

Borough Council of  
**King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk**



**Regeneration and Development Panel**  
**Tuesday, 11th June, 2019 at 6.30 pm**  
**in the Council Chamber - Town Hall, Saturday Market**  
**Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

**Reports marked to follow on the Agenda and/or Supplementary Documents**

1. **Creative Hub – Information Sheet (Pages 2 - 4)**

**Contact**

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## Creative Hub

1. The Council commissioned a piece of work to consider opportunities for a Creative Hub in King's Lynn.

"A Creative Hub is a place, either physical or virtual, which brings creative people together. It is a convenor, providing space and support for networking, business development and community engagement within the creative, cultural and tech sectors".

Creative Industries is the fastest growing sector of UK economy.

2. Baseline Findings

- No existing creative network or community- this needs facilitation, building up, leadership and support
- Also need to build up arts, culture and creative capacity within the local authority
- Numbers of individuals and groups exist but are not connected or supported – they are however **keen to develop a hub**
- Existing creative companies have good accommodation but want more **networking, talks and affordable meeting space**
- Artists and makers are lacking **accommodation and workspaces**
- There is **desire and ambition** for a large creative hub but only capacity at this point for a small-scale hub
- Look at a **four phase development** of network and buildings  
**Phase 1: Network/Virtual Hub**  
**Phase 2: Meanwhile Use**  
**Phase 3: Creative Workspaces and**  
**Phase 4: Full-scale Creative Hub**

3. Conclusion

- King's Lynn is lacking a **communication/connection/promotion** network and platform
- Not enough **free or low cost meeting spaces** suitable for creative use
- Insular attitude in some places, **people feel isolated, neglected**
- **Lots of creative people** in surrounding towns and villages
- A lot of activity in **cultural education and community building** in West Norfolk
- West Norfolk recognised as **above average area for skills** in set design, scenery, fashion, film-making, photography (NESTA)
- **Collusion** and **GroundWork** are making a difference
- There is a lot of enthusiasm and goodwill but **not joined up and working together – not yet a creative community**
- Several factions and conflicting groups, needs objective and sensitive expert brokering and development
- Needs **visionary support/investment** by Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, ACE, LEPs, Norfolk County Council to build capacity
- Needs **facilitation** and on-the-ground **coordination** in shorter term

## 4. Options

|  | <b>Benefits</b>  | <b>Drawbacks</b>  | <b>Requirements</b>  | <b>Outcomes</b>  |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Option 1</b><br>No change   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No risk</li> <li>• No investment needed</li> <li>• No increase of capacity necessary</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste of opportunity</li> <li>• No added value for Future High Streets Bid</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No creative hub</li> <li>• Dissatisfied community</li> <li>• Creative continue to leave King's Lynn and area</li> <li>• Empty buildings</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Option 2 – stage 1</b><br>Virtual hub/network of creatives  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low set-up and running costs</li> <li>• Easy to start and expand</li> <li>• No need for physical building</li> <li>• Easy to spread over wide area</li> <li>• Accessible to many</li> <li>• Uses new tech platforms</li> <li>• Increased connections</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small investment &amp; risk</li> <li>• Doesn't create workspaces or meeting spaces</li> <li>• Not accessible to everyone</li> <li>• Needs strong digital infrastructure</li> <li>• Changes &amp; updates – hard to maintain</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A coordinator to devise and commission a suitable platform and structure for a network to function that fit the purpose</li> <li>• Funding to set it up, grow, update, active and maintain</li> </ul>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A way to connect creatives across a larger area</li> <li>• National connections</li> <li>• Info sharing mechanism</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> stage creative hub</li> <li>• Limited contribution to the creative economy</li> </ul> |
| <b>Option 2 – stage 2</b><br>Meanwhile use e.g. 10 Norfolk Street shop empty retail space/Freebridge warehouse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lost cost/low risk/easy to start</li> <li>• Benefits and enlivens high street</li> <li>• Accessible</li> <li>• Helps to build capacity</li> <li>• Appealing to young people</li> <li>• Makes use of any empty building</li> <li>• Adds value to Future High Street</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of income to Council</li> <li>• Relatively small impact</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rates-free and rent-free agreement from Council</li> <li>• Community-based group or collective to run the space</li> <li>• Start-up and business development support</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A boost to the creative community</li> <li>• First step to build capacity</li> <li>• Place to run creative activities with young people &amp; workshops</li> <li>• Increase capacity</li> </ul>                                   |
| <b>Option 2 – stage 3</b><br>Studios/Makerspace e.g. White Barn, Freebridge Warehouse                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievable within 1-2 years</li> <li>• Medium investment</li> <li>• Provides workspaces</li> <li>• Builds capacity</li> <li>• Offers collective space for artists</li> <li>• Mixed offer</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs funding investment to start</li> <li>• Needs capacity and management</li> <li>• Some revenue costs to maintain</li> <li>• May not offer public access</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable building secured</li> <li>• Design development</li> <li>• Detailed business plan</li> <li>• Fundraising for conversion</li> <li>• Investment from partners</li> <li>• Manager/coordinator</li> <li>• Suitable tenants</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good use of building</li> <li>• Contribution to creative ecosystem</li> <li>• More income generation opportunities</li> <li>• Strengthen reputation of town</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Option 2 – stage 4</b><br>Full functioning multiuse hub e.g. Kwikfit  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High investment for major gain</li> <li>• Offers landmark destination</li> <li>• Inclusive and accessible</li> <li>• Provides social, meeting and workspace</li> <li>• Major contribution to the infrastructure of the Borough</li> </ul>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher risk</li> <li>• Expensive to maintain</li> <li>• Long-term project</li> <li>• Needs strong leadership and management</li> <li>• Depends on strong &amp; connected creative sector</li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships and buy-in</li> <li>• Anchor tenant to manage the building or; venue manager</li> <li>• Significant funding</li> <li>• Robust business plan</li> <li>• Long-term commitment to capital project</li> </ul>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major asset for the town</li> <li>• Raised profile as a cultural and creative centre</li> <li>• Building the tech and digital creative community</li> <li>• Increased capacity</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Campus approach</b><br>e.g. combination of spaces across the town-mixture of options above                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible</li> <li>• Makes best use of resources</li> <li>• Benefits high street</li> <li>• Can build over a period of time</li> <li>• Offers range of opportunities and access</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs coordination, input and leadership</li> <li>• Takes time to achieve</li> <li>• Could dissipate demand and capacity in the town</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision and leadership</li> <li>• Range of buildings</li> <li>• Business support</li> <li>• Strong partnerships</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A diverse and accessible creative hub</li> <li>• A range of opportunities for creatives and the community</li> <li>• Profile as a creative town</li> </ul>  |

5. Proposal

The Council has several shop units around King's Lynn. Generally shops are left empty pending re-letting or alternatively can be let to charitable entities, this gives business rates relief and can generate a small income.

It is proposed that the Council consider the use of empty retail space as small creative workspaces. Unit xx on Broad Street could be considered as a pilot scheme and would be eligible for small business rates relief.