

Report of the Strategic Director of Place to the meeting of Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 6th December 2022

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Subject:

Bradford Museums and Galleries Service

Summary statement:

This report provides an update on progress within the District's Museums and Galleries Service, forward plans, regional context, current challenges and opportunities including an update on the transformation work undertaken since the last report November 2021.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

The Museums and Galleries Service has a duty and moral imperative to represent all of the collections and stories of the businesses, residents and visitors to the District. It should be the first point of contact for visitors or residents to see themselves reflected in all the material culture it represents.

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Portfolio:

Healthy People and Places

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Regeneration and Environment

1. SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update members on the progress made during 2022, the changes made to the Service, the challenges faced and the response to the challenges ahead, and the opportunities, and considerations for the development of Bradford District's Museums and Galleries as part of the Council's wider cultural ambitions.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In January 2022 Bradford Museums and Galleries launched a new ten-year strategy (2022-2032) with a renewed vision and set of strategic priorities (reported to meeting of Executive, 1st February 2022). The Bradford District Museums and Galleries' Strategy sets out our ambition for the next decade in line with the local authority's strategic priorities and the city's creative mission. NPO funding will help make this possible.

The Mission for the Service is,

“Our unique buildings and collections enable the people of Bradford District to tell their own stories. We work with our communities and partners to develop and care sustainably for our shared heritage so that everyone can learn, find their voice, create, be ambitious, connect with others and better understand their place in the world.”

2.2 Performance

The long term effects of the Covid Pandemic on museum service opening and public programmes were still being experienced between November 2021 – March 2022 resulting in a significant decline in general visits and school workshop attendances. However public confidence in returning to museums was evidenced by strong visitor figures since the beginning of April 2022. During the period November 2021 – October 2022 a total of 85,000 visits were made including 11,391 school pupil visits.

2.3 National Portfolio Organisation application

In May 2022 an application was submitted to Arts Council England (ACE) to become a National Portfolio Organisation. On 4th November ACE announced that Bradford Museums and Galleries have been successful and will join the National Portfolio from 2023-24.

ACE received a record-breaking 1,663 applications for the NPO 2023-2026 investment programme - more than double the number of National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) it funded prior to the announcement.

Bradford District Museums and Galleries' NPO plans focus on Creative People (40%) and Cultural Communities (60%). A three year (2023-26) development process offers co-creation and engagement opportunities delivered in partnership and tailored

to the needs of Bradford communities.

Our NPO award is for total £1,145,310 (£382,000 per annum between 2023-2026) and the award of NPO status will help to transform our museums programme and make our museums more representative of local communities. NPO status acknowledges the significant potential for the museums' world-class collections to support the development of a distinctive sense of place based on the area's diverse heritage and culture. The grant will also help drive forward museums' development and leading role we have to contribute for the 2025 City of Culture.

The three-year funding round will help us to develop a better understanding of the communities we serve, expand co-creation in developing exhibitions, and improve access to collections, aiming to ensure that everyone in Bradford District has the opportunity to enjoy high quality art and heritage.

During the first year of the programme (2023-24) we will focus on engagement across all strands of work, building on our existing strengths and proven need, and consolidate delivery partnerships. Delivery will focus on experimentation and testing, trying out new approaches, evaluating. We will move beyond our walls, delivering programmes and exhibitions in community venues to raise awareness and reach people who would not otherwise engage with our museums.

2.4 Community engagement

Communities are integral to every aspect of our museums. We have been working on the development of a new Community Engagement plan that will champion meaningful engagement and participation that will raise the profile of Bradford Museums and have a positive impact on how we are perceived by stakeholders, funders and service users in the life of Bradford Museums and will make the Service more responsive, dynamic and sustainable organisation.

Our priority audiences for community engagement work are:

- Families and young children living within walking distance of our venues
- Young People aged 14-24 engaging with youth services and clubs close to our venues
- People from ethnically diverse communities, especially those living close to our venues
- People with physical and learning disabilities, neuro-diverse people and those living with dementia or other mental health issues

2.5 Community exhibitions and programme

We are committed to the development of long-term and mutually beneficial partnerships with a broad range of community groups. We have actively sought to work with other service providers including health care services, arts partners and youth services in order to reach people from our target audience groups.

During the period Bradford Museums' have successfully delivered a number of community engagement events and exhibitions including a co-created, award-winning exhibition at Cartwright Hall 'Young People's Identity & Wellbeing' with a group of young Healthy Minds apprentices, in partnership with the NHS Act Locally programme.

