



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **EISTEDDFOD CABINET SUB-COMMITTEE**

**15<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024**

#### **UPDATE ON THE RCT NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD 2024 – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

#### **REPORT OF DIRECTOR - PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION, INCLUSION & WELSH LANGUAGE**

**Author(s):** Nicola Lewis, Head of Community and Welsh Language Services

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an update on the work currently being undertaken in collaboration with National Eisteddfod officers in preparation for the 2024 Eisteddfod in Rhondda Cynon Taf, specifically in relation to community engagement and fundraising.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Cabinet Sub-Committee:

- 2.1 Notes the content of the report.
- 2.2 Considers whether further information is required.

#### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The report is to update the Eisteddfod Cabinet Sub-Committee Members of the ongoing progress being made in engaging with communities to ensure that the National Eisteddfod 2024 in Rhondda Cynon Taf is a success, in both the lead up to and during the Eisteddfod week and that a significant positive legacy remains for the longer term.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The previous Eisteddfod Cabinet report, dated 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024, outlined the progress made during the previous month with regards to the work carried out in preparation for the Eisteddfod event in relation to community engagement, events and fundraising activities.

4.2 Updates on the events held in June and outlined in the previous report include:

- The business breakfast session held on Thursday 13th June in the Lido, Pontypridd was well attended with around 25 to 30 businesses engaged.
- The unveiling of the Eisteddfod Chair and Crown, 'Cadair a Coron', in the Llantrisant Guild Hall that took place on 13th June was a great success and televised on S4C 'Heno' programme. Both are now on display to the public in the Library at Llys Cadwyn. School groups have already been visiting to learn more about the history and the design of the items, Link to social media post for Pontypridd library: [Facebook](#)
- The schools' art project showcase event held on 14th June at Llys Cadwyn in Pontypridd, announced and celebrated the selected winning entries from 320 that were submitted by over 20 different schools:

**1<sup>st</sup> place** Rhondda: Ysgol Gynradd, Trealaw  
Cynon: Ysgol Gynradd, Abercynon  
Taf: Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg, Llantrisant

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> placed entries in each area were also celebrated with all schools being given a display banner.

Link to social media post: [Locals get ready for #steddfod2024 | Eisteddfod](#)

- The annual Adult Community Learning festival held on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July at Garth Olwg was a great success with over 2,000 people attending and gave an opportunity to engage with the local Eisteddfod committee and volunteers to raise funds for the event in August.

4.3 Updates will continue to be given as part of this report on the ongoing work of both the Council and Eisteddfod under the three themed areas: Community Engagement and events, Fundraising and Legacy.

## **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EVENTS**

5.1 The National Eisteddfod events and activities with support from Council Officers, Members and local community groups being held in July include:

- 'Diva' a celebration of songs performed by favourite local vocalists was held on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July in the Parc and Dare Theatre.
- The celebration event to be held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July also at the Parc and Dare Theatre in Treorchy, is being presented by United Choirs of Treorchy with all proceeds being donated to the Eisteddfod.

Tickets for the Choir event are available to buy at either the box office or online at: [RCT | Pre Eisteddfod Celebration \(rct-theatres.co.uk\)](#).

- Information on other local activities continues to be available on the Menter Iaith website, link: [Digwyddiadau / Events - Menter Iaith RCT](#)
  - The Eisteddfod Maes B festival tour will carry out their final visit to Mountain Ash Comprehensive School on 19<sup>th</sup> July with Ponty High, Aberdare and Treorchy secondary pupils also being invited to attend.
- 5.2 Volunteering opportunities that have been promoted through the Eisteddfod website closed on 30<sup>th</sup> June. With over 400 people in total offering to volunteer, the Eisteddfod are now planning on holding engagement sessions. One face-to-face session is planned for Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July at Coleg-y-Cymoedd campus in Nantgarw. Two further online sessions are then planned to follow on from this.
- 5.3 The Welsh Government funding awarded to provide subsidised entry to the Eisteddfod event and which is being targeted at vulnerable families across the County Borough is now approaching being fully spent.
- 5.4 As at the beginning of July, 4,103 applications had been received, which will mean that over 16,400 individuals in total will potentially benefit from free access to the event and get a £25 food voucher to spend while there.
- 5.5 In addition to this, YEPS has secured separate funding from WG for 150 young people to attend during the week. This means 25 young people from each of our 6 clusters will have free entry and transport to the Maes and be hosted in the WG pavilion at a buffet lunch.
- 5.6 The Council has also been able to support and distribute 71 tickets to veterans and their families, via our Armed Forces Officer and established veteran support groups.
- 5.7 The great uptake response has been due to the work of our staff across community services, education and other departments, and local members, in reaching out to our communities and schools to promote these opportunities.
- 5.8 Any remaining funding will be used to offer access opportunities to various groups across the County Borough who support vulnerable residents to ensure the event is as accessible to as many people as possible across RCT.
- 5.9 The Eisteddfod Community Workstream group continues to meet on a monthly basis with key officers from across Council services, with the support of the Council's Eisteddfod Officers, developing a number of initiatives to support the wider participation in both Welsh and bilingual events. Updates on some of these initiatives include:
- The Library service has now printed 200 copies of their book 'O Aberdar i Ystrad / From Aberdare to Ystrad' which includes history, heritage and

places to go in Rhondda Cynon Taf, and will be offered for sale at £10 each with all proceeds going towards fundraising for the event.

- Officers have continued to plan a programme of town centres activities, which will be held in the run up and following the Eisteddfod. There will be 3 events held in Pontypridd on 26<sup>th</sup> July, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> August and two events held in Mountain Ash on 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> August. These activities will be free for families to access at the events.
- The Council's Eisteddfod Officer has been able to arrange for a small group of young people to gain valuable experience at the event by shadowing and working with the Eisteddfod's photographer. They will be required to use their own camera equipment and will have the opportunity to post an album of their selected photos on social media.

