

REPORT TO:	East Lindsey Executive Board
DATE:	15 February 2023
SUBJECT:	National Portfolio Organisation
PURPOSE:	To consider the preparation required for National Portfolio Organisation funding from Arts Council England.
KEY DECISION:	YES
PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:	Councillor Graham Marsh; Councillor Steve Kirk; Councillor Adam Grist
REPORT AUTHOR:	Lydia Rusling, Assistant Director for Economic Growth
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL
EXEMPT REPORT?	NO

SUMMARY

Arts Council England (ACE) has confirmed investment for the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP) from the 2023-2026 Investment Programme for National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). Funding per annum of £651,993 (total of £1,955,799 for a three year programme) will commence from April 2023 and will continue through to March 2026.

The Activity Plan for the first year – from April 2023 – has been submitted to ACE for approval. If successful, East Lindsey District Council as the accountable body for the ACE funding, will be awarded £651,993 to deliver an art and cultural programme in line with the Activity Plan. The Plan includes the development of three Creative Hubs to help deliver the activity (Boston Guildhall, Ayscoughfee Hall and The Colonnade at Sutton on Sea) and the establishment of a Culture Board to oversee the programme. The Culture Board will support collaboration and exchange programmes to establish the area as a hub for regional cultural development, with an exemplar approach to the inclusion of heritage within arts and culture.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recommends to Council the inclusion of £651,993 revenue grant funding per annum into the Council's Budget for 2023/24 and Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2024/25 and 2025/26.
2. Approves (subject to Council approving the budget) that the Council acts as the accountable body for the National Portfolio Organisation funding award, accepts the grant and delegates authority to agree the grant terms and conditions to the Assistant Director Economic Growth.
3. Approves the future use of Sutton on Sea Colonnade as a Cultural Hub and any necessary in-kind contributions to support the delivery of the funded programme.
4. Approves that Magna Vitae, the Council's delivery partner for Culture, be commissioned to manage delivery of the funded programme.
5. Agrees to delegate to the Assistant Director Economic Growth in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders to establish a Culture Board and agree its Terms of Reference.
6. Notes the Activity Plan (attached at Appendix B) and delegates authority to the Assistant Director Economic Growth in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders to modify and approve future plans.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To meet Arts Council England requirements to access annual funding allocations through the National Portfolio Organisation funding, and to establish a Culture Board.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The application to Arts Council England was a competitive process and the funding award is based on the commitment to deliver the Activity Plan. Funding would not be awarded, or could be withdrawn if the Council did not support the proposals.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Arts Council England (ACE) has confirmed investment for the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP) area from the 2023-2026 Investment Programme for National Portfolio Organisation. Funding per annum of £651,993 (total of £1,955,799) will commence from April 2023 and continue to March 2026.

1.2 The funding will be awarded to East Lindsey District Council as the accountable body for activity across the SELCP area.

1.3 In 2021, East Lindsey District Council and Boston Borough Council received ACE funding to develop a Cultural Strategy. Both Councils have agreed a Cultural Framework with two place based action plans, along with a commitment to extending the strategy to reflect the new geography of the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership and incorporating South Holland District Council. The principles of the strategy – Cultural Framework for Renewal – were reflected in the application for NPO status.

1.4 Following notification of NPO Investment in November, documents providing details of the activity plan and financial profile for the period April 2023 – March 2024 were submitted to Arts Council England (ACE) for approval. If approved, the funding will commence in April 2023. The funding application and subsequent Activity Plan form the basis of the monitoring and evaluation required by ACE. Please note the Activity Plan at Appendix B.

2. REPORT

2.1 National Portfolio Organisations play a central role in helping ACE deliver their strategy, Let's Create. The 'Let's Create' Strategy has three Outcomes: Creative People, Cultural Communities and A Creative and Cultural Country. Their Investment Principles are Ambition and Quality, Dynamism, Environmental Responsibility, and Inclusivity and Relevance.

2.2 The SELCP Application included an Activity Plan and Investment Principles, the expected basis for monitoring and evaluation.

