South Lakeland District Council  
Council  
25 July 2017  
EXECUTIVE REPORT – LOOK FORWARD 2017/18  

REPORT FROM: Cllr Matt Severn, Culture, Media and Leisure Portfolio Holder

Portfolio Responsibilities

The Council Plan objectives in relation to promoting culture, leisure activities and the arts.

To work with our cultural organisations to attract investment and to promote South Lakeland as a premier area for Arts and Events.

The relationship of the Council with its citizens; civic participation and the Council plan objectives around leisure, health and wellbeing and working with communities.

Working with key partners with regards to public health and community safety.

Promoting South Lakeland in and through the media.

Policies, Plans and Strategies:

- Arts and Events
- Grants Strategy
- Licensing and Statement of Gambling Policies
- Communications Strategy

Key Areas:

- Arts and Culture
- Grants
- Public Halls
- Use of community assets for promotion of arts and culture
- Young people/ projects
- Heritage and Events
- Heritage Listed buildings and built environment
- Voluntary Sector Engagement in relation to culture and leisure
- Leisure and Recreation
- Licensing and Gambling
- Media and Communications
Arts and Culture

The council’s three year Cultural Strategic partnerships supporting our Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations, Cumbria Museum Consortium, and Lakes Culture remain at the heart of our cultural strategy. Our funding in this area ensures resilient, dynamic organisations that make SLDC the leading rural cultural destination in the UK.

We will continue working in partnership with Arts Council England and cultural organisations to help facilitate, enable and fund some significant initiatives over the year to promote South Lakeland and work which also supports the Lake District National Park ‘Cultural Landscapes’ World Heritage designation.

We will also look to continue to support the capital infrastructure developments of the Wordsworth Trust, Lakeland Arts and the Brewery Arts Centre to ensure the future of these key institutions.

We will continue to assist in the development of our key festivals and events and sports adventure projects such as Great North Swim, Big Chill Swim, Tour of Britain, and look to further develop our reputation in the future working with British Cycling.

Investing in our Strategic Cultural Partners

The council will be in year 2 of its three year partnership funding agreements for our key Strategic Cultural partners; the Kendal Brewery Arts Centre Trust, Lakeland Arts, Wordsworth Trust, Grizedale Arts, Ruskin Museum, Highlights Productions and Lake District Summer Music, building on the work we’ve done to contributing to the district’s economic cultural and social well-being.

Our key partners, with our support will continue to deliver a cultural programme that is widely recognised here and beyond our district as being a high quality and exceptional offer for any rural district in the country.

Great Place Scheme

Following a successful joint bid to the Great Place scheme South Lakeland and Craven will start work on the Heritage Lottery Funded 3 year pilot ‘Great Place’ programme with Craven as the lead authority and accountable body. We are one of 16 ‘Great Places’ in England and one of 4 rural ones. The Craven and South Lakeland programme is called ‘Crossing the Watersheds’, both as a reference to the area, from Grasmere and the Central Lakes, through the southern Yorkshire Dales (3 Peaks area) to Skipton, and figuratively, as a reference to joining up the cultural and heritage assets and activities with economic and social growth.

The Yorkshire Dales and Lake District National Park Authorities are engaged along with the Cumbria and Yorkshire LEP’s and the key Arts Council national portfolio organisations and the major partner museums, including Brewery Arts, Wordsworth Trust, Lakeland Arts and Chrysalis Arts.

Our vision for Great Place is….

where a sustainable, resilient community and economy exists celebrating the distinctiveness of place, the skill and experience of creative people and a good quality of life, which in turn will retain and attract younger people to our districts to influence, support and create our future economy.

The programme will launch in September 2017.
Cultural Destinations - ‘Lakes Culture’

SLDC works as a consortium partner in Lakes Culture and continues to actively support the ongoing work to embed culture at the heart of the tourism offer in South Lakeland.

