



## **North Devon Council**

Report Date: Monday, 3 July 2023

Topic: Cultural Development Fund

Report by: Head of Place, Property and Regeneration

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. The Northern Devon Cultural Strategy: Flourishing Culture was adopted in 2022.
- 1.2. To help support the delivery of the Cultural Strategy, external funding was identified through the Cultural Development Fund. An Expression of Interest was submitted in July 2022 and following shortlisting the Council were successful in proceeding to the full application stage. A full bid was prepared and submitted with supporting evidence in November 2022. At the end of March 2023, the Council were informed of their successful funding bid and awarded £3,000,000, alongside its secured match funding of £650,000 to deliver a range of capital and revenue projects across Barnstaple.
- 1.3. The overall project funding totalling £3,650,000 is split £2,950,000 Capital spend and £700,000 Revenue spend.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. To note the award of the Fund and the projects that will be delivered.
- 2.2. Delegate authority to the Head of Place, Property and Regeneration and the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive to enter into such agreements with the Arts Council and partnership agreements with the Bridge Trust in relation to this project

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. To ensure Members are aware of the project and its outputs.
- 3.2. To ensure Members are aware of the resource implications for the project.

### **4. REPORT**

- 4.1. Following a successful two stage funding bid, led by the Culture Manager; Alison Mills, North Devon Council were awarded £3 million to deliver a range of capital and revenue projects to aid implementation of the Culture Strategy.
- 4.2. This “Flourishing Barnstaple” project combines capital investment with activity to re-establish our historic town as the beating cultural heart of northern Devon. The fund will invest in two historic buildings, our townscape, people and organisations to support our creative industries, strengthen our

partnerships and make the town a great place in which to live, work, visit and invest.

4.3. The award funds the following interventions:

- Capital works to fund the refurbishment of the listed Bridge Chambers building, Barnstaple (owned by the Bridge Trust) to create an accessible performing arts, learning and performance space.
- Capital works to fit out 36 Boutport Street, complementing the major regeneration project funded by the Future High Street fund to create a sustainable co-working hub for the creative industries and visual arts communities to include workshops and shared spaces.
- Capital to invest in public art, streetscapes and wayfinding, and the co-creation of an interactive town trail
- Revenue funding to support 3 fixed term posts
- Revenue to commission activities and events that inspire young ambition and creativity to include training and skill development – this will be developed with 'Real Ideas Organisation '(RIO) and Plymouth University.
- Revenue for a programme of event, festivals and activities.

4.4. The fund is supplemented by £150,000 match funding from the Bridge Trust and £500,000 from North Devon Council (the latter is money that North Devon Council have already agreed as part of the Future High Street Fund programme at Boutport Street).

4.5. The fund must be spent by March 2026.

4.6. The internal project team has now been set up and will be managed by Alison Mills; Culture manager. An inception meeting with the Arts Council has been set up for the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023 and this will include our partners for this project; The Barnstaple Bridge Trust, Barnstaple Town Council, Beaford Arts and Petroc, who will all be instrumental in its delivery. A Partnership Agreement will be entered into with all partners, committing to working together and the outcomes of this project.

4.7. The three new posts funded by the project are fixed term contracts for 3 years and will support the delivery of this fund. These roles are for a Cultural Producer to curate cultural activity across Barnstaple, and two project officer roles, focusing on community and sector support.

4.8. The project team will provide regular updates to members on progress of this project.



## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. The bid includes 3 new posts to ease the impact on our existing resources but will require significant input from officers including our Culture Manager, Economic Development and Regeneration and Property Teams, Finance, Legal and Communications.

## 6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is being developed for this project.

## 7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1. An Environmental assessment is being developed for this project.

## 8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8.1. What impact, positive or negative, does the subject of this report have on:

8.1.1. The commercialisation agenda: This will invest in our assets and support the delivery of Boutport Street and the Pannier market

8.1.2. Improving customer focus: The project will ensure an enhanced cultural offer to our communities.

8.1.3. Regeneration or economic development: The project will contribute significantly to the regeneration of Barnstaple and the wider Northern Devon economy.

## 9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

9.1. Part 3 Annexe 1 paragraph 1

## 10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

## 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

The Cultural Development Fund bid

Flourishing Culture: Northern Devon's Culture Strategy



## 12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Sarah Jane Mackenzie-Shapland, Head of Place, Property and Regeneration