

**CONTINUATION OF HOSTING ARRANGEMENT FOR RURAL TOURING
SCHEME (ARTS OUT WEST) COORDINATOR.**

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Deputy Leader Cllr George Clements / Portfolio Holder
Cllr Hugh Branney.

LEAD OFFICER: Keith Parker, Head of Leisure and Environmental
Services.

REPORT AUTHOR: Cath Coombs, Cultural Services Manager / Peter
Tyas, Senior Cultural Services Officer

Summary and Recommendation:

The Arts Council have made a grant offer of £31,310 to support the employment of the Arts out West coordinator post for an additional 12 months until September 2008.

It is recommended:

- (a) That the Council accept this grant which will ensure the post continues for the next twelve months.
- (b) That the arts service continue to fundraise to secure the medium term financial stability of Arts Out West and the delivery of the three year business plan.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Arts out West (previously known as the rural touring scheme) enables the delivery of artistic performances such as theatre, drama and dance to rural communities in the Copeland, Allerdale and Barrow districts. Copeland Borough Council currently hosts the Arts out West coordinator post within the Cultural Services Department. The budget for the project is ring-fenced and self contained outside of the Council's Revenue budget.

1.2 Copeland BC, as the host agency, was awarded a grant of £54,055 in 2005 for the development and expansion of the rural touring scheme over a two year period. This grant enabled the scheme to take on the full time co-coordinator and to develop additional work areas in partnership with Copeland, Allerdale and Barrow Borough Council's arts services. The scheme was re-branded Arts out West and a new business plan was developed. Partner support was also received from Cumbria County Council (£14,000 per annum); Allerdale

Borough Council (£5,000 per annum) and Barrow Borough Council (£750 per annum).

1.3 Since 2005 Arts out West has grown in scale and scope by developing new partnerships with schools and community groups. This has resulted in the number of people benefiting from the work of Arts out West doubling to over 6,000 and the earned income, through ticket and workshop sales tripling to over £10,000. Arts out West consistently provide more than 200 days of employment within the borough and offers a broad range of volunteer development activities.

1.4 In April 2007 a funding bid was submitted to the Arts Council for the delivery of this business plan from 2007 to 2010. The current funding climate has meant that despite the Copeland arts service submitting a bid for three years of funding the Arts Council have only been able to identify resources for the first year of the business plan. Support from other funding partners (Cumbria CC, Allerdale BC, Barrow BC) has been indicated for continuation of the programme. In addition, Arts out West have identified a range of local and regional funding partners that will fund project based delivery and ensure that the new work areas are sustainable.

2. ARGUMENT

2.1 Arts Out West is a vital part of the cultural economy of rural West Cumbria. It is a cost-efficient project which delivers high quality cultural experiences across West Cumbria. The project works in partnership with local communities that select, market and host a range of cultural events and activities. This gives local communities the skills and confidence to fundraise and manage additional project that increase the vibrancy and cultural diversity of the borough and beyond.

2.2 Arts Out West meets the council's objectives through encouraging social inclusion and combating rural isolation, whilst providing access to high quality cultural events. Arts out West encourages rural communities to make use of their village halls, and engages schools in high quality arts experiences normally only available in large urban centers. The Arts Council grant will enable the project to consolidate its partnerships and build on achievements whilst establishing the case for further funding to deliver the second and third years of the current business plan.

2.3 Arts Out West programmes a range of performance and participatory activity which introduce young people and families to cultures from around the world as well as providing unique opportunities for people to take part in participatory activities that connect Copeland residents with cultures from Asia to Latin America and from Africa to Scandinavia. Within the last year of activity Arts Out West has worked with over twenty schools delivering a range of workshops

and performances including World Muzik Makers (African drumming project) and RJC Dance (Reggae, Jazz, Contemporary dance project).

3. OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

3.1 The grant is accepted and the coordinator retained for a further year, September 2007 to September 2008. The cultural services unit will continue to lobby the Arts Council for a grant to complete the second and third years of the current business plan.

