

**Towards a Stronger Sense of PLACE
(Pan Lancashire Arts Culture and Entertainment)**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines the state of the arts in pan Lancashire following recent funding decisions taken by Arts Council England (ACE), which began to come into effect from April 2012. Funding decisions so far have brought mostly bad news in the sub-region (with notable exceptions) and have prompted this thoroughgoing investigation of overall performance by ACE, local authorities and arts organisations. Many recommendations are made, covering short, medium and long term actions that should be taken in order to realise the full potential of the arts, culture and entertainment in this area. The keys to success lie in vision and ambition, linked to effective leadership and advocacy across the board.

ACE decisions taken in 2011 reduced the overall level of their core-funding into pan Lancashire by 39%, with the total number of local arts organisations core-funded reducing from 14 to 9. Core-funding spend per head of population is now significantly reduced and sits far behind that received in neighbouring sub-regions, such as Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Cumbria (indeed Cumbria has seen an overall increase in its core-funding spend by ACE). Only 4.5% of the total ACE core-funding spend in the north west region now goes into pan Lancashire arts organisations, even though 20% of the NW population live here.

The practical definition of the arts, currently in common use covers:

- Theatre, Drama, Dance, Literature
- Festival/Carnival, Music, Performing Arts
- Visual Arts, Public Art, Design and Public Realm
- Photography, Film & Media, Digital Media
- Craft

Austerity is a reality both now and into the medium term future. ACE funds from HM Treasury for 2012-15 have been reduced by 30%. In addition, their internal administration costs are undergoing a 50% reduction programme.

"Achieving Great Art for Everyone" is the new ACE ten year strategic framework. It has been widely welcomed across the sector for its clarity and openness. Future direction and funding decisions will be determined according to this plan. Its key artistic goals are:

- Talent and artistic excellence are thriving and celebrated
- More people experience and are inspired by the arts
- The arts are sustainable, resilient and innovative
- The arts leadership and workforce are diverse and highly skilled
- Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts

There are many different funding streams now administered by ACE, which are detailed in the body of this report. These represent a new approach to arts funding by ACE and they will impact on both local authorities and independent arts organisations well into the future.

The shock of the outcome of the 2012-15 core-funding round has forced many arts organisations to re-evaluate, refresh and reinvent their offer. Similarly, local authority arts teams have needed to examine what went wrong and why. This report, "Towards a Stronger Sense of PLACE", outlines these efforts and starts the process of pointing a way to a better future.

Contributing factors to "what went wrong" include: lack of a cohesive arts vision and ambition for the sub-region; poor quality of funding applications; complacency; lack of co-ordination across arts organisations; weak business models, with excessive dependency on ACE funding, governance shortcomings; patchy performance locally by ACE; lack of effective support from local authorities to arts organisations through the bidding process (Blackpool excepted); lack of effective advocacy, political leadership and inter-authority co-operation.

Contributing factors to "what went right" for successful bidders include: a clear sense of ambition and vision; reflecting the communities served; being a hub of good practice; strong regional and national connections; strong leadership and governance, with financial robustness and diversification of funding streams.

Local authorities in the sub-region have a long record of support to the arts sector and a clear recognition that a thriving arts sector contributes to the public interest and well-being. In particular, they play a role in acting as a lever to provide access to external funding streams for arts organisations. Relatively modest investment can lead to substantial further investment from non-local authority sources. Key attributes of successful local authorities include: sound financial investment; strong and effective advocacy and well-informed arts development support.

Arts development units within local authorities are generally located within community services directorates, rather than being part of economic development, tourism, marketing or regeneration offices. Not all local authorities have dedicated arts development officer posts, which is a shortcoming with respect to grant applications support and a weakness when it comes to effective communication with ACE. There is, however, a growing recognition locally of the benefits and advantages of "joined-up" working across boundaries to develop a coherent set of strategies for the sub-region. ACE is very supportive of local authorities operating more cooperatively in collectively agreeing priorities. Grant funding mechanisms to arts organisations in some local authorities are in need of significant streamlining, while maintaining essential financial controls.

ACE have recently taken on additional responsibility for music education, libraries and museums. They are also committed to bringing added value to

the work of local authorities, once their attention has been secured. The diversity and complexity of the local government landscape is a barrier to their developing a clear picture of what is needed in the sub-region and how they best can lend support. ACE is also keen to play a full role in local economic development and regeneration work. Many arts organisations and local authorities, though, remain unsure of the stance of ACE and have concerns regarding consistency and accountability.

Liverpool is a beacon example of how to place arts, culture and entertainment at the heart of economic development and regeneration. Pan Lancashire needs to do the same. Key to this future will be the performance of local authorities and the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in both accessing and providing capital and recurrent investment into the arts. Clear economic analysis of all such investments, showing the benefits in terms of economic and jobs growth, is key to future success.

The arts are a central component in the tourism offer in the sub-region. "Marketing Lancashire", the new local, lead body for tourism (with a similar sister organisation for Blackpool) has a critical role to play. Cultural tourism is a national growth area. Pan Lancashire has much ground to make up in order to punch its weight.

Two other specialist areas are addressed in this report. The first is minority ethnic communities, where we focus on the long-established, Asian immigrant (mainly muslim) population in East Lancashire. There remains an under-representation in participation in the arts by these communities, in spite of a richness of talent on offer. There is a lack of integration and cross-over, which serves to disadvantage communities. There are areas of high quality in areas such as Mela and Caribbean Carnival.

The second area is universities. Pan Lancashire has four universities, all with significant strengths across arts disciplines. There is very good community engagement ("town and gown") and partnership working. But there is substantial scope for Universities to play a more prominent role in arts development.

There are many recommendations made in this report. These cover themes such as: political leadership and advocacy; more effective and intelligent investment and development of officer expertise; development of a pan Lancashire artistic vision and ambition; an annual "state of the arts" review for the sub-region; a stronger role for arts in economic development, tourism development, with more effective marketing and publicity; additional focus on BME communities; and enhanced contributions to Lancashire's artistic landscape from Arts Council England.

In short, this is a substantial agenda aimed at a sustained development in the arts, culture and entertainment infrastructure in pan Lancashire over the next many years, with all the benefits to the people and businesses of the sub-region that this will bring.

TOWARDS A STRONGER SENSE OF PLACE (pan Lancashire arts, culture and entertainment)

BACKGROUND

This joint overview and scrutiny task group began its work in October 2011, tasked to review issues relating to the development of the arts in the pan Lancashire area. It was led by Lancashire County Council and included members from Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen, Preston and Lancaster councils. Its aim was to suggest possible solutions to help develop a stronger arts offer for the County.

The basis for its establishment was a meeting of the county council's Scrutiny Committee in June 2011, which considered the outcome for arts providers in pan-Lancashire of recent changes to national strategy and funding decisions by Arts Council England (ACE). Whilst acknowledging some notable successes, councillors at that meeting expressed concern about the levels of ACE core-funding secured for arts organisations going forward from 2012-2015 and what this might mean for the people and businesses of Lancashire. Reviewed core-funding decisions by ACE came into effect on April 1 2012. Highlights of those concerns included:

- Pan Lancashire has lost 39% (£610,860) of its previous level of regularised ACE support; the Lancashire County Council area has taken a 45% hit and Blackburn 100%. Blackpool gained by 100%
- Whilst pan Lancashire has 20% of the population of the NW region, only 4.5% of the total ACE core-funding spend for the NW is going into arts organisations based here. Spend per head of population in pan-Lancashire has decreased by 64%, down to £0.60¹. By comparison, core-funding spend per head in the Merseyside area is £5.97, in Greater Manchester £4.18 and in Cumbria £4.26 The total number of arts organisations in pan Lancashire (population 1.5M) now core-funded by ACE has reduced from 14 to 9.
- By comparison, the total number of similarly funded arts organisations in Cumbria (population 0.5M) has reduced by only one overall, from 16 to 15, and furthermore with an *increase* in financial terms of over £700,000.
- 7 locally-based arts organisations in pan-Lancashire have lost completely their regularised ACE funding; and 3 of the remaining 9 have been hit by significant reductions – one at 70% (although 2 organisations, both of which are in Blackpool, have become newly core-funded)

On the basis of the evidence made available, members agreed that the result of this was very disappointing – in terms of the arts infrastructure of the sub-

¹ this figure excludes one Burnley-based arts organisation, Curious Minds, whose remit as a new "Bridge Organisation" is to reach equally across the whole NW region in developing access to the arts for young people

region, the impact this would have on the general public and the economy of the sub-region. However, neither was the result entirely surprising, with an expectation that some of the reasons behind it would likely relate to varying degrees of negative external perceptions; internal administrative, structural and organisational weaknesses; complacency within the arts sector itself; poor self-image; and a lack of artistic ambition or vision.

The Scrutiny Committee resolved to establish a task group to explore further the context and reasons behind this outcome, the social and economic impact it was likely to have, and to consider how the sub-region might best prepare itself for the future. It was felt that only in this way would Lancashire's arts organisations and overall creative talent move forwards to a stronger position where they could begin to secure more robust levels of ACE funding as well as investment from other external sources.

County Councillors acknowledged that this was an issue that affected pan Lancashire:

- As is the case for other cultural services, there is a natural inter-dependence amongst neighbouring authorities on audiences, arts organisations and artists themselves to deliver a vibrant artistic offer and strong public engagement in it across authority areas.
- There is also often a shared reliance on the common historical, cultural and landscape heritage of the wider Lancashire to provide a framework and unique context in which to develop local artistic activity. And sometimes, it is that same heritage that can act as the catalyst to initiate external interest and support to new and innovative artworks
- The attitudes of ACE and other significant external stakeholders tend to be towards the Lancashire area in its broadest sense and the artistic needs and ambitions of those therein, rather than the specific needs of those within Lancashire's component administrative parts

As such, it was anticipated that solutions for developing a more robust arts infrastructure and offer in all parts of Lancashire going into the future would most likely involve all the component authorities – county, unitary and district – better coordinating their efforts and exploring how best to maximise their resources. These solutions would apply both in working with ACE and other key external stakeholders and with the established and emerging Lancashire-based arts organisations that create and deliver the art on offer.

