

## Budget Proposals 2016-17: Arts and Leisure Development

### Summary of Feedback Received and Key Findings

---

#### Why we consulted?

Over the last four years we have had to make savings of £23m because we've received less money from central government. We have done this by becoming more efficient at what we do, by reducing some of our administrative functions and increasing our income. Throughout this period we have done our best to protect front line services.

We now have to find another £20m over the next four years, with almost £11m to be found in 2016/17. Much of this will come from further efficiencies within the council, but £4.6m will have to come from services that will impact the public.

In order to inform the budget setting process for 2016/17 we published a list of those proposals which would likely have a direct impact on service users, and sought the views from those affected and interested:

- to understand the likely impact
- to identify any measures to reduce their impact
- to explore any possible alternatives

#### Approach

All the proposals were published on the council's website on 3 November 2015 with feedback requested by 14 December 2015. Respondents were directed to a [central index page](#), with a video message from the Chief Executive outlining the background to the exercise.

Information relating to this proposal was linked directly from this index page. This contained more detailed information on what was specifically proposed, information on what we thought the impact might be, as well as what else we had considered in developing and arriving at this proposal. Feedback was then invited through an online form and through a dedicated email address.

Each individual budget proposal was placed on our [Consultation Portal](#) which automatically notified those registered that an exercise had been launched. Members of the West Berkshire community panel (around 800 people) and local stakeholder charities, representative groups and partner organisations were also emailed directly, notifying them of the exercise and inviting their contributions.

Heads of Service made direct contact with those organisations affected by any of the budget proposals prior to them being made publically available.

A press release was issued on the same date, as well as publicised through Facebook and Twitter.

## **Budget Proposals 2016-17: Arts and Leisure Development**

### **Summary of Feedback Received and Key Findings**

---

#### **Background**

The development of arts and leisure events and activities help people to develop their self confidence and creativity. This can have a number of positive benefits for a number of groups. The council provides an Arts and Leisure Development Service to:

1. Provide information, advice and guidance to the public about developing arts and leisure projects, including some advice about grants
2. Make funding applications to the Arts Council and other grant giving bodies to help fund arts and leisure projects for specific groups of people such as, young offenders, older people with dementia, people recovering from mental health problems
3. Act as liaison between the council and other bodies, to deliver projects which improve people's health and well-being through arts and leisure
4. Manage the funding agreement and relationship between the council and the Corn Exchange, Newbury and the Watermill Theatre in Bagnor.

The proposal is to cease our Arts and Leisure Development Service while maintaining liaison with the Corn Exchange and Watermill Theatre. This will save the council £54,000.

#### **Summary of Key Points**

14 responses received in total, including one from Tilehurst Parish Council and six from national and local cultural, community and leisure organisations:

- Arts Council England
- Artsworld (national arts organisation which champions, leads and facilitates young people's engagement with great art and culture and supports the development of young arts practitioners and leaders)
- Creative Junction (social enterprise working with children, young people and families)
- Interakt (community theatre and arts organisation working mostly with people with physical and learning disabilities)
- Get Berkshire Active (the Berkshire County Sports Partnership)
- 101 Outdoor Arts Creation Space (Arts Council and Greenham Common Trust funded arts organisation based at Greenham Common)

Ceasing this service means that the council will no longer have the capacity to:

- Work with and lever in grants from organisations such as Arts Council England
- Build the partnerships between the sectors to deliver arts projects
- Provide information, advice and guidance to the council, other organisations and local people about funding and partnership opportunities

All of which benefit local people and particularly those who, otherwise, may not be able to access the arts.

#### **1. Are you a user of this service?**

Of the 14 responses 7 declared themselves as users of the service

#### **2. What do you think we should be aware of in terms of how this proposal might impact people?**

## Budget Proposals 2016-17: Arts and Leisure Development

### Summary of Feedback Received and Key Findings

---

Ceasing this service means that the council will no longer have the capacity to:

- Work with and lever in grants from organisations such as Arts Council England
- build the partnerships between the sectors to deliver arts projects
- provide information, advice and guidance to the council, other organisations and local people about funding and partnership opportunities
- greater proportionate impact on the most disadvantaged in the WB community

**3. Do you feel that this proposal will affect particular individuals more than others, and if so, how do you think we might help with this?**

The majority of the users who benefit from the arts and leisure projects which this service delivers are people who generally have less access to arts and leisure – for example, people with dementia, young offenders, people with disabilities.

**4. Do you have any suggestions as to how this service might be delivered in a different way? If so, please provide details.**

The council to provide the required leadership / liaison with strategic organisations such as Arts Council England and Sports England. However there will be no capacity for developing partnerships, making funding applications and delivering projects on the ground.

**5. Is there any way that you, or your organisation, can contribute in helping to alleviate the impact of this proposal? If so, please provide details of how you can help.**

Arts Council England, Artswork, Get Berkshire Active and others are keen to continue to work with the Council but this will still require staff capacity / investment for the Council in order to deliver projects.

No other proposals were received.

**6. Do you know of any existing networks and initiatives that could be strengthened to ensure that local people have access to information and advice about grants for cultural projects? If so, please provide details.**

There are a number of national, regional and local organisations that local people can contact for information and advice about grants – for example, Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund, Sports England, Greenham Common trust.

**7. Any further comments?**

None received.

## Budget Proposals 2016-17: Arts and Leisure Development

### Summary of Feedback Received and Key Findings

---

#### Conclusion

Ceasing the service removes capacity in the council to deliver many arts and leisure projects that benefit local people the most disadvantaged and generally those who have less access to arts and leisure. Suggestions made rely upon a WBC resource

***Please note:** In order to allow everyone who wished the opportunity to contribute, feedback was not sampled. Therefore this wasn't a quantitative, statistically valid exercise. It was neither the premise, purpose, nor within the capability of the exercise, to determine the overall community's level of support, or views on the proposals, with any degree of confidence.*

*The feedback captured therefore should be seen in the context of 'those who responded', rather than reflective of the wider community.*

*All the responses have been provided verbatim as an appendix to this report. Whilst this summary seeks to distil the key, substantive points made, it should also be read in conjunction with the more detailed verbatim comments to ensure a full, rounded perspective of the views and comments are considered.*

Paul James  
Culture Manager  
Culture & Environmental Protection  
8 January 2016  
Version 1 (CB)