

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS:</b> ALL
<b>REPORT TITLE</b> Camden Cultural Programme Update Report	
Report OF: Director of Economy, Regeneration and Investment	
<b>FOR SUBMISSION TO</b>  CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY	<b>DATE</b>  11 September 2023
<p><b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b></p> <p>This report summarises the vision and ambitions for the culture service and the development and delivery of the cultural programme for the communities of Camden.</p> <p>The Culture Service has been created to reposition the council’s unique role as connectors and enablers of culture between cultural organisations, communities, and neighbourhoods to realise opportunities, animate the public realm and uncover Camden creatives and the everyday creativity of Camden people.</p> <p>The Culture Service brings together the existing arts and events team who are responsible for event management of community festivals and civic events, managing the film office and generating income through venue hire and public realm activations as well as strategically growing and supporting arts and culture in the borough and leading the Cultural Partnership –Cultural Camden, who help deliver and champion the cultural framework’s vision.</p> <p><b>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</b></p> <p>No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b></p> <p>David Burns  Director of Economy, Regeneration and Investment  Regeneration and Planning  4th Floor, 5 Pancras Square, London N1C 4AG  <a href="mailto:david.burns@camden.gov.uk">david.burns@camden.gov.uk</a></p>	

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### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment on the service update report.

Signed: 

Date: 30 August 2023

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report to the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee is to update the committee on the Culture Service. The report includes an update on vision of the service; the impact of the Arts Council Investment Programme 23-26 on the cultural sector and the council's response and the development and delivery of the cultural programme.

## **2. Background**

2. A new Culture Service has been created to reposition the council's unique role as connectors and enablers of culture between cultural organisations, communities, and neighbourhoods to realise opportunities, animate the public realm and uncover Camden creatives and the everyday creativity of Camden people.
- 2.2 The Culture Service brings together the existing arts and events team who are responsible for event management of community festivals and civic events, managing the film office and generating income through venue hire and public realm activations as well as strategically growing and protecting arts and culture in the borough and leading the Cultural Partnership –Cultural Camden, who help deliver and champion the cultural framework's vision.
- 2.3 Camden has a rich and thriving cultural sector, home to many of the UK's most visited cultural destinations, with 32 Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations, the second highest number in London. Camden is the fourth most popular filming location in London due to its iconic locations hosting up to 1000 film days a year and generating an income of up to £2m.
- 2.4 In 2018 the Cultural Camden partnership, a strategic network of key arts and culture organisations in the borough was established. The partnership and the council worked collaboratively to develop the Culture Framework 2018 to 2025 with a vision of a borough shaped by its residents where creative industries, arts, culture, heritage, libraries and museums are accessible, engaging and relevant for all.
- 2.5 The impact of the pandemic, levelling up agenda, unprecedented inflation and cost of living crisis, climate emergency and racial inequality has had an impact on Camden's cultural infrastructure. A redistribution of funding and a move to cultural democracy is at the heart of the Arts Council's 10-year strategy 'Lets Create' with an emphasis on its funded organisations to have an agile and hyper local approach to its engagement. As a result of these changes the service is refreshing its strategic approach and exploring how it adapts to support and grow a 21st century cultural and creative sector with a focus on three areas:
  - Cultural and Creative Economy - growing the cultural infrastructure and creative economy

- People and Place – cultural programmes and activities which bring communities together in the public realm
- Learning and Skills – developing the next generation of makers, producers and creators through supporting the grass roots creative sector and working with sector partners to grow the talent pipeline

### **3. Arts Council England Investment Programme 23-26 and Impact on Camden Cultural Sector**

3.1 On 4<sup>th</sup> November Arts Council England announced details of its new national portfolio of funded organisations for 2023-26. £446 million will be distributed each year to a total of 990 organisations across the country. A key priority for Arts Council England was to redistribute funding outside of London as well increasing representation within the portfolio. The outcome of the Investment Programme is detailed below:

- Camden has 32 funded organisations in the borough with a combined investment of £10,539, 801.
- 5 organisations received increases
- 10 new organisations have been funded.

