

AWEN CULTURAL TRUST Draft Service Plan 2016-17

1. Overall Service Objectives

Awen Cultural Trust is looking to consolidate its position throughout 2016/17 as a locally recognised social business and charity with a reputation for delivering quality facilities and experiences.

As an organisation there will be a particular focus on organisational culture, developing values and behaviours that will underpin our commitment to our customers.

Key objectives for 2016/17 include:

- Developing programme and activity at Maesteg Town Hall
- Progressing a capital strategy that meets the theatre and library ambitions of Maesteg and Porthcawl
- Reaching new audiences through a channel shift approach to communication and a greater emphasis on social media
- Further develop partnerships with other delivery bodies to increase activities, in particular within the library services with a focus on children, young people and digital inclusion.
- Enhancing the opportunities and experiences for trainees at B-Leaf and Wood-B by creating new product lines and wider work related activities.

The above will complement a financial strategy that acknowledges a reduced management fee from Bridgend CBC and the need to focus on increasing revenue streams and value for money reviews.

2. Service planning

The following has been prepared for the Council’s consideration against the 2015/16 Outcomes Framework for the Cultural Partnership. It is proposed that, as well as reporting retrospectively on the activities, the Council will measure the Trust’s success using a balanced score-card approach.

BCBC Cultural Aims	5-year Commissioning Outcomes	Activities
Promote, celebrate and champion the county borough’s rich cultural heritage	People (customers) enjoy access to and positive experiences at Bridgend’s arts venues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Pavilion and Maesteg Town Hall will programme a diverse range of arts events and activities. Awen will specifically focus on encouraging new audiences at Maesteg Town Hall through a supported programme of events and marketing.</i> • <i>Implementation of new box office arrangements for Maesteg Town Hall to increase opening hours, accessibility and data collection.</i> • <i>Awen will seek to undertake a training programme for staff to improve marketing, programming and fundraising across all venues with a view to improving customer experience and increasing</i>

		<p><i>attendances.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Awen will look to implement a new disability and carers scheme that ensures fair access to arts performances.</i>
	<p>Local cultural organisations are active, viable and sustainable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Awen will seek to actively support other local arts organisations in the development of programmes, promotional activities and technical support.</i> • <i>Awen will work with Carnegie House to provide them with support in marketing, programming and audience development</i> • <i>Awen will work in partnership with Valley & Vale Community Arts for the delivery of projects in the Ogmere and Garw Valleys</i> • <i>Awen will provide advice and support to artists and arts organisations, both professional and amateur, in terms of grant applications, event development etc.</i>
	<p>Bridgend's cultural heritage has a sustained positive impact on communities and the local economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Local & Family History Library will develop a series of events and activities to celebrate the role of culture in the communities of the County Borough</i> • <i>Natural heritage – Awen will work with, and support, the Bryngarw Volunteer group in the implementation of a new complete a new accessible learning trail, further enhancing the features of the Park to attract greater visitor numbers.</i> • <i>Awen will refresh the park's management plan with aim of achieving Green Flag status over the first two years of the Partnership.</i> • <i>Awen will initiate a programme of work that exploits the natural resources available within Bryngarw Park, and utilising skills from Bleaf / WoodB and providing further training opportunities for adults with disabilities, create opportunity for sustainable products.</i>

<p>Employ culture as means of supporting and enriching formal learning</p>	<p>Children and young people have a good level of literacy and digital skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Publicise and promote the successful Summer Reading Challenge</i> • <i>Start a series of regular 'Coding Clubs' in libraries to support digital skills for young people</i> • <i>A full programme of regular 'Bounce & Rhyme' sessions where babies and toddlers are introduced to rhyme, songs, books, actions and the library in a welcoming and supportive environment</i> • <i>Regular story times, offering children the opportunity to listen to a story and then participate in a related craft activity</i> • <i>Storywalks: working with Love 2 Walk to deliver a body and mind programme to children aged 3-11</i> • <i>Hold the successful annual 'Penalty Kick' reading programme for reluctant young readers</i> • <i>Awen representatives will form a part of the steering group for the arts in education work of the South Central Education Consortia with a view to supporting Bridgend Schools to access funding and other opportunities</i>
<p>Support and develop the growth of the creative industries and cultural sector as key contributors to the local economy</p>	<p>People of all ages, but in particular young people have access to, and can experience and develop career pathways within the creative industries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provide work experience placements for Bridgend College students through the events programme in Bryngarw Park</i> • <i>Continue to work in partnership with It's My Shout for the delivery of Bridgend Youth Theatre and the BBC Made in Wales film scheme</i> • <i>Work in partnership with Arts Connect and Bridgend College on the delivery of the Forte Music project</i> • <i>Develop youth theatre taster sessions in the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmore valley areas</i> • <i>Work with It's My Shout to recruit trainees from the more deprived communities in to the creative industries training scheme</i>