Following a successful pilot programme Lakes Culture has secured further funding from Arts Council England for 2017/18 to establish the Lake District as the UK’s leading rural cultural destination. The investment will continue to support the work Lakes Culture has been doing to strengthen awareness and understanding between the tourism and culture sectors in Cumbria to facilitate greater promotion of the region as a cultural destination. This second phase of the project aims to attract more new visitors to the area and build a greater international profile. This will include making best use of the positive impact of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, and building on the success of the existing Lakes Ignite Festival.

Lakes International Comic Art Festival

This unique festival held in Kendal continues to grow and celebrate Comic Art from across the world featuring international comic artists, writers and creators as well as live drawings film exhibitions workshops performances and masterclasses. More than 70 special guests from around the world from USA, Japan, Canada, Australia, Finland and Europe. We are working with LICAF to support its ongoing development connections in 17/18 with the Finnish Institute and Embassy and to secure a joint venture for a national 14 -18 Now commission for 2018 with the Maison de La Culture Amiens and ‘On a Marche sur la Bulle’ in Amiens.

Lakes Alive

Lakes Alive in Kendal a major new family friendly cultural festival with installations performance digital and illuminated works in unusual spaces. Work is continuing with LDNP in support of the development of Lakes Alive and the cultural landscapes initiatives for World Heritage inscription.

Roundabout

The council is a partner with the Brewery Arts Centre bringing Roundabout theatre dome to Moss Parrock in the heart of Grasmere. A self-contained auditorium will be pitched for a special series of performances by new writing company Paines Plough and other fringe performances. Local schools will be involved in engaging with the project.

Lakes Culture Lakes Ignite

We will continue work on an initiative which is successful in bringing together and showcasing some of the Lake District’s cultural highlights, festivals and events in the Lake District National Park that reveal the creative spirit of the Lakes. The Lakes Ignite programme in 2018 will showcase new contemporary commissioned work in the landscape at five attractions in the Lake District to promote South Lakes as a leading cultural destination.

Lake District Paradise Project

SLDC is continuing to work with CCC on exploring the potential around options to support the Lake District Paradise Project’s proposal for a permanent centre and exhibition space in Windermere.
Windermere Jetty

We will continue our work to support Lakeland Arts in the development of the new Windermere Jetty- Museum of Boats, Steam and Stories – due to open in 2018. This will be the biggest single new attraction opening in South Lakeland for many years and provide a significant boost to Windermere and South Lakeland.

The Tour of Britain

In 17/18 the council will continue to work with British Cycling, CCC and other partners to bring about a stage start or finish in the district in 2018.

Kendal Mountain Festival

Plans are underway for Kendal Mountain Festival’s outstanding festival in Kendal of films, exhibition, literature and live events and associated cultural programme to reach out to new audiences and young people inspiring a new generation to get active with the great outdoors.

The festival will continue to develop and grow promoting South Lakeland throughout the world with the best elements from the festival shown at venues across the globe.

With the support of the council KMF will extend its relationship and export of cultural product to China and South-America in 2017/18.

Strategic Community Arts and Events organisations

In 2017/18 we will continue to support the council’s Strategic Community Arts and Events partner organisations to provide services to local communities for residents to participate in and enjoy events such as Kendal Torchlight Carnival, Ulverston International Music Festival and Ulverston Lantern Procession, and programmes of work at the Heron Theatre Beetham and Old Laundry Bowness on Windermere.

In 2017 we will review our funding support to all 14 of these organisations with the aim of streamlining the funding support for culture arts and events.

Grants (Community Grants 2017/18 and Gateway Group)

SLDC will be supporting several areas throughout 2017/18 via community grants including:

5 year funding agreements beginning in 2017/18 and ending in 2021/2022 with Cumbria Association of Local Council (CALC), Action with Communities in Cumbria (ACT) and South Lakeland Hydrotherapy Trust (SLHT). The funding agreements are currently being agreed, but the aim is to fund the above organisations with £3250, £5000 and £2500 respectively per annum for a five year period that requires annual reviews.

A 3 year ‘memorandum of agreement’ (MOA) with Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was agreed. This will entail grant funding of £11500 per annum for a 3 year period. However the format of this agreement is being confirmed and a contract has not yet been signed.
Funding for the Strategic Community Arts and Events organisations and Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CafS), has been extended for 2017/18 at the same level as 2015/16 and 2016/17.

