

## **St Helens Library Service National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) Advisory Board Member Recruitment Pack**

### **Background Information**

Council Library Service is one of 17 Library Services across England to be awarded National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status by Arts Council England (ACE). The Library Service has delivered its award-winning Arts in Libraries programme since 2014 and joined the NPO portfolio in 2018.

The Arts in Libraries programme was voted Best Arts Project in the people's National Lottery Awards in 2016 and has continued to grow in strength, ambition and popularity, engaging audiences and participants in the arts since becoming an NPO. We do this through a diverse programme including work from internationally recognised artists such as Frank Cottrell Boyce, Selina Thompson, Mark Tichner and Francesca Martinez; through to working in partnership with arts organisations such as Heart of Glass, Dadafest, Wonder Arts, Homotopia, Liverpool Independents Biennial and 20 Stories High; and through commissioning artists from St Helens and the wider region to deliver or take part in our wide range of opportunities.

For a flavour of the activities and performances we are currently engaged in, please take a look at our new website at the following link: <https://artsinlibraries.sthelens.gov.uk>

Our Mission and Vision can be summarised as follows;

- Our Mission is to offer diverse creative opportunities in library spaces, online, and in the community. We collaborate with artists and by sharing best practices with other library services across England for everyone's benefit. We support individuals to be creative in whatever way we can.
- Our Vision is a community that feels better about itself, that expresses itself confidently, that listens to new ideas, that is creative and proud of it - all this happening in and around our seven library spaces.

We have presented a broad programme during 2024 which has included:

- Performances and exhibitions that have taken a place across our network of seven libraries, which include music, theatre, storytelling and visual arts.
- Our annual Storyfest for families, with our partners Wonder Arts in February half term.
- The inaugural Carnival of Creativity that took place in August this year and attracted over 1300 people to a one day festival of creativity and performance.
- Our first ever Great St Helens Potato Festival bringing together growers, cooks, writers, dancers and musicians to celebrate the humble 'spud'.
- Our artist Commission programme which supports new commissioned work from locally based artists, in which this year we will be working with Liverpool Independent Biennial to help promote the chosen artist's work on a regional basis in 2025.
- Our writers' groups which meet in our branch libraries together with other writing work that takes place in schools and colleges.

Now in year 7 of our NPO delivery we are looking to widen the diversity and skill set of the Advisory Board, which oversees the work of the programme, to bring new expertise and fresh approaches to our work.

### **Current Advisory Board Members 2021:**

Our current board members include the following;

Co-Chairs of Advisory Board: Gee Collins, local artist and producer and Tom Glynn who runs a young people's arts organisation, Powered by Hip Hop and works at the Shakespeare North. Our Deputy Chair is Emmer Winder, local artist and educator.

Other board members include Paula Williams, retired Head of Culture, Knowsley Borough Council and Gili Armson Artist and Mental Health Professional.

The Board also includes key representation from St Helens Council including the St Helens Borough Council Cabinet Member for Wellbeing, Culture and Heritage, Director of Communities, the Team Manager for Library Services and the Finance Business Partner for the Place Directorate.

### **New Board Members – Required Skillsets:**

St Helens Library Service is now seeking a small number of Advisory Board members that can bring one or more of the following skillsets:

- A marketing and /or audience development specialist, particularly someone with experience of attracting and developing audiences in areas of disadvantage.
- A funding specialist or someone who may have knowledge of external fundraising.
- Someone who has knowledge of environmental issues and how they may connect to the arts.
- A young person who may have an ambition to become a future arts leader or to work in the creative arts and would like the opportunity to learn how an arts organisation operates.
- Someone who may have knowledge of St Helens and especially someone who has experience of working with, or lived experience of, our specific target audiences – these being, young people, D/deaf and/or disabled people or residents living in areas of disadvantage within St Helens.
- Someone who may be a Library user and/or understands the possibilities that working in a library can bring.
- A creative practitioner who may be interested in learning about how an arts organisation operates, in being involved in arts governance and keen to contribute experience from the perspective of a creative practitioner. We are particularly interested in individuals from a performing arts discipline.

We are committed to broadening the diversity of our Advisory Board and although we welcome all applications, the Board is under-represented in relation to the profile of the borough, and we would encourage people from the following areas of protected characteristic groups to consider applying: LGBTQI+/ Age (particularly under 26)/ ethnicity/disability and people with financial /economic barriers. We would particularly welcome applications from people from across these

groups to bring a wider perspective to the development of our programme and engagement work.

### **How to Apply:**

If you would like to apply to join the Advisory Board, please complete this MS Form application here <https://forms.office.com/e/FtSGq3Ax7u>

The closing date for this round of applications is Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> January after which the Arts in Libraries Team and a board member will review the applications.

Interviews will take place via an informal discussion in Mid-January and successful individuals will be invited to attend the next board meeting taking place on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025 as an observer to give you the chance to see if this is an opportunity that interests you. Please note, if you are unable to make this date, please do not let it prevent you from applying.

Candidates interesting in being a Board Member that are unable to apply on this occasion are welcome to register interest for future recruitment. Please email: [andrewcave@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:andrewcave@sthelens.gov.uk)

If you have any queries about the application process or would like to discuss the role in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact Andy Cave, Senior Arts in Libraries Officer via [andrewcave@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:andrewcave@sthelens.gov.uk) or by telephone on 07745 739322.

### **Membership**

The Advisory Board consists of individuals with a diversity of perspectives and expertise to ensure internal challenge and support. There are clear distinctions between the role of the Advisory Board and the operational management of the local authority's staff.

