

Cheshire Dance
Diversity & Business Plan
2022-2023
February 2022

Cheshire
Dance



LET'S CREATE DANCE FOR EVERYONE!

Photo Credit: Adam Holloway

Cheshire Dance - Diversity & Business Plan 2022-23

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1 Executive Summary

There is no doubt that the last two years were challenging year for everyone and that 2022/23 continues to present both opportunities and challenges for our participants, freelance artists, partners, our key stakeholders, team and Board included. Support from the DCMS Cultural Recovery Fund (CRF) has been instrumental in enabling Cheshire Dance to re-emerge and re-open after lockdown. The organisations CRF action plan has seen; face to face classes re-starting alongside virtual classes, support for freelance artists both in terms of professional development and employment, improved brand awareness, Covid secure measures and resources put in place and enabled us to take forward our artistic programme for the year including plans for a Covid safe Now Northwich Festival in April 2022.

It has been noticeable that our reopening plans have been challenged by a reduction in the number of freelance artists available in the area. Many of our freelancers have had to seek other regular employment outside of the arts or are retaining to gain more secure employment opportunities. In response to this our plans include additional training and support for freelancers and creating employment opportunities. Building on our plans to ensure freelancer artists are paid for all aspects of the work they do for the organisation we will actively view and consider our freelancer artists as part of the Cheshire Dance Team.

Whilst we have experienced difficulties in accessing community spaces and incurred additional Covid related costs we have continued to be responsive to the needs of the communities we work with e.g. establishing new groups - one for home schooling, an early year's group and a new group for people with living with Dementia.

Our Re-Engagement Plans are alive and active and remain focused on our priority groups of Older People, Young People, People with Disabilities, including those with Profound Intellectual & Multiple Disabilities (PIMD), Artists and Freelance staff all of whom were amongst those most heavily impacted by COVID-19.

Throughout 2022-23, Cheshire Dance will continue to engage with and listen to participants, partners and artists to develop a programme of support and activity and to ensure their voices are present as we develop a business plan truly reflective of, and embedded into, the Arts Council Let's Create Investment Principles.

By taking the learning from 2020-22, Cheshire Dance has developed a Business Plan for 2022-23 that continues to support our priority groups, responds directly to Arts Council England Let's Create Strategy Investment Principles, delivers on key elements of the North West Dance Plan responds to Cheshire West and Chester Council's Stronger Futures Plan and provides a clear roadmap for both artistic & organisational development.

Our 2022-23 plan has been developed with the assumption that the COVID Vaccination Programme continues to allow the country to emerge safely from the pandemic enabling Cheshire Dance to deliver a dynamic and exciting artistic programme including face-to-face sessions, projects and performances.

We will use our SMART objectives as a framework to monitor the health of the organisation and recognise that central to our programme will be the wellbeing of staff, trustees, artists, participants and audiences.

- Our specialism in community, education, health and wellbeing will continue to take us into the heart of many communities across Cheshire with a particular focus on working with older adults, people with disabilities, young people and in areas of low arts engagement, championing the role of the dance artist in public engagement.
- We will embed digital activities increasingly across areas of our Artistic Programme as we have done already over the past year.

- We recognise that Black Lives Still Matter and will continue to work in partnership with Movema to seek and explore opportunities and activities arising from the 21/22 Associate Artist Scheme for artists from African, South East, East and South East Asian Diasporas
- We will find ways to sustain support for freelance artists longer term paying them to attend CPD essential to their role and providing subsidised/free access to CPD workshops linked to projects.
- We will create, produce and present dance to audiences in partnership with a range of arts, public and voluntary sector organisations in both traditional and unusual locations. This will include delivery of Winsford Creates Festival in March 22 and another outstanding Now Northwich festival in April 22.
- We will continue as the lead organisation of Dance Consortia North West, host the regional Partnerships Director role and collaborate strategically with consortia partners and beyond.
- We will develop an ambitious NPO application with stakeholders – one that will certainly include a growth bid to further develop strategic progress made over the last 4 years.
- As always, we will work for a more collaborative culture in the arts; open and honest with an unstinting passion for dance and an ambitious outlook for the future.

During the last two years Cheshire Dance has proved that the organisation is able to; flex and reframe its activities swiftly, respond and adapt to challenges and opportunities, and has demonstrated a stubborn resilience and productivity. We have proved that the organisation is dynamic, strong and resilient and well positioned to deliver ambitious plans for growth over the next ten years in line with the Let's Create Strategy Outcomes and Investment Principles and our aims and objectives for the benefit of our wider community.

We would like to draw your attention to the following

Our Artistic Programme

Highlights	See 4.1 and 4.2, pages 14 - 15
North West Dance Plan	See 4.3, page 15
Let's Create – our approach	See 4.4, pages 16 – 23
Summary programme	See Appendix 1 Artistic Programme 2022-23

Reaching audiences & participants	See Appendix 2 Audience Engagement & Development Plan
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Leadership and managing resources	See Section 5 and Appendix 3
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Gill Whitworth, Interim Chair and Adam Holloway, Director
On behalf of the Board and Staff of Cheshire Dance

2 Overview

Cheshire Dance is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, based in Winsford, Cheshire and has been in existence for more than 40 years.

Its prime charitable objective is to promote, maintain, improve and advance education amongst the public in the arts and in particular dance, in all its forms.

COVID 19 significantly impacted and challenged the organisation during 2020-22. Through careful financial & risk management and taking the opportunity to use the Government's Job Retention & Job Support Schemes the organisation remained financially viable in 2020/22. The DCMS Cultural Recovery Fund was pivotal in supporting the organisations ability to successfully reopen in 2021-22.

During 2021-22 we developed a robust Business Plan for 2022-23 with our partners, participants, board and artists aligned to the Let's Create Strategy Investment Principles and will ensure the organisation is fit for purpose, robust and dynamic.

