

To: Communities Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

From: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Communities Services and
Amanda Honey, Managing Director, Customer and
Communities Directorate

Date: 8th July 2011

Subject: Kent Cultural Baton and Kent Arts Development Unit
financial performance

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This report gives an overview of the Kent Cultural Baton and plans for the new phase to be launched in spring 2011.

There is an update on the financial performance of the Arts Development Unit for 2010/11.

For information

1. Introduction

The Kent Cultural Baton is a unique artwork commissioned by Kent Arts Development Unit and the Kent Cultural Baton Board. The overarching aim of the Baton is to deliver an inspiring and engaging cultural programme towards 2012 (and highlighting the riches of Kent's cultural offer), with partners and the people of Kent.

The Baton itself is a rare 1950s American airstream caravan that has been adapted into a mobile creative space to capture the sounds, visuals and stories of Kent as it travels around the county. The Baton has rapidly become an iconic feature of Kent's public realm, and its creative programmes have encouraged people to express how they see their local area, and how they see themselves in that context.

2. Project detail

There follows a description of the achievements to date, future programming, delivery mechanisms, and profile.

2.1 Achievements to date

The Baton has achieved two coveted Inspire marks, awarded only to exceptional projects; and as a result is recognised as being an official part of the London 2012 Games. The Cultural Olympiad will encompass thousands of local and regional events as part of our nationwide celebration towards London 2012.

To date, the Baton has engaged over 5000 participants at 12 host locations since the launch of the project in June 2010. Visits to date have already had a major impact and established a strong profile.

The Baton represents a pioneering approach for the County Council and is considered 'best practice' in the field. The Baton Board is currently reviewing applications from internationally acclaimed artists to deliver exciting new projects in Kent.

2.2 Future programming

There are three main strands to the project. The new phase of the project will begin in April 2011.

2.2.1 The 'Journey' and artists residencies – The Baton is available to a cross section of community hosts including youth groups, schools, scientists, arts organisations, festivals, and individual performing and visual artists to name but a few. Devised by the lead artist and the Kent Cultural Baton Board the journey includes free events, workshops and activities, and opportunities for 'artists in residence' to use the Baton as a creative research / workspace.

In seven months the Baton has delivered events as part of: Kent Youth Theatre Festival, Canterbury Festival, Leysdown Carnival, Kent County Show, Gravesham's Big Day Out, HM Prison Maidstone, Re:Bourne / Sittingbourne Arts Festival, Whitstable Biennale, Tunbridge Wells Museum and Art Gallery, Shorne Woods Country Park, Kent Association of Further Education Colleges Annual Sports Tournament, Dartford, and Turner Contemporary and Dreamland, Margate.

The most recent activity celebrated the opening of the new Turner Contemporary gallery on Margate seafront. Turner Contemporary hosted the Baton as part of the inaugural events. Partners for this project include Dreamland, Theatre Royal Margate, Scandal mongers, Margate Creatives, and the Harbour Arm.

Artist Iain Aitch was commissioned to work with Dreamland, Margate in May 2011. Born and bred in Margate he has earned an excellent national reputation as both a photographer and writer (he is also a broadsheet journalist).

Iain Aitch is delivering 8 events in various locations across Margate including the High Street and various housing estates. The work has an intergenerational focus and will bring together both old and young who will work together towards a final event. The project has thus far engaged people between the ages of 10 and 80 years. The project supports the development of the cultural infrastructure in Margate – with close links to both Dreamland and Turner Contemporary - essential to both the social and economic regeneration of the town.

From 2011-12 the Baton will deliver projects in Folkestone, Ashford, Dover and Dartford, with partners such as the National Trust, Kent Libraries and Archives, English Heritage, University of the Creative Arts and University of Kent.

2.2.2 Final Artwork and legacy - The information gathered throughout the journey and residencies will be brought together to form a body of new knowledge, which will be presented as a new multi-platform artwork for 2012.

Communities will be able to use this interactive resource as an educational and creative aid, in effect revealing the hidden Kent in their local area. The production of the artwork will conclude the Baton's physical journey, but it will serve as a record for future generations detailing Kent residents and local communities that took part in the build up to the London 2012 Games.

2.2.3 Volunteering and apprenticeships – there are significant opportunities to engage volunteers which include researching and documenting information gathered throughout the journey, event support, and developing the final resource /artwork. The project team is working with Kent Apprentice scheme and Kent Libraries' Time to Give scheme to develop propositions for partnership.