3.2 However there were significant losses to longstanding organisations in the borough, Donmar Warehouse, Hampstead Theatre and the newly arrived Gate Theatre receiving 100% funding cuts with Camden Arts Centre and English Dance Folk and Song Society receiving percentage cuts to their funding. In total this is a reduction of £2,063,270<sup>1</sup> to the national portfolio in Camden.

3.3 The borough has, however, seen 10 new organisations (five of which are diverse led organisations) join the portfolio bringing a combined investment of £1,822,910<sup>2</sup>. In addition, a total of £1,995,961<sup>3</sup> in uplifts to some currently funded organisation means, in total the net loss of funding in Camden of £67,319.

3.4 Whilst each organisation is exploring new operating/income models, they expressed that the loss/reduction of funding will directly impact their ability to deliver community and education programmes to Camden communities.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on Arts Council England Investment Programme 2023 – 2026 Figures

<sup>2</sup> Based on Arts Council England Investment Programme 2023 – 2026 Figures

<sup>3</sup> Based on Arts Council England Investment Programme 2023 – 2026 Figures

## 4. Sector Support

- 4.1 Following the Arts Council England Investment programme announcement along with the cost-of-living crisis, the Culture Service developed a series of interventions aimed to support the culture sector. These include the following:
- 4.2 **Culture Education Learning Support Fund** - In March 2023, Cabinet agreed to the establishment of a Cultural Education and Learning Support Fund to support the delivery of education and learning programmes. £300k has been ringfenced over three years to enable Camden-based cultural organisations to deliver cultural education and learning projects that promote engagement in free to access high-quality cultural experiences in the borough through grants of up to £25,000 cash per project. Round 1 opened in June 2023, the final round will open in January 2025.
- 4.3 **Deliberative Cultural Conversations** - Over the period April to July 23, the Culture Service curated four roundtable conversation to create space for collaborative thinking and ideation around the challenges the sector faces while providing opportunity to shape the development of a new long term collectively owned cultural vision for Camden. Delivered in partnership with Cultural Camden, the sessions looked at how the sector navigates the financial challenges, ways to grow the cultural and creative economy, nurturing skills for the future through participation and cultural and creative learning and exploring what a cultural vision for Camden look like over the next ten years. Representatives from 47 of the boroughs cultural organisations attended along with 13 year 12 students who attended the final session as part of their Science Technology Engineering the Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) Work Experience.
- 4.4 **Artist Network** - In February 2023 the Camden Artist Network and Database was launched. This is an ever-evolving 'register' of artists who live, study and/or work in Camden. There are currently 120 artists and creatives registered on the database and we continue to promote the network through Love Camden and other platforms on a rolling programme basis. In May we held the first artists network meeting at St Pancras Community Association, this was attended by 40 artists working in a range of creative practice and from diverse cultural backgrounds.

## 5. Learning and Development

- 5.1 **Camden Spark STEAM Work Experience Week** – Camden Spark is the borough's Cultural Education Partnership – an initiative bringing together schools and cultural organisations to ensure that all young people in Camden can access cultural experiences and creative careers. Supported by the Culture Service, Camden Spark delivered a week-long programme as part of the council's STEAM Work Experience week, in partnership with Ambassador Theatre Group, the Roundhouse, Camden Art Centre, Donmar Warehouse, Central Saint Martins, Bloomsbury Festival, and London Film School. The programme was designed to give 20 Year-12 students a better understanding of how cultural venues operate and how they can access the creative and cultural industries through education and training. The feedback from students was excellent, citing development of a range of valuable skills & learning over

the week along with increased confidence, suggesting their experiences during the week have had a transformative impact.