The range of people engaging in our programme continues to be diverse – particularly in age and ability – and we continue to be active in many areas of otherwise low arts engagement. Going forward, we recognise that our aspirations and brief have, and continue to, expand and that we will need to work with partners to sustain long-term growth. Whilst we celebrate the growth of Cheshire Dance over recent years, including developing and leading initiatives such as Dance Consortia North West and the Now Northwich Festival, we are acutely aware that organisations resources and capacity also need to expand to ensure the robust and sustainable plans for growth can be delivered to the highest standards. Working with partners, we will explore opportunities including shared services and integration of resources to maximise opportunities for the growth and development of dance throughout the county and region.

Cheshire Dance is proud to be a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England and also attracts significant support from Cheshire West and Chester Council. It regularly works with many partner organisations across public, arts and voluntary sectors.

2.1 Vision

To ensure everyone has access to dance and can benefit from its transformative power.

2.2 Mission

Through the ongoing development of innovative, person and community centred dance practices and collaborations with participants, audiences, artists and other organisations, we champion dance and the voices of those who engage and we do this with a commitment to excellence and diversity.

2.3 How we achieve our Mission

We make space for, listen to, engage and celebrate with participants, audiences, artists and other organisations to enable everyone's dancing voice to be nurtured and heard. Through our own creative practice and as part of a sector rich in expertise we develop and promote excellence in dance through our creative values. We encourage diversity, foster innovation in practice and develop participation and audiences. Collectively we work towards a strong, sustainable and flourishing dance and arts sector, where those touched by the transformative power of dance are living and working in a society that is thriving.

Cheshire Dance

- Leads the artistic provision and support of dance across Cheshire.
- Provides strategic leadership for Dance Consortia North West, bringing together diverse artistic interests with dance employers, promoters and education institutions to create new opportunities.
- Commits to increasing access and transforming lives through dance, taking positive action to address equality and health issues.
- Champions the role of the dance artist as the key to public engagement and sector growth, supporting dance artists in the region and community professionals locally (teachers, care, youth and health staff).
- Devises innovative forms of creative practice and supports bespoke artist development.
- Champions diversity as a source of creativity throughout its programme and advocacy work.
- Develops dance opportunities for young people in community and school settings, in areas of low arts engagement and for young talent development.
- Delivers dance opportunities with people with disabilities in day care and community settings.
- Delivers dance opportunities for older adults in health, community and care home settings.
- Celebrates and supports dance originating from all styles and aesthetics and from diverse cultural traditions.
- Produces an events and festival programme, co-programmes and supports dance platforms and touring with local and regional partners, all the while championing regional talent.
- Make existing spaces and places more accessible for dance.
- Communicates transparently, engaging stakeholders in decision making, programming and promotion. We do this as part of local, regional and national networks, partnerships and collaborations, enabling greater impact in Cheshire, across the region and beyond.

Recent growth and investment in Cheshire Dance has focused around the development of major initiatives which strategically position the organisation within the local and regional dance development landscape. The Now Northwich Festival, with its focus on town centre regeneration and Dance Consortia North West with a remit to support artists and dance development across the region all require the organisation to plan for growth.

2.4 Our Values of Creative Practice

Cheshire Dance understands excellence through the use of a set of creative values. In sharing our 6 values we emphasise learning, exploring and debating in the knowledge that they are open to interpretation, requiring dialogue as part of deepening understanding of creativity.

Awareness	Of self and others, physical and emotional as well as the space, environment and context.
Flexibility	Adapting to others needs and aspirations, the environment and changing circumstances.
Authenticity	True to our own unique way of moving, encouraging people to be themselves.
Diversity	Celebrating difference as a source of creativity.
Enquiry	Forever curious, exploring boundaries open to new ideas and challenges.
Ownership	Developing belonging and personal/group progression.

Through our values we support individuals and communities to develop their authenticity and a genuine sense of creative enquiry in their own unique way of moving and dancing. To develop ownership, we seek to heighten awareness and value diversity with natural progression to the creative process of dance making and performance. Improvisation, somatic-based dance practices, connection and touch are key to our

creative approach, irrespective of the dance style employed, which champions person and community centred practice with inherent flexibility to meet individual needs and ambitions.

2.5 Review of 2021/22 Plan

Highlights include:-

Cultural Recovery Fund Programme

Our CRF programme support the safe return to face-to-face classes which ran alongside virtual and blended classes. Central to the programme was support for freelance artists both in terms of professional development opportunities and employment. Three artists were employed to support the reopening programme providing project management, programme delivery and marketing capacity to the team as well as broadening and expanding their skill sets. The programme also provided resource to improve brand awareness, implement Covid secure measures and resources and enabled us to take forward our artistic programme for the year including plans for a Covid safe Now Northwich Festival in 2022.

Returning to Face to Face Sessions

We were delighted to see the return to face-to-face classes with all our target groups. The majority of our participants have been excited to return to classes, rekindle friendships and dance. The CRF funding was critical in enabling the safe return to face-to-face sessions however we faced challenges as our reengagement plan continued in to the autumn and spring terms. Access to community venues proved difficult as volunteer led facilities struggled to cope with the Covid guidance as well as facing additional charges for cleaning before and after our sessions. We continue to be responsive to need for example Dance Drop In change of focus to home schooling, early years provision in Neston and classes for older people in Frodsham. Class numbers were limited to small socially distanced groups, venues are to be continually cleaned between sessions and our freelancers have been using specially prepared 'Covid' boxes with everything they need to keep classes safe.

Catalyst Project

We continued our research work with the Phillip Barker Centre at Chester University to develop an evaluation framework and longitudinal study to track the impact that regularly attending Cheshire Dance classes has on our participants. Devised with our participants the longitudinal study aims to track and evidence the social value of key areas of our work relating to disability, older adults and young people. This evidence will strengthen our understanding of our practice, inform our future planning and will provide a powerful evidence based that can be used to advocate and fundraise for dance to be at the forefront of social change

Winsford Cultural Recovery Programme

Cheshire Dance were delighted to be commissioned by Cheshire West and Chester Council to deliver elements of their borough-wide reopening and recovery programme, a significant investment programme of cultural, community and visitor attraction activity to position, encourage and grow the confidence of residents and visitors to safely return to town centres and visit places across the borough.

