

Agenda Item No: 5

Report to: Charity Committee

Date of Meeting: 26th March 2012

Report Title: Cultural Programme

Report By: Monica Adams-Acton
Head of Regeneration and Community Services

Purpose of Report

To present the proposed arts and performance programme for the Stade Open Space for 2012 and 2013

Recommendation(s)

- 1. To endorse the Stade Open Space arts and performance programme for 2012 and 2013.**
- 2. To note the grant funding of £150k from the Arts Council England for this programme.**

Reasons for Recommendations

The programme for the Stade Open Space is a key objective of the Cultural Regeneration Strategy and Implementation Plan and is the subject of a successful funding bid to Arts Council England. It was approved by the Council's Cabinet on 6th February 2012.

Introduction

1. Hastings Borough Council has made a successful bid to the Arts Council England Grants for the Arts programme for £150k to supplement an investment of £161k by HBC in a £311k programme of performances and events in the Stade Open Space over 2012 and 2013 calendar years.
2. The aim of the programme is to attract new visitors to Hastings including longer stay visitors and return visitors and to provide high quality entertainment and opportunities for engagement in the arts and cultural events for local people.
3. The programme will also provide a platform for local performers and artists as well as opportunities for professional development from visiting companies.

Background

4. Over the past year, numbers of people attending activities in the Project Space at Stade Hall have indicated that the area has the potential to become a major cultural hub in the town.
5. The completion of the Jerwood Gallery and the adjacent Stade Open Space area along with the Eat@ Café and Stade Hall has provided the physical infrastructure for a vibrant cultural offer and the potential to bring together visual and performing art with the living heritage attraction of Hastings Old Town, the Hastings fishing industry and the existing Hastings festival calendar.
6. The objective is to deliver a free outdoor programme of arts performances and installations which will take place on the Stade Open Space throughout the year, and which will build on the existing festival programme including Jack in the Green celebrations, Hastings Carnival, Seafood and Wine Festival and Hastings Bonfire Night.
7. The intention is that residents and visitors to Hastings alike will know that there is a free high quality event on Hastings seafront to attract them every Saturday night, May - October over the two year period.
8. The Stade Open Space is licensed to hold 5,000 people per event which is the maximum sized target audience.
9. The programme is designed to appeal to all sections of the community, as well as the visitors to the town.

Programme: Profile

10. For each of the two seasons there will be three high profile "niche" events which will aim to attract specialist interest visitors to Hastings while having broad enough interest to appeal to Hastings residents.

11. For example, the opening season's highlight events are the launch event with a performance by the sea shanty vocal group Fisherman's Friends who appeal to a "folk" audience; performances by the Hofesh Shechter Dance Company which will obviously attract a dance audience; and a pyrotechnic multi-arts spectacular, "Pi-leau", by Dutch performance company Close Act which will attract festival and performance audiences. These events will send a clear signal nationwide about the aspirations of Hastings, with associated positive messages about quality of life and the cultural pulse of the town.
12. Other concerts and performances in the programme will feature the best of local arts talent, including local programmers such as Art Dev, who will present world music, and APMC, who will programme light classical performances for the space. Further performances will be the direct result of arts projects that engage with local communities.
13. It is hoped that the cultural programme will also encourage more students to consider living in the town rather than commuting to Hastings colleges and university from elsewhere.

Programme: Added Value

14. Each performance, while being a significant public draw, also has added value, for example:
 - a. Fisherman's Friends has obvious synergies with the location and will promote the Hastings fishing industry and heritage aspects of the Stade.
 - b. The performance piece "Pi-leau" by Close Act tells the story of a fisherman and contains strong themes of ecological sustainability. The company has already met with local fishermen to discuss the piece. A further element of added value is the offer of professional capacity building workshops by members of the company to local arts organisations.
 - c. The Hofesh Shechter Dance Company are among the leading dance practitioners in the world and will use their performance as an opportunity to kick start a youth dance training programme targeting boys in particular in the borough.
 - d. Another programmed event is the visit of the Lone Twin "Boat", which is the Cultural Olympiad's lead art project for the South East. It comprises a magnificent sailing yacht made entirely from wood donated by the residents of the South East and includes a two day serenade of the boat by community choirs from throughout the borough.
15. In this way the Stade Open Space programme offers arts for everyone, while providing opportunities for projects within the community and professional development for students and professional arts practitioners from the borough.

Programme: HALF

16. Up to ten performances in the Stade Open Space programme will be by local music professionals with young local music students as their support, and will be a part of the HALF programme (Hastings Arts Learning Fulcrum).
17. HALF is a partnership between Hastings Borough Council, East Sussex Music Service and Rhythmix. HALF will allow young local musicians and artists who are learning their skills in the education system to gain valuable experience and performing skills by working with professionals. (HALF- half professional local performer(s), half music student(s)).
18. Young individual performers or groups working within the East Sussex Education system will be paired up with an appropriate local professional musician or group. The musician (or one representative of the group) will act as a professional mentor for the student to give them experience of public performance. This will primarily entail the student(s) being the "support act" for the professional performer over a named number of gigs (minimum 3), and includes meetings to discuss the performance with the professional after each gig.
19. The final performance will be part of the Stade Open Space programme.

