



<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Boston Corporate and Community Committee
<b>DATE:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2023
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	National Portfolio Organisation
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	Consider the recommendations to Cabinet for the funding associated with National Portfolio Organisation.
<b>KEY DECISION:</b>	YES
<b>PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	Cllr Richard Austin
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	Lydia Rusling, Assistant Director for Economic Growth
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	ALL
<b>EXEMPT REPORT?</b>	NO

#### **SUMMARY**

**This report provides an overview of the National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding from Arts Council England (ACE) and the proposed recommendations for Boston Cabinet.**

**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. Funding per annum of £651,993 (total of £1,955,799) will commence from April 2023 to March 2026.**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is asked to consider and make comments on the draft report and proposed recommendations, which will be fed back to Cabinet. The proposed recommendations for Cabinet in respect of the National Portfolio Organisation funding, include:

- Agree to East Lindsey District Council as the Accountable Body for the Funding.
- Support the Activity Plan, the in-kind commitment, including Boston Guildhall as a Cultural Hub, and propose representation for the Culture Board.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

To meet Arts Council England requirements to access annual funding allocations through the National Portfolio Organisation funding.

## **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 Funding would not be awarded, or could be withdrawn if the Council did not support the proposals.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 to reflect the new geography of the 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 prior to the funding award in April 2023.

## **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 In Boston the programme of activity will complement the capital investment through Town Deal and Levelling Up initiatives 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, they 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 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 – Boston Guildhall – provides a cultural hub of activity and consideration of the recommendations from the recent Guildhall review. Artistic and cultural activity, building the stories of the town’s heritage, engagement with schools, colleges, community and art and cultural organisations will centre on the Guildhall – bringing it to life as a cultural hub and building partnerships with the town’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 a well-established NPO and 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:

<b>Name</b>		<b>23/24 funding</b>
Blackfriars Arts Centre Ltd (Boston)	NPO	£ 130,000
Box Clever Theatre Company (Touring)	NPO	£ 80,000
<b>East Lindsey District Council</b>	<b>NPO</b>	<b>£ 651,933</b>
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 Boston will be central to the development of a successful NPO with its rich heritage, the opportunity to celebrate Boston 400 and the Guildhall as a cultural hub. By working in partnership the funding will support pride of place and strengthen the visitor offer.

### **EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP**

The ambition of the Cultural Framework and associated NPO funding 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 set 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 Boston.

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

### **CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

*The Activity Plan and associated funded programme reflects the Cultural Framework, which support the priorities identified in the Corporate Strategy 2020-2024.*

### **STAFFING**

*An updated Activity Plan has informed the resourcing requirements and the development of Cultural Hub in consultation with relevant officers with responsibility for Boston Guildhall.*

### **CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

*None arising from the report.*

### **DATA PROTECTION**

*None arising from the report.*

### **FINANCIAL**

*Commitment of in-kind support to enable Boston Guildhall to develop as a cultural hub.*

## **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**

*None arising from the report.*

## **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 referenced 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**

<b>MISSIONS</b>	
<b>This paper contributes to the follow Missions outlined in the Government's Levelling Up White paper.</b>	
<b>Skills</b>	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.
<b>Health</b>	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.
<b>Wellbeing</b>	By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
<b>Pride in Place</b>	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

<b>APPENDICES</b>	
Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -	
<i>APPENDIX A</i>	<i>ACE Feedback</i>

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

<b>CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT</b>	
<b>Name of body</b>	<b>Date</b>

<b>REPORT APPROVAL</b>	
Report author:	Lydia Rusling, Assistant Director Economic Growth
Signed off by:	Michelle Sacks, Deputy Chief Executive
Approved for publication:	Cllr Richard Austin