Having a base in Winsford phase one of the programme provided the opportunity to not only deliver an exciting events programme in the town, including Winsford Create Festival in March 22, but to provide employment for local artists and engage more deeply with the local community and to understand their 'Wishes of Winsford' as part of the town centre regeneration programme.

Wildfire Rising

Wildfire Rising is an associate artist programme that aims to remove barriers of inequality by investing in and supporting dance artists from African, South, East and South East Asian diasporas to make way for the rising of their artistry, representation and development. In the programme has been devised in partnership with Movema and is made up of three elements.

1. **Bespoke Artist development support** - A package of bespoke support to nurture and develop their practice designed in direct response to the artists' needs/ambitions.
2. **Commissions** - A commission towards the realisation of their own individual artistic project with funding intended to be used as match funding (alongside the in-kind development support) to lever additional financial support from other sources.
3. **Reflection phase** - Cheshire Dance is committed to learning from and with the Associate Artists throughout the process. This learning is important for us in better understanding the needs of artists and developing our artist development programme and wider offer. The artist to take part in reflective activities with Cheshire Dance that focus on our organisation, programme and the support and development received. Cheshire Dance will facilitate this process and our learning to create change within our organisation and work towards true equity of opportunity for black, brown and people of colour as artists and participants across our programme.

Now Northwich

With 'Recovery and Renewal' at its core the festival will include a professional programme, deeply embedded community and youth co-design programme, family offer and be headlined by the awe-inspiring Museum of the Moon. Now Northwich 30th April 2022 is set to deliver important artistic, social, environmental and economic impact to support recovery from the pandemic.

The professional programme is confirmed and £30k funding has been confirmed by CWaC as part of Cultural Recovery Programme for the borough. The CWaC Regen Team successful application to ACE Project Grants Application secured £47k match funding. Additional funding had been confirmed from CWaC £30k, Northwich Town Council (£5k), Baron's Quay Retail (£5k) and Northwich BID (£5K) with further expected from other local sources and in kind. Planning is advancing including using CRF funding to make the festival Covid secure.

Staffing and Freelancers

Due to careful resource management, no staff were made redundant when the Furlough scheme came to an end in 2021. Going forward members of the team retain the option to work from home and utilise technology to stay connected to the wider team. The organisation continues to be mindful of the teams' wellbeing and offers flexible working to accommodate a COVID safe and healthy work/life balance.

Cheshire Dance is continuing to articulate and action a fundamental shift in our approach to working with freelancers. We are committed to developing relationships with our freelance artists where they are seen as consultants and co-creators of our programme, where they are paid to engage in all training required for their work with Cheshire Dance. Additionally, we aim to remove financial barriers to engaging in the rest of our CPD/Artist development programme, ensuring that we can maintain and develop diversity within our workforce. By investing in our freelance artists and their development, we invest in an excellent experience for our participants and audiences, in the development of a rich and diverse dance sector in Cheshire and the NW, and in the future of Cheshire Dance. This was achieved with the support of CRF funding, our challenge is to resource this on an ongoing basis.

Beyond the range of freelance employment sustained throughout the year for programme delivery Cheshire Dance currently employs 5.8 Full Time Equivalents including the Partnerships Director role for DCNW. Other National Dance Development Organisations employ more than 20 staff, some with more than 30.

3 External Environment

3.1 COVID-19

It's safe to say that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating economic and social impact on our country that will be felt for many years to come. Peoples' physical and mental health & well-being has been challenged, social isolation has increased and financial pressures have compounded what is an unprecedented challenging situation. There is evidence to suggest a widening gap in our society as unemployment levels rise and inequalities such as food poverty are being brought sharply into focus. There is hope that the mass vaccination programme will provide some level of easing of restrictions that will enable people to reconnect in person after sustained periods of time in bubbles and social contact limited to virtual digital technologies. Having spent a significant amount of time being unable to connect physically, even giving a simple hug, we believe that there will be an unprecedented increase in demand for dance as people recognise the power that dance has to promote physical and emotional wellbeing, helping connections to be rekindled and nurtured.

3.2 Political and Economic

Having formally left the European Union there is still a level of uncertainty of what the economic impact that this will have on the country and the arts. We are yet to fully understand how the changes currently being implemented will impact on arts and culture in the UK and our relationship with European companies and artists. Cheshire Dance will monitor this closely and learn from partners such as Arts Council England, Without Walls and Xtrax to minimise any challenges or negative impact that the transition out of the European Union may have on our Artistic Programme and ambitions to work internationally. The need to embrace diverse talent and enable talent to cross borders freely is more important than ever if this country is not to become isolated. The Creative Industries Federation, Arts Council England and Local Authorities share common goals with arts organisations to make a strong creative case for diversity and an equally strong economic case for the sector. Cheshire Dance's programme is focused on supporting more diverse voices in dance and we will continue to respond proactively to ensure these voices are heard.

There is no doubt that Public sector expenditure has been diverted to respond to the pressures of the COVID-19 Pandemic with numerous schemes to support those most impacted by the virus quite rightly taking priority. The role of the arts to support social and economic recovery and the argument for investment in the arts at this time needs to be amplified to gain political support at both National and Local Government levels. During 2020-21 Cheshire Dance faced a significant drop in earned income as a direct result of the pandemic. The organisations careful financial and risk management continues to evidence the need for diverse income streams which will in turn provides employment to artists and provides opportunities for engagement with those most impacted by the pandemic.

Devolved Government in Manchester and Liverpool can open new opportunities in the arts as decisions are made in response to more local issues. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority's (GMCA) Cultural Strategy provides the opportunity for dance to play a significant role in addressing the key priorities identified in the strategy. The North West is the largest region and the most highly populated outside of London. The Northern Powerhouse, centred on Manchester, will create a real and lasting difference to the status and development of artistic practice and the creative industries. For Cheshire Dance and amongst Dance Consortia North West partners, it is important dance continues to be pioneered and positioned as one of the key drivers of change.

