

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**COMMUNITY SERVICES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

TUESDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2004 at 10.00 AM

ENJOY! HERTFORDSHIRE

Agenda Item No.

2

Report of the Director of Community Information

Author: Annie Hawkins, County Cultural Officer
Tel: 01992 556231

Executive Member: Iris Tarry

1. Purpose of report

To update Members of the Scrutiny committee on Enjoy! Hertfordshire, a cultural strategy for Hertfordshire

2. Summary

This report updates the Scrutiny Committee on the continuing impact of Enjoy! Hertfordshire over the last 12 months and gives Members a flavour of some of the larger cultural projects taking place across the county.

3. Conclusion

Members of the Scrutiny Committee are invited to note the contents of the report, and may wish to consider the added benefits created through the various Cultural partnerships that are in place across the county, these benefits are:

- Producing greater efficiencies through co-ordinated planning
- Adding value through sharing experiences and knowledge
- Sharing costs, to avoid duplication and making our budgets go further
- Attracting external funding
- A stronger voice for Hertfordshire

By working together these cultural partnerships can make the county an even more prosperous and better place to live, work and visit.

4. Background

- 4.1 All local authorities were advised by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS] to produce a cultural strategy by the end of 2002. Their advice was that the strategy would include the arts, children's play, the countryside, film and media, heritage and archives, libraries, museums, sport and recreation, tourism and leisure.
- 4.2 Culture is a thriving sector that brings considerable revenue to the local economy and enhances the quality of life for the residents and workers of Hertfordshire and also for visitors to the County. The County Council is making a valuable contribution to this by working in partnership with all stakeholders to promote, support and develop the cultural industry in Hertfordshire.
- 4.3 The County Cultural Officer is based in the Economic and Community Development Unit in the Environment Department. She works in partnership and plays an active role with the Herts Association of Cultural Officers, the Hertfordshire Tourism and Leisure Partnership, Herts Arts Partnership and Herts Sports Partnership. These various partnerships have strengthened over the last twelve months and this is largely due to the commitment and enthusiasm of the partners. Many volunteers and voluntary groups working with local communities are the catalysts for much of the cultural activity in the county. Enjoy! is a framework that can help these groups attract funding and support for their work. Cultural activities are a key strand of community planning and local strategic partnerships and clearly link to the County Council Promise: to make Hertfordshire a better place to live and work.
- 4.4 The six Enjoy! messages that were agreed two years ago are just as relevant today and continue to be used to support crosscutting themes in current local cultural, community and strategic plans. The messages are as follows:-
- Making Hertfordshire a more prosperous and attractive place to live, work and visit
 - Offering children and young people to reach their full potential through access to learning and information
 - Encouraging children and young people to access and enjoy cultural and leisure activities
 - Enabling all members of the community to have more and easier access to different cultural and leisure pursuits
 - Valuing and supporting the diverse range of cultural and leisure activities enjoyed across the county
 - Working in partnership with national, regional and local agencies to deliver a range of cultural and leisure activities effectively
- 4.5 The Enjoy! branding which was developed as the branding for the Cultural Strategy for Hertfordshire, is now well established and is being recognised across the county and beyond. The District Tourism Officer Group has agreed to use the Enjoy! branding on all joint tourism marketing. The Hertfordshire Tourism Partnership has also adopted Enjoy! for all Hertfordshire tourism branding and it is being used for exhibitions, events, literature, leaflet dispensers and branded goods such as stickers, carrier bags and crowns.

Enjoy! branding has also been used for various cultural conferences held in the county.

- 4.6 New developments for the use of the Enjoy! branding in 2004/5 are the potential of using the branding for external signage at our libraries and exploring the use of it with our Intalink partners, on leaflets, bus stops and the livery of buses.

5. Partnership Working

5.1 National

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS] has established a Cultural Excellence Network, which meets four times a year. The County Cultural Officer represents Hertfordshire at these meetings. DCMS now state that culture and sport must be included in Community Plans, which in turn contributes to Local Strategic Partnerships. Local Authorities are no longer advised to have individual cultural plans.

- 5.2 As Enjoy! spans five years, it is our intention to continue to use it as an overarching document for cultural activity in Hertfordshire. Not least, because it can be used and indeed has been used as a supporting document for external funding bids. DCMS have also stated that culture and sport will become a strand of Comprehensive Performance Assessment from 2005. They have shared the first draft of the proposed performance indicators and measures for culture with the Cultural Excellence Network. The Network group challenged these indicators and DCMS are now revisiting them. This will have implications for Hertfordshire, the County Council and for all our Districts. The County Council is often not responsible for the delivery of cultural services, so it is very important that we are part of that national dialogue for our communities.

5.3 Regional

Herts Association of Cultural Officers continues to work together with regional agencies such as, Arts Council England East, SportEngland, the East of England Tourist Board, the East of England Development Agency, local private-sector providers and neighbouring authorities. This has ensured we are aware of what cultural and leisure funding opportunities are available to us, and be aware of what the current cultural issues are and helps us build a sustainable cultural economy.

