

Question: CS21.01

Cabinet – 14 December 2021

Re: Agenda item 21 - Cultural Investment Programme 2023-2027

Statement submitted by: Councillor Tessa Fitzjohn

The UK Museum sector is an important asset in the success of the UK's arts and creative industries, who contribute £2.8 billion a year to the Treasury via taxation and generate a further £23 billion a year and 363,700 jobs so their value financially and educationally is an important resource.

As a Visual Arts and Media Officer for Arts Council England for the SW and SE regions, and since as Public Art Producer who has worked for Bristol Museums, I feel well placed to ask probing questions as that is what ACE will do to this application. It is therefore essential that we test these documents against the newly produced Let's Create ACE 10 year strategy starting in 2023.

Let's Create is a major shift for ACE, as it will be looking particularly at their NPO portfolio with fresh eyes, asking for applicants to design projects and programmes that our outcome led; that enable participants to express their own creativity; are collaborative and include new partnerships that demonstrate reaching out beyond the cultural sector bringing in new skills and experience.

The Investment principals encourage taking risks and innovation, as well as encouraging an international outlook, environmentally aware importantly asking board members to be more engaged, responsible and increase scrutiny.

Museums are expensive beasts to fund and can suffer from management feeling daunted by the scale of their buildings, health and safety or just a traditional working ethic that lends itself to siloed working, with less interdisciplinary cross departmental project working.

Let's Create is offering Museums a unique opportunity to demonstrate new ways of working in this application.

The response and the business plan will no doubt be informed by the necessary service data such as equality of life survey and visitor surveys to name a few. These are important aspects of running a large organisation but Let's Create is asking for funding to be used to commission artists and to make art with everyone and anywhere. First and foremost, it's about demonstrating high quality activity and more of it.

As the second largest political party in Bristol, I would like to emphasis the Green Party's interest in the arts and creative industries. So we shall be looking to see that this application demonstrates the permission emphasised by let's Create, to provide opportunities for artists and the arts community to make new work, and to engage Bristol citizens in that process.

We shall also be looking for evidence to demonstrate that Bristol Museums will take the opportunity to benefit from the many new entrepreneurial organisations and small businesses emerging in Bristol since covid, which offer exciting potential for new partnerships that demonstrate risk taking and innovation.