3.2 The Cultural services unit will explore the potential of other lottery distributors as well as trusts and foundations to secure the medium to long term sustainability of Arts out West. This will include exploring further expansions of Arts out West to include; a fundraising and marketing part time post; a film programme; education and outreach projects; regional, national and international partnerships as well as the opportunities available through developments in the broader cultural sector in Cumbria itself.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The continuance of Arts out West coordinator will retain the capacity of the Rural Touring Scheme to maximise its potential, promoting more performances at more venues with more partners. The dedication of a coordinator to the smooth running of the scheme will increase the capacity for the scheme to take advantage of new funding and opportunities within the region and nation allowing Arts out West to draw in more international artists and build the capacity of local artists to tour regionally and nationally.

4.2 The continuance of the post of coordinator will free capacity within the arts department to develop new projects and scheme to meet the needs and demands of the borough.

5. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOURCES OF FINANCE)

5.1 The salary (including on-costs) as well as all training and travel costs are included in the grant offer. The redundancy liabilities of the post arising at the point when the appointment ceases have also been included within the project budget. The Council has no direct financial input towards this post, apart from the provision of office accommodation. The post will be hosted within the arts department and managed by the touring scheme's Management Group which consists of arts officers from Copeland and Allerdale as well as Cumbria County Council. Day to day support is provided by the Council's Senior Cultural Services Officer.

5.2 Copeland BC, as the grant recipient, acts as the accountable body and is responsible for completion of evaluation reports in line with the grant conditions.

5.3 Income generated from the scheme is administered by the Council, and as a non-profit making programme, any surpluses are re-invested in the development of future programmes.

6. PROJECT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The post forms a major part of Arts out West's Business Plan for the next two years. The plan has assessed the risks and threats to the scheme and Council within that time.

6.2 The project funding is secured prior to the commitment of budgets through artist and venue contracts. This minimises the risk of an overspend within the programme of activity.

7. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PLAN

7.1 Arts Out West meets objective 2.3.2 and 2.3.6 of the Corporate Plan by encouraging schools to include arts activities within core teaching time. Arts out West programmes activities that not only enrich the curriculum but help to meet specific parts of the curriculum's requirements.

7.2 Arts out West meets objective 3.1.6 of the Corporate Plan by support one full time job within the cultural sector and encouraging local performers to become 'market ready.' Arts out West mentors a small number of local performers and supports the delivery of showcase events to raise the performance standards of individuals wishing to further their careers.

7.3 Arts Out West meets objectives 3.6.1, 3.6.4, and 3.6.5 of the Corporate Plan by working in partnership with various elements of the local communities of Copeland. Arts out West works with schools, youth groups and community groups as well as village halls to promote and improve local people's access to cultural activities. Arts Out West is uniquely placed to take advantage of one-off international opportunities such as those that will be forthcoming from the cultural programme which surrounds the Olympics as well local developments such as the Dance Development Worker or the newly establish West Cumbria youth music company. At both ends of this spectrum of opportunity, Arts out West is best positioned to ensure that the rural areas of Copeland have every opportunity to programme participatory activity of the highest quality as well as showcase performances of world class.

List of Appendices

List of Background Documents:

Arts out West Business Plan
Arts out West Arts Council Funding Application
Budget submitted to Arts Council England.

List of Consultees: Cllr G Blackwell, Cllr H Branney, Corporate Team, Len Glead, Catherine Nicholson.

CHECKLIST FOR DEALING WITH KEY ISSUES

Please confirm against the issue if the key issues below have been addressed. This can be by either a short narrative or quoting the paragraph number in the report in which it has been covered.

Impact on Crime and Disorder	There will be an impact on the Crime and Disorder Reduction commitments that the Council has in that some of the participatory activity may be considered diversionary.
Impact on Sustainability	2.1
Impact on Rural Proofing	2.2
Health and Safety Implications	Hosting arrangement.
Impact on Equality and Diversity Issues	2.3
Children and Young Persons Implications	2.3
Human Rights Act Implications	None.

Please say if this report will require the making of a Key Decision ~~YES~~/NO