- 5.2 **Set Ready** – In February 2023 Film Fixer (the film office contract providers) delivered the Set Ready course, providing training and employment opportunity will see them gain skills in film location service. Upon completion of the training all cohort members are invited on paid placements with productions filming in the borough.
- 5.3 **Generator Project** – Film Fixer lead the Generator Project, highlighting research and recommendations for a more sustainable and eco-friendly approach for the Filming and Events industry. The Culture Service are working with colleagues in Air Quality team and have partnered with Film Fixer to embrace and encourage this journey. In February 2023 Film Fixer and the Culture Service hosted the second 'Clean Air: Power conference' which attracted over 70 people from the events and film location sectors to debate and progress this important agenda examining alternative energy solutions and current practice.

## 6. Cultural and Creative Economy

- 6.1 To date up to 300 artists, producers and curators have received paid opportunities across the programme. However, growing the cultural and creative economy is a new area of focus for the service which the teams will be exploring over the next 6-12 months.

## 7. Cultural Programme

- 7.1 The 2023 cultural programme has been developed to create projects and events which celebrate the boroughs heritage, uncover and platform hidden histories and explore the borough's future identity. At the heart of the programme has been the aim of bringing the community together through activations in the public realm, commissioning new work and developing a talent pipeline for the future. 2023 has been a year of significant milestones and which has provided an anchor to develop high quality cultural programming, exploring new partnerships with the community and cultural sector. Below is a list of key programmes delivered:
- 7.2 **Little Amal** - On Sunday 2nd April 2023, Little Amal came to Camden to celebrate with members of the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities in a year where the festivals of Passover, Easter and Ramadan coincide. Little Amal's Gathering was her first return to London since 2021 and was a welcoming celebration of London Borough of Camden's multiculturalism and an interfaith celebration. Delivered in collaboration with JW3, The Walk Productions, University of the Arts London, London Irish Centre, the Roundhouse, Argent and residents associations from Somers Town and Alexandra and Ainsworth estates, Little Amal met with 4200 residents throughout the day at JW3, Rowley Way, British Library, Somers Town (procession) and Granary Square. 192 artists were engaged in the design and delivery with 518 residents and community groups engaged in workshops. The

event ended with a community Iftar on Granary Square, delivered by the Ramadan Tent project with 1000 people participating.

**7.3 Community Festivals and Kings Coronation** – The Culture Service manage and distribute the Community Festivals Grants programme. This year, 57 community festivals received grants of up to £2,000 to deliver activities across the borough. The events team provide event management to ensure the events run safely and smoothly. On the 8<sup>th</sup> May the Culture Service led the borough's King's Coronation celebration event in partnership with St Giles, Lab Tech, Argent, and Waitrose. This included a barge trip for up to 120 volunteers and family members in recognition of their volunteering efforts across the borough, cultural entertainment at Labtech, St Giles and Granary Square as well as big lunch events and 32 coronation street parties, eight which were funded from the community festivals grants programme.

**7.4 Windrush 75 'The Homecoming'** - 22 June 2023 marked the 75 anniversary of the arrival of HMS Windrush in 1948. This was a significant milestone; it was the last chance to honour the living pioneers but to also open a wider public conversation about the past present and future of the UK. Throughout June the Culture Service delivered a programme which uncovered the boroughs Windrush story, this included:

- A partnership with the British Museum and Lin Kam Art to celebrate the sound system culture from the Windrush generation and highlight its significance as an integral part of British history. The day included a sound system take over on the lawn, DJ and dance workshops, performances, talks and film screening.
- The launch of the inaugural Pitt Lecture at the British Library in recognition of David Pitt, Baron of Hampstead. David Olusoga delivered a keynote speech reflecting on David Pitt's achievement, how it has changed society and how we take this legacy into the next 50 years, followed by an in conversation with David Olusoga and Darla-Jane Gilroy (daughter of Beryl Gilroy), chaired by Cllr. Francis, Cabinet Member for Young People and Culture.
- Camden Windrush Tales, delivered in partnership with Camden Black British History community hub, a three-part podcast series which explores the boroughs Windrush generation, past, present and future. The podcasts hosted by BBC 1Xtra Swarzy Macaly, feature interviews with 12 Windrush descendants, community leaders, activists and experts to explore the history of the Windrush generation, the injustices they faced, and their ongoing struggles for justice. Throughout July the podcasts toured across the libraries and will have a permanent home in the borough archives.

