

Cabinet Meeting: 21st June, 2021

Agenda Item No. 9: Consideration of the Responses to the Arts Consultation, and Subsequent Recommendations.

Comments to Cabinet:

Recognising the wider impact of arts policy across the Vale of Glamorgan, I write also in the capacity as a local ward member for Barry Town Centre, the location of Arts Central.

The context in which the original consultation took place in early 2020 is now barely recognisable, as a result of not just the pandemic but also, more locally, the option taken to bring the Penarth Pier Pavilion within the Council's control.

This report and its recommendations provide an opportunity to reconsider the aims and the Council's Arts Strategy in a manner which promotes the arts in the Vale and the investment required to deliver upon those aims.

I particularly refer to the important need to connect and engage with the public. There is an important relationship between arts and health, wellbeing and socio-economic status. Noting the central location of Arts Central within Barry, the largest town within the county and one of the largest towns in Wales, we continue to have significant pockets of deprivation in the town and historically negligible support from the Arts Council of Wales.

I recommend that this report is referred to the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee for further discussion. I would also recommend that an engagement programme is developed, including local interested parties and the Arts Council of Wales, to ensure co-production of a strategy which will have wide and long-lasting impact, and also help other bodies recognise their lacklustre involvement in promoting and funding the arts in Barry and the Vale.

As per my Register of Interests, please note that I am a committee member and volunteer at Barry Arts Festival events.

Cllr Ian Johnson