

ITEM 12 – DEPUTATION REQUEST – COOLTAN ARTS

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Comments from the Strategic Director of Health and Community Services

1. Southwark Council and NHS Southwark have statutory responsibilities to ensure that a range of primary and specialist mental health care and treatment services are provided for local residents. The Strategic Director of Health and Community Services is responsible for commissioning mental health services on behalf of NHS Southwark and the Council's Adult Social Care service, with this work being undertaken by an integrated health and social care commissioning team which is responsible for a pooled mental health budget. Whilst most people who need treatment for mental health problems are looked after by their General Practitioner, people with severe and enduring mental health conditions receive care and treatment from South London and Maudsley Foundation Mental Health Trust (SLaM), funded by Southwark Health and Social Care.
2. SLaM not only provides an extensive range of services to support people's recovery and mental well being, but also supports other local provider organisations, including CoolTan Arts, to provide additional opportunities for individuals. SLaM's user development worker has provided considerable assistance to CoolTan Arts in fundraising activities enabling them to raise significant sums from a variety of sources including Guys and St Thomas's Charitable Trustees, Comic Relief, Wellcome Large Arts Award, Social Enterprise Investment Fund (SEIF), Capital Volunteers, Maudsley Charitable Trustees and Tudor Trust amongst others. The Service Director at SLaM has also funded a small number of mental health service users to access places in Cool Tan's workshops. Their patron Maggie Hambling, a very well known artist, also helps them raise funds and they raise some through their activities such as the Largactyl Shuffle.
3. In October 2009 CoolTan Arts approached the SHSC joint mental health commissioners to request a meeting. This request was agreed, and on 30 November two commissioners visited the centre, saw the facilities and work being carried out by CoolTan Arts and held a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer and a member of the management committee. A wide range of issues were discussed but the commissioners explained that, given the tight financial situation facing both the Council and the Primary Care Trust, they did not see any immediate prospect of being able to provide any funding for CoolTan Arts. Following this the commissioners invited CoolTan Arts (together with other local organisations) to a stakeholder event held in December 2009 to consider Southwark's developing mental health strategy and thus participate in the development of local mental health services.
4. The Strategic Director appreciates that the creative workshops provided by CoolTan Arts are valued by and beneficial to the people who participate. However she has had to make significant financial efficiency savings in mental health budgets in recent years and has needed to prioritise the funding of core services. Whilst it is not possible to divert resources from essential mental health services to provide the financial assistance that is being requested, CoolTan Arts does have the option of being able to approach charitable and other funding sources for assistance. As summarised in paragraph eight,

CoolTan Arts has been successful in securing funding from a number of such sources in recent years.