- Kentish Town Library hosted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra musicians and legendary Trojan Records guitarist Trevor Brown to compose a new piece for Windrush, performed as part of a free Windrush celebration concert along with a workshop.
- Private View Of The Claudia Jones exhibition, curated by the Arts Development team, the exhibition which celebrates Claudia Jones life and work from her early years in New York to her death in Camden in 1964 was unveiled at the Town Hall in the Claudia Jones room.
- The council raised the Windrush Flag on the 22 June at the Town Hall and Crowndale for one day in honour of Camden's Windrush generation whose contributions changed the face of multiculturalism in the UK
- The Caribbean Front room became a powerful symbol of unity and community, a space where people gathered, shared stories, and upheld their cultural traditions. In partnership with Camden Black British History Community Hub in Kentish Town, the Culture Service curated an installation of the Caribbean front room, inviting the public to reminisce and celebrate the crucial role it played in bringing the Windrush community together.
- The Homecoming Celebration at Talacre Town Green on Sunday 25 June, a family event celebrating the boroughs collective Windrush story and showcasing Camden's Caribbean heritage and communities. The first time the council has delivered a community festival of this scale, the location of Talacre Town Green was significant because Camden's Windrush pioneers settled in Kentish Town in the 60' and 70's and Jerry Williams, Camden's first Black Mayor, was instrumental in securing Talacre Town Green as public open space. This was the flagship event of the programme, attracting an audience of up to 2000 throughout the day.

7.5 The Windrush 75 programme was the first time the council has delivered a Windrush programme of this scale and visibility. The programme has been positively received by the community attracting a minimum audience of 6000 with an average of 70 paid opportunities for artists, producers and young people.

7.6 **Pride Activation** - The events team supported the delivery and programming of the Pride Family Zone on July 1<sup>st</sup> in London day. The location was St Giles Gardens, and the activations included a face painter, Drag Queen story tellers and musical entertainment which complimented the stall holders, workshops, and other activities. This event has grown in status and popularity, with 2023 being the largest attendance count as over 2000 children, carers and parents enjoyed the day. The events team also produced a welcome to London



activation 'We Make Camden Proud' with a saxophone player and face painter positioned outside of Kings Cross and St Pancras station. Over 50 Camden Council colleagues and family members marched shoulder to shoulder in support of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer (LGBTQ+) equality on behalf of Camden.

7.7 **NHS 75 'Who Cares For Camden'** – To celebrate the achievements and contributions of the NHS and their staff, the Council partnered with photographer Rankin Creative, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (UCLH), London Metropolitan University, the London Irish Centre and Outernet London, to create a photo exhibition of the diverse communities in Camden who have worked or currently work for the NHS. Titled 'Who Cares for Camden?', the exhibition explored the different forms of care, including who gives care, what it means to care, what motivates people to help others, and how communities can care for the NHS. Over 100 members of staff from across UCLH applied to participate in the project with 20 selected by UCLH staff (with support from the arts team). The photo shoot took place at Rankin Studios where oral histories were also recorded. The images and audio have been made into a six-minute visual installation. The exhibition was hosted at Outernet in Tottenham Court Road, home to the largest digital exhibition space in Europe from the 4-9 July attracting an audience of 200k. The exhibition will have a permanent home on the Camden Peoples Museum later this year.