	<p>People of all ages are digitally literate and are helped to secure support and employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Undertake a project supported by Digital Communities Wales to offer ICT advice and support to the housebound and elderly via Mobile Library services</i> • <i>Job Club to be launched at Pencoed Library in conjunction with Bridges into Work to support people seeking employment</i> • <i>Awen will formally launch an innovative library app, developed in conjunction with a south Wales tech start-up as a window onto the service's range of e-resources.</i>
<p>Tackling poverty by widening access and routes to participation and quality cultural experiences`</p>	<p>People in the county borough's most deprived communities are accessing cultural provision and opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Plan and deliver a 'Pop-up library' in Blaengarw Workmen's Hall and other locations to promote library services in valleys communities and/or C1st areas</i> • <i>Develop the library offer in Betws by scheduling regular activities for young people and raising the profile of the library in the community</i> • <i>Maintain a wide programme of activities and develop, promote and encourage new events at our community centres</i> • <i>Delivery of Creative Industries Training workshops and Youth Theatre taster sessions to attract people from C1st areas</i>
	<p>Equality of opportunity and inclusivity is at the heart of cultural provision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Running and supporting a range of inclusive and supportive reading groups Inc. groups for adults, children, teenagers and Welsh language groups</i> • <i>Deliver events at Bryngarw Country Park in conjunction with Menter Iaith</i> • <i>Enhance welsh language programming in the arts venues, particularly Maesteg Town Hall, with a view to working closely with welsh language primary and secondary schools</i> • <i>The Grand Pavilion will participate in National Disabled Access Day</i> • <i>Conduct a disabled access audit of Bryngarw Country Park in partnership with Bridgend College</i> • <i>The library service will enter into a</i>

		<p><i>partnership with the RNIB which will allow us to offer a wider range of audio books to our blind and partially-sighted customers and allow people with impaired vision to fully take part in our reading groups</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Awen is committed to providing a wide range of books and e-books in the Welsh language for adults and young people at all our libraries</i>
<p>Inspire people to develop to their full potential and through culture make people's lives better and more fulfilled</p>	<p>People with disabilities learn new skills and confidence to lead and sustain independent lives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Marketing drive to raise profile of accessible opportunities / facilities within the trust e.g. induction loops; audio described performances, wheelchair accessible play equipment etc.</i> • <i>Introduction of HYNT scheme to provide carers with free tickets to enable disabled people to have the support they need to access events</i> • <i>Development of training plans for trainees at WoodB/Bleaf and delivery of work skills training in partnership with Elite Supported Work Agency</i> • <i>Create more training opportunities/work experience taster sessions for adults with disabilities in other areas of the trust</i> • <i>Recruit more trainees to the existing programmes i.e. Bleaf & WoodB</i> • <i>Hold an open day for parents/carers</i> • <i>Hold an awards evening to acknowledge success of trainees</i>
	<p>People at risk of being disadvantaged or disengage are social included through arts and culture (Suggest combining with the Equality of Opportunity theme above)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Delivery of Bridgend Youth Theatre Workshops for young people with autism in partnership with Arts Council of Wales</i>
	<p>People are healthier and independent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Work in partnership with local dementia groups to offer targeted library services to dementia sufferers and their families</i> • <i>Develop a programme of 'Healthy body, healthy mind' sessions for the elderly</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Participate in developing Awen's Volunteering Policy with the aim of creating varied and fulfilling roles for volunteers to help to deliver innovative library services</i> • <i>Booklink service continues to support the housebound by providing books for both information and entertainment. Also now providing IT support and encouragement. Supported by digital technology supplied by Digital Communities Wales.</i>
Develop a sustainable cultural offer based on delivering relevant and value for money provision	Facilities and programmes are more sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Continue to develop the e-resources offer in libraries</i> • <i>Deliver a "channel shift" project realising efficiencies and economies of scale by using smarter marketing technology and approaches</i> • <i>Develop retail opportunities at Bryngarw Park</i> •

3. Performance Indicators and Targets

As an approach to measuring Awen's success against the Outcomes Framework, Awen is proposing adopting elements of our Performance Scorecard. This has been specifically designed to consider our charitable / outcome objectives while also delivering an user friendly overview of the organisation's overall health and performance.

The Scorecard will be supplemented with case studies and other evidence to demonstrate impact against the range of outcomes.

The proposed scorecard is present as Appendix C.

The outcome measures are developed using the logic basis where longitudinal and academic evidence supports that participation has benefit e.g. that children who use libraries perform better at school and have better literacy skills.

4. Programmes of Use and Proposed Activities

As part of a strategy to encourage more and more people to engage with, and benefit, from library services and resources, Awen will be piloting a new *pop-up library* at Blaengarw Workmens Hall. This provides an additional alternative to the mobile library. It helps position the Hall as community resource and cultural hub within the Garw Valley.

