

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

12 December 2011

**Report of the Chief Leisure Officer and the
Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts**

Part 1- Public

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken
by the Cabinet Member)**

1 MUSIC/ARTS FESTIVALS

Summary

**This report covers a number of Music/Arts Festivals across the Borough,
run both directly by the Council and by local community groups.**

1.1 Background

1.1.1 At the last meeting of this Board, Members were updated on a number of Music/Arts Festivals taking place across the year, and it was agreed that:

- 1) the Council continues to support the Music/Arts Festivals outlined in the report in order to maximise the benefits for the arts through partnerships with others;
- 2) the Tonbridge Castle Festival of Music be incorporated into the Tonbridge Arts Festival programme as an associated event in 2012; and
- 3) the proposed partnership with Opera Brava for the 2012 Tonbridge Castle Festival of Music be considered in liaison with Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee and the Director of Finance, and a report be presented to the next meeting of the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board.

1.2 Tonbridge Arts Festival

1.2.1 The Committee organising Tonbridge Arts Festival consists of representatives from K College, Hillview School for Girls, Tonbridge School, Tonbridge Library and this Council. In addition to the main Committee, there are three sub groups which meet to plan a diverse programme of literary arts, performing arts and visual arts activities.

1.2.2 Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee has agreed that next year's 10-day event will take place during 15-24 June 2012. The date was brought forward to encourage more outdoor performances and to tie in with the Cultural Olympiad.

- 1.2.3 Tonbridge Arts Festival events will take place at different venues across the town including K College's Media and Arts Centre, Tonbridge School's E.M Forster Theatre, Tonbridge Library, Tonbridge Castle and the Angel Centre. A new development for 2012 is that the River Centre has offered to hold an art exhibition in its impressive reception area. Some workshops and performances will also take place using the drama and dance studios at Hillview School for Girls.
- 1.2.4 For 2012, Tonbridge Arts Festival will use Tonbridge Castle as the "event base" and the venue will host a literary event based on the successful 'The Hay Festival of Literature & Arts' model.
- 1.2.5 Once again, Tonbridge Art Group will be working with local schools to deliver 'The Big Picture' which will be unveiled on the opening day of the Festival and on view at River Walk. Children's author, Marcus Sedgwick will be visiting local schools. There will be an opportunity to experience Jane Austen's connections with the town on a guided walk, a comedy night with festival patron Arthur Smith and a Battle of the Bands performance for young people at K College.
- 1.2.6 South East Open Studios, the organisation which co-ordinates local artists and craftspeople across South East England to open their doors to the public, has contacted the Committee stating that they would like to hold their event during the 15-24 June and become part of Tonbridge Arts Festival. This is currently being considered by the Committee.
- 1.2.7 The programme is still being finalised with details of some activities still to be confirmed. The programme will be promoted on a new website www.tonbridgeartsfestival.co.uk, which it is hoped will be operational by the end of the year.
- 1.2.8 Tonbridge Arts Festival is supported by this Council through a contribution from the arts programme budget. The Committee has also sought and obtained private sector sponsorship from organisations including Warner's, Tonbridge Audi, Waitrose, Barchester Finance, Bespoke Accountants and Lindeyer Francis Ferguson.

1.3 Music at Malling

- 1.3.1 The inaugural Music at Malling event took place between 28-30 September. Established by London based, professional musician, Thomas Kemp (a former West Malling resident), Music at Malling was created to give those who live in West Malling and the surrounding area a unique opportunity to experience world class musicians on their door step with many of the performances taking place in some of the town's prestigious historic venues.
- 1.3.2 Organisers provided a varied programme including a schools performance of Peter and the Wolf at St Mary's Church. For this event professional musicians from Thomas Kemp's Chamber Domain ensemble worked with local schools including West Malling CE Primary School, The Discovery School, Kings Hill,

Mereworth Community Primary School, Borough Green Primary School, St James' The Great, East Malling and St Katherine's Primary School Snodland. Other performances included Ronnie Scott's All Stars at The Swan, a concert featuring the music of Mahler and Mozart at Pilsdon Chapel Barn, and a performance of Mark Anthony Turnage's 'Barrie's Deviant Fantasy' by the Finzi Quartet at St Lawrence's Church, Mereworth.

