

Terms of Reference

St George's Guildhall Complex Advisory Group

Guildhall Creative: Where the future of arts, culture, technology starts in King's Lynn

Background

The King's Lynn Town Deal Board (KLTDDB) was established in 2020 to develop a Town Investment Plan to secure a 'Town Deal' of up to £25m from Government. Town Deals represent a locally agreed set of 'interventions' that will result in economic productivity through urban regeneration, planning and land use, skills and enterprise infrastructure and connectivity. The KLTDDB agreed set of priorities set out in the Town Investment Plan are;

- Creating a town where people want to come to live and stay
- Developing a local skills pipeline for local opportunities responding to Covid-19
- Improving digital and sustainable connectivity
- Repurposing the town centre and historic assets for visitors and residents

The KLTDDB will oversee the delivery of any funding package agreed with central government as part of the Towns Fund process. The KLTDDB's consultation and engagement strategy includes the establishment of thematic sub-groups to engage a wider range of people and organisations outside of the Board to support the development and delivery of the Investment Plan.

The St George's Guildhall Complex

The aim of the project is to create a national centre telling the story of Guildhall theatre back to the Elizabethan period to support the development of a thriving creative and cultural economy. Visitors will follow in Shakespeare's footsteps, 'treading the boards' of the oldest working theatre in the UK, with a first recorded performance in 1445. We will celebrate and make accessible the rich built heritage of the Grade 1 St George's Guildhall, the largest surviving medieval Guildhall in England. We will improve the visitor offer, through the high quality interpretation of this rich heritage site that has a unique link to Shakespeare.

We want to create a vibrant and inclusive community cultural space, with a focus on performance, skills development and creative learning that is accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds and which supports personal development and wellbeing. We will enhance and expand the visitor offer, through the high quality interpretation of this rich heritage site that has a unique link to Shakespeare and through a strong programme of live performances, art and themed events that will make a significant contribution to the development of the local visitor economy.

As an integral part of our vision for the complex is becoming a centre for creative skills development, we have the opportunity to develop the White Barn as part of the Guildhall Complex to create a Creative Hub which will support creative businesses to collaborate, develop skills and grow. The potential for a Creative Hub will support the nurturing and growth of King's Lynn's creative community, providing support for business start-ups for those creatives needing an environment to professionalise and develop their skills.

Purpose of the Advisory Group

In recent years efforts have been made to prepare plans to breathe new life into the St George's Guildhall theatre to ensure it can flourish in years to come in an inclusive and sustainable way. This means investing in physical changes that will make its offer broader and widen the scope of its purpose. The proposed changes would see the space becoming easily adaptable for a wider variety of uses – including for more informal events, alternative performing space, as well as more traditional stage-based theatre. Initial feasibility and consultation was undertaken in 2019 by Foster Wilson Architects jointly commissioned by the Borough Council and Shakespeare Guildhall Trust in connection with the St. George's Guildhall - particularly around the theatre space.

At the same time planning for a new theatre space was being undertaken, work progressed on assessing the feasibility and operational models for a Creative Hub. An Initial Feasibility and wide ranging and extensive stakeholder engagement were commissioned by the Borough Council in 2018 and carried out by the Norwich Consortium led by Hudson Architects.

It is envisaged that a new creative community will have a shared space in which creative enterprise can flourish. This could include individuals with the potential to receive training/business support, create new businesses, creating opportunities to collaborate and benefit from synergies and shared resources and spaces. The White Barn, an under-used building situated within the Guildhall complex emerged as a proposed venue for the Creative Hub.

Tackling the Guildhall theatre and the White Barn together as one complex is logical and will be more impactful as the combined outputs are likely to be more attractive and viable to potential funders/investors. Working on the two initiatives from the outset can help achieve the ambition of having a complex that operates in a co-ordinated way with complementary uses. The approach will maximise the impact of the project, make the best use of resources in managing the development and on-going sustainable operation of the whole complex. It is important that the development of both proposals occur in a joined-up way, and that activities across the whole site are ultimately integrated and harmonised (respectful of the different perspectives of respective enterprises occupying the site) and deliver synergies.

The Borough Council with some of its key partners from the local Cultural Board will put in place the necessary dedicated resource and specialist consultancy work needed to take forward the ambition and meet the requirements of funders/ investors. What we need now is a way in which we can genuinely capture feedback, ideas, knowledge, skills of those with an interest in our ambitions and help steer the development of both proposals.

We are therefore seeking commitment from individuals or organisations with an interest in helping to shape these ambitious plans through the establishment of an Advisory Group to support the Project Board in making decisions to progress the project.

Overall Purpose:

The Project Board and Advisory Group will work towards a common purpose to;

- Promote a shared vision for the complex
- Contribute to the evolution of all aspects of the complex (theatre/ exhibition/ creative hub space)
- Create a long-term sustainable model of operation that is resilient to changes in tastes, technologies, and that is inclusive and accessible
- Make a genuine impact on the area's cultural health and economic prosperity

- Provide the mechanism for wide ranging consultation in support of external funding to ultimately deliver the project

Membership

The **Advisory Group** will include stakeholders that are invested in the success of the project and/or will be connected to activities on site, or have ambitions to use the site in the future.