**Gateway Group**
SLDC has approved a new funding agreement with the Gateway Group to manage the distribution of grants. From 2017/18 to 2021/22 SLDC will pay the group £88,500 annually in a 5 year agreement so that they will distribute small grants to 3rd sector organisations. The aim is for the Gateway to use its expertise of the 3rd sector to identify small organisations that can most benefit from grants and for the relationship between SLDC and the 3rd sector to develop.

**Public halls and Use of community assets for the promotion of arts**
Throughout 2017/18 South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) will continue to support cultural events across the district through the use of council owned assets.

Kendal Town Hall continues to become increasing popular for wedding ceremonies. 27 confirmed bookings for 2017 have been made a further 5 for 2018. Enquiries are ongoing for weddings as far as 2019.
Five rooms within the building are licensed for wedding ceremonies- Assembly Room, Bindloss Room, Georgian Room, Town Council Chamber and the District Council Chamber.
Kendal Town Hall is very much a community building and more often than not wedding ceremonies are taking place alongside existing events e.g. coffee mornings, dance classes, singing lessons.

The town hall is utilised on a weekly basis for community singing, exercise, drama and dance classes which attracts many young people.

The Town Hall will once again becomes the main hub for the internationally renowned Comic Arts Festival in October 2017 and the Mountain Festival in November 2017.

Following the closure of the courts on Burneside Road the Town Hall will also be holding a civil and criminal court once a month from July 2017 within the building.
Cumbria County Council and the Environment Agency also use the hall regularly for public consultations and training sessions.

**Young people/ projects**
The Young People’s Action plan will continue to drive events throughout 2017/18 for 11-16 year olds and 17-25 year olds.

**11-16 year olds**
Since the action plan was approved there have been 5 school council meetings in the District Council Chambers with Queen Katherine and Kirkbie Kendal Schools.

Some key achievements include:
- Schools raising funds to buy new recycling bins
- Waste Cumbria offering free mixed recycling bin and collection worth £250 per year
- School Councils giving presentations in assembly to raise awareness of new programme and start a culture of recycling in school

So far year 7 QKS have recycled 450 bottles in the first 2 weeks of the scheme commencing.
SLDC is now working with schools to become ‘Eco-Schools’ – this is an initiative run by ‘Keep Britain Tidy’ that assesses schools on nine categories;

1. Energy
2. Litter
3. Waste
4. Water
5. Global Citizenship
6. Transport
7. Healthy Living
8. Biodiversity
9. School Grounds

Upcoming schools will complete their assessment with an eco-board of students and teachers, they will form an action plan to improve the school performance in these specific areas. Schools will be awarded a flag after each assessment and execution of their plan.

This programme reportedly aids schools in their OFSTED report as evidence of working with partners and improvements to school grounds.

The most recent meetings have focused on how we can support schools to gain their first ‘eco-flag’

17-25 year olds

The current strategy is to work within schools and colleges to create multiple small groups to work with (Mouthpiece Group).

Students have raised travel costs as a major concern with the most eye catching stories including:

- Students having to drop out of college courses
- Parent and students taking on multiple jobs just to pay for train and bus fares to school and college
- Students spending huge amounts of time on public transport to be either late to school or far too early

SLDC are working with the students to collect data via a survey to understand the scope of the issue. So far there has been 30 responses. The next steps are to collect more information and take the findings to local organisations to find solutions.

A number of National Citizen Service (NCS) days have been planned throughout 2017. The aim of the programme SLDC has created is to:

- Teach young people the role of local councillors and their importance
- Encourage young people to vote
- Teach young people about the different roles and responsibilities of SLDC
- Teach young people to analyse and discuss actual policies from political party manifestos

Leisure and Recreation

The South Lakeland Facilities Strategy has been launched and the plans for the refurbishment of Kendal Leisure Centre have been approved by SLDC and GLL South Lakeland Leisure Partnership Board. A consultation period for customers and staff has taken place and the work is expected to commence in mid-July 2017.
Kendal Leisure Centre is also in the process of conducting a conditions survey that will focus on the windows, doors and exterior facade.

