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**CLOA Case Studies: Role of culture and arts in improving health and wellbeing**

**Purpose of report**

For information/ noting.

**Summary**

This report provides some case studies of activities being undertaken by councils to highlight the role of culture and arts in improving health and wellbeing.

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the report.

**Action**

Officers to action as appropriate.

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**Case study one: Erewash District Council ‘Arts at the HeART of Wellbeing’**

1. “Arts at the HeART of Wellbeing” is a project based in Erewash, Derbyshire; an area with county’s fastest growing ageing population. Responding to the challenges of the ageing population, it is a programme of arts intervention for older people with or at risk of developing a mental health issues, including dementia.
2. The programme works to improve and maintain wellbeing by increasing social interaction, meaningful activity, cognitive function, sense of purpose and learning new skills; Professional artists work alongside service users in a number of different settings; residential/nursing homes, day care centres, hospitals, supporting housing settings and alongside people with limited mobility on a 1:1 basis; enabling participants to create a range of visual art work in a range of mediums of their choice.
3. Over an average 15 week annual programme, approximately three immobile people, 10 residential home users and 15 day centre/hospital patients; plus 10 staff and volunteers within these settings; take part. Approximately 15 care staff and 10 artists also receive training. Participants are identified due to their isolation and the project therefore focuses on quality of the outcomes rather than quantity of participants; working on sustainable measures which enable the intervention to reach more people beyond the project.
4. The project is measured using the Warwick-Edinburgh Scale of Mental Wellbeing (NHS approved), within a wider contextual framework, enabling the council to monitor factors outside of the project which may influence the result.
5. Qualitative data indicates significant improvements in dementia patients’ wellbeing i.e. non-verbal dementia patients speak again during sessions, greater willingness by participants to socially interact within the sessions than they are outside of the sessions, noticeable reduction in confusion and anxiety.
6. Evaluation of all the training courses evidences that trainees feel equipped to establish and manage Arts & Health projects within their own service areas; i.e. British Red Cross, psychiatric care, Community Mental Health Teams, Occupational Therapists, Age UK, and approximately 15 care homes.
7. Further information Jo Stockdale (Arts Development Officer)  
[jolene.stockdale@erewash.gov.uk](mailto:jolene.stockdale@erewash.gov.uk)

**Case study two: Worcestershire County Council ‘Culture and Heritage in Partnership with Personalisation (Chipp)’**

8. Chipp Shop is a project that has been undertaken through funding from the social care budgets within Worcestershire County Council to give people in receipt of social care

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budgets an opportunity to take part in arts activities in Kidderminster and has been running through a mixture of subsidised funding and people's own finances.

9. The project was undertaken as a way of bringing together mainstream arts activities to people who in effect were known to social care teams, but who had both little cultural provision to do and who were low in confidence and were interested in taking part in arts activities.
10. 30 people, mainly Learning Disabled take part in a weekly two hour workshop where they take part in drama, music, dance and creative writing. Each session lasts two hours and is led by two artists with support from the arts department at Worcestershire County Council.
11. The impact has been significant with 30 people attending each week and paying £6 a session. Prior to the project beginning the council were told that no one would pay for arts as it was always provided for free. Now people say that Chipp Shop has changed their life and that they live for their two hour session. Members of Chipp Shop have also spoken anecdotally in terms of having their lives improved, increased confidence, creative skills, social skills and developing more friendships.
12. In terms of the future, the council are hoping that an arts organisation will take on Chipp shop as a social enterprise, with the county council as a partner.
13. Further information: Stephen Wilson [swilson@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:swilson@worcestershire.gov.uk)

**Case study three: Blackpool Council 'Arts for Health'**

14. Blackpool has disproportionate levels of benefit claimants in the Town along with high numbers of people claiming sickness and disability benefits. Blackpool has the highest suicide rate in England. There are above average levels of depression requiring treatment in the over 65s (an estimated 34%). Around 3,000 people in Blackpool are receiving Disability Living Allowance because of mental health problems.
15. The North West Mental Health Survey 2009 used the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental health and well-being scale to score 18PCT's within the North West. Blackpool's` scores for wellbeing were the 2nd lowest. This is consistent with the district having the highest level of deprivation.
16. Blackpool 'Arts for Health' is funded by Blackpool Council and Blackpool Public Health. Arts for Health uses creativity as a way to target adults 18+ at risk of developing/ or who have mental health difficulties to offer supportive and creative groups with the aim to:
  - Decrease social isolation
  - Increase wellbeing for adults suffering with ongoing mental health problems
  - Provide opportunities to move onto mainstream community groups
  - Offer a creative and supportive programme.

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17. The majority of the clients referred to the service are considered moderate to severe by mental health professionals and for almost all of the clients referred their mental health difficulties are ongoing. Clients can be at risk or have a history of; Severe self-neglect, prison, detention under the mental health act, hospitalisation, alcohol misuse, drug misuse, suicide attempts, expressing a wish to commit suicide, self-harm, violence to others.
18. Between April 2012 and April 2013, 143 two hour creative sessions were made available through the 'Arts for Health' programme. On average each participant engaged for 20 weeks and the total number of engagements was 1,034. During this time 98% of clients showed a significant increase in their wellbeing using the Warwick/Edinburgh Scale, on average participants wellbeing increased by 15 points after 10 weeks of 'Arts for Health' sessions and continued to increase after a further 10 weeks.
19. Further information: Sarah Jay, [sarah.jay@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.jay@blackpool.gov.uk)

**Case study four: North Kent councils 'dance 4 your life'**

20. In September 2008, North Kent Local Authorities Arts Partnership (NKLAAP) developed *dance 4 your life*, a dance research project. The project sought to build on previous findings, assessing the impacts of dance on the physiological and psychological wellbeing of participants.
21. The specific aims for *dance 4 your life* were to:
  - 21.1 Develop young people's dance and movement skills;
  - 21.2 Provide a supportive, autonomous and enjoyable learning environment;
  - 21.3 Encourage participants to be imaginative, creative and individual;
  - 21.4 Measure the impact of dance classes on young people's physiological and psychological health and wellbeing; and
  - 21.5 Assess young people's attitudes towards dance as a physical activity, and their levels of motivation to participate in dance classes.
22. Investigating the potential health benefits of dance and underpinning this with scientific evidence was deemed a crucial way of highlighting the further and continued need for investment in dance.
23. Fifty-five Year 10 students participated in the research project. There was a statistically significant increase in overall hand grip strength from the pre-test stage to the post-test stage. This indicates that these particular dance classes increased overall body strength.
24. There was a statistically significant increase in aerobic capacity from pre-test stage to post-test stage. This indicates an increase in cardiovascular fitness, there was a positive relationship between attendance and improvements in physical assessments.

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25. There was also a statistically significant increase in self- esteem pre to post indicating that by participating in the dance classes the young people's general sense of self-worth was improved. Participants generally demonstrated a very positive attitude towards dance with the majority choosing words such as 'Fun', 'Interesting', and 'Energetic', to describe both how they perceived the dance classes might be like (at pre-test stage), and were actually like (at post-test stage).
26. The findings of the dance 4 your life project provide evidence that participation in dynamic contemporary dance classes can have a positive impact on various aspects of the physiological and psychological status of adolescent girls.
27. Further information: [www.nklaap.com](http://www.nklaap.com) or [luci.napleton@medway.gov.uk](mailto:luci.napleton@medway.gov.uk).