3.3 Legal

Core business relating to health and safety, safeguarding, employment, financial and data protection compliance requires specific knowledge to be held within the organisation. Cheshire Dance takes the

opportunity to benefit from the support available through Arts Council England, Local Authorities, charity and arts sector support organisations. The Boards review of Governance and all Policies, involving senior managers and the rest of the team has progressed well over the last year, the comprehensive Schedule of Matters is proving very useful for both short- and longer-term planning and review of both policy and action plans. The team can develop and implement policy consistently and across the breadth of the organisation's programme and governance.

3.4 Public Services - Regeneration, Social, Health and Education

The Pandemic has heightened the decline of the British High Street that has struggled for many years against the impact of austerity, business-rate hikes, high rents and the rise of online shopping. With the significant increase in online shopping during the pandemic the role of the High Street in the future will need to be redefined as a matter of urgency to support regeneration of town centres.

A report by the Local Data Company and PricewaterhouseCoopers suggests we may need fewer high streets in the future "This opens opportunities to repurpose high street space, while evolving to meet consumer demand." Culture will undoubtedly have a role to play in this repurposing, regeneration and place making. ACE's reports on "Arts and Place Shaping: Evidence Review" along with experimental high data from Ordnance Survey and survey of NPOs is welcome. Cheshire Dance's plans in Northwich play well to this changing landscape and it is a key cultural organisation as part of Winsford's £20m Future High Streets Programme.

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the economy. Our towns and high streets and the sectors reliant on them for business have been particularly hard-hit. The sectors forecast to suffer most from the long-term impact of the pandemic are intrinsically linked to the High Street, and cover retail, hospitality, accommodation, leisure and tourism and office development. Arts & Culture have a critical role to play.

Additionally challenges with the mental and physical wellbeing of residents has resulted in the Cheshire West and Chester Council developing an ambitious and high-impact reopening and recovery programme to rebuild communities, draw in footfall and spend, and help to raise the profile of Cheshire West as a visitor destination. The borough-wide reopening and recovery programme is a significant investment programme of cultural, community and visitor attraction activity which will position, encourage and grow the confidence of residents and visitors to safely return to our city centre, main towns, market towns and visit places across the borough. Cheshire Dance has been commissioned to deliver cultural elements of the programme in both Northwich and Winsford town centres.

The new Secondary Arts Premium represents real opportunity in Education. However, the EBacc continues to dominate and amongst the creative subjects, dance has faced the greatest negative impact. Dance is experiencing the decrease in GCSE uptake at twice the rate of other performing arts subjects.

<https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/arts-gcse-and-a-level-entries-2021>

Pressure to include creative subjects from a wide range of lobbying forces both outside and within government is increasing. Along with calls to get children active to improve their concentration and learning made by the World Health Organisation in a review of physical activity and academic achievement published in August 2020, a House of Lords Select Committee report 'A national plan for sport, health and wellbeing', December 2021 suggested that PE should be given the same weight as English, Maths and Science in the core curriculum. The report recognises teacher training will be crucial to ensuring the delivery of PE any change in policy will provide opportunities for Cheshire Dance to not only deliver more activities in school but also CPD for teachers. The Arts Council England is responding with the Cultural Education Challenge and champions with Local Authorities strengthening Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEP), including in Cheshire West and Chester where Cheshire Dance is a strategic partner.

The Durham Commission on Creativity and Education (2019) a joint research collaboration between Durham

University and Arts Council England looks at the role creativity and creative thinking should play in the education of young people. The recommendations of the report combined with shifting policy on the Arts Premium provide a clear rationale for Cheshire Dance to further its education strategy over the coming year. The shifting of the Ofsted framework in 2019 connects to the findings from the Durham Commission, seeing a shift for Primary schools needing to provide a 'broad and balanced curriculum.' This is a move away from a focus on assessing the core subjects to encompass more creative subjects. Primary Schools are being encouraged to use their Sport Premium funding to offer a broader range of sports and dance is mentioned in government guidelines to help engage more students in activity. This is an opportunity for Cheshire Dance to work with Primary schools to help build broader curricular, provide high quality cultural capital to schools and get more young people healthy and active.

There is no doubt that the NHS is facing significant challenges and unprecedented pressures as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. It remains to be seen what the long-term impact that this will have on future investment in our health service. Under the *NHS Funding Bill 2019-20*, the Government committed to increasing investment in the NHS in the years to 2024. However, this funding settlement only applies to the NHS England revenue budget and does not cover other areas of the Department of Health and Social Care's spending such as capital investment, education and training, regulation, the local authority public health grant, and social care. The Government's ongoing review of social care policy, in particular how it is funded by individuals and the public sector in England means that there is a level of uncertainty regarding budgets. The impact of any changes to funding are unknown however we will ensure that we are responsive to the implications and opportunities as they become clearer.

A focus on prevention represents an opportunity for the arts and in particular for dance with its unique combination of physical, neurological and social benefits alongside the creative benefits of engagement. In the Long Term Plan NHS England committed to building the infrastructure for social prescribing in primary care stating that there will be 1,000 new social prescribing link workers in place by 2020/21, with significantly more after that, so that at least 900,000 people will be referred through social prescribing by 2023/24. Essentially for Cheshire Dance and the arts, social prescribing is a systemic form of marketing, supporting the most vulnerable in society to access arts and other services through a more holistic and preventative approach to people's health and wellbeing. During 2022-23 Cheshire Dance will work with Cheshire Wildlife Trust and social prescribers Pathways CIC to deliver 'A Breath of Fresh Air' project for people with long term respiratory conditions including Long Covid. The findings from this project will inform plans for, and fundraising activity to expand this area of work going forwards.

