

A New Vision for the Arts in Jersey

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A. Context

The Department for Education, Sport and Culture brief for this report acknowledges that current levels of arts activity by the three revenue-funded organisations are not sustainable with existing funding; additional investment is required if those activities are to be maintained and developed. This is consistent with the States of Jersey Cultural Strategy which noted in 2005 that “funding levels...have been set at or not much above the minimum amount necessary for...survival”.¹

However, the brief for this work also stressed the importance of demonstrating that value for money was being achieved both by the individual organisations and through synergies which might be achieved by closer working between them. Following discussions with the Treasury and Resources Department, the DfESC undertook to work with the funded organisations to seek a sustainable future based on mutual understanding of their contributions to Jersey’s cultural life.

B. The Task

The brief was, therefore, to **develop a vision for the arts in Jersey** that achieves greater ‘synergies and efficiencies’, in consultation with the three leading arts organisations – Jersey Arts Trust, the Jersey Opera House and Jersey Arts Centre (‘the organisations’). A second report was commissioned from BDO with a focus on the financial management aspects of the three organisations, covering both revenue and capital.

In the event, it was agreed that work on the two reports should be undertaken in the same timescale – the one informing the other without prejudicing the findings of either.

Subject to the findings of the two reports, the DfESC agreed to make a bid to secure a further £500,000 per annum in the next Medium Term Financial Plan from 2016 to 2019.

It has been made clear that there is a requirement, as a condition of seeking additional funding, to have a more joined-up and coherent approach to the arts and to ensure good value for money that delivers significant benefits for the Island as a whole.

This report sets out:

¹ States Cultural Strategy (2005) p.13

- The rationale for additional investment (supported by the BDO report)
- How this additional investment will extend and strengthen arts opportunities in the Island
- How the arts organisations can support and add value to wider social and economic policies in Jersey.

This marks a new maturity in the roles of the organisations with respect to their relationship with each other and with the wider cultural sector and other partners, built on confidence, success and sound management. It recognises that the organisations themselves have a key role in helping to determine future priorities and assisting in the development of strategy for the sector. The proposed initiatives are entirely consistent with the States' Cultural Strategy.

It emerged very clearly in the meetings which took place to produce this report that the chairmen and directors of the three organisations are committed, able and unstinting of their time and effort; this is a significant boon for the Island and its arts.

The process of developing this report has depended upon the involvement of the organisations and they are thanked for their spirited and generous engagement.

C. Profile of the Arts in Jersey

This is an overview of arts activity including a brief account of the specific and complementary roles and functions of the organisations along with the challenges each faces, intended to 'set the scene'.

Jersey Arts Trust

- *Core Functions:* grant-giving; support/advice/lobbying on behalf of artists/events (the 'go-to' body for advice); local arts development; international cultural diplomacy
- *Current Position:* has evolved a distinctive role including securing new funding streams and higher profile for the arts
- *Main Challenges:* development money is short-term, staff resource stretched and funding is inadequate to seize the opportunities e.g. Island Games.

Opera House

- *Core Functions:* promoting theatre-going at mid-scale - broad programme of culture and entertainment including host for amateur productions + drama classes, small studio, custodians of a listed building forming part of Jersey's heritage
- *Current Position:* successfully developed a viable business and sustainable programme with increased recognition and confidence

- *Main Challenges:* building maintenance, lease responsibility and charges, revenue funding, limited staff resources, and the high cost of importing shows.

Jersey Arts Centre

- *Core Functions:* small scale promotions and amateur events, participatory community education programme across art forms and ages, notably the youth theatre and theatre-in-education, and administrative support for the Arts in Health Care Trust
- *Current Position:* continuing to attract membership and audiences, and delivering successful programme
- *Main Challenges:* limitations of the building, revenue funding, staffing and conditions of service.

As demonstrated above, each organisation has a distinct role and function, and individually and collectively adds significant value to the Island. The boards and executives of all three are operating in an exemplary manner, both financially (as detailed in the BDO report) and in relation to their activities given the pressure on resources.