Furthermore, already in place was a supportive network of local authority arts officers throughout the sub-region, ready and willing to work together effectively to follow through on any new political impetus that might emerge.

For these reasons, county councillors requested that the task group review be carried out as a joint venture with elected members of neighbouring unitary authorities, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool, and the two city councils, Lancaster and Preston. This would ensure a full and broad pan Lancashire perspective in considering the issues.

MEMBERSHIP

All partners approached by the Scrutiny Committee accepted an invitation to take part and each submitted one elected member of their choice to sit on the task group

Lancashire County Council

Cllr Kevin Ellard (Chair)
Cllr Fabian Craig-Wilson
Cllr Janice Hanson
Cllr Allan Knox
Cllr David O'Toole
Cllr David Westley

Blackburn with Darwen

Cllr Phil Riley

Blackpool

Cllr David Owen

Preston

Cllr Tom Burns

Lancaster

Cllr Ceri Mumford

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference were agreed as:

- Review the arts "ecology" and infrastructure in pan-Lancashire and its place within the north west region arts offer
- Review the role and performance of Arts Council England in supporting the arts in Lancashire
- Review the role and performance of pan-Lancashire's local authorities in supporting local arts
- Review the effectiveness of arts development work in Lancashire to the achievement and development of other social and economic priorities of its local authorities.
- Review all additional sources of funding and support available to the arts in Lancashire
- Review how local authorities, arts organisations and all stakeholders in the arts sector work together to maximise their overall impact and support to the arts
- Make recommendations for improvements to current practices and arrangements, such that the artistic vibrancy and engagement in the arts in Lancashire is strengthened and more productive going into the future

The task group held its first meeting on 31 October 2011 to set out the form and scope of its review. It would be chaired and resourced by direction of the county council's Scrutiny Committee and its final report and recommendations

submitted to that body for approval. It was intended that scrutiny committees of partner authorities would also approve the report.

All members of the task group undertook to maintain a pan-Lancashire perspective of these issues, rather than a parochial one. Of course, their own experiences and knowledge of their patch was also important and valid. Recommendations made in the final report would be directed to Executives across the pan-Lancashire area and, as appropriate, beyond.

METHODOLOGY

The Task group carried out its evidence gathering over a period from November to May 2012, with a total of 18 meetings/discussions/site visits. Sessions took place in a variety of types and locations of arts and community-related settings across the sub-region, so as to ensure as wide an experience as possible for the task group members and to maintain as broad and objective an outlook as possible in their approach. The culmination of this process was a meeting in early April with representatives from ACE's North West Office at the sub-region's cultural flagship, The Harris Museum and Art Gallery, in Preston.

Oral evidence gatherings were organised broadly around a number of key themes:

- Perspectives from Arts Organisations
- Perspectives from Arts Officers
- Perspectives from Executive Members
- Perspectives of Arts Council England
- Role of the universities in arts and cultural development
- Artistic Ambition – towards an iconic Lancashire?

- Arts and Economic Development
- Arts and Tourism
- Arts and Cultural Tourism
- Social impact of the arts - including arts and ethnicity and with particular reference to the Asian heritage minorities in the Pennine Lancashire part of the sub-region

Comparative study visits were made to Cumbria and Merseyside (Liverpool, in particular). The task group is most grateful to all those who engaged with us and who gave so generously of their time, their insights and their encouragement to the efforts to secure improved outcomes for Lancashire.

The task group also drew on a range of documentary evidence relating to strategy, philosophy and impact studies.

In addition, and on a voluntary and adhoc basis, members made extra effort to see and experience the art itself across the county in its many and varied forms.

The task group is grateful to all those who cooperated so eagerly with us, especially to the artists and arts organisations– whose prime purpose is to create and deliver art - for the time and effort they took to include the task group members in their work and to explain their artistic product.

But we must also make note of our gratitude for the support, input and encouragement that has been shown to us by the Executive Members and senior managers of all five Lancashire authorities whose members comprise this overview and scrutiny task group. All have stated how they await with interest and a readiness to consider carefully the findings and recommendations of this work.

Witnesses and Key Documents

List to follow

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FINDINGS

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1 What is Art and Does it Matter?

It is not the intention in this report either to define the arts or to quantify accurately its value and purpose to our individual and collective well-being. It is fair to conclude however that the arts are important and that they have always played a significant role in our society and economy, even if a universally satisfactory definition and purpose remains elusive. In a contemporary and local context, the example of Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture 2008 bears testament to this. (see Liverpool Case Study p 33).

Certainly, that is the conclusion of successive British governments, including the current Coalition Government, which support the Arts Council England (ACE) in its latest position on why art matters. This task group, too, endorses the latter's new 10 year strategic plan, "Achieving Great Art for Everyone" as a relevant, ambitious, yet realistic strategic framework for the arts.

What is more relevant for the purposes of this review is to identify how best our local leaders and decision makers can support and intervene in the natural "arts economy" to help it achieve maximum productivity and public benefit. In other words, what role – if indeed any – does the local public sector in Lancashire have in the promotion and development of the arts?

The practical definition of the Arts currently recognized by local authorities in pan Lancashire covers the following creative practices or disciplines:

- **Theatre, Drama, Opera, Dance, Literature**
- **Festival/Carnival, Music, Performing Arts**
- **Visual arts, Public Art, Design and Public Realm**
- **Photography, Film & Media, Digital Media**
- **Crafts**

The term "arts development" is used for those local authority services that support a robust arts infrastructure of professional artists and arts organisations across Lancashire which facilitate the delivery of a high quality arts provision for the people and places of Lancashire; an arts provision that:

- supports Lancashire communities become stronger & more cohesive,
- protects and improves our environment and culture
- promotes health and well-being
- promotes sustainable economic growth

One of the most striking findings from our investigations is the role of the arts in fuelling economic development and as a "force multiplier" in leveraging additional, external monies into the local economy. We cover this issue in significant detail on Ch 6 (Art and The Economy) but it is important to note here that there is a powerful and convincing body of evidence to demonstrate how arts and culture can be a key driver in economic development initiatives and how they can also play a key role in sustaining vibrant and attractive places in which to invest, live and work. Arts and culture also play a key role in education, health and social cohesion – each of which in turn contributes significantly to the vitality and vibrancy of the local workforce.

The advantage of investment in the arts is often under-rated, it has great benefits locally, although hitherto measurement of those returns has not been easily quantifiable. Investing in arts and culture can mean that taxpayers get more for their money. It is also the case that some localities in the country have truly grasped this truth and incorporated it successfully into their local economic development priorities and decisions and decisions.

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2 CONTEXT OF OUR REVIEW

Austerity

Arts Council England (ACE) is the lead body in England for arts development and the vehicle by which national funding streams and support to the arts is delivered. This is often supplemented to a greater or lesser extent by other funding sources, such as local authorities or the private and philanthropic sector. For artistic activity in Lancashire, this represents no mean sum of external monies coming into the area. In 2010, it amounted to approximately £2.5m (although that figure has now reduced). This compares to the approximate £7m that pan-Lancashire's 15 local authorities invest per annum.

In late 2010, Arts Council England (ACE) published its new 10 year strategic framework for the arts – "Achieving Great Art for Everyone". At the same time, it announced that there would be an approximate 30% reduction in its overall national budget and a commitment to streamline and scale down by 50% its own administrative costs.

As part of this new strategy ACE created a new National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding programme to replace the long standing Regular Funded Organisation (RFO) programme. This programme is the cornerstone funding programme for arts organisations in the country and acts as the foundation for the delivery of ACE's strategic priorities.

This funding programme was open to all, regardless of previous relations with ACE and in spring 2011 decisions were announced which came into effect as of 1st April this year. Its overall budget is £1.04 billion and includes the core funding to national institutions such as Royal Opera House, Royal Shakespeare Company, English National Ballet, the National Gallery, Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. Funding will run for three years with renewal after April 2015.

At the same time, local authorities throughout the country found themselves facing an increasingly tough period of necessary austerity. Acting in partnership with ACE, they too have traditionally played a key role in supporting the development of their local arts offer, albeit to a lesser extent than ACE. Like others, Lancashire County Council has had to deal with budget reductions on a major scale: in the period 2010/11– 2013/14 it will have made an approximate 25% overall reduction in its budget. Blackburn with Darwen, £40M over two years, with a 28% reduction target across all services; Blackpool an overall budget reduction of 22%; Lancaster 6% reduction; and Preston 23% reduction. It is a similar story for other districts in the Lancashire area. This context of austerity has brought into ever sharper focus the need for every council to articulate a strong and convincing evidence base to justify all budget choices made.

Furthermore, in spring 2012, the regional development agencies (RDAs) were dismantled. These had been the vehicles for channelling development funding from central government and would be replaced in that role by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). Like other RDAs, the NWDA had a tradition of awarding significant resources to arts-related projects where a clear economic or regenerative dividend was expected. The Lancashire LEP was established in May 2011 and is still in the process of embedding its modus operandi and developing its key priorities. Certainly, there is nothing yet on its agenda relating to arts development work, nor have any representations yet been made to it about the value of the arts in fuelling economic development.

Strategy

Overall, the new strategy of ACE, "Achieving Great Art for Everyone" was welcomed by the arts sector for its clarity, openness and its subtle shifts in emphases around priorities. Of particular interest to those operating outside the capital and major cities was the move towards championing public engagement in the arts. Unlike in previous years, arts organisations and project coordinators now had some clear and strict criteria about what their art must achieve if they wanted to receive ACE funding. The arts sector also anticipated that the fall-out from the 30% budget cut would be mitigated to some extent by the renewal, focus and efficiency that "Achieving Great Art for Everyone" represented. And especially welcomed were the commitments to make more National Lottery monies available for the arts and to work harder with the private and philanthropic sectors to lever in further monies still from corporate sponsorship and donations.