One of the more significant demographic trends and therefore a spending priority, continues to be the ageing population, as highlighted through the Office for National Statistics - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/articles/overviewoftheukpopulation/august2019#the-uks-population-is-ageing>. In rural areas including Cheshire, the demographics highlight an ageing population that is comparatively more exaggerated than the UK average. For example:-

- The number of people over 65 years old in Cheshire East (as a % of total population) increases from 18% in 2006 to 26% by 2026. In Cheshire West a similar trend is noticeable. These are markedly higher than the UK average 15.9% in 2006, increasing to 20.5% in 2026. The UK average is expected to continue to climb to 2050 where 25% of the population is expected to be over 65.

As people live longer, the health and social care sectors are coming under increasing pressure to achieve more with less resource. According to Age UK, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/feb/01/ageing-britain-two-fifths-nhs-budget-spent-over-65s>, 40% of the NHS budget is spent on those aged over 65.

Cheshire Dance is already a key innovator and collaborator in this market responding creatively with older adults and practically with Health and Care partners. In response to this dance and older adults will continue

to be a key priority for the organisation. We will continue to deliver an older adults dance programme and develop our relationships with social prescribers such as Health Box and Pathways CIC.

Cheshire Dance will continue to champion the educational and social benefits of dance as we continue to develop a longitudinal study to track and evidence the social value of key areas of our work relating to disability, older adults and young people. This evidence will strengthen our understanding of our practice, inform our future planning and will provide a powerful evidence base that can be used to advocate and fundraise for dance to be at the forefront of social change. We will explore how this evaluation tool can be used alongside NHS evaluation data sets required for emerging health-based partnership projects. This work is supported through our Arts Council England supported Catalyst programme.

3.5 Technological

Perhaps now more than ever technology plays a huge part in everyday life and will continue to be a key tool as the country emerges from the pandemic. However as highlighted by the issues families' home schooling have faced, digital inequalities and digital poverty needs to be addressed. With the introduction of new products, new technologies and services, it is important for us to continually assess technology and how as an organisation we can best benefit from it. The organisation will continue to utilise technology; Zoom to deliver online classes and to stay connected as a team and with partners, YouTube to offer pre-recorded content for older people and people living with disabilities and Drop Box to access data to enable the team to work effectively from home. Thanks to Cultural Recovery funding Cheshire Dance purchased AV equipment and training to ensure artists have appropriate equipment and skills to deliver for blended sessions (in person and online) and online engagement and we launched Dance Biz software in the Autumn '21 to integrate programme and payment systems and provide training to implement a better online system, cost control and efficient income management.

Global internet connectivity continues to rise and we recognise the need to better position ourselves to take advantage of creative digital technologies, ranging from how we communicate with our stakeholders via social media and web-based platforms to how we use digital technologies to enhance artistic practice. In response the Marketing and Events role created in 2019 significantly focused on digital communications and has proven to provide the organisation more effective ways of working and a greater understanding of our customer base. Our Marketing Strategy and use of Facebook to engage audiences for regular classes, projects, Winsford Creates and Now Northwich, highlights our ability to use technology for considerable impact.

Cheshire Dance has seen a significant increase in digital engagement and buoyed by this success the organisation is looking to integrate digital outcomes across the range of its artistic programme.

3.6 Arts Council and Local Authority Priorities

The new Arts Council England Let's Create Strategy 2020-2030 which aims to *'recognise and champion the creative activities and cultural experiences of every person to ensure they support more people to express and develop their creativity and create more opportunities for them to enjoy the widest possible range of culture,'* resonates very strongly with everything Cheshire Dance does and stands for.

Cheshire Dance devised a roadmap of actions and activities that we undertook with our stakeholders in preparation for developing our plan for 2022-23 which is firmly linked to the delivery of Let's Create and the Investment Principles. See appendix 4

During the development of this plan, we have begun to articulate in greater depth how our new Artistic Programme for 2022/23 (the NPO extension year), and the North West Regional Dance Plan for 2022 to 2026, will transition to, and deliver on, the four Let's Create Investment Principles.

- Ambition & Quality
- Dynamism
- Inclusivity & Relevance
- Environmental Responsibility

And the outcomes

- Creative Communities
- Creative People
- Creative Country

In addition, we will utilise evidence from our partners, our data sources and other external sources such as Culture Restart Insight Alliance to better understand the internal and external environment within which we work. We have identified how our SMART objectives relate to the Investment Principles Core Characteristics and the North West Dance Plan Outcomes.

In addition to responding directly to the ACE Let's Create Investment Principles and the North West Dance Plan the delivery of our Artistic Programme also responds to:

Cheshire West & Chester (CWAC) Stronger Futures Plan that sets out how the Authority will move through and beyond the pandemic crisis to prepare the borough for a stronger future that addresses the vulnerabilities exposed during the pandemic and grasps new opportunities. In particular three of the priorities

- Supporting children and young people to have the best start in life and reach their full potential
- Enabling more adults to live longer, healthier and happier lives
- Making our neighbourhoods even better places to call home

Three of Cheshire East Council's corporate outcomes.

- Our local communities are strong and supportive
- People have the life skills and education they need in order to thrive
- People live well and for longer

Our achievements and approaches over the years are evidenced in detail in our Annual Review to ACE, Local Authority reviews and quarterly Board reports. Cheshire Dance has long delivered against Arts Council goals and its work is increasingly suited to the policy changes being brought about by the Let's Create Strategy.

4 Artistic Development

4.1 Artistic Programme 2022/23

Engaging with and listening to our participants, partners and artists has been integral to the development of our 2022-23 plan - see **Appendix 1**

The experiences of the pandemic during the past two years have of course influenced our plans, providing opportunities to refocus our work in particular in relation to artists support and CPD, our approach to digital activity and crystallising our priorities in the knowledge that the groups we work with are those that have been most impacted by the pandemic – older people, people with disabilities, black people and people of colour and people who face health inequalities. During the early part of 2021-22 we were excited to re-launch our programme, employ artists, equip the programme for safety, promote it well, re-engage more of our dancing community and learn from engagers and non-engagers alike.