The members of the group will be determined invited by the Project Board in conjunction with the Chair of the Advisory Group and will include representatives from;

- Elected ward member(s)
- Borough Council Portfolio Holder
- Nominated representatives of the KLTDDB;
 - Michael Baldwin (Chair)
 - Harry Seaton
- Historic England
- Industry expert (theatre / performing arts)
- National Trust
- Industry expert (theatre / academic research on Shakespeare link)
- Heritage Champion
- Local Interest Groups
- Tenants of the complex

In addition to the above, to support the group and to ensure a working relationship between the KLTDDB, Council Officers will support and advise on specialist subjects/progress on the project being discussed.

This group will operate using a variety of meeting/non meeting methods/formats.

The Role of the Advisory Group

The role of this group is to explore, discuss and shape the development of the St George's Guildhall Complex. It will:

- Examine and explore proposals around the physical and operating model of the complex
- Inform and support applications for external funding
- Generate ideas, supporting the development and sustainability of the complex to improve the cultural offer for the town centre
- Use wider networks and contacts to gather (informal) feedback from the wider community
- Act as a consultative forum for specific ideas and proposals under consideration/development by the Project Board responsible for ensuring delivery and success of the project
- Be a champion for the cause and communicate the ambition and agreed vision in a proactive and positive way
- Use specialist knowledge and expertise to inform the refurbishment, regeneration and future activity for all elements of the Guildhall complex
- Support the Project Board in delivering identified strategic priorities
- Identify sector specific funding opportunities and provide expertise and support in funding applications

- Challenge ideas and provoke discussion

Operating Arrangements

- The Advisory Group have **no decision-making authority** but acts as mechanism for making recommendations to the Project Board
- The Group does not have the authority to commit other partners' action or expenditure
- It is intended that the Group should meet on a bi-monthly basis, with provision to call additional meetings if required
- The Group will be chaired by a representative nominated by the KLTDDB
- Minutes of meetings will be circulated to members of the Group and outcomes reported to the Project Board and KLTDDB
- Secretariat will be provided by the Borough/County Council Officer team
- Meetings will be held virtually and on occasions face to face at a King's Lynn venue when deemed appropriate and worthwhile in doing so by the Chair
- Meetings to be held weekdays
- The individual expertise and interests of individual members may be sought at any stage where this is relevant
- The Group may request particular individuals to attend meetings in order to provide specific advice or to facilitate informed discussion
- It is expected that members will consult within their particular interest groups or communities on non-confidential matters so that the widest possible range of views are represented
- The Groups will operate for as long as deemed appropriate by the KLTDDB

Wider, targeted engagement and consultation will take place with the following (non-exhaustive) as and when required to inform specific work streams emerging during the project;

- Tenants of the complex
- Collusion
- Norfolk Arts Service
- Kick the Dust
- King's Lynn Festival
- West Norfolk Gilbert & Sullivan Operatic Society
- Shakespeare Guildhall Trust
- King's Lynn Community Cinema Club
- King's Lynn Civic Society
- The Garage
- Lavender Hill Mob Theatre Company
- Lynn Academy of Dance
- College of West Anglia
- Creative Arts East
- King's Lynn Preservation Trust
- King's Lynn Operatic & Dramatic Society
- West Norfolk Artists Association
- King's Lynn Players
- St Margaret's & St Nicholas Ward Forum
- King's Lynn Town Guides

- Arts Council
- Youth Forum representative
- Businesses (existing and new start ups)
- Residents
- Artists and Creatives

The above is not limited to and open to people who have;

- a passion for improving the cultural offer and opportunities for creative enterprise
- enthusiasm and interest in creative industries

Code of Conduct

All sub-groups of the King's Lynn Town Deal Board are expected to respect the following core values of engagement;

- Act with integrity and in best interests of the group
- A non-judgemental approach that respects the views and opinions of other members
- Promote diversity and inclusivity in a non-discriminatory way
- Truthfully represent the interests of the group/organisation/cohort they represent
- Hold a genuine interest in the work and purpose of the groups
- Be committed to, and be actively involved in, pursuing the outcomes sought by the sub-group within its work
- Where specifically requested by the Chair, all members are expected to retain confidentiality in the context of the matters being considered
- Any conflicts of interest which they have in any matter to be considered at the meeting should be declared to the Chair. A conflict of interest arises where a Board Member, a close associate, immediate family, business, organisation or employer has an interest in a matter which is the same as, connected to or may be affected by the matter under discussion.

Members of sub-groups should also acknowledge the 'Seven Principle of Public Life' the King's Lynn Town Deal Board abides by in its own Code of Conduct;

1. **Selflessness** Board Members should act solely in terms of the public interest.
2. **Integrity** Board Members must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
3. **Objectivity** Board Members must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without any form of discrimination or bias.
4. **Accountability** Board Members are accountable to the best interests of the project and the principal objectives of the Board.
5. **Openness** The Board must act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner.
6. **Honesty** Board Members should act with honesty, objectivity and integrity.
7. **Leadership** Board Members should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.