In "Achieving Great Art for Everyone", ACE commits itself to working with arts organisations and other partners - with a crucial role for local authorities – to help them deliver on 5 key artistic goals:

- Talent and artistic excellence are thriving and celebrated
- More people experience and are inspired by the arts
- The arts are sustainable, resilient and innovative
- The arts leadership and workforce are diverse and highly skilled
- Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts

Funding

The backbone of delivery of this new 10 year strategy are the newly announced National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs). The NPOs provide a balance of provision across all 5 artistic goals, with a diversity of art forms represented. ACE's budget for the NPO programme is £1.04 Billion over the three years 2012 – 2015 and is a fixed income from HM Treasury.

ACE has also developed a range of additional investment streams for the period 2012 – 2015 to enable it to meet aims and objectives of its new 10 year strategy, particularly where gaps in provision are identified. The source of

much of this investment is increasingly profits from the National Lottery. Specific areas these funding streams aim to address include geographical gaps that have emerged from the establishment of the National Portfolio Organisations and areas identified as having low public engagement with the arts (in Lancashire, there are seven such areas: Preston, Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, Hyndburn, Wyre, Pendle and Burnley). The current value of these additional funding streams nationally, broken down into programme titles, amount to:

1. Grants for the Arts (GfA) £202m (2012 – 2015)

GfA is especially valuable for arts organisations outside the capital and major cities. It offers significant opportunities for a wider range and reach of arts forms and activities than the NPO infrastructure alone can deliver. This programme pre-dates "Great Art for Everyone" but continues as an important strand and with a commitment to increased investment levels into the future. One important policy development to note is that selection as a core-funded NPO, whilst providing security and continuity in funding from ACE, does preclude access to GfA funds. Some NPOs told us that this had a limited and constraining impact on them. However, this policy does protect access to ACE funds for new and emerging arts organisations and community groups.

2. Strategic Funds £440M (2012 to 2015)

This is a particularly important funding stream as it enables ACE to encourage greater audience development and to promote public engagement in the arts in areas of traditionally low take up. There are so far three strands to this funding between 2012-2015

- **Targeted Grants** Programme covering
 - **Capital** - £214.6m over the three years with a priority on NPO organisations, enabling them to develop their venues
 - **Catalyst** - £100m over three years with focus on supporting arts organisations to diversify their funding streams and develop more philanthropic giving
 - **Touring** - £45m over the three years to encourage arts organisations to take their work outside their usual venues and into areas with low engagement with the arts
- **Specific Grant Commissions**
 - **Creative People and Places** - £37m. A three year programme targeted at the 71 local authority areas across the country identified as areas of low engagement with the arts. 7 are in Lancashire
 - **Audience Focus** - £7.5m. The Audience focus fund is designed to help funded organisations understand, retain and grow their audiences. The fund is intended to address major support needs in the sector; it will support a small number of large-scale national, sector-wide or major cross-regional collaborative activities.
 - **Arts Mark** - £4.5m. The Arts Council has appointed a national provider to deliver Arts Mark, the national programme that enables schools, further education colleges and youth justice

- settings to evaluate, celebrate and strengthen a quality arts offer.
- Others still to be announced
- **General Strategic Grant Programme**
 - Details awaited but this fund will use remaining resources to fill in the gaps left by all the above.

ACE Governance and Accountability.

While responding of course to the financial constraints and priorities of the Government of the day, ACE continues to operate at arm's length from it and has a significant degree of autonomy over policy, selection and scale of funding awards. It is governed by a National Council comprising 15 members, which meets 5 times a year, and which includes the Chairs of each of the 9 subordinate Regional Councils that respond to the specific geographical needs and interest of their area. For Lancashire, this is currently the ACE North West Council, the 11 members of which are selected by interview and served by an approximately 24 strong Secretariat. There is one Lancashire-based member on the North West Council, a councillor from Blackpool.

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3 "Achieving Great Art For Everyone" – Outcome for Lancashire

Not Good. The opening paragraph of this report highlights the big blows felt in Lancashire when the funding decisions in relation to the new National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) were announced in March 2011. As outlined above, this funding stream is only one of a number that the Arts Council will operate moving forward. But the decisions around the NPO funding stream are indicative of the state of the arts in Lancashire today and are mirrored in recent decisions around Strategic Funding that have recently been announced. For example:

- the first round of "Catalyst" funding announced in June 2012 saw £3.3m invested into the North West but with none in Lancashire, even though four bids were submitted from within pan-Lancashire. Ours was the only sub-region in the North West not to see any "Catalyst" investment made.
- The "Creative People and Places" programme (ACE's final decisions on which are yet to be taken) saw competing bids submitted from different parts of pan-Lancashire, which some believe created unhelpful tensions and possibly reduced chances of maximising income across the sub-region;
- In April 2012, ACE announced its latest capital funding awards for this year – a total of £114M. ACE can inject up to £5M to support capital development of an arts venue. There were no awards made in pan-Lancashire. That said, only one bid had been submitted from within the sub-region (Blackpool Grand), indicating perhaps how the problems don't lie just with choices made by ACE .

It is fair to say that the outcome overall for arts in Lancashire is not good currently. As a result of NPO decisions local jobs have been lost and some organisations have folded completely. Others are operating with considerable difficulty at the present time.

The reduction in funding for NPO's in pan-Lancashire comes into even greater focus when we make comparisons with the outcomes for our neighbours, such as Liverpool, Manchester and Cumbria, the latter in particular given its predominantly rural population and distance from major cities.

But NPO Decisions Not All Bad. Despite the disappointments, it is also important to remember that there were some successes for pan-Lancashire based arts organisations in the NPO funding round. For example:

- Blackpool was a strong winner in acquiring two NPOs – the Grand Theatre and Grundy Art Gallery – having not previously received any regular ACE funding.

- In addition, a couple of Lancashire organisations saw an increase in their core-funding levels. More Music in Morecambe received a 52% increase and Burnley Youth Theatre a 9.5% increase.
- Curious Minds, based in Burnley, became one of ACE's so-called Bridge Organisations, and is tasked as the northern regional agency to develop the experiences of children and young people in the arts. Whilst populations across the north will benefit equally from their work, it is excellent news that Curious Minds has such a strong presence in Lancashire and has been encouraged to stay.

In addition, Lancashire County Council was awarded £47K to support those arts organisations in its area which are now facing an uncertain future. The intention is to support them through a transition and re-modelling process, providing business support and development, but also fostering creative excellence and exploring other funding streams.

Exciting Opportunities to Refresh and Renew in Lancashire. It is also important to keep in mind that the National Portfolio is not the be-all and end-all of ACE funding. Grants for the Arts (GfA) and Strategic Funds are both substantial funding streams. Furthermore, the opportunities and potential they offer are perhaps especially well-suited to the conditions and character of the pan-Lancashire sub-region, something which ACE themselves advised us. One positive example of GfA funding:

- Preston Guild, as one of the biggest cultural events in the north west and happening only once every 20 years, won a GfA award of £300K, and while The Guild organisers were a little disappointed that the award was not higher, as we have seen in the urban areas of the North West, they are encouraged that the possibility is open for them to apply for additional funds building the Guild legacy.

The Strategic Funding programmes are still very much in their early days and now only just beginning to come on stream. Indeed, some programmes are still in the process of development and not yet formally announced as available. While it is true that the outcomes so far for pan-Lancashire have not been so good (see above), we are nevertheless confident that Strategic Funds in the longer term will be of benefit to the sub-region. The potential of this programme to support arts development in pan-Lancashire is significant.

If we consider "Achieving Great Art for Everyone" in its entirety and the potential it offers, notwithstanding the many disappointing outcomes to date, the prospects for developing pan-Lancashire's arts offer into the future begin to look more promising – and certainly something on which to build for the future.

It is also even possible to argue that the disappointing outcomes are in some small way positive. The shock of the result was a wake-up call to many and it has catalysed arts organisations to re-evaluate, refresh and reinvent their offer – and we came across impressive examples of that in our evidence gathering, such as The Dukes and The Horse and Bamboo Theatres, and

which ACE also tell us it has noticed. The result has also motivated Lancashire's local authorities and their arts teams to think hard about what might have gone wrong and how they as local leaders might help to fix it. In the words of Cllr David Smith, Lancashire County Council's Lead Member for the Arts, "it makes clear to us that our arts scene is not as vibrant nor as healthy as it ought to be and it catalyses us to refresh what we do here and how we do it." In other words, it makes us all motivated to make a fresh start in creating a stronger, more relevant and sustainable future for the arts.

This work of this task group begins that process, first of all by establishing why things went wrong in relation to ACE's decisions on NPO funding and why some things went right. We have consulted widely on this in our evidence gathering, for example with arts organisations, ACE, arts officers, local politicians and arts experts within Lancashire and beyond. Some very clear reasons have emerged (although not all of these apply in all cases):

What Went Wrong?

- With some notable exceptions, the overall strength and depth of NPO applications coming in from the pan Lancashire area was poor in relation to what Arts Council were looking for. Having the best art on offer wasn't necessarily enough to secure funding: it was the quality of the applications according to ACE's key priorities that mattered – and the two could be different.
- The bids submitted from arts organisations in pan Lancashire suffered by their not being set in the context of a clear and cohesive arts vision or ambition for the sub-region. The lead cultural services officer in one authority said "as a result, they (the bids) appeared to ACE as less-well focused, less well-coordinated and less complementary than the bids from many other areas."
- Too many arts organisations in Lancashire had become complacent, stale and isolated. One local arts officer suggested that "perhaps some had lulled themselves into a false sense of security that continued funding was a right rather than a privilege they had earned." This had led to some weaknesses in artistic practice by some art organisations, creating work that was perceived as tired or dated and failing to keep pace with contemporary practice.
- There was insufficient cohesion and coordination amongst arts organisations. The spread and diversity of the Lancashire population and their diverse artistic preferences and needs goes some way to explaining this, which makes it an extra challenge to be overcome. An ACE officer suggested that, "arts organisations in big cities have a natural advantage over many of those in Lancashire in that there are many more opportunities there to connect and communicate with others of similar interest."