Managed a British Library funded project to train three young people of African & Caribbean heritage to record, for public archive, the untold stories of twenty-three Windrush Generation elders who came to Bradford in the 1950s. This led to a fully co-curated exhibition at Cartwright Hall to showcase the stories, collaborating with the project participants; Windrush Generations; Bradford Hate Crime Alliance and the Mary Seacole Day Centre. A well-attended and emotional launch day during Black History Month welcomed participants, council members and the press.

Installed new family and school friendly gallery, the Making of Bradford District at Bradford Industrial Museum, working with four local young people and residents.

Established partnership with NHS, Born in Bradford, Bradford Care Trust to initiate planning to make our museums neuro-diverse friendly for the communities we serve.

A site-wide exhibition called 'Rhyme or Reason' about the origin of nursery rhymes was on display at Cliffe Castle 2022 at the start of 2022 before moving to Bolling Hall Museum in April 2022, which used objects on display that link to elements of the nursery rhymes.

New display of artwork from our art collection depicting 'Icons' has been recently installed at Cliffe Castle Museum. Other community outreach and projects include Cliffe Castle installations with Keighley Pride; Healthy Living; and Keighley Creative (Cliffe Castle was a delivery partner with Keighley Arts Festival)

There were displays across all of the sites to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee using objects in the collection linked to the royal coronation and royal visits to Bradford.

2.5 Schools

School bookings were reintroduced across all sites from September 2021, initially with a maximum of one school per site per day. This has gradually increased as Covid measures have reduced. Local schools report welcoming the opportunity to visit museums locally as this offers them cheaper transportation options. The Bradford Museums and Galleries schools programme aligns well with the national curriculum as well as giving schools a space to provide enrichment and time to include expert-led Cultural Capital in their teaching and learning plans.

A wide range of sessions are available for schools with the most sought after currently being the Victorian Classroom, Early Islamic Civilisation, Hockney Techniques and Egyptians.

Schools are returning in good numbers and despite restricted provision during the past 12 months we have worked with 11,391 pupils in the period 1st November 2021 to 31st October 2022. Pre pandemic annual learner numbers were c. 20,000.

Site	Number of Pupils	Number of Session delivered
Bradford Industrial Museum	3891	135
Bolling Hall	790	28
Cartwright Hall	3566	118
Cliffe Castle	3144	111
	11,391	392

2.6 Collections

Loans

Loan requests have increased post-Covid and some of the exhibitions that had to be delayed have now taken place. In total there have been sixteen outward art loans take place over the period in locations from Liverpool to Falmouth in the UK. They include Nationals such as the Tate and to other Local Authority Museums including a number of Georgian dresses loaned to Bankfield Museum, Halifax for their Gentleman Jack costume displays. Internationally, we have loans out to museums in Sweden, France and forthcoming loans to Germany. Ten loans are currently being progressed for the next two years and include requests from Italy and Japan. Post-Covid, like many organisations, we have become used to virtual couriering where we view the install using video conferencing.

Four Collection Development Panel meetings have taken place during the period with twenty-six new acquisitions accepted (four declined). Approved acquisitions range from a medieval silver brooch to three Bradford Caribbean carnival costumes. Each meeting is open to all museums teams and members of the Museum Friends and Cliffe Castle support group.

Projects

- Bradford Museums' collections staff have been working on the Congruence Engine project, a three-year research project starting in November 2021 that will use the latest digital techniques to connect industrial history collections held in different locations across the UK. It is one of five funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council under the 'Towards a National Collection' funding stream. Through 27 months of iterative exploration of the textiles, energy and communications industrial sectors, the project will tune collections-linking software to make it responsive to user needs. It will use computational and AI techniques – including machine learning and natural language processing – to create and refine datasets, provide routes between records and digital objects such as scans and photographs, and create the tools by which the curator participants will be able to employ the sources that are opened to them.