These are not of course the only organisations in the Island that offer diverse arts and arts-related experiences. For example:

- Activities and services provided by and through States' departments such as Youth Arts Jersey and Fort Regent leisure centre
- Other independent organisations such as Jersey Heritage, the Société Jersiaise, the Jersey Eisteddfod
- Festivals and events that involve the arts as part of their programme such as the Liberation celebrations, the Battle of Flowers, the Fête de Noué and a range of Parish events
- Commercial and private sector bodies working in the creative economy such as Jersey Live, commercial galleries and a number of media and marketing organisations
- Emerging arts promoters such as Branchage and the Liberation Music Festival.

Moreover, there are many other events and activities that employ the arts to achieve social and economic outcomes such as health, tourism and the environment, and significant opportunities to deploy the arts more widely, for example, a programme of activity during the Island Games.

However, it remains the case that the three organisations which are revenue funded by the States - the 'pillars' of the arts provision - have a particular role in supporting this wider arts community and developing new initiatives in order to provide a vibrant and coherent offer for the Island and its visitors.

D. The Vision and how it will work

The vision statement below was developed with the organisations and represents an agreed statement of intent for the future.

Vision Statement

The organisations are committed to working together to lead, support, nurture and develop the arts in Jersey in order to generate experiences for participants, audiences and artists, enhancing the cultural life of the Island.

Overview

Research undertaken for this report has conclusively found that the organisations are each providing high quality arts opportunities and operating well-run and efficient businesses, generating on average more than 50% of their income².

They all recognise the potential to work together more effectively to benefit Jersey's arts development and to take a more strategic approach across the spectrum of arts development as set out in the vision statement above.

This is a long-term ambition and will be advanced in a number of ways. To that end, five **strategic aims** are proposed for the period 2016 to 2019. These represent the agreed priorities, based on an assessment of the current opportunities and gaps in the Island's arts provision as outlined below and should be reviewed annually to check they remain relevant. The aims are outlined below with a brief example to illustrate the type of activity that might result.

The Strategic Aims

1. Festivals and events

Expanding existing activity and looking to strengthen and widen how the arts can support and add value to other areas such as tourism, sport and heritage.

Example: The Jersey Arts Trust has suggested a mini 'cultural olympiad' to accompany the Island Games in Jersey in 2015. Such an idea could involve events presented not only by the three principal organisations but by a range of other bodies in the Island. It could engage with the participating islands and involve cross-cultural exchange, building links with other jurisdictions which could be sustained at future Games. Although it will not be possible to develop the proposal fully in the short time remaining before next year's Games, the Arts Trust has suggested a creative event at Elizabeth Castle coinciding with the 2015 Games in which artists from all the islands would take part. If this is practical within the timescale

² BDO Report p.9

available, it could illustrate effectively the potential of the arts to add value to events which have had relatively limited cultural input in the past.

2. International relations/diplomacy

Jersey's growing international profile has increased the importance of positive contact with other jurisdictions and there has been interest expressed by other States Departments about the value that culture brings to such exchanges.

Example: Annual reports and current programmes show particularly close working links with France; all three organisations have been involved in projects with Brittany or Normandy in the past two years – artists exchanges, partnerships with theatre companies from both regions and a link-up with the Rennes Opera, for example.

Constructive discussions have already taken place about the way such work can contribute to the development of broader cultural relations with other jurisdictions. There is a significant opportunity for the arts sector to work with other parties, including Heritage, to maximise these opportunities and seek additional funding which might be associated with such work.

3. Children and young people

Providing opportunities for children and young people is another common thread for each organisation. Other bodies like Youth Arts Jersey (part of the Jersey Youth Service) and some of the festivals also provide significant activity for the young. Building on the work of JAC and the OH and developing a more structured relationship with the complementary work of the Education Department could result in increased opportunities for participation.

Example: Efforts could be made in concert to look at how to extend opportunities for participation and enhance routes of progression, for example into other art forms, and across age and ability. A useful first step would be to consider gathering information from all the providers in a single place to allow people to see and engage with the diverse opportunities which currently exist.