Examples of projects that have been supported by these regional partnerships are the Green Heart Partnership, the establishment of a Herts Sports Partnership and the organisation of a regional conference on Young People and Physical Inactivity. The latter a topic that is now high on both the government's, and the Herts Together agenda. The support of Herts Association of Cultural Officers, Arts Council England East and SportEngland have been hugely influential in the success of these activities.

6. County Herts Tourism and Leisure Partnership

- 6.1 The Herts Tourism and Leisure Partnership is made up of representatives from The Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce, visitor attractions, accommodation providers, commercial tourism businesses, the Districts and the County Council, represented by the County Cultural Officer.
- 6.2 The aim of the group is to actively contribute to the economy of Hertfordshire by promoting, supporting and developing the industry. Over the last year the partnership has achieved the following:
- The organisation of a familiarisation visit for twelve travel writers and group tour operators to Hertfordshire, they visited key attractions in the county over a weekend in April 2004.
 - The production of 120,000 copies of the 6th edition of the Herts Holiday Times, a comic style journal aimed at 6 to 13 year olds. The comic promotes the visitor attractions and cultural and leisure activities taking place across the county.
 - The promotion of Hertfordshire attractions on local radio
 - The hugely successful Enjoy! Hertfordshire marquee at the County Show at Redbourn. Over 6000 visitors came to the marquee over two days.
 - The organisation of an annual Tourism Forum for Hertfordshire, held at Paradise Wildlife Park, Broxbourne
 - Attended seven travel trade exhibitions overseas and in Britain
- 6.3 These activities are supported and funded through the sponsorship and goodwill of the commercial businesses in Hertfordshire, the Districts and the County Council.

7. The Green Heart Partnership

- 7.1 Green Heart is a partnership between the County Council, the District and Borough Councils, the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and Arts Council England, East. The title reflects the overarching environmental theme of this arts led initiative. The partnership, to run initially from 2004-2007, will provide a baseline investment from the Hertfordshire local authorities and Arts Council England, East of approximately £130,000 annually, (£390,000 over three years). This investment will also be used to lever a further £570,000 and together this will amount to nearly £1 million, over 3 years. Green Heart will work within three themes:

- Environmental sustainability
- Urban and rural renaissance
- Social Cohesion

The project will be delivered through:

- Profile – aims to promote a number of high-profile cross-boundary projects that enhance and challenge perceptions of Hertfordshire. These projects will focus on major joint initiatives that can achieve regional and national recognition.

- Connect – aims to build partnerships. Green Heart will develop close, practical working relationships with Arts Development Officers and environmental team contacts. These officers will work together as a team to develop projects around arts, culture and environment to deliver on each department's agenda.
- Exposure – aims to provide match funding grants of up to £500 for arts and environment projects. The awards will help with bids to larger funding schemes e.g. 'Grants for the arts'. Successful recipients will be offered training or mentoring to help them through the application process.
- Resource – aims to offer training in a range of skills (including fundraising, developing arts and environment regeneration projects) to arts and environment officers, artists and organisations.
- Manage – the Steering Group will oversee and manage Green Heart Facilitator who will work to deliver the four other strands.

7.2 The County Arts Development Officer is the County Council's lead officer for this project and is also the administrator of the Herts Arts Partnership, who are key players in taking this project forward.

8. Herts Sports Partnership

8.1 The support of Herts Association of Cultural Officers has driven the formation of the Herts Sports Partnership forward. The partnership was set up to bring together sports practitioners and volunteers across the county to have a unified voice for sport.

Over one hundred people signed up to the partnership and work groups have been formed to take forward generic issues affecting the delivery of sport in Herts. Partners include sporting organisations, clubs, coaches and officials, governing bodies of sport, local authorities, Sport England, education and health providers.

The Herts Sports Partnership aims to work together to promote a quality sporting infrastructure allowing everyone to get involved, stay involved and reach their full potential in their chosen sport or physical activity. The common goal is the advancement of sport and physical activity at all levels and for all people in Hertfordshire. It aims to:-

- Act as a voice and raise the profile of sport in and beyond the county
- Provide advice and support to its members on common issues
- Offer direct services to its members through its core staff team working with the wider sports network
- Be the county link with regional and national agencies
- Facilitate a co-ordinated approach to the development of sport

Activities over the last 12 months have included:

- Developing the management structure of the partnership
- The setting up of work groups, including: club development, officials and administrators, resources, communications, sport development, young people

- Developing the website: www.sportinherts.org.uk
- Successfully bidding for external funding to support the sports partnership

9. Herts Museums Cultural Diversity Project

9.1 Led by Hertfordshire Museums this is a partnership project, involving seven museums in Hertfordshire and the County's Local Studies and Archives Services (HALS). The Project's main aim is to develop a greater awareness of the cultural diversity of Hertfordshire through activities and events that engage with minority ethnic communities who are currently under represented by their local museums.

