

Greater Manchester Culture and Social Impact Fund Committee

Date: 2 October 2023

Subject: Greater Manchester Culture Portfolio Update

Report of: Councillor Neil Emmott, Chair of the Greater Manchester Culture and Social Impact Fund Committee

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Culture and Social Impact Fund Committee about activity delivered by the Greater Manchester Culture Portfolio between April 2022 and March 2023.

Recommendations:

The Committee is requested to note the content of the report.

Contact Officers:

Marie-Claire Daly, GMCA

marie-claire.daly@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

Hafiz Khokhar, GMCA

Hafiz.khokhar@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 All recipients of Culture funding were required to submit an annual report in July 2023, outlining activity delivered using GMCA investment. This report gives an overview of activity delivered between April 2022 and March 2023.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In January 2020, GMCA agreed to invest £3.8m p/a in 35 organisations for two years. In 2021 it was agreed that this investment be rolled over for one more year recognising the instability of the sector in the wake of COVID–19. Organisations were required to submit an annual plan that delivered activity in five priority areas. Organisations are funded to:

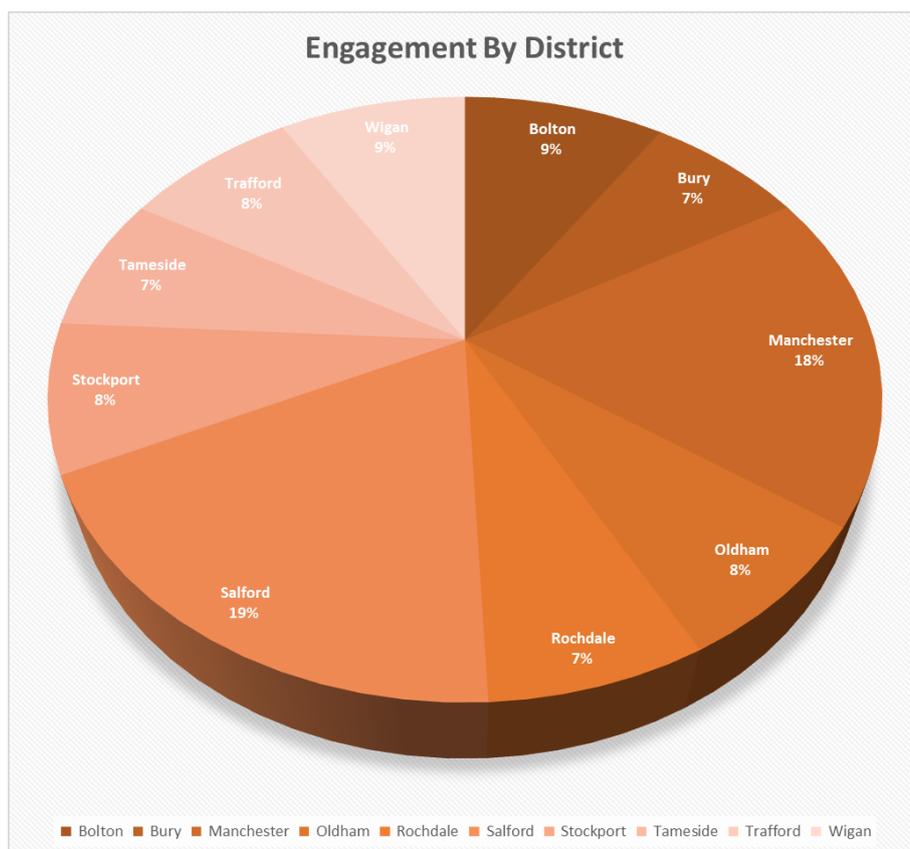
- Contribute to the recognition of Greater Manchester locally, nationally and internationally to attract new investment, new visitors and new talent to Greater Manchester
- Make a positive contribution to improving skills and employability of residents in Greater Manchester, including support for the creative education, expression and ambition of young people across Greater Manchester
- Play a strong role in developing strong and inclusive communities and an improved quality of life for residents, particularly those residents at risk of disengagement or social isolation
- Be able to evidence how the project will make a positive contribution to improving residents' health and well-being and meeting our equality duties
- Provide paid employment and opportunities for freelancers, individual practitioners and organisations within the Greater Manchester

- 2.2 This report summarises activity delivered by 33 organisations in the culture portfolio over the full twelve months of this rollover year. We have not requested reporting from Oldham Coliseum or Turnpike as at the time of data collection, July 2023, neither organisation was operational. Despite several reminders and extensions Old Courts Wigan were unable to provide reporting in time for the preparation of this report. The GMCA Culture Team is working with the Old Courts and partner funders to decide on appropriate course of action. This may result in the organisation's next payment being withheld until the situation is resolved.
- 2.3 As well as direct investment into cultural organisations, GMCA also manages a strategic budget of £270,000 p/a which supports activity that cannot be delivered by a single organisation, including Town of Culture, Creative Improvement Districts, Arts, Health and Wellbeing, Culture and Ageing, WeEuro, Redesigning Freelancing, StreamGM and the GM Artist Network, Greater Manchester Music Commission. More information on this activity can be found in the Greater Manchester Culture Strategy review document provided as part of the agenda papers.

3. ANNUAL DELIVERY

- 3.1 Analysis of all returns shows that, between April 2022 and March 2023 Culture Fund recipients reported 7million engagements with activity supported through the GM Culture Fund. This represents a significant increase in engagement since the last time full reports were provided, in 2019, prior to the pandemic when annual engagements totalled 4.6million per year. Given the challenging times experienced by cultural organisations during the pandemic this demonstrates the resilience of the organisations funded by the GMCA.

- 3.2 Over the year, engagement by district was appropriately split which demonstrates the success of our revised investment approach, that sees investment in each district of Greater Manchester.
- 3.3 The annual investment in cultural organisations equates to around £3m per annum. This means that GMCA spent, on average, 40p on each funded engagement with culture in Greater Manchester. While 'levels' of engagement vary, from one-off attendance at an event, to involvement in a bespoke, in-depth activity, this represents significant value for money.
- 3.5 In developing the GM Culture Fund we have been clear that, while numbers around levels of engagement are important, to demonstrate value for money and distribution of investment, we also need to demonstrate the more qualitative impact of our investment. This is especially important given the variety of activity supported through the Culture and Social Impact Fund.



3.6 More detail on the overall delivery of cultural investment by GMCA can be found in the GM Culture Strategy review document provided with these papers. Cartwheel Arts a recipient of the fund based in Rochdale will give a verbal update on the type of activity GMCA funding has enabled.

3.7 A new reporting framework will be developed for the new culture portfolio of 40 organisations that was approved in Spring 2023. This will also feed into any new governance arrangements developed as part of Greater Manchester Trailblazer devolution deal.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

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