

GREATER MANCHESTER ECONOMY, BUSINESS GROWTH AND SKILLS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Friday 8th October, 2021

Subject: GMCA Culture Portfolio Update

Report of: Councillor Martyn Cox, Portfolio Lead for Culture and Alison McKenzie-Folan, Portfolio Lead Chief Executive for Culture.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

In February 2020, GMCA agreed the two-year GM Culture budget, which included £3.5m a year support to 35 cultural organisations from across Greater Manchester and £270k p/a to support strategic activity that delivers the ambitions outlined in the Greater Manchester Culture Strategy that cannot be delivered by a single organisation.

In March 2020 cultural organisations in Greater Manchester closed their doors as a result of COVID-19 national lockdown. While many managed to deliver activity during lockdown and beyond, the sector nationally and across Greater Manchester continues to be in a precarious position, with many still unable to open venues and operate and most unable to generate earned income, vital to the long-term sustainability of the sector.

While it has been a challenging year for one of the sectors hit hardest by the pandemic, significant activity has taken place that has supported our people and places through the first year of the pandemic. This activity is outlined in detail in our Year In Review - Appendix A.

In March, 2021, GMCA agreed the second GM Culture Recovery Plan, which will run between April 2021 and March 2022, that outlines how GMCA will support the culture sector in Greater Manchester to emerge from the pandemic and contribute to the wider national and local recovery (Appendix B).

In September, 2021, GMCA agreed a one-year roll-over of cultural investment at the same levels as 2020/21. Leaders agreed to the proposal as it gives stability to a sector disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and in recognition of the role the sector will play in the recovery of our places and supporting the wellbeing of our people.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Economy, Business Growth and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

1. Note GMCA-funded activity (Appendix A).
2. Note the GMCA Culture Recovery Plan 2021/22 (Appendix B)

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Equalities Implications:

Several measures outlined in the Culture Recovery Plan 2021-22 have been specifically developed to increase access to opportunity and culture for those from protected character groups. A separate equality impact assessment will be undertaken as a delivery plan for this work is developed.

Risk Management:

Risk to investment is monitored on a quarterly basis as part of payment release conditions.

Climate Change Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures –

Increased efficiencies around equipment purchase and hire through partnership working and digital solutions included in the paper have potential to mitigate any concerns around negative climate change impacts and all GMCA Culture fund grant recipients committed to green growth as part of two-year funding agreements.

Legal Considerations:

N/A

Financial Consequences – Revenue:

Plan to be delivered within resource committed by GMCA in February 2020.

Financial Consequences – Capital:

N/A

Number of attachments to the report:?

1. *Appendix A – Our Year In Review*
2. *Appendix B – GM Culture Recovery Plan*

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Since lockdown began in March 2020, the GMCA Culture Team has been working to support the sector, working with organisations in the GM Culture Portfolio, supporting digitally excluded residents through the Creative Care Pack project and entertaining and raising more than half a million pounds for the sector through United We Stream.
- 1.2 While the year has been challenging for cultural organisations, artists and freelancers, the sector has shown real resilience and government support schemes like the Job Retention Scheme and the Culture Recovery Fund has meant that GM hasn't yet seen the scale of closures or redundancies expected earlier in 2020. There are still significant challenges ahead, however, as much of the sector in Greater Manchester has only recently been able to return to anything near approaching full operation after being unable to generate earned income for more than a year.
- 1.3 In July, 2021 most restrictions affecting the cultural sector were lifted, with venues of all sizes and types able to operate at full capacity, albeit with measures in place to stop the spread of the virus. While restrictions have been lifted it will take time before all our residents are willing or able to return to our cultural venues though early anecdotal evidence is positive.
- 1.4 The GMCA Culture Recovery Plan, published in March, 2021 outlines how GMCA will support the sector and our residents through the year and has been developed in collaboration with colleagues from across Greater Manchester and national stakeholders, including district arts officers and cultural organisations.

2. IMPACT ON THE SECTOR

- 2.1 In February 2021, the Creative Industries Federation released a report highlighting the impact on the sector so far;
 - Since the start of the pandemic, 63% of respondents have seen their turnover decrease by more than half, with creative freelancers seeing the biggest drop in revenue.
 - Three quarters of those working in areas dependent on live audiences have seen a drop in income of more than 50% since the pandemic began.
 - Freelancers and those based outside of London have been among the hardest hit:
 - Freelancers were 20% more likely than organisations to have seen a drop in income of 75% or more since the pandemic began.
 - Respondents outside of London were 8% more likely to see decreases in turnover of more than 75%.

