

# LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

<b>REPORT:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>	
<b>DATE OF DECISION</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> October 2024</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>London Borough of Culture Impact Report</b>	
<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:</b>	<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Nick Hibberd</b> Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration &amp; Economic Recovery</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Kristian Aspinall</b> Director of Culture &amp; Community Safety</p>	
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<p style="text-align: right;">Kristian Aspinall, Director of Culture &amp; Community Safety <b>Kristian.aspinall@croydon.gov.uk</b></p>	
<b>LEAD MEMBER:</b>	<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Councillor Andy Stranack</b> Cabinet Member for Communities &amp; Culture</p>	
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>No</b>	N/A
<b>CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Public</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	N/A	

## 1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1** This report outlines the success of the **London Borough of Culture: This is Croydon** (LBoC), and the lessons learnt and legacy of the program for future years.
- 1.2** The program was delivered within budget, with zero core Council funding spent. It was entirely funded using ring-fenced grants and other restricted monies, bringing in several million pounds worth of additional investment into the borough.
- 1.3** Despite the challenges of Covid and the Council's financial difficulties since winning the bid in early 2020, we overachieved on the number of local artists, creative organisations involved, opportunities for children and young people, and total audience numbers.
- 1.4** Our headline performance across a wide range of targets is displayed below, extracted from the Impact report:

# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS



**174**  
**PARTNER ORGANISATIONS**  
Shaped *This is Croydon*,  
83% Croydon-based



**2,750+**  
**ARTISTS AND CREATIVES**  
Involved in the programme



**8**  
**GIANT PUPPETS**  
Representing Croydon's music icons



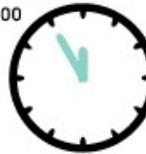
**92%**  
**CROYDON SCHOOLS**  
Engaged with the programme



**655,000**  
**AUDIENCES**  
360,000 in-person  
and 295,000 digital



**5.1M**  
**PUBLIC ART VIEWS**  
Out and about around the borough



**1,071**  
**VOLUNTEERS**  
With almost 13,000 hours of time donated



**11.6M**  
**VIEWS OF MEDIA COVERAGE**  
From 201 pieces of coverage, 95.4% positive



**60**  
**GIRAFFES**  
Decorated by local artists and communities



**16,275**  
**OPPORTUNITIES TAKEN UP BY YOUNG PEOPLE**  
To develop skills



**5**  
**THINGS TO DO PER DAY**  
As an average across the year



**18**  
**SHEEP & 2 SHEPHERDESSES**  
As part of Rural Croydon

- 1.5 This was done using an innovative approach, working hand in hand with Croydon's vibrant cultural sector as an equal partner, rather than Council making all decisions and leading all elements of the program.
- 1.6 Significant inward investment and support for Croydon's Creative sector was prioritised by the Executive Mayor in 2022, and the program brought into over £3m direct funding through the Council and several million indirectly to participating organisations across the year.
- 1.7 A strong legacy program has been developed for future years based on the learning and experience of LBoC.
- 1.8 The full impact report is attached as appendix 1.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

For the reasons set out in the report and its appendices, Cabinet is recommended:

- 2.1 To endorse the findings of the 'This is Croydon London Borough of Culture 2023 Impact Report' as attached as Appendix 1, and note the success of the program and the rich diversity of events offered throughout the borough.
- 2.2 To endorse the lessons learnt and next steps elements of the Impact report.
- 2.3 To support the ongoing work with Culture Croydon and the culture sector to build on the success of the new partnership approach.

## **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 As outlined in the Impact Report, "This is Croydon" was a successful program that galvanised our culture sector and community. Our recommendations build on that success and will secure a stronger future for culture in Croydon.

## **4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS**

- 4.1 Please see the full Impact Report in Appendix A for the complete details.
- 4.2 Croydon was chosen as the London Borough of Culture:2023/24 in February 2020. A month later, Covid resulted in a national lockdown. This impacted greatly the culture sector. In 2020 the Council issued two S114 notices, effectively declaring it was bankrupt. By May 2022 the Council was on the brink of declaring its third S114 notice. The Executive Mayor chose to proceed with the program, focussed on the boost to the economy and creative sector in Croydon and wanting to showcase our vibrant culture across London.

- 4.3** The groundbreaking approach was based on a fundamental reshaping of how the Council worked with the culture sector in Croydon. Rather than directing the whole program as originally envisaged, This is Croydon would be delivered by an equal partnership between the Council, the culture sector, and the communities of Croydon.
- 4.4** The program was delivered over a 12 month period and included a significant number of events across the borough, with groups including professional culture organisations, amateur arts, community festivals, and neighbourhood groups.
- 4.5** Key results from the year include:
- 114 partner organisations delivering the program, 83% of which were Croydon based
  - 2,750 artists and creatives involved in the programme
  - A total audience of over 655,000
  - 5.1 million public art views across the borough
  - 16,275 opportunities for young people taken up
  - 92% of Croydon schools involved
  - 11.6 million views of media coverage, with 92% being positive
  - An average of 5 things to do a day, averaged across the year
- 4.6** The programme focussed on the key themes of:
- Developing Pride in Croydon
  - Surfacing hidden histories and seldom seen communities
  - Making sure everyone is welcome
  - Bringing a positive impact for Croydonian's health and wellbeing
  - Investing in the creativity of young people
  - Supporting economic and social development in the borough
- 4.7** Following the year, we have embarked on an ambitious legacy programme outlined on pages 42 and 43 of the Impact Report. This includes further grant rounds under the "Croydon Loves You" programme started in the year of culture, the access manifesto toolkit to enable everyone in Croydon to take part in Culture, further funding for arts and creativity in Croydon Town Centre, and a program of health and wellbeing through culture. All of this is funded through ring fenced grants and has no cost to general Council funds.

## **5 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 As outlined throughout the report, qualitative and quantitative findings from participants and artists were essential to development of the program and the report.

## **6 CONTRIBUTION TO EXECUTIVE MAYOR'S BUSINESS PLAN**

- 6.1 This plan directly contributes towards the Executive Mayor's Business Plan:

"Deliver a vibrant London Borough of Culture which showcases local talent and supports Croydon's recovery"

## **7 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1.1 There are no financial implications from this report. The LBoC program was delivered within budget, and did not use any core Council funding.
- 7.1.2 Comments approved by Nish Narendran, Finance Manager on behalf of the Director of Finance ((Date 27/08/2024)

### **7.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.2.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the contents of the recommendations in this report
- 7.2.2 Comments approved by Kiri Bailey Head of Commercial, Housing and Litigation and Deputy Monitoring Officer on behalf of the Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. (10/09/2024)

### **7.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.3.1 As outlined in the impact report, equality and diversity was at the heart of This is Croydon.
- 7.3.2 Pages 28-31 outline the work done to platform artists from the global majority, LGBTQ+, and deaf, disabled and neurodiverse communities.
- 7.3.3 As a result of the program, an Access Manifesto with supporting toolkits for artists and cultural organisations was developed and is available through the Culture Croydon website.

Comments approved by Ken Orlukwu, Senior Equalities Officer, on behalf of Helen Reeves, Head of Strategy & Policy on 09/09/2024.

## **8 APPENDICES**

**A** This is Croydon: Impact Report

## **9 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None