2.3 The Application proposed an artistic and cultural programme to bring to life the rich tapestry of events and episodes from history, to resonate through the development and growth of our towns, connecting to our communities and building pride in our place and engaging new visitors.

2.4 East Lindsey District Council will be the accountable body for the programme of activity across the South and East Lincolnshire geography. In East Lindsey, the NPO funding will complement the capital investment through both the Town Deals and Levelling Up funding to build pride in place and strengthen the visitor offer.

2.5 Feedback from ACE (attached letter, Appendix A) identified **areas of work expected** to be preserved within the updated Activity Plan, including:

- Programmes of work with schools and young people;
- Digitisation of collections;
- Working across heritage and museum sites to enable stronger cultural programming including a focus on heritage within arts;
- Engagement with the new Cultural Strategy;
- Embedding approaches to supporting the involvement of children and young people.

2.6 As per the application, ACE expect the **development of three Creative Hubs** to help deliver the activity and the establishment of a **Culture Board** to oversee the programme. East Lindsey District Council will be the lead authority and accountable body for the Partnership's NPO investment, with a focus on three hubs – Boston Guildhall (Boston Borough Council), Asycoughfee Hall (South Holland District Council and the Colonnade at Sutton on Sea (East Lindsey District Council).

2.7 Working collaboratively across the Communities and Growth Directorates, officers will ensure connectivity between the Culture Board and the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership's Healthy Living Board. Quarterly Healthy Living Board meetings will consider updates on NPO activity and the development of the Culture Board.

2.8 An updated Activity Plan has informed the resourcing requirements and the development of Cultural Hubs in consultation with relevant officers with responsibility for Asycoughfee Hall, Boston Guildhall and the Colonnade at Sutton on Sea. The NPO for the SELCP will be led by the

Growth Directorate whilst working collaboratively with the Communities Directorate to ensure the Council asset – The Colonnade at Sutton on Sea – provides a cultural hub of activity and connecting to the Town Deal funded Culture House in Skegness and the projects in Alford and Spilsby supported with Levelling Up funding. Artistic and cultural activity, building the stories of the District’s heritage, engagement with schools, colleges, community and art and cultural organisations will centre on the Colonnade – bringing it to life as a cultural hub and building partnerships with the Culture House and the area’s heritage assets.

2.9 We reference commissioning other ACE funded organisations and care will be taken to ensure there is no duplication of ACE funding. We are proposing effective management arrangements with Magna Vitae, East Lindsey District Council’s Cultural and Leisure Partner. Magna Vitae has led a well-established NPO – So Festival – and has an excellent reputation with ACE. Their support, guidance and collegiate working will enable the effective mobilisation of the Culture Board, delivery of the activity plan, whilst adding value for resourcing and commissioning. Working in partnership with Magna Vitae we will actively engage with all NPOs across Lincolnshire:

Name		23/24 funding
Blackfriars Arts Centre Ltd (Boston)	NPO	£ 130,000
Box Clever Theatre Company (Touring)	NPO	£ 80,000
East Lindsey District Council	NPO	£ 651,933
Lincolnshire County Council	NPO	£ 205,910
Magna Vitae	NPO	£ 320,796
North Kesteven District Council	NPO	£ 204,861
The University of Lincoln	NPO	£ 250,000
Zest Theatre, Lincoln	NPO	£ 180,000

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 Being a National Portfolio Organisation is vital to the success and development of the cultural sector. Organisations are required to put the public at the heart of their work and be committed to working collaboratively with each other and with other individuals and organisations within communities.
- 3.2 The NPO status and associated funding will support the Council’s Cultural objectives as set out in the adopted Cultural Framework for Renewal.
- 3.3 East Lindsey will be central to the development of a successful NPO. By working in partnership with Magna Vitae, the funding will support pride of place and strengthen the visitor offer across the District, including Towns Fund and Levelling Up initiatives on the Coast and in the Wolds Market Towns.

EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

The ambition of the Framework and associated NPO status supports a wider cultural and place based approach to regeneration, in line with the Government’s Levelling Up White Paper and links culture with community engagement to support our Partnership objectives.