- There were some significant organisational weaknesses too, such as: weak business models that were not robust enough to ensure sustainability over the 3 year funding period; poor financial resilience, including excessive dependence on ACE funding; unreliability; governance problems, with over-stretched board unable to address weaknesses already raised by external funders; and an inertia to adapt.
- The performance of ACE in guiding and advising Lancashire's arts organisations through their new funding programme was patchy (see p30 ACE – Role and Performance).
- The majority of arts organisations did not access the support and advice available to them from local authorities. For example, only one organisation approached Lancashire County Council during the bid-writing period for a letter of support. However, this is not necessarily the "failure" of the arts organisations, because neither were most of Lancashire's local authorities – county council included - sufficiently ready, equipped nor accessible to provide effective support to the arts organisations in securing successful NPO bids. Blackpool is one exception here, where the council's arts team were heavily involved in the – notably successful - bids put forward by The Grand and The Grundy.
- Local authorities in pan-Lancashire did not advocate effectively on behalf of arts organisations in their patch, at both a strategic pan-Lancashire level and locality level. There was no local political leadership nor effective inter-authority cooperation in promoting what the various NPO bids had to offer and why they were relevant in the pan-Lancashire context. This is symptomatic of a long-standing lack of advocacy and political leadership for the arts – irrespective of political groupings. And the root cause for this is likely to be the tendency for the arts to be included within the same political portfolio as other big budget services, such as social care. This contrasts with, for example, the assertive lobbying performed by Liverpool City Council through the last NPO round and the work they are already doing to ensure positive results in three years time.

What went right?

Those of our arts organisations that were successful in the NPO funding process display a number of key characteristics that others might learn from:

- They portrayed a sense of ambition and vision in what they were seeking to achieve, giving ACE a clearer understanding of how they could help them deliver the 5 artistic goals laid out in "Achieving Great Art for Everyone"

- They reflected the communities that they serve and demonstrated how they are a hub of good practice, continuously developing their artistic programme in collaboration with local communities;
- They highlighted their strong connections regionally, nationally and indeed internationally. For example, More Music in Morecambe creates great work borne out of the local community and environment. They are also acknowledged for presenting their work on a national and international platform.
- They provide training and/or paid placement opportunities for local people to become engaged with and involved in the arts. They understand the need to develop new talent and support a developing arts infrastructure
- Leadership quality and strong governance arrangements are also features. Those organisations that did well have strong leaders who can articulate a strong ambition and act as ambassadors for their product, fostering a sense of confidence in others within their organisations and a positive external image and reputation for work that they produce.
- They demonstrated financial robustness, with a varied and diverse approach to securing funding and not an over-reliance on ACE.

Arts Lancashire – arts organisations coming together

Arts Lancashire is a new body forming around the 17 key strategic arts organisations in Lancashire. This informal network of organisations had been meeting through facilitated sessions led by Lancashire County Council and linked to its funding agreements. It has gathered some new impetus since the arts task group has been in progress and aims to

- advocate for the arts as a whole in Lancashire
- create new opportunities for promoting and marketing of the arts across pan-Lancashire as deemed appropriate, and to develop links with the new Marketing Lancashire
- develop joint evaluation approaches for arts activity, including measuring the social and economic impacts of investment, that can be standardised across the county
- develop / discuss new coordinated activity where suitable opportunities arise
- support the development of artform specific projects as appropriate e.g. North by NorthWest and their visual arts programme

Arts Lancashire is developing its terms of reference and will be open to organisations working on a strategic basis within Lancashire. Organisations involved initially are

- Lancaster Arts Partnership Members
 - The Dukes
 - Ludus Dance
 - Storey Gallery
 - Litfest
 - LICA
 - Green Close
 - More Music

- Burnley Youth Theatre
- Mid Pennine Arts
- Horse & Bamboo
- Lancashire Sinfonietta
- In Certain Places
- In Situ
- Culturapedia
- They Eat Culture
- Harris Contemporary
- Bluestreak Arts

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4. Local Authorities – Role and Performance

Support to the arts. The component parts of pan-Lancashire have a long record of support to the arts sector and continue today to demonstrate that commitment. They play a vital role in nurturing and supporting the arts organisations and activities in their area, often working complementarily to the agenda of Arts Council England, or additionally in focusing on the local grassroots activity that feeds in to professional arts infrastructure and help to develop audiences and public participation. Local political leaders recognise the value and importance of their local authority contribution to the arts sector and understand how a thriving arts offer contributes to public good.

However, since local authorities don't "do" art in the way that they "do" other cultural services, such as museums or libraries, their contribution can often be less visible and less easily understood by the public. One of the big challenges that local political leaders face in making decisions about the extent of their support to the arts is that evidence from public opinion surveys places investment in the arts as a low priority relative to other budget choices. In times of austerity this is especially relevant. And since local leaders are democratically elected, this evidence cannot be discarded, which means that the arts sector must work harder to demonstrate and prove its worth.

In our view, the most significant role that local authorities do - or should - play is as a "force multiplier", the "catalyst" or "lever" for local arts organisations to gain access to the additional external resources that are essential to fuel their work and creativity. This leverage role is carried out in three crucial ways, to varying degrees of effectiveness in pan-Lancashire:

- financial investment in the form of grants. Securing this "base" money is a sign of confidence in an arts organisation and makes them more eligible then to gain match funding from elsewhere, often from ACE, but also from the private and charitable sector, and often of a magnified dimension. For example, in 2011/12 Lancaster City Council's investment in local arts organisations helped to lever in a further £1m, providing over 200, 000 opportunities for public participation.
- advocacy by a local authority of the merits, relevance and value of the contribution made by particular arts organisations to serving the public interest. We saw in Liverpool how this is a powerful and effective mechanism of support , in particular in informing the funding decisions made by ACE and in promoting public awareness and participation in the local arts offer.
- Providing more generalised support services, such as guidance, advice, signposting, networking opportunities. The task group saw many examples of the value of this service: in Lancaster, the City Council helped to establish and nourish the (now independent) Lancaster Arts Partnership which has enabled local arts organisations to develop a mutually supportive network; Blackpool Council played a significant role in drafting the successful bids by The Grand and The

Grundy for NPO status; and Lancashire County Council has recently run a series of "Culture Café" events, aimed at making new contacts with grassroots/community base arts organisations and to support them in developing their goals and aspirations.

Some local authorities also act themselves as commissioners, working directly with artists on pieces to deliver works according to their specifications. However, this model is the exception rather than the rule.

What is Lancashire? – A Snap Portrait

History and Character. The area known today as Pan-Lancashire has a complex governance and administrative structure, with some history of inter-authority conflict which continues even today. There are 15 component local authorities in the sub-region: 12 district councils complemented by Lancashire County Council as the upper tier authority, together governing a population of 1.1 million; and two unitary authorities, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen, each with populations of around 140, 000. Blackpool and Blackburn used to be part of the Lancashire County Council area until 1998, when they left the two-tier system of local government and acquired unitary status (although they remain in the county for formal ceremonial purposes and for provision of fire, rescue and policing services). Even the two major urban centres of the north-west region, Liverpool and Manchester, were historically part of Lancashire too - along with the southernmost parts of Cumbria - although both have been administered entirely in their own right since 1974.

Pan-Lancashire today is characterised by its geographical spread and diversity, in landscape, population and economy. Covering an overall area of 3075km square (almost a quarter of the North West region), there are 4 main urban centres: Blackpool, Blackburn, Preston, and Lancaster/Morecambe, along with areas of urban spread throughout central and east Lancashire and the Fylde coast especially. 22% of the population is rural, with agriculture and large landscapes of outstanding natural beauty featuring strongly.

It is this very diversity that has contributed to the history of political and administrative conflict in pan-Lancashire, as localities strive to assert their own particular identity and needs, and often end up competing against each other for national resources. It is understandable that this has happened and often for good reason, although it is unfortunate, too, in that it has sometimes been at the cost of gaining advantage from those aspects of Lancashire which the component parts hold in common. Also often lost can be opportunities for more effective cooperative or collaborative working and resource sharing.

A Lancashire Brand – What might it look like?

There are numerous outstanding features of pan Lancashire's heritage, culture and landscape that contribute to a strong sense of identity and uniqueness, a Lancashire Story perhaps. They are helpful in particular in presenting an image - or a central theme - of pan Lancashire externally. Since ours is an area of significant size and diversity, these features will apply differently in the different component parts of the

sub-region, but are still something that all can relate to in some way. Indeed, we would suggest that it is our very diversity that is one of our strengths, providing the ingredients and the mix of traditions to forge something new. These features might include:

- 1 Cotton trade, industrial revolution and world changing invention
- 2 Rise of the ports of Liverpool and Lancaster and their involvement in the slave trade
- 3 Historic, industrial architecture
- 4 Sweeping, rural landscapes of rolling hills and a rich farming heritage
- 5 The development of Blackpool as a leading, national tourist destination for seaside vacations
- 6 Strategic canal network
- 7 A strong tradition of major philanthropic investments in the public realm, including the beautiful and inspiring Harris building in Preston (Grade 1 listed) and the iconic Ashton Memorial in Lancaster
- 8 The Lancashire Red Rose, its historic context in the Wars of the Roses and Lancashire's contribution to heraldry traditions
- 9 The Lancashire Witches Trial of 1612
- 10 The role of Lancashire people in major political and social reform
- 11 Long-established migrant communities and a cultural mix: a diverse population

The nuances of statistics Getting an accurate figure for how much is spent by local authorities on the arts is very difficult because financial support can be channelled through a variety of budget headings, according to other council services and priorities, and it can be delivered as part of a wider cultural services programme and difficult to separate out. Also, making comparisons of spend between authorities can be misleading because there are some which have high building maintenance commitments for physical infrastructure on top of any grants that they might provide for specific projects or arts organisations – such as Preston with The Harris; Blackpool with The Grand, The Grundy, Blackpool Tower and Winter Gardens; and Blackburn with Darwen and King George's Hall and Turton Tower. Lancashire County Council owns no physical facilities whose primary use is arts related. Nevertheless, it is still possible to draw some relevant observations from the information that is available, and which helps us to identify what possibilities there might be for improvement.