Programme: Community Engagement

20. During the period of March - September 2011 a successful community arts programme, "Eight Foot Square", was delivered in Hollington and Ore Valley by multi-artform group Parrabbola. Parrabbola is a non-profit-making cultural organisation that specialises in community development through participatory creative activity
21. The local programme included genuine community engagement and linked local communities with the Stade Open Space through performances by local people in the "Eight Foot Square" format on the space itself.
22. In order to sustain and build on the community engagement of "Eight Foot Square" and to address stated concerns by Arts Council England about HBC's capacity to deliver such an ambitious programme alone, Parrabbola will assist in the management of the Stade Open Space programme and ensure that further opportunities for community performance as part of the programme are realised.
23. Other elements of community engagement will include the "Bicycle Ballet", a performance piece for people on bicycles which will involve up to fifty local cyclists as performers, and a large scale dance piece by local young people in 2013.

Programme: Delivery

24. The programme will be managed by the Stade Open Space Management Team which will meet on a monthly basis to ensure delivery of the programme and expenditure schedules. The team will comprise the Lead Member for Regeneration, Cllr Peter Chowney, the Arts and Cultural Development Officer, officers from Regeneration and Resort Services, and a representative of Parrabbola.

25. As recommended by Arts Council England, Parrabbola will supply the expertise to deal with stage management and specialist contracts with performers and arts organisations.

London 2012 Festival

26. The London 2012 Festival is the finale of the Cultural Olympiad and is taking place from June 21st until the end of the London 2012 Paralympic Games on September 9th.
27. It is proposed that three Hastings events - the overnight stop of the Olympic Torch Hastings on July 17th, the visit of the Cultural Olympiad Boat Project to Hastings on July 7th - 9th, and the performance of Pi-leau by Close Act on June 23rd are all part of the London 2012 Festival.
28. The publicity gained by being part of the London 2012 Festival will firmly place Hastings and the Stade Open Space on the national and international cultural map and will be invaluable in the promotion of Hastings as a cultural destination.

London Olympic period July 27th - September 9th

29. Discussions have taken place with a local arts project management and consultancy agency which hopes to raise funds to install a giant screen on the Stade Open Space for this period, in order to show Olympic events and film-based arts programmes in the fortnight between the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games.
30. Should such a project not be achievable, the Council will programme events and activities by local arts groups on the space during the Olympic period.

Coastal Currents 2012

31. Due to the recognised need for a two-year approach to build relationships and longer term projects within Coastal Currents provision was made in the procurement process for 2011 to extend the contract to deliver the festival in 2012.
32. It is therefore proposed that Creative Coast will manage the Coastal Currents 2012 festival on a renewed contract. The 2012 Coastal Currents festival will not be funded from the Stade Open Space budget, although any performances programmed on the space for this period will be eligible for inclusion in the festival programme.

Marketing

33. As part of the application to Arts Council England, there is a commitment from the existing Council marketing budget of £75,000 over the two years to market the Stade Open Space arts programme nationally, regionally and locally over the two years.
34. The quality and depth of the proposed cultural programme offers an opportunity to promote Hastings as a regionally and nationally recognised cultural destination,

and pulls together the themes of art, performance, a sustainable fishing industry, and architectural and cultural heritage.

35. A condition of the Arts Council England funding award is that Hastings and St Leonards is marketed as part of a cultural "hub" that comprises Bexhill (De La Warr Pavilion) and Eastbourne (Towner Gallery) which in turn will attract the "cultural tourist" who will stay overnight in the area.

Impact Assessment

36. A sum has been identified in the cultural programme budget to measure the economic impact of the Stade Open Space programme in terms of numbers of visitors to the town, new jobs created, income in shops, restaurants and hotels and qualitative interviews with people attending Stade Open Space events.

Risk and Policy Implications

Finance

37. £161k has been allocated by HBC for expenditure on the Stade Open Space programme over the two financial years 2012/3 and 2013/4.
38. A further £20k has been ringfenced in 2011-12 budget for delivery of Coastal Currents in 2012/3 to facilitate advance planning and programme management.

Foreshore Trust Land Event Policy

39. The Meeting Minutes of the Charity Committee 29/3/11 item 19 apply as follows:

"The Head of Communications and Marketing presented a report recommending an Events Policy which delegated the routine booking of events on Foreshore Trust Land to the appropriate officers of the Council...." and "the appropriate officers of the Council be delegated authority to book and manage events on Foreshore Trust land in accordance with its events policy. New events (i.e. those that have not taken place before 1 January 2011) that incur real costs to the Foreshore Trust be considered on a case by case basis by the Charity Committee."

Economic

40. The cultural and creative sectors are important contributors to the sustainable regeneration of the town. Attracting high spending visitors and inward investment is important if Hastings is to enjoy a level of economic success with increased employment opportunities for its residents.

Equalities and Cohesion

41. Cultural regeneration will support the drive to a more equal and cohesive town. Access to and participation in cultural activities for all promotes an inclusive society and can help people and communities overcome poverty and social exclusion. The cultural programme provides opportunities for local people to actively participate in creative activities and to experience high quality and innovative cultural performances. Some activities specifically target groups most vulnerable to exclusion.

Wards Affected

Ashdown, Baird, Braybrooke, Castle, Central St. Leonards, Conquest, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill, St. Helens, Tressell, West St. Leonards, Wishing Tree

Area(s) Affected

Central Hastings, East Hastings, North St. Leonards, South St. Leonards

Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Yes
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	Yes
Environmental Issues	No
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	No
Organisational Consequences	No
Local People's Views	Yes

Background Information

Officer to Contact

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