IMPLICATIONS SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCILS PARTNERSHIP

The Cultural Framework sets out a number of specific commitments:

- A commitment to increasing audience participation levels across all types of cultural activity – from the very low levels of participation which have promoted Arts Council England to position Boston and East Lindsey as priority places for investment in cultural development.
- A commitment to excellence and innovation in cultural infrastructure, partnership and programming.
- Commitment to the four investment principles set out by Arts Council England – Ambition and Quality; Dynamism; Environmental Responsibility; Inclusivity and Relevance.
- The establishment of a Cultural Compact to enable the delivery of a programme of activities as a new National Portfolio Organisation.
- Commitment to the Priority Actions identified in the Cultural Framework for East Lindsey.
- A **Culture and Place-making Board** is established to oversee the delivery plan set out the wider remit to deliver the actions of the Shared Cultural Framework and ensure culture sits to the heart of socio-economic renewal.

These commitments are reflected in the NPO application and associated funding.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The Cultural Framework for Renewal reflects the Corporate Priorities identified in East Lindsey's Corporate Strategy 2020-2030, supporting the strategic aims of facilitating initiatives to enable the viability and vitality of town centres, maximising healthy and active lives, and creating an environment for businesses to survive and grow.

STAFFING

An updated Activity Plan has informed the resourcing requirements including management arrangements with Magna Vitae and the development of Cultural Hubs in consultation with relevant officers with responsibility for the Colonnade at Sutton on Sea, Boston Guildhall and Asycoughfee Hall and Gardens.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None arising from the report.

DATA PROTECTION

None arising from the report.

FINANCIAL

Commitment of in-kind support, including the Colonnade at Sutton on Sea as a cultural hub, oversight of the programme and management arrangements, and support to the Culture Board.

RISK MANAGEMENT

None arising from the report.

STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

External consultation was undertaken as part of the formation of the Cultural Framework.

REPUTATION

None arising from the report.

CONTRACTS

Management arrangements with Magna Vitae will form part of the existing agreement with East Lindsey District Council as a key strategic partner. Magna Vitae is a not-for-profit charitable trust and is fully responsible for the strategic and operational management of culture, the arts, physical activity and sport in the East Lindsey area.

CRIME AND DISORDER

None arising from the report.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

None arising from the report.

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

The Cultural Framework references The Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Lincolnshire (2018). In many of the areas it prioritises, arts and culture are already making a difference, with the potential to do much more in the future.

We are committed to aligning the Framework and the Action Plans with the recently established Healthy Living Board, which is tasked with delivering a leisure and culture offer for the sub-region.

Quarterly Healthy Living Board meetings will consider updates on NPO activity and the development of the Culture Board.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Cultural Framework aligns with Arts Council's four investment principles, which incorporates Environmental Responsibility.

The Framework references connecting culture to the natural environment through projects and infrastructure, and positioning this Framework as a vital tool for sustainable and responsible cultural development.

We are committed to aligning the Framework with the Partnership's Climate Change Strategy and the newly established Climate Action Network.

LINKS TO 12 MISSIONS IN THE LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER

MISSIONS	
This paper contributes to the follow Missions outlined in the Government's Levelling Up White paper.	
Skills	By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.
Health	By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by 5 years.

Wellbeing	By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
Pride in Place	By 2030, pride in place, such as people’s satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.

ACRONYMS

- ACE: Arts Council England
- NPO: National Portfolio Organisation

APPENDICES	
Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -	
<i>APPENDIX A</i>	<i>Arts Council England Feedback on NPO</i>
<i>APPENDIX B</i>	<i>Activity Plan</i>

BACKGROUND PAPERS
<i>No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.</i>

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT	
Name of body	Date
Executive Board Briefing	25 January 2023

REPORT APPROVAL	
Report author:	Lydia Rusling, Assistant Director Economic Growth
Signed off by:	Michelle Sacks, Deputy Chief Executive
Approved for publication:	Councillor Graham Marsh