- 1.3.3 The event was supported by the Council through a financial contribution from the arts programme budget and Tonbridge Castle Gateway ran the box office for the event. Other sponsors included The Malling Society, Malling Action Partnership, The Swan, Sane & Able, West Malling Parish Council and Brookline Coaches.
- 1.3.4 Music at Malling was well received locally and the organisers have agreed to deliver the event again in September 2012. In order to maintain the profile of the event, a one off Christmas Concert will take place at St Mary's Church on 17 December 2011.

1.4 East Malling Arts Festival

- 1.4.1 The Beat Project held a two week arts festival at the St James Centre from the 18 June – 2 July. Organised by Angela Borsos, Community Development Manager, the Festival provided the local community with a variety of activities including ceramic tile painting, photography clinics, dance classes and exhibitions, all of which showcased local talent.
- 1.4.2 Due to the success of this new initiative, which encouraged community engagement and participation, The Beat Project is keen for the Festival to become an annual event. Depending on available funding, it is anticipated that in 2012 the event will tie in with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations and will take place in June.
- 1.4.3 This year the Festival received financial contributions from this Council via the arts programme budget and The Malling Action Partnership.

1.5 Tonbridge Castle Festival of Music

- 1.5.1 Following the last meeting of this Board, discussions have taken place with Opera Brava regarding proposals for the 2012 Festival, whilst also maintaining close liaison with Tonbridge Arts Festival.
- 1.5.2 In agreement with the Director of Finance, I am pleased to confirm that the Council will be continuing its relationship with Opera Brava providing two evenings of Opera at the Castle and an educational performance.
- 1.5.3 The Opera programme for 2012 is as follows:

Friday 15 June 2012	Puccini's La Boheme	(7.30pm start time)
Saturday 16 June 2012	Rossini's The Barber of Seville	(7.30pm, start time)

- 1.5.4 Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee has agreed to incorporate the event into the Festival, which will provide an opportunity for joint marketing.
- 1.5.5 Ticket prices have been held at the same level as last year, with discounts offered for booking early, and to Leisure Pass holders, bulk purchases, children and, for the first time this year, families. Tickets will be available to purchase on line at www.operabrava.co.uk , by phoning the Opera Brava box office number 01444 443000 or by visiting Tonbridge Castle in person.
- 1.5.6 Opera Brava will once again be delivering an education outreach programme with a local school to put on a young person's performance of Prince Caspian by C S Lewis. Ticket prices have once again been held at last year's prices.
- 1.5.7 Opera Brava has indicated that its stage, sound and lighting could be made available for hire on the Sunday evening. This option is currently being considered by the Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee and other interested groups in the community.

1.6 Legal Implications

- 1.6.1 The contract between the Council and Opera Brava was prepared with Legal Services and signed by both parties.

1.7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.7.1 The Music/Arts Festivals outlined in the report are supported by the Council's arts programme revenue budget. The partnership approach to the events offers good value for money, bringing a programme of arts performances to residents across the Borough.
- 1.7.2 Within the formal agreement with Opera Brava the Council has made a payment of £3,000 as a deposit to Opera Brava, and will also be responsible for providing costs associated with the venue such as toilets and stewards. The total financial exposure to the Council will be £5,000 representing a significant reduction in cost and risk to the Council, compared to previous years. Opera Brava will retain all income from ticket sales for the event to cover the remainder of their costs.

1.8 Risk Assessment

- 1.8.1 An Event Management Plan will be produced for the Tonbridge Festival of Music in close liaison with the Council's Health and Safety Officer.
- 1.8.2 Risk Assessments of Tonbridge Arts Festival, East Malling Arts Festival and Music at Malling will be adopted and developed further as the events become more established. The emphasis will be on the community groups organising the events to produce the relevant health and safety paperwork.

1.9 Equality Impact Assessment

1.9.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report.

1.10 Policy Considerations

1.10.1 Community, Healthy Lifestyles, Customer Contact

1.11 Recommendations

1.11.1 It is **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET** that the Council continues to support the Music/Arts Festivals outlined in the report in order to maximise the benefits for the arts through partnerships with others.

The Chief Leisure Officer confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Lyndsey Bennett

Nil

Robert Styles
Chief Leisure Officer

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The Festivals are accessible to the whole community.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	No	See above.
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		N/A

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.