Funding has been secured from Kendal Bid to install 10 bikes at Kendal Leisure Centre. In addition to this SLDC has worked with Kendal Town Council to create a cycle trail to the rear of the Leisure Centre. Current bidding is secured to build a trail that will begin in Kendal Town Centre ending in Natland.

The master plan for the Ulverston Leisure Site Study is currently in phase 2 of the feasibility study which during the consultation stage received a 98% positive response. Also during the consultation period Sports England cited the master plan as a model of best practice.

In October 2016 both Kendal and Ulverston Leisure Centres achieved a status of good when being assessed against the Quest Quality standard.

Following improvements to fitness facilities and goods sales and retention training for all frontline staff, sales of memberships have continually increased for the leisure centres since the partnership began in 2014.

GLL are operating the Glebe Park for a trial period of 12 months from 1st April 2017 with a view to support the park and increase participation from local residents and visitors. GLL are set to report back in October 2017 on whether or not they would seek to continue running the park in line with the current leisure contract.

GLL have also been working with external agencies on the Swim safe project which is a project organised Royal Nations Lifeboat Institution and Swim England to promote swim safety in young adults swimming in open waters.

Work is continuing on a County wide basis, where GLL have put in a proposal to access funding from Sport England for a locality bid to support the work they are doing with older people to encourage them to become more active.

**Licensing**

The licensing service will be undertaking a number of improvement areas to support the Council Plan priorities and improve licensed activities across the district.

**Media and Communications**

The broad aim of our communications strategy is to keep residents and other stakeholders fully informed about what the council does in a way which supports Council Plan priorities and builds local pride.

Messages are delivered using all available channels including newspapers, TV, radio, websites, social media, and other digital platforms. The Communications operation is merged with Customer Services to provide a consistent joined-up approach to how we interact with the public.

We are already maximising the use of digital channels to enable the council to target communications much more effectively, making it easier for us to build stronger relationships with local communities.
For example, we now have a system in place where the communications team is emailed ‘live’ information about any disruption to waste/recycling collections and in significant instances (vehicle breakdown or many properties missed due to roadworks etc) we can alert residents via social media and co-ordinate inquiry responses with the Contact Centre team.

In the next year we intend to build on this approach, to provide a dynamic information service for our residents through our social media channels.

This, in the longer-term, will be refined further through the Customer Connect project, which will eventually allow us to send targeted and relevant information direct to a single customer’s account.

This will be invaluable for campaigns such as the kerbside recycling roll-out or flood grants, where we will be able to distribute information and updates directly to those affected households by a delivery method of their choosing, including digital channels.

The next year will see the communications operation make increasing use of video to deliver information.

All members of the communications team and digital editors have attended a video production workshop and the intention is to use video to assist with key messages and information, especially where a more ‘visual’ approach could be effective.

We are already looking at ways that ‘how-to’ video guides on the website - for example filling out a grant application form or which container to use for which recyclables - could effectively replace several pages of existing content and provide an accessible and effective method of sharing information on other channels, particularly social media.

We are developing a short video to support council staff recruitment, promoting the benefits of living in South Lakeland and working at the authority, that can be used to complement recruitment adverts on-line and on social media.

We have increased our social media activity in the past 12 months and intend to continue to develop this as an effective way to communicate with our residents

Recent examples of the effectiveness of this strategy have included our co-ordinated multi-channel approach to communications around the flood grants, where we utilised not only traditional media channels to disseminate information but also sent information out via community, business and third sector organisations working directly with flood-affected residents and through partner agencies working in flood recovery, as well as an extensive social media campaign.

In the next year we are intending to produce a social media report to help analyse performance to help give a clear direction for future strategy, examining data to see which posts work best, when they receive most views and response rates.

We are also looking to involve more departments across the council using social media for their messaging, to build on the success of HR’s recruitment posts.