4. Creative economy

Considering how the arts can address economic goals such as increasing the number and quality of independent artists and arts-related businesses in the island, and developing the night-time economy as part of tourism (see also strategic aim 1).

Example: Exploration of this potential sits well with Jersey's leadership of the British-Irish Council workstream on the Creative Industries.

5. Visual Arts

Along with others, notably Jersey Heritage and the private sector galleries, the organisations all play their part in developing visual arts in the Island. While there is no dedicated major space, JAC has a gallery

which may be expanded and the OH holds regular informal exhibitions. Notably, the JAT has been undertaking a programme of development focusing particularly on the potential of the Open Studios programme. *Example:* a coordinated approach to and joint working on the visual arts - both exhibition and participation – could result in a significantly more coherent and productive offer for the Island.

Each of these strategic aims will be scoped and planned through 2015 in order to develop a set of strategies which will include:

- A context and rationale for the activity (a mapping)
- Proposals for new initiatives with costs and outcomes
- Leadership and management structures
- Key partners, their roles and commitments
- Timelines
- An evaluation framework to demonstrate effectiveness (KPIs etc.)

Leadership and accountability

These aims have emerged out of work that is already in progress and therefore has a solid base on which to build. The organisations recognise that this requires a new, more outward-looking focus in leading on activity that is consistent with their individual businesses but engages more widely with each other and, importantly, involves other players and organisations in the planning and delivery of these activities.

It is suggested that each aim is led by one of the three organisations as appropriate to their knowledge and skillset, for example, JOH might lead 1, with JAT leading on 2 and JAC on 3. In some cases the leadership role may be best filled by another organisation: for example, Jersey Heritage on strategic aim 5 regarding visual arts development.

E. Supporting the aims

New approaches

In order to achieve this new vision, there are number of issues to be addressed.

1. Enterprise

The organisations have successfully demonstrated a commitment to augmenting their revenue grants with funding secured from a range of other sources. They recognise that there is both an opportunity and a need to build on this entrepreneurial approach in securing self-generated income including from other States departments, trusts and foundations, the corporate sector and their own commercial activities. It is agreed that this would be advanced through a coordinated strategic approach in order to avoid unnecessary and damaging competition between the organisations and confusion for funders.

2. Marketing and the digital world

There is a need for a coordinated marketing strategy which can provide residents and visitors with information and promote the arts programme and activities more effectively. The potential for a digital and social media presence needs to be explored with the advice and support of bodies such as Visit Jersey and Digital Jersey.

3. Extending opportunities and engagement

The organisations are committed to connecting with and offering more opportunities for Jersey people to take part in the arts with a particular focus on the 'hard to reach' – communities that are not currently engaged in the arts including issues regarding disability and diversity. There are a range of ways in which this needs to be developed including the two new approaches above (marketing and enterprise) and the strategic aims. The organisations are agreed that they will work together to continually explore this as part of their overall programme and development.

Efficiencies

There is a range of areas where joint action should be explored with a potential for greater impact and benefit, and possibly some peripheral savings. These are essential under-pinning. The BDO report contains some additional areas that the organisations will explore.

1. Marketing

Each organisation has its own marketing resource and there may be an opportunity to look at how these can be coordinated to better effect. This includes initiatives such as central booking, membership schemes and joint branding such as 'Jersey Arts'.

2. Staff terms and conditions

As the BDO report verifies, the staffs of the organisations are working extremely hard and the situation cannot be sustained going forward. Moreover, it is an absolute condition of these proposals that staff at all levels need to have time to develop the new approaches and initiatives proposed above. In some cases this requires rethinking and restructuring the staff teams in order to reflect new responsibilities. In order to do this some additional staff resource (and potentially skills) needs to be secured.