### **Objectives of the Advisory Board**

The Advisory Board provides a formal structure for stakeholders to undertake a joint role, operating within the existing Council governance structure, to oversee the work of St Helens Library Service NPO and provide collaborative leadership in shaping its direction in order to improve the cultural offer for the people of St Helens.

The Board does not have a legal status and is not expected to formulate service strategy, but will be consulted on local priorities, artistic direction and content and invited to give views on the future strategic direction of the NPO.

The Board will:

- Maintain an overview of priorities for St Helens Library Service NPO, supporting delivery and within the local, national, and regional context.
- Make recommendations regarding the NPO's aims and objectives based on the strategic priorities of Arts Council England and the stated aims and objectives of St Helens Council.
- Provide support and robust challenge to ensure that; performance meets targets set in the Business Plan; the programming is excellent, inclusive and diverse and encourages people of St Helens to take part in the arts as audiences or participants; the work, through

targeted programming, supports emerging artists and strives to increase audience reach through all possible means.

- Provide independence of judgment and scrutiny of service provision.
- Provide support and guidance to the service to secure additional income generation to ensure sustainability and growth.
- Help raise the profile of St Helens Library Service and the NPO with internal departments and external organisations with a view to generating new artistic and partnership opportunities.

### **Frequency of meetings**

Meetings take place 4 times per year, on a quarterly basis. Arts Council England release payments quarterly on the receipt of Minutes of the Advisory Board meeting and a financial statement. Board meetings will be arranged to fall in line with this payment schedule, which is usually on the last Tuesday of each January/April/July and October. Exact meeting dates are set in advance on an annual basis and are reviewed regularly to suit board members availability.

### **Terms of Engagement**

The following are the terms of engagement for this position.

- Board membership: Attendance is voluntary,
- Salary: Board membership is a voluntary, unremunerated role (although reasonable travel and accommodation/subsistence will be met for people travelling from further afield) and any expenses will be reimbursed if required, although most meetings will continue to be online.
- Time commitment: Attendance at 4 board meetings per year.
- Other Attendances: There may be occasional training or development sessions relevant to the position.
- Term of Office: Board members are recruited on a 3-year term, with reappointment possible after this period.

### **Job Description - Key Duties:**

1. To attend quarterly meetings.
2. Maintain an overview of priorities for the St Helens Library Service NPO, supporting delivery and within the local, national and regional context.
3. To provide support and robust challenge to ensure the delivery of the NPO Business Plan, working within the Core Values of Governance, the Ten Principle Responsibilities of Good Governance and the Seven Principles of Public Life as defined by the Nolan Commission (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership)
4. Bring an individual area of specialism, skills, knowledge or experience to the meetings to help the Board make sound decisions and to support the development of the programme.
5. Make recommendations regarding the NPO's aims and objectives based on the strategic priorities of Arts Council England and the stated aims and objectives of St Helens Council.

6. Provide independence of judgement and scrutiny of service provision.
7. Raise the profile of St Helens Library Service and the NPO with internal departments and external organisations with a view to generating new artistic and partnership opportunities.

**Other Duties may include:**

- Further advice / input into the development of areas of work within your specialist field
- Attendance at Arts in Libraries public events throughout the year.
- Representing Arts in Libraries at networking events as appropriate.
- Attendance at training sessions relevant to the position.

**Person Specification: Advisory Board Members**

In addition to the specific skill set which each Advisory Board Member brings to the Team each individual must have:

1. A commitment to the vision and mission of St Helens Library Service NPO programme
2. A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to their duties as an Advisory Board Member
3. A commitment to work within the ethical framework of the Seven Principles of Public Life; selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty and leadership.
4. An ability to constructively question and challenge (or a willingness to develop these skills)
5. A commitment to equal opportunities

**Equality Opportunity Employment Policy**

St Helens Library Service National Portfolio organisation (NPO) Advisory Board will recruit Advisory Board members within the Employment Policy of St Helens Council. St Helens Council is an equal opportunity employer. The aim of the Council's policy is to ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, age, being pregnant or having a child, being or becoming a transsexual person, religion, belief or lack of religion/belief, or disability, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be reasonably shown to be justified.

**Data Protection Privacy Notice: Your Application**

Your Application via the MS Form process will only be to consider your application to join the Advisory Board.

If you are successful in your application, we will ask your permission to store your contact details on our secure system and ask you to complete the Advisory Board Skills Audit Form to be

accessed only by relevant members of the Arts and Libraries Team. We will electronically destroy your original application.

If you are unsuccessful, we will electronically destroy your submission once we have completed the recruitment process, but we may ask you if we can keep your contact details on file along with your main skill set / area of interest. If we request this, we will issue you with a further Privacy Policy with regards to the storage of your data.

### **Legal Basis for Processing Your Data**

The information in your application will be processed in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations. It will be treated as confidential. The legal basis for processing your data is to enable the Council to fulfil its lawful / statutory functions and for pursuing the legitimate interests of the Council for the purpose of recruiting to the Advisory Board and the provision of workforce monitoring statistics.

### **Further information about Data Protection**

If you would like further details about the council's data protection policy and practice, please contact the council's Data Protection Officer using the following email address: [dataprotection@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@sthelens.gov.uk).

You have every right to make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) regarding inappropriate handling of your personal data using the following methods:

Tel. 0303 123 1113

Online: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Post: Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF