

7. CREATIVE CLUSTERS CONFERENCE 2002 – 20-23 NOVEMBER 2002, SHEFFIELD, UNITED KINGDOM

Officer responsible Director of Information	Author Warren Brixton, DDI 941-8439
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The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the forthcoming Creative Clusters Conference in the United Kingdom and seek approval for the Committee Chairman to attend.

One of the fastest growing sectors in the United Kingdom economy is creative industries. Each of the United Kingdom's ten regional development agencies has identified the creative industries as a growth sector, and at the local level, towns and cities all over western Europe are looking to the creative industries to bring them new wealth, to sharpen their city image and to help address social inclusion issues.

In the United Kingdom every local authority is mandated to draw up a cultural strategy that conforms with guidelines issued by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, and which must include a development strategy for the creative industries. Many towns and cities have designated a Cultural Industries Quarter as part of this Strategy.

The Creative Clusters Conference is made up of two core days of talks, project visits and discussion sessions (21 November 2002 and 22 November 2002), together with supporting events such as masterclasses and workshops on the Wednesday (20 November 2002) before and Saturday (23 November 2002) immediately afterwards.

It will bring together hundreds of creative industry development experts from across the globe as a means of learning more about assisting creative enterprises in your community.

Councillor Anna Crighton initiated an informal meeting on 2 May this year of people from the business and arts community to brainstorm ideas for showcasing the creative industries in Christchurch. This initial meeting was followed by another a month later. Since that time discussions have taken place within the arts and business community to test the viability of showcasing our creative industries and this has been met with positive responses. Concurrently with this Canterbury Development Corporation under the responsibility of David Rycroft, Economic Development Manager, Canterbury Development Corporation, Leonie Foster has been researching the creative industry sector within Christchurch.

Given that creative industries are not proving easy to identify, to understand or support being based on individual creativity, successful development policies must take account of both economic and artistic issues. Councillor Crighton believes that the role of the Arts Culture and Heritage Committee is to look at such development policies, beyond those already established, eg Art in Public Places. One of the workshops she wishes to attend is 'Workshop in Cultural Quarter Development' which draws on arts, urban planning, and economic development. The total programme is available on www.creativeclusters.co.uk.

The cost of the conference, air fares etc to be made available at the Committee meeting.

Staff

Recommendation: That the Council approve Councillor Crighton, Chair, Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee to attend this conference.