- Whilst half of respondents said that they had been able to deliver a small number of activities online, 80% said that digital activities had only delivered a little income (34%) or not delivered any income at all (47%).
 - Outside of London, respondents were 39% more likely to be unable to deliver activities online and 28% more likely to say that new digital activities have been unable to deliver any income.
- 2.2 While data is not available to city-region level, as Greater Manchester is the second largest creative cluster in the United Kingdom and the creative industries identified as one of the four growth sectors in the Independent Prosperity Review prior to the pandemic, the potential impact on the economy of Greater Manchester is significant.
- The Visitor Economy in Greater Manchester is worth £2.6bn GVA p/a and supports 105,000 jobs.
 - The Digital and Creative Industries in Greater Manchester are worth £4.4bn GVA p/a and supports 78,500 jobs
 - Pre-pandemic, Arts Council England and National Lottery Heritage Fund invested more than £40m p/a in Greater Manchester.
 - Organisations in Greater Manchester accessed more than £37m from DCMS's Culture Recovery Fund, additional to that annual investment amount.
 - Music alone contributes £169m p/a to the economy of Greater Manchester
- 2.3 As we begin to emerge from the pandemic it is vital that we support the organisations and individuals who make such significant contribution to our economy and, importantly to the vibrancy of our town and city centres, our global reputation, and the health, wellbeing and happiness of our residents.

3. ACTIVITY TO DATE

3.1 A full report, on activity delivered in 2020/21 by the GM Culture Portfolio and with GM Culture Strategic Funds and Great Place funding is attached (Appendix A). The majority of GMCA cultural investment goes to the GM Culture Portfolio (84%, Portfolio, 13% Strategic funding, 3% programme management). The portfolio comprises 35 organisations, based in every district of GM.

3.2 Activity undertaken by the GM Culture team in 2020/21 included

Renegotiated contracts with 35 GM Culture Portfolio recipients, focussing deliverables in four priority areas;

- Supporting individual artists and freelancers;
- Providing cultural activity for communities hardest hit by COVID-19;

- Providing opportunity for young people in Greater Manchester; and
- Reduce inequality in the cultural sector, with a particular focus on BAME and working class artists and professionals.

GM Covid Commissions – 60 individual grants of £500, providing musicians, poets, illustrators, artists, writers and designers with vital funds and creating an archive of work that documents the first few months of lockdown.

United We Stream – from its first show on April 3rd, 2020 to the final show of the year on New Years' Eve, 2020, United We Stream produced 308 hours of live content, amassed more than 20 million global views in more than 150 countries, provided a platform for more than 448 artists and cultural organisations and raised £583,300 for 130 cultural organisations and individuals affected by the pandemic and supported 30 charities including Nordoff Robbins and Manchester Mind.

Publication of the GM Night Time Economy Recovery Blueprint and establishment of the Night Time Economy office, providing advice and support for NTE businesses impacted by the pandemic.

Since the start the pandemic, Greater Manchester's Great Place project has delivered a significant amount of activity. This has included Old Frame New Picture; a photography competition and billboard campaign to challenge narratives around ageing. Using supermarket billboards, this managed to reach an audience of 84,000 with 1.6 million impressions, even during lockdown. Creative Care Packs were developed in response to the pandemic and brought together 50+ cultural organisations, all ten local authorities and their community response hubs, the voluntary sector and more than 300 volunteers to develop and deliver more than 50,000 packs of creative activities, ideas and materials to digitally excluded residents in GM, including school children, young adults and older residents.

- 3.2 This activity was delivered alongside significant local and national advocacy for the sector, regular consultation with artists, organisations and regional and national stakeholders, and leading national and local policy discussions around culture and NTE with politicians, APPGs, universities and think tanks.

4. **GM CULTURE RECOVERY PLAN**

- 4.1 Following the easing of restrictions in July 2021 most of the sector, from theatres and music venues, to festivals, museums and galleries have been able to open their doors to full capacity audiences, albeit with measures in place to reduce the spread of the virus. Some organisations are still operating at limited capacity and producing hybrid online and in-person events, following feedback from audiences around customer confidence. The GMCA cultural recovery plan was drafted to support organisations, businesses and individual artists, freelancers and creatives until the true impact of the pandemic on the sector has becomes clear.

