

**Report of The Director of City Development and Arts organisations across the city**

**Report to the Sustainable Economy and Culture Scrutiny Board**

**Date: 21<sup>st</sup> February 2013**

**Subject: Marketing Culture**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. Individual Cultural organisations have strong marketing approaches to both sell their programme and continually develop their audiences. This results in 72% of the people in Leeds attending some form of cultural activity in a year
2. The strength of the cultural offer<sup>1</sup> in Leeds is in its breadth and depth from the fast moving community arts scene through the iconic dance programme to the monumental performance of works such as Wagner's Ring Cycle by Opera North. The weakness of this, however, is telling a single coherent story. Culture in Leeds is more than one iconic event or organisation. There is no brand for culture in Leeds. Leeds Inspired has begun to make a difference providing one place for everyone to go and see what is on. We need to celebrate the diversity of the cultural offer, encourage increased and more targeted marketing to attract the 28% not yet reached. In Newcastle they have identified that for every £1 invested there is a £4 return to the City while London estimate the value culture adds £225m per year. In Leeds the average secondary spend of someone attending a city centre cultural event is £25.

**Recommendation**

3. To explore how the arts organisations currently communicate their cultural offer and investigate the issue and opportunities marketing offers the sector.

<sup>1</sup> For this paper we are using Culture to include Performing and Visual Arts, Film, Music, Dance, Libraries, Museums, Creative industries, digital media.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To outline how organisations go about marketing Culture in the city, why it is so vital and how it contributes to The Vision for Leeds.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 In its Vision for Leeds 2030 the city outline its ambition to work to become the 'Best City in the UK'. If the city is to achieve this for children, businesses and communities, improve health and well being and be the best place to live, then a strong vibrant cultural offer which is well marketed, is vital.
- 2.2 The Vision for Leeds is supported by the simple cultural strategy
  - To spot, nurture and retain talent
  - To remove barriers
  - To demonstrate the distinctiveness of culture and tell the story better
  - To inspire the city and be inspired by it
- 2.3 The city is in the early stages of developing robust data on the impact and value of the cultural offer. Both the Arts Council and Leeds City Council require data to be returned on impact and value from grant aided organisations. Council run cultural activity also has a wide range of data available. As data collection improves and a consistent approach implemented, this data will become much more useful. Support in this area is forthcoming from the two universities both of whom have specialists in this field.
- 2.4 From 2010/2011 data, we know that 90% of the audiences of the 63 arts organisations are from Leeds and that 72% of the population take part. 21,000 activities were organised with 37% of them targeted to children. 3,459 people volunteer in culture and 42,083 creators were involved. £1.67 is the subsidy per audience member.
- 2.5 The most quoted figure in the UK for impact of culture is that for every £1 spend there is a return of £4. £25 is the average secondary spend of someone attending a major show or event in Leeds. There are almost 21,000 people employed in the creative and digital industries and 3% of businesses in Leeds are from the cultural sector.
- 2.6 Just this headline data shows the importance of the cultural sector in Leeds and why marketing it is vital. We are yet to tap the full depth of data available so this is only a very conservative estimate of impact in the city.

## **3 Marketing culture**

- 3.1 The focus of marketing is two fold; to market the arts to the city and to market the city through its cultural offer. There is a significant story to tell as Leeds has a unique mix of national and internationally recognised organisations and events coupled with a vibrant, fast moving DIY scene with a lot going on in communities.

High profile, quality creators have originated in the city and are also attracted to the city. As a result it is a city buzzing with diverse cultural activity contributing to the city's economy.

- 3.2 Marketing focuses on two areas selling tickets and developing audiences. A strong market place attracts the best shows and artists and enables a quality offer. To achieve this there constantly needs to be a focus on the audience, to raise awareness as to what is available, to listen to what they want and need. Organisations continually seek to identify new audiences and help them engage with culture and through associated programmes explore their own creativity. Audiences are very loyal to an organisation or even a venue. For example Northern Ballet have found the audience for their shows at The Grand and WYP are very different.

#### **4 The process of marketing**

- 4.1 There is a common approach to marketing which works for culture as well as all other activities. The cultural programme of an organisation is developed considering a range of issues related to the organisation and its environs. These include economic, social, technical and environmental issues. Activity needs to be relevant to the city, likely to attract public interest, be cost effective even if free to engage with and deliverable in the location and with the people available. The puppets recently part of Liverpool's commemoration of the maiden voyage of the Titanic were relevant because the Titanic sailed from Liverpool, the puppeteers told the story of Liverpool children and the event was timed for the centenary of the voyage. The event would not have had any relevance if in Leeds.

