

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Deputy Chief Executive
(Place)

to

Cabinet

on

10 January 2017

Report prepared by: Rosemary Pennington,
Cultural Development Manager

Development and Expansion of Jazz Centre (UK) in the Beecroft Art Gallery

Relevant Scrutiny Committee(s)
Executive Councillor: Councillor Holland
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item) / Part 2

1. Purpose of Report

To inform Members of the proposal for Jazz Centre (UK) to develop and expand its programme to take over areas of the lower ground floor of the Beecroft Centre, Victoria Avenue.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members support in principle the Jazz Centre (UK) proposal to extend its presence beyond the current single room on the Lower Ground Floor of the Beecroft Centre.
- 2.2 That Members authorise the Deputy Chief Executive Place to approve the terms of a lease in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and the Economy based on the terms negotiated and recommended by Asset Management.
- 2.3 That Members note the future aspirations of Jazz Centre UK to further develop a Jazz Club for Southend into a regular performance space subject to future self-funding and planning considerations.

3. Background

- 3.1 The National Jazz Archive (NJA) was established in Loughton Library in 1988 as a charitable organisation to ensure that the cultural heritage of jazz is safeguarded for future generations of enthusiasts, professionals and researchers. In 2015 Southend Borough Council was approached to create a second centre in Southend to foster and develop jazz in the borough. A 10 year SLA was signed in July 2015 with the NJA with the aims to increase cultural activities within the borough and to promote jazz related events and activities across the borough from this new centre. Local jazz musician Digby Fairweather

has been the key driver involved in this project and has used his influence in the national jazz arena to support this initiative. The NJA would use the space provided (initially one room) as a facility to preserve and display parts of its collection with a vision to engage with local communities, academic partners to develop educational projects around oral and social history, and to provide academic research opportunities and work experience where appropriate. Since that time the centre has plans to develop beyond the remit of NJA, and a separate body Jazz Centre (UK) has been created in order to expand the activities offered.

- 3.2 The Council has already provided a room in the basement of the Beecroft gallery exclusively for Jazz Centre (UK). This room has been designated as “The Archive Room”. No charge is made to Jazz Centre (UK) for utilising this space.
- 3.3 Jazz Centre (UK) has recruited a team of volunteers to staff “The Archive Room” as a resource open to the public one day a week at present.
- 3.4 There was a highly successful opening in February 2016, with several hundreds of visitors during the one day event. Subsequent events have also been successful. As a result the interest in the centre has grown, and an increasing number of volunteers work at the archive. Celebrities and international musicians including Sir Michael Parkinson, Van Morrison, Jamie Cullum and Jools Holland are lending some support to the activity.

Proposals

- 3.5 Jazz Centre (UK) is now a constituted body based in Southend, and has negotiated an agreement with the National Jazz Archive to enable the existing archive collection to remain in the centre and to enable performances, exhibitions and events to take place at the centre; these activities go beyond the charitable objectives of the National Jazz Archive.
- 3.6 Jazz Centre (UK) has ambitious plans to develop a National Jazz Centre reflecting the town’s interest in jazz. In order to progress this it has recruited a group of volunteers to develop a jazz centre with an outreach programme funded through the group. They are also appointing a fund-raiser to support their financial objectives. The Council has been clear that there is no direct funding available to support the project.
- 3.7 The Jazz Centre’s initial plan is to expand into the lower floor currently used by the Beecroft Gallery. There are longer term aspirations to develop a larger separate facility that would need further approval, funding and planning considerations.
- 3.8 Through the proposed plans the Jazz Centre (UK) will increase community use of the lecture theatre in the building, for talks, films and performances.
- 3.9 Space currently allocated in the Gallery for artistic displays will be relocated to under-utilised areas of the Gallery, with design and costs of changes covered by Jazz Centre (UK).

3.10 The longer term aspirations for development would deliver regular performances, exhibitions, talks, meetings with objectives to:

- Encourage visitors to the centre from outside the borough.
- Attract new interest in jazz and cultural activities across the borough
- Engage with university and South Essex College to develop a programme of events for students.
- Engage with schools across the borough to raise the profile of jazz for young people.
- Promote travelling and in-house exhibitions of jazz, art and artefacts.
- House a full museum facility including instruments and jazz memorabilia; amongst them the Humphrey Lyttelton Archives and the 'Louis Armstrong Special' trumpet designed and played by Armstrong.
- Utilise the Lecture theatre area with a range of live performances.