It has not been possible within the resource constraints of this review to gather a detailed picture of local authority investment on the arts across pan-Lancashire. However, it is important that this work is done somehow as part of any evidence base for future arts development policies, so we have made a recommendation to this effect.

The picture in Lancashire and Future Prospects.

Following are key points that emerged from our evidence gathering:

- Total spend on arts development support in pan-Lancashire, and comparisons between that made by different authorities, can be difficult to quantify. Some authorities include arts spend within wider cultural services budgets, others within capital and regeneration budgets. However, below is an outline of some key points in relation to this.
 - Total spend on the arts across pan Lancashire by local authorities approximates to approximately £7m per annum. This compares to the approximate £..... likely to be spent by Arts Council England (ACE) in the sub-region over 2012/13 (*we await confirmation of figures from ACE*).
 - Lancashire County Council arts spend in 2012/13 is £725,000 (out of a total budget for all cultural services of £20.7m). £570,000 is used to allocate (approximately 30) grants annually to arts organisations through the cultural driver programme. The remainder is spent on dedicated staff salaries for 4 full time posts and 1 part time post. There are no building maintenance costs.
 - Blackpool Council spend on arts and heritage for 2012/13 is approximately £576,000. This includes capital spend on The Grundy Art Gallery of circa £79,000, a £92,000 grant for The Grand Theatre and staffing costs. Around £30,000 is spent on projects.
 - Blackburn-with-Darwen spend is £97K (2012/13) for arts development
 - Lancaster and Preston City Councils, as second tier district authorities but with significant local arts activity, spend respectively:
 - Lancaster £1,160,800 (2012/13) This includes The Platform and Museums, but does not include all the maintenance costs associated with these buildings and some staff costs. £251,600 of this has been invested in local arts organisations this year for core costs, projects and activities.
 - Preston £3.8M (2012/13) The Harris and The Guild Theatre buildings require major maintenance costs each year, which impacts on financial capacity to make project grants available to local arts organisations. £1.5M has been invested in the Preston Guild celebrations (although not all this spend is arts related).
- In the main, arts development teams in pan-Lancashire are organised within those council structures that focus on people and community services, rather than those that focus on economic development,

tourism, marketing and regeneration (there are exceptions here, such as Burnley). This is in contrast to the examples of Liverpool City and South Lakeland District councils, both of which enjoy a proportionately higher spend by ACE in their area. (see p... "Art and the Economy" for further detail).

- Not all of pan-Lancashire's local authorities have a dedicated or specialised arts development officer. This makes it difficult then for those authorities to advise accurately the local arts sector on where to find additional external monies or signpost them to other sources of advice and support such as the county council. Even in those authorities where there is a dedicated support, the council services that are on offer are not always well accessed by the arts sector, which means that some opportunities for identifying and nurturing new talent are being lost. ACE told us that they had noticed this in Lancashire and that there are some areas of the sub-region where very few - and in some cases no - bids for ACE grants have been even attempted for over seven years. In the words of ACE, "we can't fund arts organisations that don't bid for funds."
- Support to the arts is delivered by a number of different models, according to local needs and preferences. There is no cohesive artistic vision and ambition for the sub-region.
- There is appetite across Lancashire's authorities to re-evaluate and renew how the arts are supported locally: this for individual local authorities, but also strategically as members of one sub-region with a common heritage, aspiration and unique selling points. This agreed view was reflected in the comments of one Executive member, that when it comes to the arts, "any one part of Lancashire lacks the necessary financial and political clout acting on its own".
- Witnesses identified numerous examples of how more could be achieved by local authorities working together, such as: sharing and growing audiences, expertise and resources for the arts organisations; complementary rather than competitive programming; and, most significantly, advocating more effectively with the major stakeholders and funders.
- This appetite extends to the development of a shared ambition and vision for the sub-region that could be used to mutual advantage and provide a context within which up-to-date local plans and strategies could be developed. Indeed, ACE too advised this approach, suggesting that Lancashire authorities "articulate a clear and straightforward sense of what they want arts and culture to do for them, and collectively agree a set of priorities for arts and culture". ACE also said that this shared vision would be best if limited only to the achievable, "ideally 2 or 3 big things that everyone wants to work towards."

- This appetite is also shared by Lancashire's arts organisations and those beyond our borders, often quite vigorously. Just because Lancashire is not an urban centre does not mean that it cannot develop a successful artistic and cultural identity, nor its own artistic ambition, and use that to local advantage. One Liverpool arts organisation described the potential for pan-Lancashire as a "String of Pearls", rather like Germany's Ruhr Valley, which as a disparate set of small urban centres coping with long term industrial decline won European Capital of Culture for 2010
- The current mechanism used by Lancashire County Council for awarding grants to the arts is part of the council-wide "Central Gateway" system that is effective in maintaining control and oversight of the monies that are given to the voluntary, community and faith sector in pursuit of the council's aims and priorities. However, this process is also recognised as a point of weakness in how the authority supports the arts. Stakeholders told us that in serving the development of the arts sector, the process is complicated, heavily bureaucratic and inflexible; that it creates a degree of staleness in the county council's arts development service, and stifles opportunities for identifying and nurturing new and emerging talents. Encouragingly, the task group saw at the same time a keen interest by the County Council's arts portfolio holder to develop a new mechanism for awarding arts grants, but one which must not lead to loss of financial oversight. Preston City Council's grants system has hitherto been seen as equally unhelpful and effective reforms there are now being put in place.
- The relationships between the officer arts development teams and their respective political leads (and councillors generally) is less robust in many cases than it might be. Certain exceptions notwithstanding, arts teams often "get on" with doing arts development without necessarily keeping their political portfolio holder as fully informed as they might, nor seeking the support or the views of the latter on a regular basis. This makes it harder then for the politicians to advocate effectively on behalf of the arts sector in their area. It is understandable that this happens, since arts development budgets are very small relative to those of other council services, and responsibility for the arts is usually only one of a wider range of responsibilities within the relevant Executive member's portfolio. But it does, we observe, weaken the performance of local authorities in how they support the arts.

One Big Idea? – The Aerospace Commission

In 2010, a group of influential former employees of BAE and the wider aerospace industry came together to press the case for a symbolic public artwork for Lancashire which would represent and promote the importance of the aerospace industry to the local community and to the wider public. In partnership with BAE, Lancashire County Council arts development

team undertook an initial feasibility study into options for such a project, with findings presented in September 2011. Ian Banks, a leading public art consultant, undertook the feasibility work which outlined the potential for a major public art commissioning programme that could encapsulate the engineering and technological expertise that the aerospace industry in Lancashire encompasses. The feasibility study was presented at a sensitive time, following redundancies announced by BAE and lately has acquired something of a low profile. Nevertheless this project perhaps offers an opportunity for a major symbolic arts programme project to animate the aerospace industry and the importance of this technologically advanced industry to the economic development of pan Lancashire.

Creativity Works – a good example of cooperative working

Creativity Works is a strategic model of cross district working across the arts. It is managed and delivered by the six districts of Pennine Lancashire (Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley and Rossendale)

Creativity Works was set up in 2002 by the Lancashire district and county arts officers to support and promote the creative industries in the sub region, and in 2008 moved to a new wider model of delivery it is managed by an executive management committee. It delivers strategic projects through a series of themed groups.

It is overseen by an executive which has a representative from each local authority, Regenerate, Curious Minds, Horse and Bamboo, Burnley Youth Theatre and is supported by Arts Council England NW. The executive reports to the PLACE (Pennine Lancashire Leaders and Chief Executives) Culture Leisure and Sport theme group. This group leads on the Pennine Lancashire Cultural Plan and Action Plan. Creativity Works has been successful in being identified as a key delivery organisation of cross district work and is consequently responsible for delivering elements of the action plan, but also providing a voice for arts and cultural at this strategic level

5 Arts Council England (ACE) - Performance

As lead public body for developing the arts in England and the biggest single spender of public monies into the arts in pan-Lancashire, Arts Council England is an influential player in the Lancashire arts sector. It is appropriate, therefore, that as public scrutineers we make some examination of its performance in Lancashire.

The task group sought views and comments about ACE from a wide-range of local stakeholders. In addition, we received detailed written and oral evidence from ACE themselves. A number of key points emerged:

Positive

- There is widespread support and respect for ACE's latest strategic framework, "Achieving Great Art for Everyone". Stakeholders are also supportive of the more open and robust systems for awarding funding to the arts, all this especially given the financial context and constraints in which this strategy has been developed
- ACE have recently taken on additional responsibility for music education and for libraries and museums. This positive development will help to improve the relationships between national and local level cultural services and present exciting opportunities for artistic development. This is especially so for Lancashire, with its rich historical legacy and the strong local commitment to libraries and museums even through this austerity period.
- ACE themselves recognise already the issues in pan-Lancashire that the task group is investigating. Furthermore, they too believe that there is scope for the arts in Lancashire to fare better from their support than has been the case recently. They have for some time been aware that arts activity in Lancashire has been relatively thin on the ground and are motivated to nurture and support efforts towards a more robust future. ACE say that Grants for the Arts (GfA) funding is a good means of achieving this which they have already been using to good effect: in 2011, 22% of the GfA pot allocated to the NW was spent in Lancashire (with 20% of the population). This amounted to just over £900K. But ACE would like to see that grow in future, in particular by more and higher quality funding applications coming in from Lancashire arts organisations.
- In addition, the support from ACE does not amount to money only. One of their designated roles is to bring added value to local authority support for the arts and to empower local arts teams. ACE told us that they remain committed to this, as their staffing structure demonstrates, but they also say that local authorities must work at getting their attention because ACE too are under resource pressure;
- ACE admitted that the complexity of governance and administrative functions in Lancashire does pose a challenge for them in seeking to develop a clear sense of what is needed in the sub-region and what their role in that might be. They would welcome a clearer steer from Lancashire localities about what is needed, and say they will respond to that however they can and within their means. Indeed, they await this task group report and its recommendations with interest and enthusiasm.