#### **5 Marketing channels**

- 5.1 A combination of channels need to be used to engage with the maximum number of people. Traditional methods – printed material in the form of leaflets, posters and postcards are still useful as are radio and TV campaigns. Of increasing significance, particularly for marketing culture is the use of modern technology. Welcome to Yorkshire mobilised over 2,000 cycling enthusiasts to stand outside Leeds Town Hall for the Tour de France announcement in less than a week just through e-flyers and Twitter.
- 5.2 The use of social media and the internet has changed the face of marketing. Opera North, for example, have seen 50% of their audience now book online and their mobile traffic has increased 530% in the last two years. Many of those interested in culture whether the DIY scene or the programme of the major organisations use Twitter to share and discuss in great detail. The introduction of Leeds Inspired the city's website, which shares with the world the cultural programme of the city, has seen a significant growth in use in its first nine months. One of the benefits of this approach is that organisations can support each other by retweeting, reciprocal adverts etc.
- 5.3 Meanwhile Joshua Bell's own experience graphically shows the difference. When marketing an event with an average price of \$100 a ticket his concert in Boston sold out within minutes, while a gig on the subway with no marketing earned him \$32!

## **6 The value of a strong marketing campaign**

- 6.1 To explain the impact of a strong marketing campaign a good example, from many available, is Annie at West Yorkshire Playhouse. TV advertising for the production was seen by 1.5million people in the Yorkshire region. As a result 50,000 people went to see the production and 55% of these were new to the Playhouse, and 30% of these were from South Leeds. The total box office income was £893,020, the highest in the company's history.

## **7 Partnership approach**

- 7.1 Marketing culture in Leeds is a partnership approach. Individual organisations market their own programmes; cultural communicators such as Culture Vultures re-tweet and comment on the programmes through articles and blogs; Leeds City Council promotes its own cultural activity but also works across organisations through Leeds Inspired to give coherence and ease of access. The Arts Council and Welcome to Yorkshire market to broader audiences and tell the story across the region and Leeds and Partners are looking to help tell the story better in the UK and world wide.

## **8 Summary of the cultural offer**

- 8.1 Leeds is unique in the breadth and depth of its cultural offer. It has a number of iconic elements: The Leeds International Piano Competition has a huge reputation outside the city but little understood within it. Leeds is the only city outside London with its own resident Ballet and Opera companies, it is the best city for dance and has the fourth largest producing theatre. It has the largest local authority music programme in the UK in the Leeds International Concert Season. It has a cultural infrastructure the envy of all and the addition of the Arena will complete that offer. Leeds has the best contemporary art collection outside London, has a unique grant scheme, is the birthplace of internationally renowned talent and is training the future through some of the best further and higher education. So Leeds has much to be proud of and a strong story to market.

## **9 Main Issues**

- 9.1 The impressive offer does, however, create marketing challenges. Up to now the focus has been on marketing individual organisations and activity. This marketing has been strong and activity such as Canvas and Leeds Inspired are trying to change this but there is no collective brand identity for culture.
- 9.2 Leeds is much richer than one iconic story, the strength is in the depth of the offer and this encourages the development of creativity across many artforms. However it makes the collective city story harder and so far marketing agencies have failed to tell it. There is also a reluctance by some to see the benefits of new marketing channels and techniques using modern technology and people's current interest in

sharing. The impact and benefit of using more channels is clear but not everyone encourages their use. At the same time there is no proposal to substitute technology for print as this would disadvantage certain audience groups. As the economic and social impact of the cultural offer is better understood by analysing the marketing data there will be greater understanding and value of culture in the city.

- 9.3 There are some significant challenges to marketing culture in Leeds. Transport is a real challenge whether it is the public feeling safe getting to and leaving events, enabling young people and low income earners to access culture or getting critics back to London after the show all impact on the marketing effort. The Concert Season has overcome this by organising bus transport to and from Leeds Town Hall on a Saturday night.

28% of the people of Leeds have yet to be attracted to a grant funded cultural activity. Marketing to these non-attendees is particularly challenging and requires significant consideration and cost. Strong marketing and large audiences attracts further funding and as a significant proportion of an arts organisation's budget comes from sponsorship, grants and external funding marketing the offer is vital.

## **10. Corporate Considerations**

### **10.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 10.1.1 This report has been produced in consultation with the major arts organisations in the city.

### **10.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 10.2.1 A diverse audience is vital to the health of the sector. The arts organisations constantly consult with and canvas opinion across the city to not just inform new marketing but also their programme. Attracting new audiences is vital and each programme is assessed to define target audience and potential reach. This report is not about Council provision and so an Equality Impact assessment has not been done. However LCC has offered to help Arts Organisations assess new audiences against their current systems like Mosaic to better understand breakdown.

### **10.3 Council policies and City Priorities**

- 10.3.1 Increasing participation in cultural activity is a core priority for the city.

### **10.4 Resources and value for money**

- 10.4.1 This report does not have any financial implications.

### **10.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 10.5.1 This report is an information report and has no legal implications.

## **11 Conclusion**

- 11.1 The city has a strong cultural offer which responds to both local and regional demand. Each organisation targets each element of their programme to specific audiences. The breadth of the offer creates some challenge at demonstrating a single story or iconic offer and there is therefore no single brand for culture in the city.

## **12 Recommendations**

- 12.1 The Scrutiny Board explores how the major organisations market culture and the impact of their work and encourages them to work together to tell better the story of culture in Leeds and demonstrate its distinctiveness.

## **13 Background documents<sup>2</sup>**

- 13.1 None

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<sup>2</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.