3. Staff CPD

The staffs are committed and indeed passionate about the arts. They have a significant range of skills and experience that might be usefully shared across the organisations. The organisations will consider how the combined staff resource might be shared and enhanced through attachments, collaborative training and skill-sharing in order to strengthen and nurture the organisations and the arts as a whole. It will also increase the attractiveness of careers in the arts and provide opportunities for new entrants.

F. Delivery and Accountability

Working together

If the vision is to be realised it must be rooted in trust, respect and openness. It is no secret that in the past the relationships between the organisations have been at times strained. Many of the causes for this are historical but need to be addressed in order to support a new working relationship henceforth. These include a number of matters raised in the BDO report, specifically the issues concerning the lease and charges resultant from the purchase and refurbishment of the Opera House, dealt with in the next section.

Moving to this new vision will need considerable commitment (time and energy) from the three directors in particular - time to discuss, research and plan new initiatives and then to make them happen. While these proposals are consistent with the aspirations and aims of the organisations, they must ensure their core businesses do not suffer. How this is to be achieved is set out in Strategic Support in the next section.

This process signals a significant shift consolidating the more positive attitudes from the organisations' leaders but in order to bed-in this new way of working and thinking, the directors suggested that some facilitated support may be helpful.

The chairs of the organisations have agreed that they will meet together on a six monthly basis in part to coordinate and ensure good progress, and in part to prepare for the meeting cycle with the States, as outlined in the next section.

Relationship with the States

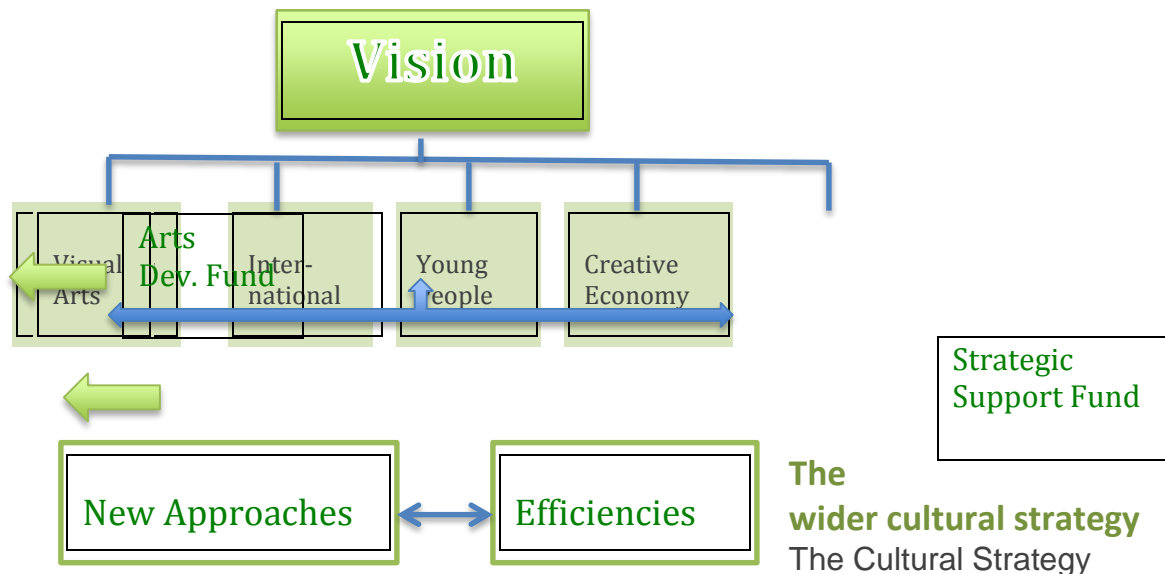
The organisations wish to establish a 'new contract' with the States. It is felt that the contribution the arts makes to the island is not fully recognised or understood. Over and above its cultural significance, the arts are powerful in achieving wider social and economic goals. Indeed, it is these opportunities that the organisations will capitalise on through this new vision.

The organisations wish to have a more constructive dialogue with the States based on parity of esteem – to be recognised as important as sport or heritage or tourism, and indeed complementing these and many other aspects of life in the Island.