Amidst our full programme, we are particular keen to:-

Further develop our national specialism in Dance, Health and Wellbeing, Community Dance and Dance in Education amongst older adults, people with disabilities and young people.

- We will identify and develop leadership in the area of dance practice with people with Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities (PIMD). Through exploring new models of working, in collaboration with participants and staff we will create best practice guidelines for those involved in the delivery of this work (artists, support workers, managers) to be shared nationally and internationally. We will train dance artists in this area of practice and use the research findings to advocate within the social care and education sectors for the development of markets for this practice. This work will be co-led by Ruth Spencer from UCLAN dance department and People Dancing will be a key partner in the design and dissemination of the guidelines and training.

Provide opportunities for Artist and Continuing Professional Development

- We are committed to supporting freelance artists and will take the opportunity to build on the practice sharing's with Freelancers that took place in 2020/22 and continue to develop our Freelancer Meetings as spaces for sharing, dialogue and exchange, providing opportunities for us to respond to artists needs and develop our services and working practices appropriately.
- Emphasising older artists, disabled artists, emerging artists, black artists & artists of colour and artists seeking to develop their Dance, Health and Wellbeing practice.
- The creation of a programme through which we support the development of dance work for outdoor touring – through co-commissioning, supporting artists artistically and in the development of their outdoor touring infrastructure, whilst linking them to outdoor touring markets nationally and internationally through partnerships with Without Walls, X-Trax and others. Now Northwich is a dance-led outdoor arts festival - a platform to share new, innovative outdoor dance alongside a full support package.

Create, produce and present dance

- Through the Now Northwich Festival and the opportunity presented through a major Town Centre Regeneration Project we will work with key partners to develop new opportunities for the creation, production and presentation of dance by North West artists.
- As the lead organisation for DCNW we are working with the Partnerships Director and DCNW partners to implement the Dance Plan for the North West

Nurture audience development

- Particularly through the Now Northwich Festival, 30th April 2022
- With Cheshire partners and through Dance Consortia North West
- Through Marketing, Communications and Audience Development campaigns

4.2 Artistic Aims

Cheshire Dance has a clear set of Creative Aims and a commitment to delivering these through detailed **SMART Objectives** – see **Appendix 7**

- To continue to secure the viability of Cheshire Dance, it's programme and the benefits derived by communities across Cheshire.
- To secure resources to support the growth of Cheshire Dance both in terms of artistic programme and staffing levels to deliver the ambitions of the organisation.
- To ensure everyone has access to dance and can benefit from its transformative power
- To amplify the creative voices of older adults, people with disabilities and young people. Providing opportunities to participate, progress, create, celebrate and lead with a particular focus on; developing our specialism in dance, health and wellbeing in partnership with health and third sector partners, and those least engaged in dance and the arts.
- To engage, train and employ more artists and staff from priority groups and diverse dance backgrounds as a reflection of the rich and diverse dance community and as driver of new aesthetics in dance. Artists paid to attend essential CPD, breaking down barriers to professional development and enabling artists, and professionals connected to dance, to fulfil their potential
- Work with partners to create, produce and present dance of the highest quality
- To realise the vastly untapped potential of dance that has a uniquely North West influence and identity

4.3 North West Dance Plan

Cheshire Dance is committed to the North West Dance Plan and we have mapped how our Artistic Programme and the actions within our Smart Objectives directly contribute to the aims of the Plan- see Appendix 1 & 7.



Working with colleagues to build the North West dance sector through the NW Dance Plan; a map for collaborative, cumulative actions, can only strengthen Cheshire Dance and the opportunities for the communities with whom we work.

4.4 ACE Let's Create

Cheshire Dance is committed to playing its part in delivering the ACE Let's Create Strategy and embedding the Let's Create Investment Principles throughout the organisation. We recognise that during the year further work will be required to fully understand and deeply embed these Principles across the organisation and in all that we do.

To do this we will.

- Use our board and team development days to focus on the Investment Principles
- Identify how our board members' skills and expertise can best support embedding of the Investment Principles
- Ensure that the Investment Principles are standing agenda items for board meetings via our Board Reports and Smart Objectives
- Review the format of the board reports to ensure reporting is aligned to Investment Principles
- Utilise Board Working Party meetings as required to further support embedding the Investment Principles throughout all aspects of the organisations work
- Make use of the ACE Investment Principles resource hub to support planning

Having undertaken an initial mapping exercises (see Appendix 4) that identified how our consultations and activities taking place during Summer/Autumn 21 contribute towards the development of the 2022/23 Business Plan & connect directly to ACE Let's Create Investment Principles we have utilised the findings to articulate in greater depth how our new Artistic Programme for 2022/23 (the NPO extension year), and the North West Dance Plan for 2022 to 2026, will transition to, and deliver on, the Let's Create Investment Principles. See Appendix 5 – Mapping of Cheshire Dance Artistic Programme 22/23 against Let's Create Principles and analysis of the programme against Inclusion & Relevance core characteristics.

And the **outcomes**

➤ Creative People

Cheshire Dance is an active employment hub offering training to support access into employment within the Creative Industries, particularly but not exclusively dance. Our person-centred approach encourages all our participants to be creative people, encouraging a diverse range of people and communities to recognise their creative talents, with some looking to creative industries career paths.

➤ Creative Communities

Cheshire Dance is truly connected to the communities we are part of and the people we work with. Our approach to our work with Older Adults, Young People and People with Disabilities takes us into the heart of these communities of both interest and place. Our artistic programme has proved to be dynamic as even during lockdown and restrictions we provided 10,713 creative experiences and delivered 1,300 creative sessions with 90% of this activity targeting vulnerable communities/people with Protected Characteristics.

➤ A Creative and Cultural Country

Creative, active and positive partnerships are at the heart of all that Cheshire Dance does. In our role as lead organisation for Dance Consortia North West we champion, promote and influence opportunities to grow the dance sector across the region through the North West Dance Plan.