- ACE recognise that they have a role to play in local economic development and regeneration agendas and would be willing to participate actively in supporting those arts that contribute in particular to economic development. They are already active in doing this in some other sub-regions in the country.

Negative

- There is still a widespread sense of bewilderment and disappointment within the local arts sector about some of the decisions taken in the NPO round and, more recently, in the "Catalyst" Strategic Funding decisions. There is a view held by some that the fault for the "failures" does not lay entirely with local stakeholders and there is a concern that, consequentially, pan-Lancashire populations may not be receiving appropriate equity of opportunity and access to the arts.
- There are some concerns that ACE is distracted by its current internal pressures to downsize and restructure, such that it is not able to apply full attention nor continuity to its external commitments. One senior arts organisation executive suggested to us in this context that, "right now, ACE are not ready to listen - to anybody".
- While ACE on paper commits itself to working constructively with arts organisations and local government, we received substantial anecdotal evidence to indicate that there are some negative perceptions held locally about their performance in doing this. Most significantly, these relate to issues of consistency. For example: contrasting advice given to local authorities about the place of Preston in ACE's regional planning priorities with regards public participation in the arts; the availability of funds for the "Catalyst" programme was announced with quite a tight time frame attached and local stakeholders received different interpretations by different ACE personnel about what the programme was asking arts organisations to achieve.
- These negative perceptions manifest in other regards too. Examples shared with us include: a sense that many of ACE's working relationships in Lancashire succeed more through personal compatibility than from an objective evidence base of public need; some concerns that ACE is not sufficiently held to account for its local spending choices; and relatively low levels of awareness within the arts development sector about the nature, composition and accountability of the ACE NW Council and its individual members, and with this a view that ACE should be reaching out and working much harder than it does currently to make itself accessible and understood throughout the arts sector at a local or sub-regional level.

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6. Art and the Economy

"If you can develop an ambitious artistic and cultural vision of the right scale, and invest in it, you will see a huge multiplier."

This was Paula Ridley CBE, former Chair of the Victoria and Albert Museum, current Chair of the Liverpool Biennial and Chair of The Civic Voice, speaking

to the task group. Ms Ridley believes that artistic vision of the right scale creates such powerful financial incentive that, once understood, outweighs any competitive advantage that one stakeholder acting alone may have over another and drives local decision-makers to overcome their differences and come together. It is also enough to override competing opinions over artistic merits.

Another of our expert witnesses went further to suggest that investors don't even have to like or appreciate the work or the project: just the fact that it makes money and drives regeneration is a compelling case.

The evidence for the arts sector as a key driver for economic development and regeneration is striking. In the boxes below is just some of the evidence that we came across. It applies especially in a north west England context. But there also is evidence from well beyond our regional borders. It is also the case that many localities in the country have grasped this truth.

Liverpool – case study

Liverpool-based witnesses to the task group told us that since 2003, when Liverpool won its bid to become European Capital of Culture for 2008, the city has undergone a "major transformation". Tourism income is increasing year-on-year; the arts and culture sector is now a big employer in the city; and there has been a revival in Liverpool's self-confidence and civic pride, filtering increasingly down to communities and neighbourhoods.

Arts and culture in Liverpool retain a high level of political and official commitment and promotion. The City Council Executive portfolio holder told us that this happens "in a way that 10 years ago it would not have". Local public investment in arts organisations is seen widely in Liverpool as key to its continued regeneration. This applies even to those organisations that do not attract big numbers of "bums on seats" because of their "iconic" value and the external kudos and respect that they command, which in turn brings benefits to the city as a whole, especially in its marketability for inward business investment.

"Liverpool Vision", the city council's economic development, regeneration and marketing vehicle, is very clear on this. This is demonstrated by the placement of the city's arts development services at the heart of the management structures of "Liverpool Vision". One of the priorities moving forward is to market Liverpool as a centre of excellence for mass participation arts events, over time developing home grown artistic talent and expertise to fuel the growth of its own specialist creative industry.

The very recent "Sea Odyssey" event, for example, saw £1.5M investment by Liverpool City Council for an event held over three days. It is still early days for a full analysis, but initial reports are that an extra 250,000 people came into the city for this free event, generating an additional £30m into the local economy. In addition, the massive amount of publicity, external prestige and free advertising generated for the city is also to economic advantage. Furthermore, "Sea Odyssey" was also an event

that succeeded at a neighbourhood level: it drew new people into the more deprived and under-exposed parts of the city, spending their money and appreciating these areas more positively. Set in a local historical context, it also included local people and communities, contributing to those "softer" elements of regeneration that are more difficult to define and quantify, but important nevertheless. Liverpool is already planning its next Big Art event and its investment into it.

Liverpool City Council's Executive Member for Culture, Tourism, Leisure, Sport and Civic Buildings also told us that support for grassroots and community-based arts is just as important to the council as so-called "Big Art", like Sea Odyssey or the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, because of the significant contribution they make to cohesion, place-making and health and well-being, although it is also the case that one supports the other.

[Link here to Liverpool'08 Impacts Study](#)

Current Situation in Lancashire

There are some areas of Lancashire where there is good practice in linking the arts closely into economic development and regeneration, especially East Lancashire/Blackburn for incorporating the arts into regeneration frameworks and Blackpool for incorporating the arts offer into tourism development. But we must conclude that overall, there is scope for improvement in this area for pan-Lancashire as a whole. The evidence for this is below:

- The funding stream that had been available through the NWDA for arts projects that could deliver a high economic and regenerative dividend no longer exists. There is currently no mechanism for developing projects of any significant scale and ambition in pan-Lancashire. For example:
 - the Preston Guild, an historic festival that takes place every 20 years and has the potential for sustained economic impact for the sub-region, has struggled to gain structural funding of a scale that can extend the reach and impact of the Guild much beyond Preston itself.
 - Investment in capital arts projects. ACE has financial capacity to inject up to £5M for capital development projects at individual arts organisations (the building work for which would provide additional local jobs). For the past 10-15 years many parts of the country have enjoyed improvements to their arts facilities under this funding stream, but not pan-Lancashire. The challenge for pan-Lancashire local authorities under current arrangements is getting access to sufficient local capital that can then help to secure a successful application to ACE.
- Economic development is a priority of Lancashire County Council. However, the arts is not yet a part of that programme of investment and support.

- The arts as an economic driver have not yet featured on the agenda of the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The Lancashire LEP is a government endorsed partnership between public and private sectors, covering the full pan-Lancashire footprint. It is charged with the lead role in identifying and coordinating pan-Lancashire's economic priorities, but it also channels the much sought-after government Regional Growth Fund and Growing Places funds. That said, the Chair of the Lancashire LEP, Edwin Booth, has expressed an interest in the work of the task group and what it might propose about arts and economic development. In addition, ACE have indicated to us that they would be willing and interested to contribute in some way to Lancashire's LEP.
- The majority of the overall local authority arts development effort in pan-Lancashire is organised separately to that of economic development, with some few exceptions. Internal links between arts development and economic development teams are limited in many authorities.

Local Economic Impact Studies

1 Lancashire/Cumbria

A study report "Why Art Works" in 2011 examined the value of the contemporary visual arts in Lancashire and Cumbria. Below are a few of the illuminating conclusions of the study that the author, economist James Rebanks, gave to the task group :

- The impact of increasing (or indeed reducing) arts budgets by a small percentage is miniscule in relation to the overall budget of a council, but is major in relation to what it can then lever in to the arts sector and/or the local economy generally.
- Investing in contemporary visual arts in Lancashire and Cumbria represents good value for taxpayers money: "every 3p per person per week in taxation in Lancashire and Cumbria leads to between £8.5 and £14 million of economic impact generated by the member organisations of the partnership (80% of which is spent in local communities)". Put in another way, approximately £1.6m of local council tax invested in arts and culture in this area can lead to £8.5 - £14m of economic impact.
- The local arts offer contributes significantly to the tourism economy of Lancashire and Cumbria
- Contemporary visual arts make a major contribution to place-making and civic pride eg. Panopticons in East Lancashire.
- Contemporary visual arts also make a major contribution to prospects for inward investment. It has been proven that the main factors in what attracts companies

thinking of investing in an area include a wide availability of arts and culture as part of a "lifestyle" offer. It is also the case that there are prevailing negative external perceptions of Lancashire as something of a cultural desert, which will impact negatively on prospects for inward investment.

- Lancashire and Cumbria have strong traditions and heritage to facilitate a vibrant home-grown visual arts offer.
- The strength of contemporary visual arts in Lancashire is fragile, with the tide of interest sweeping back down to Liverpool and Manchester

"Why Art Works" was commissioned by North by North West, an independent consortium of publicly-funded contemporary visual arts organisations in Lancashire and Cumbria. This commission was funded through grants from Lancashire and Cumbria County Councils. [Link here to "Why Art Works"](#)

2 Lancaster

Another study report in 2011 "Economic Impact of the Arts" quantifies how public investment in the arts in Lancaster and Morecambe district has impacted on the local economy. Some findings from this study are:

- The arts in Lancaster is an especially profitable sector of the local economy in which to make public investment: for every £1 of core funding invested, £5.19 is then leveraged into the local economy (this compares to an average return on investment in local economic development of £2.80)
- There are 600 arts related businesses in Lancaster and Morecambe district
- The net value of the component members of the Lancaster Arts Partnership is £7.56M which has generated 199 jobs.
- The relationship between arts and tourism is strong: 10% of audiences to LAP facilities come from outside the NW region and 25% from outside the Lancashire county boundary.
- There is scope for further development and improved marketing of Lancaster as a tourist and cultural destination.