5.10 There will be translation services on the Maes provided by the National Eisteddfod, to ensure non welsh speakers can enjoy the main programme. In addition, as part of the RCTCBC stand and in support of Elected Members, the Welsh Language service has been concentrating efforts on developing translation support for the Eisteddfod, arrangements that will be put in place include:

- At home cover for morning and late evening for social media and external communications, from 7am-9am and 6pm-9pm.
- Two translators based at Llys Cadwyn for all dates of the event.
- Two simultaneous translators and, at times, a 3rd translator on the Maes each day who will be doubling up as RCT Village hosts and supporting staff scheduled in from other Council services.
- 40 headsets available on the RCT Stand for simultaneous translation support that will also be available for members to access.
- In partnership with Menter Iaith, staff will be supporting a volunteer training day for those who don't speak Welsh and learners on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July (as referenced in point 5.2 above).

## **6. FUNDRAISING**

6.1 As outlined in previous Eisteddfod Cabinet Sub-Committee reports, the funding model of the Eisteddfod requires that a contribution to the operating costs of the festival is raised by community fundraising activities in the host local authority area.

6.2 It is recognised that fundraising efforts have increased substantially over the last few months and as at the beginning of July the total funds raised stands at

£290,000. This figure does now include funds raised from the Mayor's Charity and the recent Three Peaks Challenge completed by volunteers from the local fundraising committees and Council staff.

- 6.3 Fundraising efforts continue right up to the start date of event with the Council supporting the Eisteddfod to promote opportunities to communities and businesses across the County Borough (refer to points 4.2, 5.1 and 5.9 above).

## **7. LEGACY**

- 7.1 The Community Workstream group continue to capture information as activities are being developed and delivered in relation to each of the Legacy aims and will provide more details in future reports, after the event has been held.

- 7.2 As outlined in the report dated 10<sup>th</sup> June, officers have been planning, developing and scheduling the Council's offer for our Host stand at the Eisteddfod event, under the five Legacy themes of

- Tourism – Attractions, Heritage and What's on the Menu
- RCT – a great place to live and work
- Biodiversity – A Greener RCT
- Culture and Arts – Putting RCT on the Stage
- Welsh language – Developing RCT into a bilingual county.

This schedule is now nearing completion and will provide a full programme of to be offered on each day of the event.

- 7.3 Rhondda Cynon Taf's Tourism team with the support of the Council Communications team and other service staff have designed an Eisteddfod 'magazine' which will be available free at our Host stand. It will promote other places of interest and to visit whilst in Rhondda Cynon Taf not only during the event, but it is hoped will encourage people to make return visits in the future.

## **8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

- 8.1 This is an information report and therefore no equality and diversity screening is necessary.

## **9. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 This is an information report and therefore no Welsh Language assessment is necessary.

## **10. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

10.1 This is an information report therefore no consultation is required.

## **11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

11.1 There are no financial implications aligned to this report.

## **12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

12.1 There are no legal implications aligned to this report.

## **13. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

- 13.1 The Welsh language is a cross-cutting theme in the Council's Corporate Plan and the Council has a Strategy for the Promotion of the Welsh Language and supporting Action Plan, which includes a focus on increasing the use of the Welsh Language within communities by working with partners to deliver and/or facilitate events and activities as well as improving the number of services the Council offer through the medium of Welsh. The work undertaken in partnership with the National Eisteddfod will support this as well as contributing to [Cymraeg 2050 : A Million Welsh speakers](#) – the Welsh Government's Strategy to achieve 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.
- 13.2 The Corporate Plan recognises the important role that culture and heritage plays in supporting the wellbeing of residents enabling them to be independent or maintain their independence for longer. Supporting the development of events to engage with residents of all ages will contribute to the Council's aim of increasing participation in arts and culture.
- 13.3 The success of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Eisteddfod is dependent on a partnership between the National Eisteddfod, the Council and local communities. This report highlights how the National Eisteddfod and the Council are working together to ensure that communities across the County Borough are involved in the preparations for the festival, that no one feels excluded and that they have an opportunity to shape the events and activities that will be developed so that there is a longer-term legacy after 2024.
- 13.4 The main well-being goal being addressed is goal 6 – A Wales of Vibrant Culture and thriving Welsh Language. However, as recognised in the Corporate Plan, participation in arts and culture has a positive impact on promoting health and well-being and brings people together, thereby increasing community cohesion.

## **14. CONCLUSION**

- 14.1 The Council's Eisteddfod Project Officer and other Council Officers will continue to work closely with the National Eisteddfod team especially in relation to their work of engaging with communities across the whole of the County Borough. Our common aim is to ensure maximum involvement by communities and to promote the message that the Eisteddfod is for everyone and you do not need to be able to speak Welsh to enjoy and participate in its activities and events.
- 14.2 Ongoing efforts will continue to ensure Members, residents and businesses across the County Borough are involved and engaged, and fundraising is maximised. With only 21 days to go, work to prepare for the event itself is also being prioritised to ensure the event is a success.
- 14.3 The importance of this work cannot be under-estimated as it will be central to the success of the festival's legacy in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 14.4 Further reports will be prepared for Members following the event to give details of planned ongoing Legacy work, as required.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**  
**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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**SERVICES IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER**  
**FOR EDUCATION, INCLUSION & WELSH LANGUAGE**

**UPDATE ON THE RCT NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD 2024 – COMMUNITY**  
**ENGAGEMENT**

**Background Papers:**

None

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**Relevant Scrutiny Committee:**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee