

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	21 st June 2021
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Learning and Culture
Report Title:	Consideration of the responses to the Arts Consultation, and subsequent recommendations
Purpose of Report:	For Cabinet to consider the responses to the Consultation and the proposed actions as a result of feedback received
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Arts and Culture
Responsible Officer:	Paula Ham, Director of Learning and Skills
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Trevor Baker, Head of Strategy, Community Learning and Resources
Policy Framework:	The recommendations of this report are within existing policy frameworks and budget.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report has been prepared following the Arts Consultation carried out between 3rd February and 23rd March 2020. • The report provides background information on the results of the Consultation. • The report requests that the recommendations outlined, based on the Consultation results and the requirements within the Arts sector as we emerge from the easing of Welsh Government's Coronavirus restrictions, are approved. 	

Recommendations

1. That the Vale of Glamorgan Arts and Culture service focus its resources to assist local arts organisations to recover from the impact of the pandemic and the restrictions imposed.
2. That a programme of exhibits and events be developed between the Arts Central Gallery and the Penarth Pier Pavilion, including implementation of any opportunities for income generation to support the sustainability of the venues and their programmes.
3. In line with recommendations 1 & 2 above, an options appraisal be developed to evaluate a new operating model for the Arts and Culture service and review the implications to the Arts and Culture Strategy.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To support the Council's and the community's recovery from the pandemic, reflecting the Council's four Wellbeing Objectives as outlined in the Annual Development Plan.
2. To ensure economies of scale, a diverse programme of events and exhibits to be showcased across the Vale, and to promote and support community engagement to build best practice, promoting the strengths and diversity available across the Vale.
3. To reflect the emerging themes and comments received following the Consultation and to ensure the current strategic aims and objectives reflect the current climate and are achievable in the long-term.

1. Background

- 1.1 On 20th of January 2020 Cabinet approved a review of the Arts service. It was agreed that the review would include a Consultation on how this service is delivered in the future, and was broken down into three themes:
 - Meeting the objectives of the Vale's Arts Strategy "Arts and Culture: An Aspirational and Culturally Vibrant Vale"
 - Ensuring that the service is sustainable and cost neutral to the Council
 - Identifying potential future uses of Arts Central Gallery
- 1.2 The Consultation ran from Monday 3 February 2020 until Monday 23 March 2020, with key stakeholders being invited to respond. A dedicated Consultation page was set up on the Council's website, which set out the background for the Consultation, the three elements to be considered, and how consultees could respond to the Consultation.
- 1.3 Responses could be submitted via an online survey, with hard copies available from libraries and the Arts Central Gallery. Stakeholders were also invited to submit their views in writing to the Council. Some stakeholders such as the

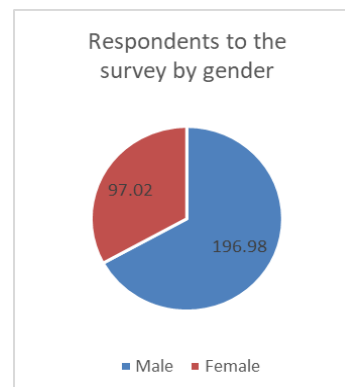
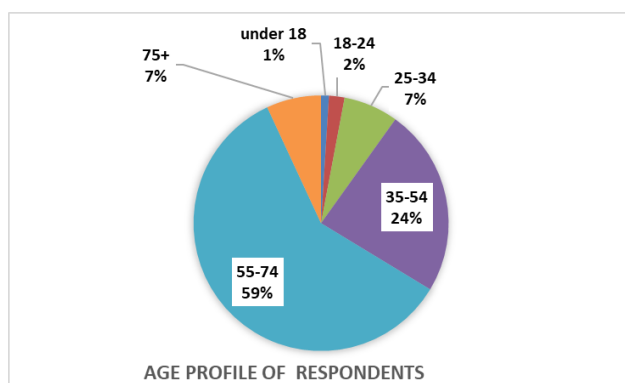
50+Forum and Friends of Arts Central Gallery were informed of the Consultation at meetings held with these stakeholders.