- 4.2 The cultural and creative sector has a huge role to play in the recovery of our economy, high streets and town centres, increasing consumer confidence and growing national and international reputation and, equally importantly, in Greater Manchester's collective healing; from commemorating, marking and trying to make sense of the events of the past year, to supporting our residents' physical and mental health, providing educational opportunities for our young people and bringing people together, as a community again.
- 4.4 We will be making the most of shared experience, resource and networks, especially in relation to marketing and audience development and formal and informal education. The Team will work with cultural organisations across the conurbation to share audience intelligence and insight and develop shared, thematic 'seasons' of activity, communicating clearly with GM residents about activities on offer across Greater Manchester. GMCA will also work with Arts Council England, Curious Minds and Local Education Partnerships to support young people in any attempts to increase wellbeing support and/or catch-up with education missed as a result of the pandemic.
- 4.5 Without action to support cultural organisations, businesses, collectives, freelancers and creatives through Q1 and Q2, they will be unable to undertake the necessary actions required in Q3 and Q4, where GMCA's continued investment and support for the sector throughout the pandemic will begin to bear visible fruit, as the cultural sector in GM recovers faster and in a more equitable way than other areas where support has not been so forthcoming. This recovery builds on the GM Culture Recovery Plan 2020/2021 and complements the GM Night Time Economy COVID-19 Recovery Blueprint, developed and delivered by the GM Night Time Economy office and GM Night Time Economy Adviser Sacha Lord.
- 4.6 The GMCA Culture Team will continue to work with local authorities on the development of Creative Improvement Districts as set out in the current Cultural Recovery Plan and the Night Time Economy Blueprint – looking to the cultural and creative sector to support town centres and high streets to thrive by diversifying the range of uses and activity, and the re-purposing of buildings and spaces for cultural and creative use.
- 4.7 Activities outlined in the culture recovery plan (Appendix B) will be delivered within already committed budget, as part of the Cultural Fund two-year settlement agreed by GMCA in February, 2020, though some partnership funding will be sought to increase reach and maximise impact of some strands of strategic activity.
- 4.8 This plan will be delivered by and with the 35 organisations in the GM Culture Portfolio, by each of the 10 local authorities that make up Greater Manchester, with strategic partners including Marketing Manchester, GM Health and Social Care Partnership, Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England and a whole host of cultural organisations and individuals from across the city region.

- 4.9 In September, 2021, GMCA agreed a one-year roll-over of cultural investment at the same levels as 2020/21. Leaders agreed to the proposal as it gives stability to a sector disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and in recognition of the role the sector will play in the recovery of our places and supporting the wellbeing of our people.
- 4.10 A paper will be taken to GMCA in October 2021 outlining the process for Town of Culture 2022, building on the proposal agreed, by GMCA in 2019. Once the process is agreed, districts will be invited to apply to become the Greater Manchester Town of Culture 2022. All GM districts will be eligible. Proposals will be appraised by Culture and Heritage Steering group members not employed or associated with any GM districts in November, with applicants notified of the outcome in December 2021.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The recommendations can be found at the front of this report.

GM Culture Fund 2020-2022

Organisation name	2 Year Total
The Halle	£1,498,340
People's History Museum	£817,940
GM Arts	£612,000
Royal Exchange Theatre	£438,680
Old Courts	£400,000
Quays Culture	£380,000
HOME	£273,800
Octagon Theatre	£214,400
Oldham Coliseum	£204,860
Contact	£194,000
Manchester International Festival	£180,000
Art with Heart	£165,712
The Turnpike	£121,500
Manchester Camerata	£109,600
Company Chameleon Dance Theatre	£108,900
The Met	£100,000
Z-Arts	£99,500
Wigan STEAM CIC	£99,000
MancSpirit	£89,512
Arts for Recovery in the Community	£80,000
Global Grooves	£80,000
Walk the Plank	£80,000
Manchester Literature Festival	£80,000
Manchester Jewish Museum	£70,000
Centre for Chinese Contemporary Arts	£70,000
English Folk Expo	£70,000
Cartwheel Arts	£60,000
Manchester Pride (Superbia)	£60,000
Manchester Jazz Festival	£59,048
Manchester Histories	£50,000
Comma Press	£49,394
Brighter Sound	£29,088
Gaydio	£26,000
Music Action International	£25,160
Sheba Arts	£20,000
Programme Management	£140,000
Strategic Funding	£540,000
Total	£7,696,434*