7.8 **South Asian Heritage Month 'Stories To Tell'**– Taking place between Monday 18 July - Wednesday 17 August 2023, the month is an opportunity to celebrate the impact and contributions made by South Asian cultures and commemorate South Asian history in the UK. 2023 was first year of a public facing cultural programme which has been delivered in partnership with cultural organisations and the community. Over the weekend 1850 attended the following events which celebrated the boroughs South Asian communities through the following:

- An evening of poetry with the Daytimers' Mehfil a collective that uses parties and much more to change perceptions of South Asian communities across the UK
- Regents Roots a one-day festival taking place in the streets and open spaces of the Regent's Park Estate surrounding Old Diorama Arts Centre (ODAC). The culture service commissioned two dance performances, 'Pravaas' from Camden based Akademi Dance, a promenade performance inspired by the climate migration of people from the Sundarbans across India and Bangladesh was commissioned for the festival and ODAC's 'Through our eyes!', performed by young people which shared personal histories across generations from South Asian countries, through storytelling, poetry, dance and music

- Kilburn based Other Cinemas to deliver a short film exhibition at P21 Gallery on Charlton Street. Films from all over South Asia will be shown continuously from noon to 6pm at the gallery. The festival concludes with a stimulating panel discussion featuring the filmmakers, followed by an engaging evening networking session.
- 7.9 **World Cup Football Finals Screening** – The Culture Service led on the organisation and delivery of the screening of the England vs Spain World Cup Football Finals on Sunday 20 August. The screening took place on Talace Road where up to 300 residents came out to watch and enjoy the match.
- 7.10 **Inverness Street Block Party** - Launching the 2023 Block Party with the 50th Anniversary of Hip Hop culture, the culture service presented an exciting and engaging one day family friendly event to celebrate, educate and reflect on the impact of hip hop culture over the last 50 years and its roots in Camden. Camden based Mandala Productions worked with the Culture Service on the curation and delivery of the event which set out to celebrate the boroughs history. Up to 800 people experienced the event with a constant 300 at anyone time.
- 7.11 **Re-presenting Bloomsbury** - A pilot project to test Camden’s approach to interpreting sensitive and contested heritage stories. The project comprises independent research into the biographies of Noor Inayat Khan (Gordon Square Gardens), Bertrand Russell (Red Lion Square), and Virginia Woolf (Tavistock Square). 130 residents came together with historians and curators to explore the lives of these individuals and make a meaningful creative response. This interpretation will be available to visitors through QR codes. In addition, the Camden Peoples Museum website is being developed. Due to launch this autumn (October) it will provide a ‘home’ where visitors of the website will be able to access our research and work to represent individuals memorialised through statues, the Camden Art Collection, Who Cares for Camden exhibition and works commissioned through the Camden Alive programme.
- 7.12 **Black History Season** – Camden’s Black History programme will run from October to December 2023. This year’s themes are ‘Black Resistance’ and ‘Saluting Our Sisters’, Camden will explore this through poetry, workshops and performances which shine a spotlight on the boroughs activists, changemakers, leaders and communities.
- 7.13 **Light Up Camden** - Light Up Camden is an ambitious spectacle event that will transform the dark winter evenings and animate the public realm with a trail of illuminated, engaging, and playful light-based artworks. Planned for 2024, the Culture Service are developing a programme which will bring artists, producers, residents and community groups together to create and influence the artwork in the public realm.

## **8. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services**

- 8.1 The report provides an update on the vision of the service and the development and delivery of the culture programme within the borough. It highlights impacts from the Arts Council Investment Programme 23-26 and Camden's response to this.
- 8.2 The funding of £300k as agreed by Cabinet for the Cultural Education and Learning Support Fund set out in section 4 has been identified and is available for drawdown when required.
- 8.3 No significant financial implications are expected for the Council from this report.

## **9. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor**

- 9.1 Legal Services have been consulted and have no specific comments.

## **10. Environmental Implications**

- 10.1 There are no environmental impacts arising directly from this report.

**REPORT ENDS**