2.3 Delivery – although managed by the Lead Artist with support from KADU, the project is overseen by the Kent Cultural Baton Board; a strategic group whose membership is made up of knowledgeable and experienced representatives of key creative organizations including Canterbury Festival, Applause, and local authority arts representatives, which has helped to achieve a sense of shared ownership.

2.4 Profile – the project has developed a significant profile within the creative sector and is attracting internationally acclaimed artists to undertake artists' residencies in Kent. We are building regional press activity, and the project has a significant social networking following, bringing a lively dialogue with public - the Baton was the most 'tweeted' Kent story last month. To follow the news feed please visit - <http://kentculturalbaton.com/blog/>

There is growing demand from community groups, organisations, individuals and partners to visit new locations and growing interest from artists keen to be a part of next phase of the Baton project and explore the changing face of Kent.

3. Resource Implications

In April 2011 the project was awarded £40K Arts Council England funding.

The current annual budget allocation for this project is £25K, excluding officer time, and internal resources.

4. Financial performance of the Kent Arts Development Unit 2010/11

4.1 Kent Arts Development Unit Performance 2010/11

The Kent Arts Development Unit has attracted £5.2million investment into the county at the point of reporting on the Annual Operating Plan for 2010/11 (please note that the actual figure is likely to be higher than this as we are still receiving evaluation reports from organisations we have funded for this period). This represents £10.80 for every £1 Kent invests in the arts.

Strategic positioning

A Cultural Strategy for Kent: *Unlocking Kent's Cultural Potential* was adopted by the Kent Partnership and endorsed by KCC. This strategy is attracting partnership support, brokering new initiatives and attracting investment.

Hextable Dance

An investment of £30,000 in Hextable Dance has achieved two things: direct delivery of 12 weekly community dance classes including ballet, jazz, jive and youth dance activities, with between 160-200 customers taking part each week. Kent County Council has financially supported the organisation whilst Hextable Dance Trust has negotiated a merger with South East Dance (SED). SED is a national dance agency, which delivers dance activity across the South East of England.

SED have secured 86 partners (including new investors, dance companies, dancers, schools) from across Kent and will deliver specific dance experience with Hextable School and communities in Kent to include people of all ages and abilities. They have focussed on early years, young people and young people at risk. The dance programme aims to tackle some of the priorities identified by Central Government and the Strategy for Public Health in Kent. SED will produce 6 family friendly performances per year and the Kent Dance Teachers Network will support dance teachers across the county who will come together on a quarterly basis to network, share information and develop skills.

Supporting great art

- Turner Contemporary attracted 45,000 visitors in its first ten days of business – the Gallery has achieved unprecedented coverage for Kent as a cultural destination. We have played our part in this – securing the funding agreement with the Trust, working with Thanet District Council

to ensure the town was ready for the influx of visitors and supporting additional cultural events to ensure a rounded experience for visitors on their first trip to the Galleries.

- The Kent Cultural Baton has been enthusiastically received by the public, the creative sector and the wider 2012 partnership. We have many requests to host the Baton and artists' commissions are attracting expressions of interest in their hundreds.
- We have welcomed a number of significant new cultural organisation to Kent (Propeller, Acrojou, Jasmine Vardimon) – all of whom have chosen to relocate to Kent because of our growing reputation as welcoming and cooperative hosts to the creative workforce.
- The East Kent Festival's cluster commission has resulted in an art work which has been invited to the Venice Biennale – a first for all the festivals involved.
- We delivered a two day residential youth theatre festival where young people were able to engage with a range of professionals in all aspects of the theatre experience.
- We have successfully worked with YOS to deliver film based activities which have secured notable outcomes for a group of NEET young people.
- We have supported 3,500 festival events, exhibitions, screenings and live performances
- 1267 education events
- 189,000 people over 16 have attended events we have supported
- 58,000 young people under 16 have attended events we have supported
- We have dealt with 591 general enquiries
- During 227 separate sessions (562 hours) we have advised 1648 creative businesses/organisations
- We have supported 22 Continuous Professional Development, networking or development events
- We have advised on 15 strategies and policies

4.2 Kent Arts Unit expenditure

The Arts Development Unit budget was made up of two elements in 2010/11: £1.18million for the delivery of the Arts Development Unit's Annual Operating Plan

£1million KCC contribution to Turner Contemporary Trust

This report focuses on the £1.18 million.

