

From: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services
Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 15 November 2018

Subject: Turner Prize

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: None

Electoral Division: County-wide

Summary: Turner Contemporary has been selected to host the Turner Prize in 2019. Considered to be the most prestigious visual art competition in the world, The Turner Prize seeks to encourage wider interest in contemporary art and support the careers of British artists. The competition is a partnership with Tate and is hosted in alternate years between Tate Britain and a gallery outside London. BBC is the media partner. It is estimated that the event will attract an additional 120,000 visitors to the Turner Contemporary and presents a significant opportunity to present a high profile visitor offer across Kent.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Turner Prize is the most prestigious visual arts prize in the world. It brings with it high profile public debate on the value of contemporary art and, in 2019 will put Margate and Turner Contemporary under the spotlight of the world's media not least with the announcement of the winner on News at Ten to an audience of ten million. It provides a significant opportunity to showcase Kent as a cultural county and to develop a high profile visitor offer in parallel with the competition.
- 1.2. Turner Contemporary estimate that the exhibition will attract 250,000 visitors as compared with 130,000 over the same period for a regular event. This will bring the annual total of visits for 2019-20 to 500,000. During the current show which runs until January 2019, visits are estimated to top a total of three million since the gallery opening in 2011.

- 1.3. When hosted at Tate Britain, its regular London home, the exhibition attracts between 70,000 and 100,000 visits. At the Tramway in Glasgow in 2015, the exhibition achieved 75,000 visits as compared with their previous record of 20,000. A further 16,000 also took part in associated events across the city including workshops, talks and pop up activity. In 2011, there were 150,000 visits to Baltic Gateshead when they hosted the Prize. In 2017, Ferens Gallery in Hull achieved 116,000 visits and Erbington, Londonderry 60,000 although both of these were also UK City of Culture in the same year.
- 1.4. Turner Contemporary was selected to host the 2019 prize following a bidding process in 2016. The gallery is used to exhibiting high profile work from a diverse range of artists and is currently working with Tate and BBC to plan for the Turner Prize which will house four separate exhibitions, one from each of the shortlisted artists. The formal awards dinner where the winner will be announced is a feature of the event and will be held in the Ballroom at Dreamland.
- 1.5. The Economic Development team is managing a Readiness Group with membership from Turner Contemporary, Visit Kent and Thanet District Council. The group will plan for a wider visitor offer which will run alongside the Turner Prize to provide additional activities to encourage people to spend more time in the county in addition to visiting the gallery.
- 1.6. Sub groups have been set up to plan and manage marketing and communication; tourism; cultural activity; and operational issues such as transport and public realm to prepare for high levels of visitors.
- 1.7. The Readiness Group and Turner Contemporary are working with Canterbury Christchurch University to consider the scope for evaluation of both the process and the event to help partners better understand how to maximise the benefits of hosting the Prize for Turner Contemporary and for Kent.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Turner Prize was founded by the Patrons of New Art who were formed in 1982 to encourage wider interest in contemporary art and assist the Tate Gallery in acquiring new works. It is named after JMW Turner as a figure who was innovative and controversial in his day but has become known as one of the greatest British artists.
- 2.2. The prize is awarded to a British artist for an outstanding exhibition or other presentation of their work in the preceding year as determined by an independent Jury.
- 2.3. Each year, four artists are shortlisted from nominations from both the public and members of the Jury. The shortlist is announced in May and each of the four artists takes part in an exhibition in the host gallery from September to January. The winner is selected by the Jury and announced at an awards dinner and televised on News at Ten in early December.

- 2.4. Turner Contemporary has been selected by Tate to host the Turner Prize in 2019. The competition is the most high profile visual arts event in the world and generates significant interest in national and international press.
- 2.5. The profile of the competition is a significant opportunity to raise visibility of the quality cultural offer across Kent. We are working with Turner Contemporary and The Kent Cultural Transformation Board to maximise the economic and social benefits of hosting the Prize.

3. Governance

- 3.1. A cultural sub group, working through the mutli agency Kent Cultural Transformation Board is working with cultural organisations across Kent to plan a parallel programme of events which will reflect the values of Turner Prize, Turner Contemporary and JMW Turner himself.
- 3.2. A marketing sub group, led by Visit Kent is planning to maximse the press and media opportunities afforded by the competition and is exploring links with other visitor attractions and campaigns such as Kent Contemporary, Kent Big Weekend and the Toursim Awards. This sub group is also considering the wider visitor offer, looking at visitor accommodation, and tourism businesses and considering practical issues like transport and street scene informed by other more specialist sub groups to ensure Kent is a welcoming host for the expected increase in visitor numbers.
- 3.3. An operational sub group led by Thanet District Council and drawing on their experience of opening the Turner Contemporary in 2011, is considering practical issues of welcoming high levels of people to Margate and what steps the Council needs to take to make sure the town is prepared. Their work is informed by a Transport Sub Group who will consider travel into and across the county and the impact of increased visitor numbers on trains, buses, roads, carparks etc.
- 3.4. A further sub group is being established to include Canterbury Christ Church University, research partner for Turner Contemporary, to look at research and evaluation. The group is reviewing the model developed by the University of Hull to measure the impact of the 2017 UK City of Culture. Its aim is to evaluate both the process of staging the Turner Prize and also its impact across different areas including, economy, place, society, arts and culture and partnership working.
- 3.5. Turner Contemporary is leading on an investment strategy supported by the Readiness Group. An online document highlighting [opportunities for sponsorship](#) of the Turner Prize has been circulated to prospective investors.
- 3.6. Turner Contemporary will train 150 local volunteers from diverse backgrounds using the methodology developed by the exemplary scheme developed in Hull for UK City Of Culture 2017. Volunteers will act as greeters to guide and inform visitors.

4. Financial Implications

4.1. KCC has agreed a contribution of £40,000 in 2018-19 from the culture and creative economy budget (which will provide the prize money for professional development of the artists and a further contribution of £20,000 will be made in 2019-20 as match funding subject to the success of a £220,000 bid made by the Turner Gallery to Arts Council England's Ambitions for Excellence fund. An announcement about the bid is expected in January.

5. Next Steps

5.1. The Readiness Group is scheduled to meet monthly until February 2020 alongside the marketing and cultural sub groups. The operations sub group has met once and will now plan a regular schedule of meetings. Sub groups focussing on the practical aspects of the event will come on stream in early New Year. Turner Contemporary have their own operational plan which they will continue to implement in partnership with Tate and BBC.

6. Recommendation

Recommendation:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

7. Background Documents

7.1. None

8. Contact details

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