There are no other plans to introduce new programmes of use beyond those activities outlined within the Partnership Agreement.

5. Pricing Changes

Room hire charges at Pyle and Y Llynfi libraries will be revised to reflect community usage and consistency across venues. A small number of prices which have been historically unsustainably low will be increased; many charges will be reduced to encourage greater usage by the community.

A full report is attached at Appendix A. Awen requests that the Council notes and supports the proposals.

As part of the effort to reduce dependency on public funding and increase the profitability of products Awen will be introducing booking charges on ticket sales during 2016/17. Booking charges are already in place at Maesteg Town Hall.

6. Changes to opening hours

Betws Library

Betws Library is currently open for 17 hours per week, viz. Tuesday 9.30-1 & 2-5, Thursday 2-6, Friday 9.30-1 & 2-5. These hours were established following a staffing restructure in 2011 which envisaged a full-time job share Community Librarian role who worked across Betws and Pontycymer Libraries. In practice the role has always been split between two part-time members of staff and, since 2012, the staffing of Pontycymer Library has been the responsibility of Halo.

As such, it makes sense to revise the opening hours at Betws to maximise use of the facility in line with the needs of the community. The community centre in which the library is located has long been relatively quiet on Fridays and statistics show that Friday is the least busy day for the library. Evidence from other comparable libraries shows that Monday is usually the busiest weekday (for example Sarn Library issues 20% more books on a Monday than a Friday) and hence, with the agreement of the post holder, it is proposed to move the Friday session to a Monday.

This will maintain the opening hours at 17 hours per week but should improve visitor numbers, book issues and community visibility. The service will engage with current library users over the course of a month prior to the change of hours to ensure that anyone affected is aware. In addition, the local council member will be apprised of the proposed change and the rationale behind it.

7. Operational Procedure Changes

Awen Cultural Trust has adopted an Adult Safeguarding Policy which is attached for the Council's reference. The nominated Safeguarding Officer and the Director of Business Development have already undergone training for their roles.

Awen can confirm that Ceri Evans, Director of Business Developments is the Trust's nominated officer for the purposes of liaison with the Council's nominated officer for B-leaf and Wood-B under provision 33.1 of the Partnership Agreement.

During October 2105 Awen instigated a total review of the referral process and procedures for service users at WoodB and Bleaf. The result was the flow chart as illustrated in Appendix B. It is requested that the Council formally acknowledge the process through this first service planning document.

Aligned to this process are the responsibilities of both parties to ensuring the safe and appropriate placement of service users to ensure the best possible experience within the two settings.

Awen Cultural Trust has adopted a Health & Safety Policy in accordance with provisions 4.4 of the Partnership Agreement and a copy is attached.

8. Marketing Action Plan

Awen Cultural Trust has recently restructured the marketing functions bringing them together in to a central Marketing & Development Unit. Reporting to the Director of Business Development, their remit is to cover internal/external communications, strategic and operational marketing, fundraising and commercial development.

The main priority for the marketing team early in 2016/17 is to conduct a marketing audit with a view to developing a Marketing & Development action plan. Work is already underway on a comprehensive branding review with a view to developing the Trust's visual identity and its utilisation through new and/or refreshed websites. As part of this process an organisational culture workshop has been held with board members and further branding workshops are being held with staff in the coming weeks.

An application has been made to the Arts Council of Wales for a Training & Business Development Grant to support the team with the implementation of a major channel shift exercise from traditional marketing methods to improved use of digital technologies. This should help realise efficiencies as well as improve the customer experience. The grant will also enable to the team to improve their skills in fundraising and commercial activities thus contributing to the overall financial sustainability of the trust.

An application for capital support has also been made to Arts Council of Wales for a new box office and customer relationship management system for the trust which will provide a single box office service for events across the whole of the trust. The system will have integrated marketing segmentation software and sit seamlessly with websites to improve the customer experience and also provide sophisticated data intelligence on customer behaviour thus enhancing marketing opportunities and performance monitoring.

9. Other proposals

Awen Cultural Trust would like to seek the Council's agreement for the implementation of Pay & Display parking arrangements at the Grand Pavilion, Car park in Porthcawl. While providing some additional revenue, the aim of the scheme is also to discourage all-day town centre users parking at this site. It is currently a free to park site which already experiences non-pavilion users parking there for long lengths of time at the expense of customers and staff. This will no doubt become more prevalent as wider parking schemes are implemented around the town.

This request is made in accordance with provision 16.1 of the Partnership Agreement.

10. Financial Plan

The 2016/17 budget is currently being finalised. A breakdown of proposed spend against the various facilities and activities will be forwarded to the Council to supplement this Service Plan.