[Link here to Economic Impact Study](#)

Future Prospects.

Lead local politicians acknowledge these likely gaps in our current approach and say that they would be interested to address in some way. The problem for them, however, is that the case for a stronger investment in local arts development as part of the economic development effort just has not yet been presented in a way that is easily understood by nor convinces the public. This makes it very difficult to justify decisions on arts budgets, especially when set against the contrary evidence from citizen surveys of the arts as low priority for individuals and in times of austerity.

Lancashire County Council's Executive Member for Economic Development, Cllr Michael Green, told us that he encouraged the arts sector in making their case clearly to those in the sub-region charged with driving economic development. Based on the quality of that case, he hoped that further consideration could then be given to the merits of public investment in projects likely to give high economic returns on investment. We hope that this report starts that process off.

Cllr Green noted two significant exceptions to his comment about arts not being a part yet of our investment programme in the economy:

- "Creative Lancashire", a loose consortium seeking to support creative businesses such as the design and digital media sector, which we believe has the potential for revival and growth
- "Marketing Lancashire" –a tourism/inward investment/visitor economy support and promotion vehicle that has been signed up to by all authorities within the Lancashire LEP area, although not Blackpool, which has a unique selling point in terms of tourism. This is still in its early stages of formation, but there is potential here certainly for a stronger role for the arts in promoting its aims. Indeed, the newly appointed Chair of "Marketing Lancashire", chef and restaurateur Paul Heathcote, has an artistic background of his own which he has used to good effect in generating successful local businesses.

Experience in some other local authorities and LEPs show that proposals for cultural investments generate significant dividends in terms of economic development and regeneration. Standard measurement techniques – including economic impact assessment, economic footprint analysis, social return on investment and, especially, gross value added – can all be used to show the benefits of investment both in prospect, at the decision stage, and in retrospect, at the subsequent review stage. A wider use of these techniques will bring more clarity and objectivity to the funding process.

Cultural Tourism

Tourism is a significant element of the pan-Lancashire economy. Parts of the sub-region, Blackpool and the Fylde coast especially, but also Lancaster/Morecambe and Ribble Valley – have a strong tradition and dependency on it. Furthermore, the tourist industry is a potential growth sector and a means of creating new jobs. Promoting tourism is therefore an important strand of the economic development plan for pan-Lancashire. So-called Cultural Tourism, which includes the arts, is an important and fast developing part of the tourist sector.

- It is widely understood that there is significantly more scope for growth in this sector in pan-Lancashire because of its strong historical legacy, landscape heritage, and leisure infrastructure. Success in this, however, depends on the effectiveness of the infrastructure and marketing in place to support that.

- Local authorities in Lancashire have made good progress recently in re-orienting and refreshing their tourism development effort and connecting to the overall economic development offer.
- The "Marketing Lancashire" vehicle is a good example of this progress and offers strong potential for a role for the arts.
- Blackpool has made great strides in recent years in using Cultural Tourism as part of its regeneration programme. The aim here has been to improve access to Blackpool's cultural assets for visitors, but also for local people at the same time, and to think carefully about how to maximise the contribution to jobs and the local economy that those tourism assets can produce. An excellent example of this success is the newly redeveloped promenade, which has a strong artistic function and aesthetic.
- However, it is also the case that the complexity of Lancashire's governance structures and tendency to inter-authority competition has created challenges in capitalising effectively on those common characteristics
- The task group spoke to the (then) Director of Tourism for NWDA, Nick Brook-Sykes about support for arts in pan-Lancashire. He contrasted Lancashire with Cumbria, saying that while Cumbria is a relevant comparator to Lancashire in many ways, when it comes to the arts - and especially in relation to tourism development - there has long been a collective will from all sides in Cumbria to collaborate and cooperate on the arts. This has contributed to Cumbria's stronger position with regards arts investment and external image. Brook-Sykes observation was that Lancashire does not yet have a similar collective will

7. Arts and the Minority Ethnic Communities

Lancashire has a diverse population, with communities of a range of ethnicities and nationalities. In East Lancashire especially, there is a large and long-established Asian community - mainly Muslim but with a Hindu presence - and that population is growing proportionately faster than the average. (For pragmatic reasons, it is the latter community that the task group focused on, although we recognise that there are different issues that arise in communities of other ethnicities.)

There are some good examples in Lancashire of how the arts sector is relevant to and inclusive of the various groups. Work of this type can also have the added bonuses of breaking down unhelpful prejudices, promoting social cohesion and presenting diversity as an artistic and creative strength. Examples include: More Music (Morecambe), and its Chinese Ensemble piece; The Dukes (Lancaster) with their recent successful production of Quicksands, written by a local writer of Polish heritage dealing with local

issues of immigration; and The Harris's current exhibition called Global Threads, which is "a ground-breaking fashion exhibition co-curated by young people from Lancashire, mixing traditional South Asian textiles with today's catwalk, high street and student fashion". There are also long standing Mela's in Preston and Blackburn as well as the Preston Caribbean Carnival.

However, in Lancashire it is still the case that there is an under-representation and participation in the mainstream arts offer by our Asian community, despite its size and longevity. We understand that this is the case here even more so than established Asian communities in other parts of the country, such as London, Leicester and Birmingham.

The Arts Council too recognise that there is an under-representation and participation in the arts by some significant ethnic groups, nationally and not just in Lancashire. Art of this genre is also something that they currently look well upon and tell us they are keen to support. Their agenda in "Achieving Great Art for Everyone" includes a renewed focus on this and their recent publication, "Creating Diversity" makes informative suggestions about how to develop a more inclusive – and therefore successful - arts infrastructure that better reflects and caters for the diversity of interests.

The task group spent some time with various representatives from the arts sector in the Asian community exploring this. Our discussions with the representatives established a number of points of view on which there was broad agreement

- Ethnic communities in East Lancashire offer a rich tapestry for the arts. This includes heritage, dance, music, colour, folklore, poetry and stories. It involves the older generation with their traditionalist perspectives, but also the perspectives of the young, especially in how they might fuse Eastern and Western culture to create a new and exciting genre unique to Lancashire.
- The BME community of pan-Lancashire is not served as well by the local mainstream arts infrastructure as its equivalent in the south of England, where there is more available that will appeal.
- There are some generational issues within the Asian communities that impact on participation in the arts. Different groups within the Asian communities have a different approach to the idea of participation in the arts. This isn't surprising when one considers the journey that Lancashire's Asian communities have taken over the last 40 years. Some attitudes are borne partly out of fear that encouraging the arts and engagement in them might lead to the community losing sense of itself and its identity. However, the witnesses we spoke to all believed quite differently; that their community could only gain in confidence from developing a stronger support for the arts. They said that work is needed in Lancashire to influence more people in their community of the value and benefits in allowing art to thrive. They also cited the example of a relatively vibrant contribution by the Asian community to the art sector in southern England.

- There is scope for a more much effective and sophisticated marketing and presentation of "Asian" art, such that it becomes appealing to a wider audience from a range of cultural backgrounds. This could really help to lever more "Asian" art into the mainstream. Use of neutral space to perform, exhibit or participate is especially important, so that it is the beauty and inspiration of the art itself and less its historic or religious context which speaks to audiences.
- Reductions in financial support has impacted on those local "arts offers" that typically have appealed to the Asian community and that provide a public platform to showcase the "quiet vibrancy" of their arts. One example of this is the Blackburn Mela, which had developed as an annual festival and enjoyed mass participation by the Asian community. It was especially valuable to the young in giving them opportunity to express themselves artistically. However, it disappeared due to lack of support, although community representatives are now working with the Blackburn Council to consider how the Mela might be reinstated, with one idea that it might be fused with the Annual "Arts in the Park" event on the same week-end. This would create an arts and culture celebration of universal appeal and facilitate cross-fertilisation of artistic ideas and experiences across racial and cultural groups – showing off the strengths of diversity rather than the weaknesses.
- More could be done to generate sponsorship and leadership from the private sector to promote art of Asian appeal, in particular for the Mela because of its potential to contribute to Lancashire's tourist offer and how Lancashire markets itself externally. Lancashire could become known for the development of "A Lancashire Mela", taking place in different parts of the County at the same time and creating a national event to be proud of.
- In addition, general financial pressures on councils have resulted in rising hire costs of venues traditionally used by some BME, which have become prohibitive for many. This is a challenge that applies to other grassroots and community based groups.
- Some suggestions for how improvements might be brought about included: more voice for those who believe that art would strengthen the community; goal-setting and leadership from the Lancashire councils; searching for and encouraging those with "new eyes, new blood and new perspectives – freshen everything up".

8. Role of Universities

Universities have a key role to play in promoting development in the arts, particularly in talent development and research. Furthermore, there is an expectation placed on them by government to do so, through the requirement to contribute positively to area economic and social development, particularly in relation to knowledge transfer and graduate retention.

Pan-Lancashire is blessed by the strength and depth in its higher education and research provision. There are four highly regarded universities forming a large part of that: Lancaster, Uclan, Edge Hill and University of Cumbria. The latter two are also teacher training institutions. Each of these nurture highly regarded arts departments, some of which are arts organisations in their own right. LICA (Lancaster Institute of Contemporary Arts) at Lancaster University, for example, is a member of ACE's National Portfolio.

Along with some of Lancashire's schools (in particular those recently built in East Lancashire), these institutions house performance and exhibiting facilities, some of which are of exceptionally high standard. Examples of this

are the Rose Theatre at Edge Hill (Ormskirk), the Chaplaincy at University of Cumbria (Lancaster), the LICA building (Lancaster University campus); and the Media Factory/Sound Box at Uclan.