- 1.4 On 13 February 2020, the consultation was reported to Scrutiny Committee Learning & Culture Scrutiny.
- 1.5 Over 300 responses were received to the Consultation, the majority of which were responses via the online survey (294 in total).

2. Key Issues for Consideration

Results and relevant themes of the survey

- 2.1 The Consultation yielded a total of 300 responses, the vast majority of which were received via an online survey (294). An overall demographic profile of respondents is below.



- 2.2 All written submissions and further details from the survey are available in the links provided at the end of this report.

Engagement

- 2.3 Consultees stated that they engaged with the arts in a variety of different ways including music events, creative crafts, and workshops. They also attended these events at different locations, including events held outside of the Vale. These types of events have not necessarily formed a major part of the arts offer from the service in the past and the opportunities for music and theatre performances at the Gallery, the Penarth Pier Pavilion and other venues across the Vale may engage a wider range of service users from outside of the traditional gallery patrons and generate increased interest from young people. As a result, the service will seek to establish a broader programme of performance arts across the county to complement the existing gallery exhibitions when restrictions permit.

Marketing

- 2.4 Consultees to the survey identified a need to improve on the marketing and promotion of events. This was also highlighted at Scrutiny Committee Learning & Culture where Members commented on their own personal experiences in encountering difficulties finding relevant information about events and

exhibitions. It is recognised that the service needs to strengthen its collaboration with the Council's Communications Team and identify the necessary expertise to develop a marketing plan that capitalises on the wide range of information platforms now available, in a structured and timely way. The development of a recognisable brand for the Vale Arts and Culture service would also help residents of all ages to engage with the arts programme more easily. The 'brand' could be designed by an open invitation to schools and youth services to submit ideas by way of a further engagement activity.

Income Generation

- 2.5 The vast majority of consultees who responded (82%) would prefer the Council to look to generate additional income. A number of suggestions were received, including entry fees for events, a donations box, and a café. 76% of respondents stated they pay typically between £5-£20 to attend specialist arts events facilitated by third parties. A programme of monthly arts events, including music and dance that appeal to different age groups with a flexible pricing policy could become self-funding and potentially generate a surplus income.
- 2.6 Currently no entrance fees are charged for the gallery and no booking or ticket fees are in place for exhibition launches and events. For example, if a £5.00 fee was introduced for attendance at exhibition launches where there are often 60+ guests in attendance, this would generate a surplus income of £300+ at up to 10 launches per year. Consultees also stated that the opportunity for income generation would be increased if artists workshops, lectures, art classes and other events were to take place at the same time as exhibitions e.g. If there were 5 x 2 hour room hire sessions during a week with a fee of £20 per hour, then the gallery could generate £200 per week in income, increase footfall, and potentially increase sales for artists, and the gallery's commission.
- 2.7 Pre-Covid-19, revenue generation via room bookings, workshops, art classes, and lectures was in the region of £1,200 per annum (£1,202 in 2019/20). At this time there was a clear separation between these events and gallery exhibitions, which severely restricted the ability to generate income. Going forward, the potential to generate income at events and exhibitions, it is proposed, should be combined in order to maximise income opportunities.
- 2.8 Based on annual pre-Covid-19 visitor numbers of 12,500 at Arts Central Gallery, additional income could be generated if a small fee were charged. However, this would create a further barrier to engaging with the arts and would need to be balanced against room hire bookings and running events or workshops while exhibitions are taking place which, has greater potential for income generation and permits greater accessibility to the gallery space.
- 2.9 A preferable option suggested by consultees would be to have a donations box with a suggested donation price giving those that can and wish to make a donation, the opportunity without penalising those that cannot. A suggested

donation of £2.00 per visitor could for example generate £6,000+ if for example, half of the visitors attending were to contribute.

