**Item 12**

##### AONB

**Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Board**

15th June 2022

Surrey Hills Arts Review

**Purpose of the report:**

To consider the Situational Analysis of Surrey Hills Arts

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Surrey Hills AONB Board:

1. Notes the Situational Analysis of the Surrey Hills Arts partnership
2. Agrees that the Surrey Hills AONB Director works with the Head of Surrey Arts to review the report and make recommendations to the respective funding partners.

**Introduction:**

Surrey Hills Arts has played a leading role in championing art programmes within AONBs. Surrey Hills Arts projects have been presented at AONB national conferences across the country as recognition of the arts being a successful way to connect and engage people with nature and landscape. Surrey Hills Arts is part of the national Art & Landscape steering group which has led to the National Association of AONBs now signing a Memorandum of Understanding with Arts Council England.

**Background:**

The Surrey Hills Arts partnership began on 5th October 2015 after two years developing the initial idea and sourcing funding. The development work prior to this included identifying shared priorities of Surrey County Council (SCC) and Surrey Arts as part of SCC and Surrey Hills AONB researching other models of Art and landscape programmes across the country and attending Clore leadership training.

In October 2015 an agreement was signed by Surrey Hills AONB Director, the Head of SCC Surrey Arts and the Chair of Surrey Hills Enterprises CIC in respect of receiving contributions for the ‘Inspiring Views’ programme, funded by the Mittal family. This initial agreement was to be for three years and stated:

• The full cost of the Programme Manager (0.8 fte/ 4 days per week) will be funded in equal proportions by SCC Surrey Arts and Surrey Hills AONB Board.

• The level of contribution from each party in the first year would be £17,700 and annual amounts thereafter to include SCC cost of living/ pay increases for the duration of the partnership to cover the cost of the Programme Manager post.

• The salary costs for the programme managers sits within SCC Surrey Arts establishment staffing costs

• Programme costs including funding received goes through the Surrey Hills cost centre within SCC environment.

There is a Surrey Hills Arts Advisory Board with representation from both Surrey Arts and Surrey Hills AONB Board as well as a range of other members with knowledge and experience in the fields of landscape, arts and community, including the National Trust and the University of Creative Arts. The Advisory Board meets on a quarterly basis and provides advice and sector support and connections. The Advisory Board was initially Chaired by Perdita Hunt DL OBE and is now chaired by Alistair Burtenshaw, Director of the Watts Gallery Trust.

After three years, the decision was made to continue the Surrey Hills Arts programme in 2018 due to its successful delivery of projects that focused its aims to:

• Inspire new audiences & raise Surrey's profile and sense of place through public art

• Deliver inclusive arts projects that connect people to the landscape and strengthen Surrey communities

• Boost the local economy by attracting an arts interested audience

• Proactively build and engage with a diverse audience including remotely through digital engagement.

• Promote the rich artistic and cultural heritage of the Surrey Hills within a contemporary context

• Encourage outdoor activity for all promoting health & wellbeing

• Enlighten visitors to environmental challenges and encourage positive action

• Work in partnership with internal and external services to create new arts-led opportunities that achieve positive health, education, and social outcomes

• Support and develop local artists of all art forms in creating work relating to the Surrey Hills

• Develop volunteering opportunities to support the programme

• Pursue a diverse funding strategy to enable a sustainable future

The Chair of Surrey Hills Arts Advisory Board and the Programme Manager report to the quarterly AONB Board meetings, and the budget is presented to the Surrey Hills AONB Board’s AGM for agreement.

**The Review:**

In March 2022, Surrey County Council commissioned Dr Dawn Langley to conduct a situational analysis of the Surrey Hills Arts partnership, with the Surrey Hills AONB contributing £2k. This was to make recommendations to inform the future of the partnership, and exploration of possible long term funding opportunities, including consideration of an application to the Arts Council for National Portfolio Organisation (NPO), in order to secure the following outcomes:

• Strengthen governance of the partnership to ensure clarity in terms of reporting/decision making and the role of the advisory board.

• Diversify workforce and board

• Ensure the service offer meets local need and aligns with local and national strategic direction

• Increase capacity of the partnership to widen its work

• Ensure the network of partners and providers is sufficiently equipped to deliver this diverse, accessible offer, including through thorough mapping, review and recommendations around relationships between groups and organisations, governance and accountabilities

• Maximise resources

• Increase income/funding

• Ensure efficient use of staff

**Next Steps:**

This evaluation feeds into a wider strategic review of the Surrey CC Arts & Culture service as well as to inform the business planning process for the Surrey Hills AONB Board.

**Report contact:** Rob Fairbanks, Surrey Hills AONB Director

**Contact details:** rob.fairbanks@surreyhills.org

Sources/background papers:

Appendix 1. The Long View: A Situational Analysis of Surrey Hills Arts

Part A: Analysis

Appendix 2. The Long View: A Situational Analysis of Surrey Hills Arts

Part B: Recommendations & implementation guidance