3.11 A new SLA between Southend Borough Council and the Jazz Centre (UK) will be rewritten, and will include either a lease charge, or a contribution towards the running of the building to reflect the increased use will be negotiated.

3.12 It has been suggested that a Council Member be invited to join the Jazz Centre UK Trust to interlink mutual objectives and increase connectivity on this important cultural opportunity.

4. Other Options

To continue with the current arrangement and lose the opportunity of improving the cultural offer in Southend.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 To decide, in principle, to support the Jazz Centre UK's aspirations so it can progress fundraising and business planning.

5.2 To provide a new cultural facility and asset to the town for the express purpose of developing jazz in the borough, without any capital investment required by the local authority.

5.3 To encourage cultural tourism to the town, with the associated social and economic benefits this could bring to the borough.

5.4 To enable increased community use of an existing civic building.

5.5 The former Central Library has proved to be a successful site for the Beecroft Gallery, and additional investment in these facilities is important to improve the cultural offer in central Southend.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

- 6.1.1 Healthy Southend - Support Southend to be active and alive with sport and culture.
- 6.1.2 Prosperous Southend - Ensure continued regeneration of the town through a culture led agenda.
- 6.1.3 Excellent Southend – Enable communities to be self-sufficient and foster pride in their town.

6.2 Financial Implications

- 6.2.1 There are no capital funding implications for the council.
- 6.2.2 Subject to the lease being agreed, the Jazz Centre would contribute either rent and or running costs to assist building costs.
- 6.2.3 There will be no costs to the Council relating to relocating space in the Gallery.
- 6.2.4 Any leasing arrangements will be prepared and agreed by the Council to ensure there is no financial liability on the Council.
- 6.2.5 Future investment in the Beecroft building may be required to improve the facilities and secure the necessary environment to safeguard the collection.

6.3 Legal Implications

- 6.3.1 The agreed area of the Beecroft Gallery will be leased to NJA/Jazz Centre on terms to be agreed.
- 6.3.2 The council must demonstrate it has secured the best consideration reasonably possible and good value for money. The Asset Management Team will be involved in the negotiation of the lease terms, and the transaction will need to be certified for best consideration before the lease can be entered into.

6.4 People Implications

- 6.4.1 Cultural Services Officers' time will be used to assist the JAZZ CENTRE (UK) in the initial planning of this project.
- 6.4.2 Cultural Services Officers' time will be used to monitor and oversee the service level agreement.

6.5 Property Implications

- 6.5.1 The Asset Management Team in consultation with Cultural Services will work to agree detailed lease terms to ensure that the Council's position is suitably protected and that there is not any detrimental effect on the Beecroft Gallery; and ensure that best consideration and value for money are addressed relating to the proposals.

6.6 Consultation

6.6.1 JAZZ CENTRE (UK) has consulted with officers and with audiences and participants to its programme of events.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

6.7.1 This will be addressed through the design process to ensure this meets the required access requirements.

6.7.2 The programme promoted by NJA/Jazz Centre will be wide ranging and will look to incorporate specific events to celebrate the diversity of the town.

6.7.3 It is anticipated that NJA/Jazz Centre will have its own Equalities Assessment in place.

6.8 Risk Assessment

RISK	Likelihood (L) & Impact (H)	Mitigation
Funding Application not successful	M/H	Officers continue regular communication to assess situation in advance.
Insufficient numbers of volunteers to support and deliver the events	L/H	Officers to continue regular communication to assess situation and assist where necessary.
Unable to agree heads of terms for the Lease	L/H	Officers to work with NJA/Jazz Centre to agree terms.
JAZZ CENTRE (UK) unable to sustain the proposed activities.	L/H	Officers continue regular communication to assess the situation in advance.

6.9 Value for Money

6.9.1 The Council will not need to contribute financially to the development or delivery of the project or on-going revenue costs.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

6.10.1 Jazz Centre will produce risk assessments for all events and projects.

6.11 Environmental Impact

No environmental impact.

7 Background Papers

No background papers.

8 Appendices

No appendices.