95% of the funding has come from the Heritage lottery Fund with remaining money from the museum partners and the Standing Committee for Museums in Hertfordshire. A project officer has been employed for two years to help deliver the activities and events at the seven museums; Stevenage, Watford, Hertford, St Albans Museums, Hitchin, Dacorum Heritage Trust and Tring Zoological Museum.

9.2 Aims of the Project:

- To increase the number of people from ethnic minorities visiting and taking part at the seven museums in Hertfordshire and to improve the quality of involvement for those people.
- To help raise the awareness of everyone within the County about the ethnic diversity of the place in which they live, work and go to school, helping to appreciate those cultures different to their own and reduce prejudices.
- To increase the ability of museum staff and volunteers to address diversity issues and race equality.
- To encourage greater cultural diversity in the museum workforce by supporting the Co-ordinator to develop a career in museums.

9.3 The Project was launched at Hertford Museum on 18 May 2004 and will continue until June 2006. Two of the museums have already developed and held their exhibitions, Hertford Museum's 'Passing Places' illustrated the Traveller communities of Hertfordshire and Asian Routes looked at the important contribution Asian people have played in the paper industry of Hemel Hempstead.

The remaining projects will be developed over the next two years culminating in the collation of material from the different communities and individuals involved, to produce a County resource for schools on the cultural heritage of Hertfordshire.

It is intended that this project will be used as a study of best practice across the region on how museums can develop their services to be inclusive of all members of the communities they represent.

10. Access to the Countryside

- 10.1 The Countryside Access Strategy and Countryside Access On-line are both included in the development of Hertfordshire's first Rights of Way Improvement Plan. The County Council is leading on this work and has completed a detailed assessment of countryside user's needs and demands, the initial results of which were consulted on in 2003. The County Council is currently preparing a draft Statement of Action that will be subject to wide public consultation in the coming months.
- 10.2 The Rights of way Improvement Plan will provide an overarching strategy for improving access to the countryside in Hertfordshire. Supported by the Statement of Action it will help inform bids for future funding and identify actions. Information about public access opportunities including linear routes and sites has been gathered from District Councils and other organisations.

This information will inform a digital database and will be used to map needs and identify areas where there is a shortfall in provision. This same information will form the basis of an online public information resource in the future.

11. Access to Archives: Hidden Talent

- 11.1 Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies [HALS] has been awarded nearly £50,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to convert the catalogues of thousands of historical documents from HALS into electronic format for the web. The aim of the project, which is part of the national Access to Archives (A2A) scheme, is to make many of the most important documents held by HALS available to a much wider audience. In all, nearly 9,000 pages of text (about 52,000 catalogue entries) from HALS will be converted through the project.
- 11.2 These archive catalogues will be drawn from the HALS estate collections spanning eight centuries, from administrative and accounting records to personal letters and diaries. The estate collections show the enormous contribution made by Hertfordshire residents to the government of the British Isles and to historic events across the world; they also provide a unique insight into daily life in the county across the centuries.
- 11.3 A special booklet will also be produced as a guide to these important estate collections and to highlight the wealth of information they contain for local and family historians. This will be sent to universities, schools and colleges, local history societies, as well as Hertfordshire's libraries and museums.
- 11.4 The project will also be complemented by a slide collection of images from the collections, and these will be used in a series of talks and workshops to encourage new users to learn more about their local heritage. They will also be made available online so that audiences outside Hertfordshire will be able to access the material as well. A launch event to be held in May 2005 as part of Local History Month. The project will take 14 months to complete.

12. Enjoy Priority Areas

12.1 All of the above partnerships and projects support several if not all of the six priority areas which are the focus for Enjoy! over the next three years. These are:-

- More young people involved in activities
- Explore ways of promoting the use of sustainable transport to facilities /events
- Organisations working together to improve equal access to cultural and leisure activities
- Activities to improve people's mental and physical health and welfare
- More learning opportunities for all
- Develop a greater understanding of the social and economic impact of cultural and leisure activities on communities

13. Financial Implications

County Council staff activity under the Enjoy! banner is contained within existing budgets. The significant amount of partnership working described in the report enhances the value of the activity.

14. Access to Service Implications

High quality cultural activities can enhance the quality of life to **all** our communities, by improving and adding value to the local economy. Culture clearly has a role to play in this. Partnership projects such as those referred to in this paper will help facilitate access to cultural activities for residents, workers and visitors to Hertfordshire.

15. Conclusion

15.1 It is essential for our service delivery that partnership working continues as it creates the added benefits of:-

- Producing greater efficiencies through co-ordinated planning
- Adding value through sharing experiences and knowledge
- Sharing costs, to avoid duplication and making our budgets go further
- Attracting external funding
- A stronger unified voice for Hertfordshire in the cultural arena

15.2 Enjoy! embraces many of these cultural partnerships priorities and ambitions and will continue to do so in the future. Members may wish to consider the implications of culture and sport becoming a strand of Comprehensive Performance Assessment.