We are deeply embedded in voluntary and public sector partnerships as a lead creative and cultural voice in Cheshire. These partnerships ensure we work in a responsive way – informed, supported and invested in by these sectors to meet the priorities of the communities we engage.

Investment Principles

Having mapped how our Artistic Programme and the actions within our Smart Objectives directly respond to the Investment Principles – see Appendix 1 & 7 it is clear that Cheshire Dance is extremely well positioned to deliver the Let's Create Strategy and core characteristics of the Investment Principles as evidenced below.

Ambition and Quality

➤ Measuring Performance and Understanding Perceptions

Working with the Phillip Barker Centre for Creative Learning at University of Chester we will learn from the pilot and begin to roll out the Cheshire Dance Evaluation framework across our participatory programme. Our framework was created through a participatory process with our participants and freelance dance artists and will enable us to identify scope for improvement, track progress and communicate the quality of our work and our ambitions with stakeholders. The data collection process also elicits benefits of, increasing the group members' voice, facilitating learning, supporting a sense of agency for members, helping to gauge the group experience of the dance sessions, building relationships and highlighting progress.

Regular use of session-based and comms-based data sources and systems, as well as bespoke work to uncover evidence about our delivery, all work in parallel with our face-to-face and focus group dialogue across our programme, to ensure we take great care in understanding our stakeholders. Strategic and Artistic reflection work hand in hand to ensure progression is relevant, ambitious and deeply informed for the purpose of delivering quality.

➤ Progression

We will continue to build stronger partnerships with specialist practitioners and organisations to ensure the quality of our work and facilitate knowledge exchange which enables practice to develop. Knowledge exchange partnerships we will focus on in 2022-23 include: UCLan and Vivo Care Choices for Dance with people with Profound and Multiple Disabilities (with development input from Joanna Grace and Sheridan Forster), Without Walls for outdoor arts and festivals, Cheshire based local authority and public sector partnerships as well as Dance Consortia North West.

Dynamism

➤ Business Model Innovation

Leadership in dance in the NW has arguably been the most important priority in the sector to resolve over the last 20 years. Without it, the investment deficit grew year-on-year. Cheshire Dance addresses this issue head-on. From 2018, with Managed Funds support from Arts Council England, the growth in the deficit began to slow. From 2021, with a £170,000 National Lottery Project Grant from Arts Council England and many other investments in dance in the region being made, deficit is beginning to turn into growth. For Cheshire Dance, and probably all of the partners connected to Dance Consortia North West, this is

COVID required organisations to adapt to survive/thrive. Cheshire Dance adapted quickly to the challenges and in so doing did not dilute its mission around dance, inclusion and amplifying marginalised voices. Even in 2020/21 we delivered more than 60% of our normal engagement programme.

Further innovation has taken place since 2018. Cheshire Dance has developed a whole new festivals development offer and expertise. Building on past experience of outdoor, large scale production, Cheshire Dance is now Producer, Programmer, Commissioner, Audience Development and Engagement lead for Now Northwich and currently, Winsford Creates.

Dance and PIMD represents one of the last under-explored impacts of the arts in society. Not only does Cheshire Dance deliver in this context every week (4 regular groups), we innovate in partnership with a major care provider (Vivo Care Choices) and lead a national practice group attracting artists from across the country.

➤ **People and skills**

Cheshire Dance will continue to develop as an organisation filled with leaders, not just a leadership organisation. Our leaders are practice focused, they listen, encourage and amplify voices. We will continue to invest in their professional development through dedicated personal CPD budgets and innovative knowledge sharing partnerships with other arts and non-arts organisations including those in education, health, social care, public, voluntary and commercial sectors. We commit to developing freelance artists through a free to access CPD programme and strive to build in paid development opportunities whenever we are able to resource it.

Environmental Responsibility

➤ **Influence, Education and Advocacy**

We will ensure the development of our programme embeds environmental responsibility – training and working with local freelancers and organizing activity to minimize travel. We will continue to go to communities in spaces they inhabit, reducing travel needs. We will engage, implement and learn from sector leaders in environmental responsibility (such as Without Walls for outdoor festival work.)

CHESHIRE DANCE ACTION PLAN for Let's Create Investment Principle - Inclusivity & Relevance

Communities

We will build stronger and more meaningful relationships with our communities through:

Actively developing and growing relationships with people with Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities (PIMD) and those who care for them in our 'Wanna Dance?' dance and PIMD project. We will analyse the data from stage one of the project (Autumn/Winter 2021) and use the findings to inform the development of the project and future dance practice with people with PIMD.

Completing the Pilot Phase of the Cheshire Dance Evaluation tool with four key regular groups. Use the learning from this to further develop our work with young people, older adults and people with disabilities.

Working with Young Producers to integrate the youth voice across our community development programmes in Winsford and Northwich and the Now Northwich Festival (April 2022). Use these as a pilot for trust building and developing an ongoing Cheshire Dance Young Producers group who will focus on embedding youth voice across our programme, increasing access, opportunity, participation, and involvement of young people at all levels.

Workforce, leadership and governance

Evaluation from Wildfire Rising (end Dec '21) will support us to identify and remove biases and barriers in our organisational cultures and structures around representation of artists from the African, South Asian, East Asian and South East Asian diasporas. This will be done in partnership with Movema and Inc Arts and learning will be developed into an action plan devised by Cheshire Dance team and Board (Winter/Spring '21).

The Board will continue to focus on diversity and inclusion in its succession planning/recruitment through action focused Board Working Party meetings and the Artistic Programme will remain focused on investing in freelancers. We will ensure all activity continues to align with the Cheshire Dance Values and that actions detailed in our Single Equality Policy and Plan 2022-23 and Safeguarding policy continue to ensure Cheshire Dance remains an inclusive organisation providing a safe workplace for all.