Collection Management

- We continue to develop and enhance the collections with new acquisitions, auditing existing collections, and loaning objects to other institutions/organisations.
- Working alongside Asset Management and a broad spectrum of commercial companies to ensure that our buildings are physically and environmentally secure spaces to accommodate our collections while safeguarding the historic buildings themselves.
- Challenging year with projects ranging from re-attaching displaced legs on entomology specimens, constructing dedicated manikins for historic costumes to installing large industrial objects.
- New acquisitions include war memorials from a local church; a Pearly Queen costume outfit made and worn by a local resident – now on display at Bradford Industrial Museum; and around 2,500 souvenirs, costume and photographs relating to the Keighley Cougars rugby club which will form a new exhibition in 2023 at Cliffe Castle Museum.
- During the period staff have audited, photographed and uploaded to the museums' collection management system 6,500 objects.
- During 2022, staff have responded to 344 email enquiries and facilitated 11 research meetings.
- We continue to promote the Bradford Photographic Archive, which this year has included giving talks at the Impressions Gallery about our newly acquired Through Our Lens digital photograph collection and on site promotion of the Belle Vue Studio collection.
- We recently hosted a workshop and talk for the public by artist Esna Su whose knitted sculpture piece, displayed at Cartwright Hall, as part of the series 'The Burden' we acquired last year, supported by the Contemporary Art Society and the Friends of Bradford Museums.

Digital

- This year we provided four new digital exhibitions on our website. One complemented the Queen's Platinum Jubilee displays, and three relate to upcoming displays about the Photo Archive; the designated Worsteds collection; and the history of Bradford District Museums and Galleries.
- We continue to provide collection-focussed and research-driven blogs for our website to publicly share our research.
- We continue providing content for social media linked to collection objects and Bradford's history, including our popular 'What Is It Wednesday' mystery object feature.

2.7 Volunteering and Apprenticeships

During past 12 months Bradford Museums & Galleries have hosted fifteen trainee Kickstart placements including family activity apprentices, catering assistants and front of house roles. Two trainees have been temporarily retained as casual employees at the Refreshment Room Café, all other have gained further employment eg. children's' services, theatres, NHS, restaurants/cafes, CBMDC Estates and Facilities, retail and further education/university. Kickstart was a Government scheme to help 16 to 24-year-olds on Universal Credit find work in a tough post-lockdown jobs market.

We currently have one Leaving Care Enterprise Partnership (LCEP) Placement trainee working as a Volunteer Administrator for 12 months. The placement is working with the BM&G Volunteer Co-ordinator providing time and experience with all teams in the museums, library and other services in order to build and increase training and employment prospects.

Volunteer engagement

Bolling Hall held a Need to Weed morning with members of the public invited for coffee and weeding get together in Oct 2021 and a garden volunteer run event Cherry Blossom Festival in May 2022 with nearly 2 000 visitors and planted bulbs and roses with visitors for the Queens platinum jubilee, for which 2000 visitors attended. Bradford Industrial Museum held a Plant a Daffodil Day in October 2021 and Plant a Christmas Crocus Day in December 2021 attracting over 300 visitors. March 2022 Weaving volunteers held an International Women's Day, 'Weave and Spin' event with 230 visitors for this afternoon of weaving, archival reminiscence from BMG archives of mill workers, Morris dancing, Guild of Dyers and Weaving volunteers with sale stall of craft and knitwear. Linking with local community associations for coffee and cake. Print volunteers in the letter press gallery of Industrial have a strong programme for visiting schools, including demonstrations and hand printed certificates for each school. Also bookmarks and posters for special initiatives and projects

Award Winning

In October 2022 BM&G Volunteer Gardeners were awarded the Sustainability Starts Award at the CBMDC Excellence Awards. Sponsored by AWM Waste, this was an incredible accomplishment for the two museum volunteer teams who have been on site for just one year at Bolling Hall and Industrial Museums. We hope this will assist in future funding, staffing and support.

Other volunteering

- Our meeting and greeting volunteers, originally designed for lockdowns in parks and gardens when buildings were closed, has now continued indoors. It has also developed into invigilation e.g. Mill Manager's house – with some visitors becoming authentic 'living history' characters e.g. Mrs Moore, Mill Manager's wife at the Industrial Museum and Frances Tempest, wife of civil war royalist at Bolling Hall.
- We have now uploaded most volunteer profiles and documentation to Better Impact Volunteer Management System
- Adoption of Citizen Coin Bradford App and management reward system for volunteers to access retail discount and rewards for their time volunteering.
- Volunteer Expenses vHelp app now installed and working to enable our volunteers to claim their expenses wherever they are – avoiding petty cash and staff resource time.
- The BM&G website have been updated to incorporate blogs, and voluntary opportunities, apprenticeship pages and Young Ambassador pages.