- 2.10 The charges above are for illustrative purposes and a comprehensive schedule of charges covering both the Arts Central Gallery and the Penarth Pier Pavilion is currently being developed for Cabinet to consider. Although these measures would help manage sustainability, the Arts and Culture service would still need to consider additional revenue streams.
- 2.11 One further opportunity is the introduction of a café on site, offering additional services to patrons, via a profit-sharing arrangement, creating an additional revenue income stream for Arts Central. This model has recently been successfully implemented at the Penarth Pier Pavilion and has been an enabler in widening access to artistic works as it also provides additional footfall into the space to engage with the arts.

The Arts Central Gallery Space

- 2.12 Arts Central Gallery is in a desirable location on King Square in Barry and comprises a very large space, approximately 244m square. The majority of comments (92%) were in support of keeping Arts Central Gallery as an arts venue in Barry. All respondents were in favour of keeping the gallery for the benefit of Vale residents and emphasised the benefits the arts bring to people's wellbeing. In addition to all the survey responses, the Council received 7 written responses. All of these respondents were in favour of keeping Arts Central gallery.
- 2.13 Respondents felt that there needs to be a far more flexible use of the space available within the Arts Central Gallery, and performance and income generating events must be run alongside traditional wall mounted exhibitions. In addition to the successful café model at Penarth Pier Pavilion which could be implemented at the Arts Central Gallery, there is an opportunity for exploring greater integration with the library service to increase exposure and accessibility to the arts, its services and events, and aiming to replicate the library service's success in digital broadcasting for events, to engage with a wider audience. This year, a new MakerSpace is being launched at the Penarth Library, providing new mechanisms for artistic expression including music, film, design and 3D printing. The links between this and the gallery spaces within the Vale will be further developed as a facilitated opportunity for makers to display their created works to the public.

Public Speakers

- 2.14 The Consultation was considered at a meeting of the Council's Learning & Culture Scrutiny Committee on 13 February 2020. The minutes from the meeting reflect the nature of the discussion as well as the feedback from members of the public who had registered to speak. The minutes also reference a report by Unison which was tabled at the meeting. The link to this report and all written submissions can be found in the background papers.
- 2.15 Seven speakers spoke of their concerns and hopes for the Arts & Culture Service on a variety of topics including:

- The financial element of the consultation.
 - The contribution arts will play in the new curriculum and the need for the service to work more closely with schools.
 - The formation of a management group for the gallery and greater involvement by arts and community groups in the running of the gallery.
 - The role the Arts Central Friends (ACF) Group could play in future developments. A copy of the Friends' detailed written submission can be found in the background papers.
- 2.16 Historically the ACF have made a significant contribution to the gallery and influenced the arts in the Vale for many years. This form of collaboration provides an example of how an alternative partnership delivery model could work in future, where external knowledge of contacts across the region could be utilised to re-engage the community and maximise income generation opportunities.
- 2.17 Scrutiny Committee, Learning and Culture recommended that it support the future use of Art Central and an approach which develops and enhances the facility to deliver a multi-use art space.

Implications due to the COVID-19 pandemic

- 2.18 Since the Consultation was undertaken, the Covid-19 pandemic and WG restrictions meant the gallery had to close, and the redeployment of service resources to other priority areas, resulting in a delay to the Consultation response, and actions associated with the recommendations outlined above.
- 2.19 The pandemic has changed the way many people view the arts and there is now far more recognition of the impact of the arts on our general wellbeing, with communities and individuals having to deal with isolation since March 2020. The Wales Art, Health and Wellbeing Network highlighted that the arts sector will play a key role in in the post pandemic recovery by:
- Fulfilling its core artistic purpose and offering entertainment and opportunities for collective social gathering and shared experiences.
 - Prioritising the health and wellbeing of our people and future generations by combating isolation and mental health problems, enriching the lives of children within and beyond formal education settings, enhancing skills and energising communities.
 - By helping people in a diverse and often divided society to understand each other.
 - By responding energetically and creatively to the urgent needs of our society.
- 2.20 As we emerge from lockdown and an easing of restrictions, the Council seeks to re-engage with the public, the Arts Central Gallery has re-opened and welcomed visitors by appointment. The further lifting of restrictions will now see the gallery reopening to a managed number of visitors as it helps to raise public confidence through events, exhibitions, and public performances. In the short term there will

be an extended viewing of the current Women's Arts Association Wales exhibition, followed by an exhibition of many of the works from the online digital exhibition 'Arts in Isolation'. The digital version of this exhibition will be shown as an on-screen projection for visitors to the Penarth Pier Pavilion and in Arts Central Gallery.

