

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

meeting date: 28 MAY 2024
title: CONTEMPORARY ARTS EXHIBITION – GRANT REQUEST
submitted by: ADAM ALLEN DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: MARK BEVERIDGE HEAD OF CULTURAL AND LEISURE SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To ask Committee to help support the running of the 2024 Clitheroe Contemporary Festival by awarding a further grant of £3,000.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives – Creating flourishing, healthy, and happy communities.
- Other – Sustaining a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 After a successful first year of creating a new Arts Festival for Clitheroe in 2023, Clitheroe Contemporary (CC) are developing its second year of activity. Last year's inaugural festival was solely based in Clitheroe and brought several of the local galleries together, in addition to showcasing a range of artists at venue such as the Atrium at the Castle Museum.

2.2 This year as well as building upon the work from 2023, the festival is reaching out to the surrounding villages encouraging arts activity within their smaller communities prior to the festival that will contribute to the larger central event in June 2024.

2.3 This Council has already agreed a Culture and Recreation Grant of £1,000 to support the running of this year's festival, approved at your March meeting.

2.4 The main June Festival will host a weekend of arts activity within Clitheroe. A multi venue display will host the Festival Hub at Holmes Mill, plus the Clitheroe Contemporary Open Exhibition will be shown around the town in different venues.

2.5 A Plein Air art competition will also invite artists to create new pieces of work live throughout the weekend & the culmination of the week will be a grand finale awards event.

2.6 There is a strong desire to grow on the success of the first year's event increasing the participation numbers of people directly involved e.g

- Artists - entering the open exhibition, featuring in curated shows, delivering workshops. Community - taking part in arts workshops, joining in the plein air competition.
- Increase the visitor numbers to the festival.
- Increase income opportunities for artists.
- Support Ribble Valley communities to develop and deliver arts activity for their residents.

2.7 Exhibitions across Ribble Valley in pop up galleries will serve to support the careers of emerging artists whilst raising the Ribble Valley's profile & lending an economic boost to its community, leisure & hospitality trade. Professional artists will work with our

communities demystifying the creative arts as an elitist endeavour & encouraging them to pursue their creative ambitions. The aim being that a collective effort can help fire the imaginations of everyone, young and old, and especially those who might otherwise not experience art. The aims of the festival are provided in the appendix to this report.

3 ISSUES

3.1 The project is seeking to cover the costs of running the festival through crowdfunding via the LCC Lancashire Culture & Sport Fund, plus raise funding via corporate and public donations.

3.2 The budget for the festival this year is £27,889, at the present time the organisers are concerned they may be up to £6,000 short of their target, which will mean they will not satisfy the criteria for the LCC fund. If that element of funding is lost it will prevent the festival from building upon the success of last year's event and organisers will have to scale back the ambitions for this year, potentially impacting the future of the event itself.

4 PROPOSAL

4.1 The Council Arts Development Officer provided around 50 hours of assistance to the event last year, which along with other help, could be used as match funding. It is proposed that officer helps again this year, for which the organisers are grateful.

4.2 A request for further financial assistance has been made for the festival and it is proposed to offer a further grant of £3,000 which could be met from the arts development budget to part cover the potential shortfall in the crowdfunding appeal. However, this is not something which was anticipated at the start of the year for a budget which already earmarked to be used as match funding for the Council's Arts Council bid.

4.3 Therefore, the proposal, if Members were to agree, is to fund a further grant of £3,000 from the Council's Arts Development budget and then seek Policy and Finance Committee approval for funding to reimburse the Arts Development Budget. Ideally, Policy and Finance approval for the further grant would be sought before the festival, however the timing of the meeting (18 June 2024) does not fall in line with the deadline for the LCC crowdfunding fund.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Art & culture can energise communities, inform thinking & inspire change. The aim of the festival is for it to be an open to all, volunteer led festival that will generate a sense of inclusion & optimism in an area where, despite wealth there is also need.

5.2 Last year's survey of visitors revealed a strong demand for more arts events amongst the community and its visitors. This year's festival supports the RVBC's Arts Development plan to explore what individual places need, tailoring arts activity directly for each village, ward, town.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications.

- Resources – The Arts Development budget can cover a further grant of £3,000, however, if additional funding for that budget was not agreed from Policy and

Finance it would delay the Council submitting the Arts Council bid previously proposed at this Committee by one year.

- Technical, Environmental and Legal – There are existing grant criteria under which any funding offer provided could be made.
- Political – No implications identified.
- Reputation – The Council is known for supporting a range of organisations and individuals through the grant schemes it operates, this festival can add to the area's arts scene.
- Equality & Diversity – One of the festival aims is inclusivity.

6 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

- 6.1 Approve the use of the arts development budget to support the Clitheroe Cotemporary Festival for a further grant of £3,000 for the 2024 edition.
- 6.2 If agreed ask Policy and Finance Committee to provide a sum to the Arts Development Budget equal to the support given to the festival.

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ADAM ALLEN
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS – None

For further information please ask for Mark Beveridge, extension 4479.

APPENDIX 1

Clitheroe Contemporary is a Not for Profit Organisation set up with the aims to:

- To promote the work of local, national, and international artists in Clitheroe and the Ribble Valley.
- To work in co-operation with Ribble Valley Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and other partner agencies and service providers to achieve our aims and objectives.
- To foster community-wide access to and appreciation of the arts.
- To demonstrate that the arts can enrich lives and communities.
- To demystify the creative arts as elitist endeavour.
- To provide insight into the working lives of artists and how the arts are funded.
- To contribute to decisions which affect the creative arts locally, where possible.
- To raise funds and apply for grants and external funding.
- To foster and promote the inclusion of schools and community groups in preparing for and participating in festival events and legacy initiatives.
- To actively engage with schools and the local community to identify those projects and activities they would like to see provided at the festival and as enduring programs between festivals.
- To establish Clitheroe Contemporary as an annual event
- To provide a channel for feedback from members of the community.