- We have interviewed and recruited eight volunteers to run the Community Managed Library at Bolling Hall museum. Now open 5 days a week, 10am – 3pm with related volunteer activities and library links for the future.
- We have a corporate gardening volunteer at the Industrial Museum from Virgin Media lending his work time alongside a qualified level 3 horticulture volunteer. This year we have also hoisted corporate volunteers from AMEY PLC working in the print gallery learning letterpress and engaging with the public and schools, and one jet washing the Bolling Hall outside flagstones with her AMEY team.

2.8 Visitor Services

This is the first full year of opening since the Covid pandemic. Visitor Services have worked hard, along with Facilities Management, to bring all the sites up to standard, ensuring all sites are safe, clean, maintained and welcoming to visitors.

The Visitor Services in the past were four teams based across four sites, through hard work and amendment of staff rotas have achieved one strong team working across the organisation.

- Visitor Services have embraced the large number of volunteers to our sites, welcoming them all as part of the team.
- We are now holding numerous events across sites, including family activities, which Visitor Services are taking the lead in ensuring all the correct equipment, furniture is set up and the public programme runs smoothly
- The large number of schools and groups that use our sites are always welcomed with Visitor Services, working closely with other teams in the service that meet the needs of the schools/groups
- Visitor Services have implemented Warm Spaces at Bradford Industrial Museum and Bolling Hall from 1st November 2022 as part of Bradford Municipal District Council's network of community initiative this Winter, providing warm refreshments and comfortable facilities.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Business Plan approval for NPO funding agreement (January 2023)

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

Following service restructure in 2019 and consequent reduction in staff resource, in addition to the ongoing recovery from the Covid Pandemic that has impacted on income generation, there continue to be a number of challenges affecting the business model for Bradford Museums & Galleries.

£0.5m of allocated savings due to be achieved in 2020/21 were deferred due to the COVID19 pandemic and have been reintroduced back into the budget, as an unachieved saving in 2022-23. The saving was to reduce costs through service efficiencies and integration, remodelling of operational delivery and investigate

commercial opportunities, which is being reviewed as part of the medium term recovery plan for Museums. In 2021-22 £531,998 was received from the business rates re-evaluation (back dated to 2017-18). This has resulted in BM&G forecasting a break even position in 2022-23 due delay in VO notification and the rebate off-setting the unachieved savings dating back to 2018

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The Service is an important part of the Council's cultural offer and infrastructure and as such is a key stakeholder and contributor to the Council's 'Culture is Our Plan' and City of Culture 2025 delivery plan.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

The general power of competence under s1(1) of the Localism Act 2011 enables the Council to do anything an individual can do unless prohibited by law (and subject to public law principles). The activities referred to in this report including the acceptance of grant funding from the National Arts Council fall under the general power of competence. The use of such funding must meet any purposes and milestones set out in the grant funding agreement with the National Arts Council. There are no legal issues as a result of this report.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Bradford Museums and Galleries Strategy, the actions and investment as well as the day-to-day operations of the Service fundamentally supports the District Plan 2021-2025 and contributes to the wellbeing, resilience and longer-term prosperity of the District. With a particular focus on key assets including the collections and flagship buildings and their use this is managed as a district-wide resource for present and future generations. The Mission and Vision ensures that our focus is on maximising the value of our buildings and collections to enable the people of Bradford District to tell their own stories; 'working with our communities and partners to develop and care sustainably for our shared heritage so that everyone can have fun, learn, find their voice, create, be ambitious, connect with others and better understand their place in the wider world.'

The Strategy and its six Priorities are structured to deliver on the District Plan and Council Plan 2021-25, connecting to Bradford2025 and specifically a shared focus on sustainability, clean growth and long-term legacy.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

No implications arising from this report

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

No implications arising from this report

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

No implications arising from this report

7.5 TRADE UNION

No implications arising from this report

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Bradford Museums and Galleries serve all wards in the District

7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

No implications arising from this report

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Early help and prevention to support people in their communities underpins our work with children and families in partnership with our colleagues in the public and charitable sectors. It also informs our approach to estate management across our museum and gallery properties, working with built environment colleagues to anticipate and address maintenance issues and prevent problems from escalating.

Safeguarding is at the forefront of our work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. We recognise that safeguarding is part of everyone's role across the authority.

(Bradford Museums & Galleries Strategy 2022-32, Core Principles)

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

No implications arising from this report

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

None

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to consider and comment the updates provided in this report.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Bradford Museums & Galleries Strategy 2022-32

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Bradford Museums & Galleries National Portfolio Organisation application to Arts Council England (submitted May 2022)