2.21 The Arts Central Gallery was closed in line with WG Health Protection regulations following the first lockdown apart from a brief week when it was used as a Covid-19 testing station. During this extended closure of the gallery the service focused on other aspects of the service including:

- 1) Working to help develop the numerous public arts projects across the county, carrying out on-line consultations and developing commissions with artists.
 - Paget Road Seating areas development project with artists.
 - Arcot Triangle - Installing artworks in a few weeks time. Developed from a community engagement project (artist David Mackie).
 - Dingle Park - schools engagement project underway (artist David Mackie).
 - Penarth Cliff top Shelter - artist brief in progress for tender. Initial community consultation completed.
 - Dinas Powys - Basketball Park . Community consultation & artist brief.
 - 11 other public arts projects across the Vale with external arts consultants all ongoing and at different stages.
- 2) Facilitating a major online exhibition 'Arts in Isolation' which received over 100 submissions and can be viewed on the Council's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dKYskH5jXw> or as a digital display at the Penarth Pier Pavilion.
- 3) Development of a large Arts Council for Wales 'Connect and Flourish' funding bid for £124,000 in partnership with several independent local arts organisations. This project will help us to bring together community groups and professionals as partners from across the Vale both on and off-stage, providing a creative focus to harness the disparate and often competing agendas. Placing a spotlight on the Vale of Glamorgan's home-grown creative talent, this project draws on the diversity of tourists, visitors residents, and engaging community arts organisations, enthusiasts, business and freelancers in a summer carnivalesque celebration culminating in outdoor productions.
- 4) Helping to evaluate submissions and distribute Creative Freelancer Grants from the Wales Cultural Recovery Fund during lockdown. A second tranche of Freelancer grant funding commenced on the 17th of May and closes on the 1st of June.

2.22 Whilst many of the respondents focused on the Gallery during the consultation there is clearly far more to the Arts & Culture Service as a whole. Developing the role of the service as a facilitator for the multitude of arts organisations that already exist in the Vale and help them to return to full activity will be a priority

over the next year. The focus for the service must now be on promoting and aligning each organisation's activity to complement each other and work in partnership, and to provide support for these organisations to capitalise on the funding opportunities that will emerge in post pandemic Wales e.g. the 'Cultural Recovery Fund' by:

- Creating a post-pandemic database of arts and craft organisations in the Vale of Glamorgan and their current needs and status. This is in order to establish common support and funding requirements and feedback these needs to The Arts Council and Welsh Government so that future funding schemes can be effective.
 - Developing a forum for collaboration and co-operation to best take advantage of funding, joint working and marketing opportunities as they arise.
 - Exhibiting and promoting the work of these local organisations wherever possible even as co-exhibitors to more established artists exhibitions and project the arts sector in the Vale as one united body.
- 2.23 The Arts Central Gallery is clearly important to those who responded to the Consultation. Respondents stressed the importance of the Arts Central Gallery and that it should therefore be retained by the Council while longer term plans for more community involvement are developed. With the Penarth Pier Pavilion, another much loved building, now being managed by the Vale of Glamorgan Council, it will be important to align the activities of both these venues and mirror the income generation opportunities already being introduced at the Pier, such as weddings, film screenings and a café. The sharing of exhibitions, performances, events and workshops with a planned complimentary programme and joint marketing will make better use of the very limited resources that the service has at its disposal and the commissioning of some elements of the programme to existing local arts organisations or freelance artists will help to draw the sector together in the Vale.