There are some positive contributions already being made by these institutions, sometimes with the help or partnership of local councils. Some examples of this include:

- Availability and access to these facilities for wider community use, sometimes at a reduced rate according to means
- Arts related courses include a strong element of professional training so as to equip students with the enterprise and employability skills alongside their creative skills to develop an arts-based career, ideally with a percentage of students remaining in the pan-Lancashire area
- Programming events and exhibitions targeted especially at the surrounding local population, so as to develop public awareness and develop regular audiences. An example of good practice already is "In Certain Places, Uclan's long-established, temporary public art partnership with The Harris.
- In Morecambe, local student artists were granted permission to use a vacant high street shop using a grant supplied by the town council. Students were teaching arts to the general public and the venue was open after hours to allow wider access. It was a successful initiative.

However, there is also the capacity and scope for pan-Lancashire universities to play a more prominent role in local arts development and for local authorities to work harder with them on that. For example:

- Development of stronger, more regularised links between universities and local authorities.
- Local authorities to work harder at identifying opportunities for arts students to gain experience, expertise and public exposure
- Universities to offer better guidance and advice to arts students about potential employment experiences and sources of funding, such as from ACE and the private/charitable sector, that might help them to realise their creative ideas
- Stronger marketing to community arts groups of campus-based facilities, ensuring that hire costs are appropriate to means of payment
- More effective publicity and promotion locally of students' work. Students need real audiences and the local general public can provide that. This also serve to develop the local arts offer, often at significantly lower costs

RECOMMENDATIONS

Building on the enthusiasm, encouragement and support that we have received from all contributors to this review, from across the Lancashire sub-region and beyond, and in particular from the Executives of all the participating local authorities and from Arts Council England, we recommend that:

1 Political Leadership and Advocacy.

Local authorities in Lancashire should each develop a clear political leadership for the arts. The prime purpose of this role would be to advocate for and champion the arts, both internally and externally, and focus in particular on the value of the arts to local economic development and regeneration. It should include a commitment to work in collaboration with

local Lancashire partners to develop a stronger advocacy effort with key strategic partners and in support of a more strategic pan-Lancashire arts identity and ambition (see recommendation ...in addition).

2. Effective and Intelligent Investment.

All local authorities should recognise their individual role as a "force multiplier" investor in the arts and ensure that they have efficient and effective funding mechanisms in place to support the arts and, where appropriate, should review these. This should manifest as:

- a stated commitment to a minimum percentage at least of annual budgets to be so dedicated so as to facilitate the leverage needed for arts organisations to gain access to additional external funding streams, but at the same time appropriate to the financial plans and constraints in each authority.
- Further internal consideration given to ways in which a stronger local financial commitment might be achieved, in particular for those art forms and projects that are likely to be most productive in the economic and regenerative returns made on initial investment
- Lancashire County Council should also review its arts spend in the context of the overall cultural services budget, where there is historical underinvestment in the arts relative to other areas of work. This should include
 - reviewing the proposed £100k reduction for arts in funding in 2013/14, with an analysis first of the likely impact on local capacity to lever in additional external investment into the sub-region.
 - exploring how to support investment in the voluntary and amateur sector without impacting on that made to the professional arts sector.
 - securing investment into significant capital projects linked to Arts Council England's capital fund.
- Lancashire County Council should review further its current arrangements for awarding grants to the arts and develop a more appropriate, effective and efficient system. This might include consideration of whether any new process could be removed from the current Central Gateway system. The bureaucracy of any new system should be proportionate to the level of investment requested, but will require the development of a new cultural driver investment programme with mechanisms built in to ensure that impacts and dividends can be measured and monitored in a way that is appropriate in scale for the money involved

3. Officer Expertise.

All local authorities in pan-Lancashire should employ dedicated arts development officer support to: develop and promote the arts sector in their area; monitor progress and value for money of funds awarded; and draw in additional, external funding resources. Possibilities should be considered for sharing arts officer resource and expertise across authorities.

4 . Pan Lancashire Artistic Vision and Ambition.

Local authorities and arts organisations alike should consult and collaborate to develop a pan-Lancashire approach to supporting the arts and the independent arts sector of the sub-region. This approach should involve:

- Joint formulation of an agreed sub-regional artistic vision and ambition that is simple, relevant, realistic, appropriate and attractive to external and additional arts funding sources. It should articulate a clear and straightforward sense of what collectively pan-Lancashire local authorities want arts and culture to achieve for them
- Supporting the development of Arts Lancashire as a strategic, independent pan-Lancashire advocacy body for the arts sector in the sub-region.
- Setting a limited number of sub-regional goals and aspirations that focus on getting access to ACE funding with regards: the National Portfolio; Grants for the Arts; Strategic Funds; Capital Funds. It should also involve goal setting around access to other external funding opportunities, from Government, the private and charitable sector, and the European Union.
- Regular monitoring and analysis of public investment levels made into pan-Lancashire by Arts Council England (ACE) and local authorities.
- More cooperative planning for big arts and culture events and opportunities, such as Preston Guild, Open Golf Championships, and exploiting to greater effect the shared historical, natural, and industrial heritage of the sub-region as a context in which to place pan-Lancashire's arts vision. This should be led by immediate support to the implementation and launch of the revived and renewed BAE public art project
- Local authorities should work together closely to simplify accessibility for arts organisations and artists to the overall local authority support and guidance that exists for them.

5. Annual Review of the Arts.

Lancashire County Council, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen Councils should lead in hosting an annual standing conference of the "State of the Arts" in pan-Lancashire, as a means of: publicising and promoting Lancashire's arts sector; setting shared priorities and objectives; monitoring and reviewing progress; and identifying new opportunities.

6. Arts and Economic Development.

There should be greater recognition of the role the arts can play in local economic development and regeneration programmes. This should include:

- Developing stronger links within councils among arts development and economic development teams

- Encouraging greater representation on the agenda of the Lancashire LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) as a significant economic driver and as a pathway to:
 - new funding opportunities, in particular for works of iconic and income-generating value, the Aerospace collaboration project being the current leading contender;
 - possibilities for leveraging in additional sponsorships and funding from the private sector;
 - leadership in driving forward a pan-Lancashire artistic vision and ambition in support of economic development and regeneration.
- Promoting more proactive business development support to arts organisations to promote financial efficiency and resilience, effective governance structures, and developing pathways for growth.
- Developing the opportunity for arts apprentices within the arts sector in Lancashire

7. Arts and Tourism Development.

Stronger links should be developed between tourism development and arts development work. Lancashire County Council, District Authorities and unitary neighbours should work closely with tourism champions in each area to explore how a pan-Lancashire arts vision can be best employed as a driver for local tourism. A pan-Lancashire action plan should be developed to drive this forward.

8. Marketing and Publicity.

Stronger links should be developed between arts development officers and "Marketing Lancashire" to ensure maximum impact of arts activity in Lancashire in the development of the visitor economy in the sub-region. Blackpool Council can guide and advise on this. It should include: the development of joined up publicity, programming and audience sharing; the development of an e-calendar of arts activity; the establishment of an "arts champion" to sit on the Board of "Marketing Lancashire" and "Marketing Blackpool".

9. Arts Strategy.

Lancashire County Council (informed by and with support of district partners) and unitary neighbours, should each develop their own detailed arts development plans/strategies, drawing on evidence and ideas from this task group report. All strategies should be underpinned by the agreed sub-regional artistic vision and endorsed and championed by political leaderships. All district councils should be encouraged to do the same and, where appropriate, as a joint approach, focusing in particular on nurturing the vibrant amateur sector and identifying new artistic talent in every area of the sub-region.

10. BME Communities

A pan-Lancashire steering group should be established to focus on the needs and opportunities and potential of the BME communities in Lancashire to contribute to growth in participation and in Lancashire's overall arts offer. This

should include consideration of major arts events, such as Mela and Carnival, to be developed as highlight events for the sub-region. Stronger support to grass roots organisations and individual artists should also be encouraged.

11. Dialogue with Arts Council England.

Local authorities and arts organisations should work together to develop more assertive strategic relationships with ACE and a stronger voice for pan-Lancashire.

- Further consultation should be carried out on the details of how a pan-Lancashire voice could be achieved in practice, perhaps using Arts Lancashire – a new advocacy body for the sub-region.
- In addition, CEOs and Executive Members from Lancashire County Council, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen Council should establish stronger, more active, strategic relationships with ACE.
- Districts too should be supported and encouraged in their own relationships with ACE.

12. Partnerships at regional level.

There should be development of proactive relationships with strategic leads for the arts in neighbouring sub-regions – Manchester, Liverpool, South Lakeland and Yorkshire – to identify and encourage new opportunities for respective arts organisations to develop joint ventures - in audience development, for example, and sharing knowledge and expertise on current trends and new creative ideas.

13 Enhanced Performance from Arts Council England.

Arts Council England should:

- comment on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of this report, in particular to the evidence in the report regarding their own role and performance
- consider how best to offer clearer, yet manageable lines of communication with local authorities and arts organisations during the current period of organisational change within ACE, and beyond
- pursue opportunities to demonstrate a more energetic commitment to arts development in Lancashire and in working with local authorities to achieve that – for example: a close working relationship with Lancaster Arts Partnership (LAP); offering encouragement and support to the new "Arts Lancashire"; pressing the case for a close working relationship with the Lancashire LEP; offering to present to and advise Marketing Lancashire; strategic representation at the first State of the Arts Lancashire event.
- Offer opportunity for some local political engagement with ACE's NW Council members, the Chair and Lancashire-based member in particular, for an exchange of views and ideas for how pan-Lancashire might develop a more robust and vibrant arts offer into the long term.

14. Proactive Arts Organisations.

Local authority arts officers should lobby local arts organisations to nurture stronger relationships with their local councillors and become more proactive

in informing and engaging the interest of the latter, perhaps even offering interested councillors a place on their governing bodies.

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