Of the £1.18million significant expenditure is as follows:

£678k direct investment in the arts

£407k staffing

This direct investment can be broken down as follows:

£317k Arts Investment Fund (open access grant scheme)

£142k Strategic projects*

£90k	Cultural Olympiad
£44k	Cultural Strategy development and annual Cultural Summit
£38k	Audience development (related to NI 11)
£20k	Youth Theatre Festival
£15k	Picture storage at Kings Hill
£7k	Liberty Public Art Award
£5k	Kaleidoscope Gallery (Sevenoaks Library) programming and marketing

The remainder covers office costs, training, transport, outstanding redundancy expenditure etc.

Strategic Projects

Strategic projects are those projects which Kent County Council commissions rather than the Arts Investment Fund where we respond to requests for funding. Investment is on average between £3k to £5k and therefore there is not room in this report to provide detail on all the investment provided; although we are very happy to provide this on request. Individual officers working “in the field” effectively apply internally and the Arts Unit management team assesses proposals before agreeing to expenditure.

Larger investments in 2010/11 included:

- Leysdown Rose Tinted (£5k)
This artist led vision is an ambitious approach to urban renewal with arts as the driving force for the transformational change and economic uplift in Leysdown. Leysdown Rose Tinted is a vision which seeks to place artists at the heart of creating high quality public realm. Projects have been developed to both reflect and build on work done in Leysdown to date. Leysdown Rose-tinted transforms Leysdown by making it more itself, by working with people who live, work and visit there.
- Artlands Commission Dartford £7k: (total budget for this commission £35,000)
Artlands is a high quality programme of contemporary art in the public realm that will frame North Kent’s identity, create connections, encourage innovation and respond to the unique qualities of the sub-region; its landscapes, its heritage and its people.
Artlands’ strategic objectives are:
 - to support economic development, attracting businesses and tourists to the area and providing opportunities for skills development,
 - to improve the quality of life for new and existing communities,
 - to engage new audiences in quality arts projects,
 - to provide a delivery framework,
 - to facilitate a joined up approach to commissioning art, in the public realm across North Kent

(1) Creek Creative Community Interest Company (CIC) £20k (total budget £110,500)

Creek Creative CIC will develop the Lower Ground Floor (LGF) of Creek Creative (mixed use artists space/historic building) to enable a greater number and variety of workspaces to be created, responding to demand and bringing 714 additional square meters in to use. Phase Two of the project sees a studio facility conversion.

4.3 Kent Arts Sector – the wider picture

The impact of the financial downturn has impacted on the arts in the following ways:

Investment:

The government Giving White Paper will, we hope, in the future have a positive impact on arts organisations.

Arts Council England announced their new National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) – three year funding agreements which begin in 2012/13 but which were selected in advance to allow for organisations to plan ahead. This replaces the current Regularly Funded Organisations or RFOs. There was a great deal of national coverage for these announcements, this is largely because the last three year announcement was badly managed – coming too late for many organisations to adjust their expectations. ACE has learned from this and the process has been far better managed this time. The coverage was also driven by the fact that ACE, like all surviving NDPBs has taken a considerable reduction in funding - 29.6%. Kent however has overall, benefited from the announcements seeing an increase in investment.

Kent will see £4.5m worth of investment. Kent has achieved the best settlement of all other administrative areas in the South East and we believe that this reflects the ambition and resourcefulness of Kent's creative sector and of the clear message that the Cultural Strategy for Kent has established – that Kent values and is committed to developing its arts and wider cultural sector. Whilst nationally there are 29% less NPOs than there were RFOs, Kent will see an increase, achieving 7 NPOs where we had 6 RFOs

For organisations that have not been awarded NPO status from 2012 onwards, they will still be able to apply for funding through Grants for the Arts Lottery funding (of which the money available is increasing). This process has until recently been a light touch for applications up to £4k, but this threshold has now been raised to £10k, making it quicker and simpler to apply for funding up to £10k. Some organisations will fear that they have lost out by not being successful in applying to be part of the National Portfolio and Kent County Council's arts development Unit will work closely with any organisation who now feels they need additional support to prepare themselves for April 2012.

Kent National Portfolio Organisations from April 2012

- Canterbury Festival
- Jasmine Vardimon Dance Company (Ashford)
- People United (kindness in action through the arts - Canterbury)
- Propeller Theatre Company (Canterbury)
- Stour Valley Arts (Ashford)
- Turner Contemporary (Margate)

Regional National Portfolio Organisations based in Kent

- South East Dance (regional Dance Agency – Hextable Dance Space/Swanley)

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 Members of the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to NOTE the continuing success of the Kent Cultural Baton, and its continuing contribution to maximising opportunities around London 2012 Games.
- 5.2 Members of the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to NOTE the financial performance of the Kent Arts Development Unit

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Background documents - nil