

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
EDUCATION, SKILLS AND CULTURE CABINET BOARD

29th November 2018

REPORT OF HEAD OF TRANSFORMATION
ANDREW THOMAS

MATTER FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED: Pontardawe

PONTARDAWE ARTS CENTRE BUSINESS PLAN AND CINEMA DEVELOPMENT

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To seek Member approval for the implementation of a new business Plan for Pontardawe Arts Centre and for the Head of Transformation to be granted authority to engage with the Arts Council for Wales to secure a capital grant towards the cost of a new cinema development at Pontardawe Arts Centre.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 A new business plan which is appended as (Appendix 1) for Pontardawe Arts Centre, is presented to Members for consideration and approval.
- 2.2 The plan seeks to explore opportunities to reduce costs and generate income that will contribute towards meeting the forward financial plan saving target.
- 2.3 The business plan recognises the addition of a new cinema is key to sustaining the future of Pontardawe Arts Centre. This development would consolidate the existing audiences and also widens the appeal to new audiences, especially young people, within the community.

3. Background

3.1 Set within the Swansea Valley, in the heart of Pontardawe, the

Arts Centre opened in 1996. The venue comprises of a Victorian style theatre with a maximum capacity of 500, a studio theatre which can accommodate up to 100, an attic gallery, teaching studio, café, bar, and complimentary facilities.

- 3.2 Pontardawe Arts Centre receives an annual revenue support grant circa £64k from the Arts Council for Wales .
- 3.3 As well as the Arts Centre establishing a more commercial approach, it must continue to deliver the requirements of the funding agreement, which is appended as (Appendix 2).
- 3.4 To date the Arts Centre has engaged with the Arts Council via its resilience programme, at no cost to the council. As a result of an initial feasibility study commissioned by the Arts Council, we have been invited to progress to stage 2. This requires the procurement of a business consultant. ACW will pay 75% of the consultant at a cost circa £50k, with the council funding 25% of the costs circa £12.5k.
- 3.5 Stage 3 of the application would be the final submission to the Arts Councils capital grants panel. Prior to that a fully costed report would be brought to the Board for member approval to progress to stage 3.

4. Financial Impact

- 4.1 The business plan seeks to reduce the current level of subsidy that the Arts Centre receives, and to support a more sustainable business model for the Council.
- 4.2 Whilst the council will be able to draw down grant funding from The Arts Council for the capital cost of a cinema, there would be a financial contribution required from the council. A fully costed report would be brought to the Board for member approval to progress at that stage.

5. Equality Impact Assessment

- 5.1 There is no equality impacts associated with this report.

6. Workforce Impacts

- 6.1 Implementation of the business plan may have workforce impacts. Where this is the case, it will be reported in subsequent

reports to Members.

7. Legal Impacts

7.1 All actions within the business plan will be delivered in line with the Council's financial guidelines and regulations.

8. Risk Management

8.1 There are no risk management issues associated with the business plan.

8.2 With regard to the cinema, as stated in the draft budget consultation report to the cabinet on 31st October. "In relation to the medium term future of such facilities as Pontardawe Arts Centre, it is now very dependent upon bids for capital funding submitted to the Arts Council".

9. Consultation

9.1 There is no requirement under the constitution for external consultation on this item.

10. Recommendation

Recommendation :1

It is recommended that:

- a. The new business plan for Pontardawe Arts Centre appended to this report be implemented accordingly.
- b. Delegated authority be granted to the Head of Transformation to commence a procurement exercise in partnership with the Arts Council for Wales, to engage a business consultant at a cost of circa £12.5k and for authority to enter into any contractual arrangements associated with this arrangement.

11. Reasons for Proposed Decision

11.1 To ensure the long term sustainable future of the Arts Centre.

12. Implementation of Decision

12.1 The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

13. Appendices

Appendix 1: Pontardawe Arts Centre Business Plan.

Appendix 2: Arts Council for Wales funding agreement.

14. List of Background Papers

None

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