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Meeting: Arts, Culture and Tourism Committee, Item ACT1.8

Date: 03 August 2021

Author: Project Officer

Subject: Creative Mendip Arts Project

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 For councillors to note that a proposal for an arts project has been submitted to Mendip District Council as part of their Creative Mendip funding strategy, in partnership with Make The Sunshine CIC.

2.0 Background information

- 2.1 Mendip District Council announced a funding opportunity for Town Councils to submit a proposal for arts project which meet the following criteria:

- A project that embraces and celebrates any form of creativity in your community, working with one or more established organisations
- A project that can attract other funding eg Arts Council, Somerset Community Foundation, crowdfunding
- A project that can be delivered within the current financial year
- A project that can play a part in the revitalisation of creative industries, including the visual and performing arts, post-Covid

The details of the scheme were circulated in June 2021 and the deadline for town councils to confirm the would like to submit a proposal was July 2021.

- 2.2 In consultation with the chair of the committee, the local Community Interest Company Make the Sunshine were approached to develop a proposal meeting these criteria. The resulting proposal has been submitted to Mendip District Council for review *and a decision is pending*.
- 2.3 The proposal submitted by the Town Council in partnership with Make The Sunshine is called '374 Ways to Change The World' and consists in the following:

374 Ways to Change the World will explore the power of performance and creativity to challenge, question and inspire action in young people. From flash mobs to craftivism, protest poets to theatre productions: 374 Ways will share life-changing performing arts experiences with schools and their wider communities.

At the heart of this project is children using their own creativity. Children will design their own 'social action' project exploring how arts and creativity can change the world. The project will be part performance, part social action, and will bring young voices and ideas to the fore in how arts and creativity can transform hearts, minds, communities and the planet.

The project will involve

- 1100 Children across six Shepton Mallet primary schools
- Six professional artists or companies
- Six launch events / performances across the community
- Three free community performances
- An exhibition of work by young people

The project will work in three key phases

1. *Artists who Change the World*

- A series of assemblies sharing life-changing artists who use art to challenge, inspire, and educate

2. *Re-imagine the future*

- Students will choose their social action project – it could be cheering up the local doctors' surgery or it could be providing a tea party for the local care home. It could be creating a campaign about climate change or it could be doing a flash-mob performance for local key workers

3. *Be the Change*

At the crux of this project is young people as agents of change

- Children will create a change-making project paired with an inspiring creative mentor – it could be a performance poet or craftivist, a dancer or actor. The creative mentor will come into schools to share their work and there will also be three community performances as part of this in playgrounds, parks and local venues (e.g. the library) free for local people.
- Each school will be paired with a mentor to fit their ambitions and will undertake a series of workshops.
- Each school will have an events budget managed by the children.
- There will be a '374 Ways to Change the World' festival featuring the six community events where the children either perform or launch their social action project in their local community.
- There will also be an exhibition at Whitstone School under the title 374 Ways to Change the World with children across Mendip invited to submit.

3.0 Financial Information

3.1 A costed proposal of £4705 has been requested for this project as part of the Creative Mendip bid. If the proposal is accepted by Mendip District Council, the funding will be awarded to the Town Council to administer to Make the Sunshine.

3.2 If the proposal is accepted by MDC and funding secured, the Town Council will fund the project upfront from this committee's arts budget (800 - 4224) and recover the funds from MDC by the end of the financial year.

4.0 Environmental Implications

4.1 This project will encourage participants to consider issues such as climate change, our carbon footprint and other environmental matters.

5.0 Town Plan Reference

5.1 People

Encourage and facilitate family based activities	Ensure that there are events for all ages and areas of the community and that they are supported and promoted to a wide audience Facilitate activities across town that encourage people to get involved Work with community interest groups that bring events and activities to the community, to encourage participation
Support and promote clubs and societies, to encourage participation and growth	Develop strategies to work with and support groups that are representative of the community, to encourage participation and to combat social deprivation and loneliness.

5.2 Promotion

Advance Culture, the Arts, and Education	Capitalise on the rich culture and heritage that the town has to offer and advance it through self-promotion to locals and visitors alike
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6.0 Recommendations

6.1 For councillors to note this report.