

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

19 May 2009

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 ARTS PROGRAMME UPDATE

Summary

This report updates Members on the current arts activity being delivered by the Council in partnership with others.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Members will be aware that a large proportion of the current arts programme is delivered in partnership with other organisations, which include the West Kent Arts Partnership, local schools and numerous community groups. This report provides an update on a number of arts projects the Council is involved with.

1.2 Tonbridge Schools' Arts Partnership

- 1.2.1 During the last week of April, the Tonbridge Schools' Arts Partnership delivered an exhibition at the Angel Centre. Entitled "Viewpoints" the exhibition focused on visual art work being produced by local schools. A private viewing was held which was attended by the Mayor, students who created the artwork as well as teachers from the various schools involved in the project. The partnership is made up of representatives from primary and secondary schools from across the town including Sussex Road, Hayesbrook, Hillview and Weald of Kent. Tonbridge Schools' Arts Partnership meets regularly throughout the year to discuss cross-curricular art activity and to identify joint working opportunities.

1.3 West Kent Arts Partnership

- 1.3.1 The West Kent Arts Partnership members are Maidstone Borough Council, Sevenoaks District Council, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council. The aim of West Kent Arts Partnership is to realise growth for the arts, promoting and encouraging arts activity in line with local, regional and national strategies across West Kent, where there is benefit and "added value" achieved by joint working. West Kent Arts Partnership is one of three local authority partnerships in Kent. Each partnership liaises with Arts Council on the delivery of its projects.

- 1.3.2 West Kent Arts Partnership develops and maintains a three year programme of work which is reviewed on an annual basis. All West Kent Arts Partnership members have agreed to deliver and support the following projects throughout the 2009–2012 period.

1.4 Applause

- 1.4.1 Originally established as a West Kent Arts Partnership project in 1999, the Applause Rural Touring Scheme offers small, rural communities a superb range of exciting performances from brilliant live music to professional small-scale theatre shows that appeal to both adults and children alike.
- 1.4.2 In the February to June season of this year there will be four performances taking place in local village halls across the borough including Aylesford, Platt and Offham. Applause is currently negotiating with Kings Hill Parish Council to encourage them to participate with the scheme.
- 1.4.3 Earlier this year, Applause was successfully awarded £64,000 towards the programme of work 2009-11 from the Arts Council via its Grants for the Arts application process. This year Applause celebrates its 10th anniversary and a celebratory event is planned to mark this significant achievement.

1.5 Time of Our Lives

- 1.5.1 Inspired by the creation of International Young People's Day and International Older People's Day, it is hoped this project will help change perception, encourage joint learning and promote greater understanding between the two generations. This activity was originally piloted on International Older Peoples' Day in October 2008 at Tonbridge Baptist Church, when a dance and drama workshop was held with 20 members of the Church's Day Care Centre whose ages ranged from 60–98. A DVD was produced to record the day which it is hoped will encourage other similar groups (including Age Concern, West Malling) across the borough to take part.
- 1.5.2 Creative workshops will take place which is hoped will inspire lively debate on generic subjects including fashion, music (including dance), history (war) and technology.
- 1.5.3 The project will culminate with a photographic exhibition focusing on one of the themed workshop subjects. Hillview School and Tonbridge Girls' Grammar School have already expressed an interest in supporting this project. Tonbridge Library is keen to host the final exhibition.

1.6 Support Professional Artist Practice in West Kent

- 1.6.1 West Kent Arts Partnership aims to build and maintain a network of professional artists in West Kent and assist, where possible, with the provision of continued professional development. West Kent Arts Partnership realise the necessity of

helping to retain arts students (from across all art forms) within the West Kent region. Part of this programme includes delivering artist surgeries in libraries (potential venues include Larkfield and Borough Green) on subjects such as how to put on an exhibition; marketing and funding opportunities.

1.7 Traditions

- 1.7.1 This project aims to promote British traditions within local schools and community groups whilst encouraging other ethnic groups to understand more about British history and culture. Workshop based, participants will learn about the origins of customs such as Morris dancing, folk music, May-day celebrations and St. George's Day.
- 1.7.2 It is anticipated that these British traditions will be showcased as part of the MELA festivals in Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells. The project will conclude with participants performing in the Lions Summer Carnival parade in Tonbridge in June 2012.

1.8 Tonbridge Arts Festival

- 1.8.1 Tonbridge School have recently approached the Council to discuss the re-launch of Tonbridge Arts Festival. The school is keen for the event to take place in October 2010. Whilst Tonbridge School will take the lead in organising the event and hosting many of the related activities, there will be more community involvement and use of different venues throughout the town (for example Angel Centre, Oast Theatre, Tonbridge Library, Hillview School Theatre, Weald of Kent, West Kent College and possibly the River Centre).
- 1.8.2 It is anticipated that these alternative venues will hold themed events including comedy nights, music recitals, exhibitions and drama performances. A steering group is currently being established. The Borough Council will be represented at these meetings and have an input into the programme content.

1.9 Legal Implications

- 1.9.1 All artists employed by the Borough Council, West Kent Arts Partnership or directly by schools and community must produce copies of required paperwork including Criminal Record Bureau certificates and public liability insurance (to the value of £5 million).

1.10 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.10.1 Each authority within the West Kent Arts Partnership contributes £5k on an annual basis to the work of the Partnership. This helps lever in further funding from organisations including the Arts Council. By pooling resources (financial and expertise) the Partnership can deliver arts activity more effectively with greater impact in local communities and across a wider region than could be achieved on an individual basis.

1.10.2 Borough Council support is given to local schools and community groups for their art projects largely through in kind contributions, waiving venue fees, assistance with printing costs and other marketing activity relating to the events including officer time.

1.11 Risk Assessment

1.11.1 West Kent Arts Partnership work to an agreed action plan and risk assessments, copies of which are available if required.

1.12 Policy Considerations

1.12.1 Community.

Background papers:

contact: Lyndsey Bennett

Nil

Robert Styles
Chief Leisure Officer