

**REPORT OF THE ACTING CORPORATE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN, FAMILIES
AND CULTURAL SERVICES****ARTS SERVICE – CERAMICS PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT****Purpose of the Report**

1. This report follows the options for change approved by Full Council in February 2015 and Committee is asked to give approval for a formal partnership agreement to be developed and agreed with the Harley Foundation Charitable Trust to be custodians of the ceramics collection on behalf of the County Council and to receive surplus ceramics studio equipment to continue the provision of ceramic workshops available to the public.

Information and advice

2. The options for change outlined changes to the Arts service to meet the financial reductions required by the Council.
3. The residual arts function with a staff of 2.5 fte will be imbedded within the Libraries and Archives service and will be included within the Council contracting arrangements with the new arm's length operating model for Libraries, Archives and Learning, due to go live in April 2016.
4. The current arts provision and programming at Rufford Craft Centre will cease in July 2015. Alternative ceramics provision as outlined in this report will be supplemented by a range of Arts programming across Libraries (including the Big Draw), the continuation of the annual Earth and Fire Ceramics Fair at Rufford Country Park and the continuation of the rural touring programme 'Village Ventures'. Surplus spaces will be considered within the future development plan for Rufford Country Park which will be the subject of a report to Culture Committee in July.
5. The future service will focus on providing:
 - an advisory and grant seeking function for the arts
 - commissioning the rural touring programme
 - engaging young people and those with lower levels of participation to take full advantage of arts and cultural opportunities
 - supporting external programmes and fund raising
 - supporting the integrated cultural and learning programme within the new arm's length body for libraries.

6. There are also a number of key actions required to ensure that in addition to the ongoing work directly provided a legacy is established for other current arts activity.
7. The County Council is the custodian of an extensive collection of studio pottery which has been donated, and in some cases bequeathed, to the County Council over the past 15 years. To ensure the collection is curated properly and made accessible for artists and the public to view, it is proposed that:
 - an online catalogue with appropriate details be created and made public
 - an appropriate partnership be established with the Harley Foundation Charitable Trust to be custodians of the collection and facilitate public viewing.
8. This approach maintains the integrity of the collection, reduces risk to the loss of access to the collection and places it within a professional arts environment. It also enables the County Council to maintain its ownership of the collection.
9. Ceramic provision is becoming rarer across the country. As an art form ceramics is resource heavy, requiring specialist equipment, storage, cleaning, and ventilation and is subject to numerous Health & Safety regulations. It also involves an extended making process which includes making, drying, firing, glazing and re-firing over several days.
10. Ceramics is also a dirty activity; once a room is used for clay it limits other use as it never becomes completely dust free. In financially difficult times these requirements have resulted in the number of public facilities reducing across the country and access to ceramics shrinking significantly.
11. In order not to lose this specialist provision in Nottinghamshire, an option is to move ceramics learning programme activity and surplus equipment by developing a partnership with the Harley Gallery, which is part of the Harley Foundation Charitable Trust, based at the Welbeck Estate near Worksop.
12. The Harley Foundation has an existing community and schools outreach programme which specialises in visual arts and crafts but this programme does not offer ceramics due to a lack of accessible specialised workshop space. Working with the County Council would enable the foundation to expand their programme and provide Nottinghamshire people with ongoing access to ceramic courses and equipment.
13. The Foundation has identified a large studio space within their artist workshop complex which they would make available to develop an open access ceramic studio and further develop the work previously undertaken at Rufford Craft Centre.

Other Options Considered

14. A cessation of activity and investigation of other potential partners have both been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

15. The recommendations enable the Council to maintain and support ongoing arts related activity whilst making required budget savings.

16. The potential partner is uniquely placed geographically and with the ceramics arts sector to enable sustainable legacy arrangements to be established within the required time frame.

Statutory and Policy Implications

17. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

18. The costs associated with the curation and transfer of the ceramics collection and related workshop equipment has been budgeted for within the 2015/2016 Arts service revenue budget.

Public Sector Equality Duty Implications

19. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the options for change Arts service and is available as a background paper.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That Committee approval is given for a formal partnership agreement to be developed and agreed with the Harley Foundation Charitable Trust to be custodians of the ceramics collection on behalf of the County Council and to receive surplus ceramics equipment to extend the provision of ceramic workshops available to the public.

Derek Higton

Acting Corporate Director, Children, Families and Cultural Services

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Peter Gaw

Group Manager, Libraries, Archives, Information and Learning Services

T: 0115 9774201

E: peter.gaw@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (SLB 11/05/15)

20. Culture Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (CDS 18/05/15)

21. The financial implications of the report are set out in paragraph 18 above.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Annual budget report 2015/16 - options for change – report to Full Council on 26 February 2015

Equality Impact Assessment

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0617