Funding Considerations and Alternative Delivery Models

- 2.24 The Consultation was undertaken in part to ensure the service was sustainable for the Council going forward, under increasing financial pressures. Therefore, consideration must be given to alternative service delivery models and funding streams.
- 2.25 Alternative delivery models that will need to be considered include establishing a trust to manage the arts in the County. This is a fairly common practice across the country and often includes the grouping together of compatible services to form a viable organisation with a large enough turn over to be sustainable. For example, in 2015 Bridgend County Borough Council set up the Awen Cultural Trust to manage the delivery of parks, playing fields, leisure centres, libraries, adult education and the arts. Other examples in Wales include Blaenau Gwent and Flintshire, and further afield include Devon and Wigan. Fact finding visits to some of these Trusts were curtailed by the pandemic but may soon be possible if numbers remain low.

- 2.26 There is of course a local model that should not be overlooked in the Community Libraries initiative that has seen support for local communities to run local library services, including the provision of book stock and peripatetic librarians. This model has been running successfully for several years in the Vale. The development of these organisations started with establishing management/working groups, then developing the individual vision of that group for their library. This helped each Group to develop a constitution and legal status that best fitted their aims and ambitions with some becoming trusts and other PLCs. The management group members then went on to become trustees or directors.
- 2.27 The third alternative to be explored is to establish a commissioning model where arts programmes, projects and events are undertaken by public arts organisations on a contract basis as currently happens with much of the section 106 public arts funding.
- 2.28 Other funding streams have recently come into play and others may have a changed focus due to the impact of the pandemic on the arts. In many cases organisations are required to have trust status to qualify for these funds. these funding streams include:
- The recently launched UK Community Renewal Fund and the proposed UK Shared Prosperity Fund
 - Arts recovery funding streams (post-pandemic)
 - UK Community Ownership Fund which is in support of the social wellbeing of local communities and will fund local communities to take over the running of buildings and services.
 - Other external funding streams also available from the Museums, Archives and Libraries Division of Welsh Government (MALD), the Federation of Museums and Art Galleries Wales, National Lottery Heritage Fund and The Community Fund.
- 2.29 The starting point for exploring these alternative delivery models is to form a management working group to investigate and scrutinise each of these models and identify the right 'fit' for the Vale Arts Service. An options appraisal considering a number of target operating models will then be presented to Cabinet for consideration in due course.
- 2.30 There are few funding opportunities available from Welsh Government to support Council managed arts facilities. However, as demonstrated by the recent Connect and Flourish bid the service can work with and support independent arts organisations and sector collaborations to draw down funding for the arts in the Vale. These bids can include funding for the use of Arts Central Gallery, the Pier Pavilion and other local arts venues.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1 The Culture and Community Learning Service identify historic, heritage and art & cultural places throughout the Vale which contribute to a safer place to be, and also provides the opportunity for long-term inclusive access to this information for both residents and visitors to the area.
- 3.2 Digital archives of historic, heritage and cultural information would be environmentally beneficial to the Vale of Glamorgan. Promotion of local historic opportunities can contribute to cultural tourism and in turn increase economic benefit through visitor attraction and sustainable practice.
- 3.3 The promotion and marketing of cultural, heritage, tourism and arts opportunities promoted under one branded umbrella contributes to the culturally vibrant experiences available in the Vale.
- 3.4 Engaging residents and visitors alike in experiencing the arts and live cultural learning experiences and opportunities, impacts upon and contributes to individuals' mental and physical health and wellbeing, promoting an active, inclusive, healthy Vale.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1 There are no financial considerations arising from this report.

Employment

- 4.2 There are no employment considerations arising from this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.3 There are no legal considerations arising from this report.

5. Background Papers

Arts consultation full report and written responses

<https://sway.office.com/l6KMTQWDfgrT7ewV>

Arts Strategy

https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Cabinet/2018/18-03-05/Reports/updated-15-02-18-Cabinet-Report-Arts-Strategy-2018-Final.pdf