The cause of many of the infelicities concerns the lease and debt arising from the refurbishment of the Opera House. It is recommended that any new funding streams to support the new working arrangements recommended in this report are accompanied by a commitment to resolve the underlying issues relating to the Jersey Opera House; that is, recognition of the resources required to maintain the fabric of the building in the future and a clear agreement detailing the respective responsibilities of the States of Jersey as owners of the building and the Jersey Opera House Limited as tenants/custodians (see Capital below).

It is proposed that the chairs and directors meet with the Minister annually to discuss progress and plan new opportunities at a strategic level. This group will meet every six months with the cultural development officer to report on review matters.

Diagram of Funding



(last reviewed in 2010) is to be revised and refreshed in 2015 so this report is timely in encouraging the arts organisations to contribute and actively plan for the next phase of the strategic development of these proposals. In particular, building partnerships and links between the organisations and the wider arts community will ensure a better and more joined-up approach to the arts which can then play an even stronger role in the overall cultural development of the Island.

It is also important that the organisations meet with other key cultural players – including Jersey Heritage and the Société Jersiaise - to outline the vision and aims and look for complementarities and opportunities to share initiatives, perhaps as part of the consultation on the new Cultural Strategy.

Funding and operations

The approach this report sets out is predicated on applying the additional funding which the DfESC has accepted is required to make the arts sector as a whole sustainable and ensuring it is done so in an accountable manner. It is suggested that it be applied in two complementary ways as outlined below. A diagram above illustrates how the funding streams might be directed.

Arts Development Fund

The aims essentially outline an ambition that will be realised through a series of initiatives, coordinated and, in some cases, led by the organisations –

singly and/or together as appropriate. Each aim will also have input from and involvement with other partners – variously, States departments, independent bodies, other arts organisations.

Each of the aims will have a thoroughly researched plan for four years (2016-2019) which sets out:

- the context and rationale for the development
- what will be done, by whom and when
- what it will achieve including outcomes and outputs and an evaluation framework that monitors progress over the period
- examples of similar projects as ‘good practice’ or which can provide learning
- a budget including leveraged contributions from other sources (also in-kind) and funding required from the Strategic Support Fund (if any).

The activity set out in the plans will be funded from a new Arts Development Fund which will be principally directed at achieving the aims and allow for new and emerging organisations to have a role as and when consistent with the aims; for example, Branchage might be included in the plan to develop Festivals and Events and supported appropriately.

Each plan will be considered by States’ officers and funding allocated accordingly, perhaps assisted by an independent panel to advise the Minister.

Strategic Support Fund

As set out in sections above, the organisations will need additional investment to take on these new roles. In particular, there is a need to free up staff time to take on the development role without undermining the strength of the organisations’ core business. There may also be a need for additional training or study visits.

The Strategic Support Fund will, therefore, be used to support the six proposals for closer working between the organisations set out under New Approaches and Efficiencies. The balance between the two funds will be a matter for the DfESC to determine following more detailed discussions with the organisations.

Transparency

It is critical that the greater trust and openness that has resulted from this work is maintained through a transparent process of accountability. The chairs and the Cultural Development Officer will consider how to put in place the protocols that can ensure this. This might include sharing accounting information and the SLA process.

Capital

This report does not deal with capital issues and it is important that the additional proposed investment remains focused on new activity. However, as reported, the organisations face a number of issues that need to be addressed to ensure the buildings, accommodation and equipment is fit-for-purpose.

There are three current capital issues which need to be addressed alongside the revenue and grant funding:

- Funding for the ongoing maintenance of the Jersey Opera House.
- Plans currently being developed to refurbish the Jersey Arts Centre.
- The requirement to make long-term arrangements to accommodate the staff of the Arts Centre and Arts Trust currently occupying premises on a short-term lease through Jersey Property Holdings.

Final Statement

The task of developing the vision and aims is complete and now the structures and processes need to be put in place to build on the strengths of the Island's arts organisations and ensure their growth and sustainability.