The Creative Case for Diversity

We will work in partnership with Movema on Wildfire Rising to develop bespoke training and support for dance artists from the African, South Asian, East Asian and South East Asian diasporas. Using the evaluation from the first phase (end Dec '21) to develop the programme and feed into DCNW with the aim of removing barriers to participation and progression.

We will continue to provide access to resources and studio space to enable our freelance artists and other under-represented artists from Cheshire and the wider North West to share their stories and develop their work. We will listen to the voices of freelance artists and develop our artist provision and programme in ways that meet their needs (consultation began through CRF summer '21, continues through Inquiring Bodies Cheshire Oct '21). We envisage this including subsidised and paid training opportunities to support the diversity of our freelance artist pool, particularly those from low socio-economic backgrounds and culturally diverse artists.

We will work with partners such as Unlimited, Without Walls and Cheshire Rural Touring Arts to ensure diverse programming in Now Northwich and other performance events, particularly in relation to dance and disability and culturally diverse dance.

Action	Responsible person/people	By when	Inclusivity & Relevance Core Characteristics
ARTISTIC PROGRAMME			
Programme and activities detailed in Cheshire Dance Outline Artistic Programme 2022-23	Creative Director	April 22 to March 23	Communities Creative Case for Diversity Workforce Leadership & Governance
Focused on Young People, Older Adults and Disabled People with emerging, older, disabled and culturally diverse artists	Artistic Team	April 22 to March 23	Communities Creative Case for Diversity
DATA & EVIDENCE			
Roll out CD evaluation framework across programme. (Outcomes framework finalised 2020-21. Pilot Autumn 21 to inform final business plan 22-23 to be submitted Feb 22)	Creative Director Dance Development Artists	April 22 to March 23	Communities Creative Case for Diversity
Continue to ensure Participant Voice is present (complimenting eval framework). Examples re. Young People - Regular dance groups with Young People - Now Northwich Young Producers	Creative Director Dance Development Artists	April 22 to March 23	Communities Creative Case for Diversity

- CD / Jubacana Youth dance dev programme - Rewind project - Burgeoning Schools programme			
Undertake Audience Finder Survey	General Manger	April 23	Communities
Use Dance Biz software to gather data from class participants via online registration forms	Creative & administration team	April 22 to March 23	Communities
Impact & Insight Toolkit	General Manager	April 22 to March 23	Communities
DATA & COMMUNICATIONS			
Programme continues to be developed through actively listening to stakeholder voices, including artists, participants, funding partners, the local community	Creative Director Dance Development Artists Marketing and Comms Co-ordinator	April 22 to March 23	Communities Creative Case for Diversity
Use of analytics from Mailchimp. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn	Marketing and Comms Co-ordinator	Quarterly April 22 to March 23	Communities Creative Case for Diversity
BOARD REPRESENTATION			
Diversify board representation Board Working Party meetings (BWP) to focus on diversity and inclusion in its succession planning / recruitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define roles and skills required clearly - Understand what the barriers are and how to remove them 	Board Working Party	2/3 meetings per year. 3 meetings held to date	Creative Case for Diversity Workforce Leadership & Governance
Inclusivity & Relevance IP to be a standing item on agenda for Board Meetings	Board	Quarterly	Creative Case for Diversity Workforce Leadership & Governance
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT			
• Artists			
Artistic Programme focused on investing in freelancers (detailed in Artistic Programme)	Creative Director	April 23	Creative Case for Diversity Workforce Leadership & Governance

Inquiring Bodies – By Artists for Artists Ongoing regular and project based training opportunities Look to improve Terms and Conditions Support legacy of Wildfire Rising – Culturally Diverse Assoc Artists scheme. Fundraise with other willing DCNW partners for possibility of a 2 nd cohort. Continue to support career/projects initiated by freelance artists that add value to CD programme	Creative Director Dance Development Artists Director	April 23 April 23	Creative Case for Diversity Workforce Leadership & Governance Communities Creative Case for Diversity
• Team			
Develop artistic practice as participants and leaders of CPD offer	Artistic team	April 23	Workforce Leadership & Governance
Ensure all activity continues to align with the Cheshire Dance Values Awareness, Flexibility, Authenticity, Diversity, Enquiry, Ownership	Team and Board Away day/retreat Team & Board meetings and across programme	April 23	Creative Case for Diversity Workforce Leadership & Governance
Actions detailed in Single Equality Policy and Plan 2022-23	Director Creative Director General Manager Board	April 23	Creative Case for Diversity Workforce Leadership & Governance
Safeguarding policy Associated Risk Assessments & Actions	Whole team	Review February 24	Workforce Leadership & Governance
Safeguarding training	Creative Director	Twice a year during 22/23	Workforce Leadership & Governance

Data Sources

Participant voice	Chester University research as part of evaluation tool development Longitudinal impact tracking with regular groups. One-off 'all stakeholder' project evaluations
Artist voice	Freelance line management and Freelancer meetings Inquiring Bodies 'By artists for artists', CPD feedback, bespoke one-to-one artist services Wildfire Rising – partnership with Movema Cheshire Cultural Organisations and LCEP (Cheshire West) ALFA / Venues / HE / Dance Orgs - DCNW Partners
Youth voice	Young Producers (Now Northwich) Rewind, Dope and other regular groups Schools programme
Community voice	Northwich & Winsford Cultural Recovery Programme Cheshire West & Chester Council, Winsford and Northwich Town Councils Voluntary Organisations – e.g. Vivo Care Choice, Cheshire Downes Syndrome Support Group, Cheshire & Warrington Carers, Health Box and Pathways CICs (Social Prescribing Lead Orgs)
Analytics Performance Indicator Spreadsheet	Manual data collection across entire programme (part automated through Dance Biz implementation). Participation, group demographics, audiences
Website	Tracking of event occurrences
Dance Biz	Tracking of participation in regular classes
Registration forms	Participant individual demographics (also part automated through Dance Biz)
Marketing Automation	MailChimp, Hootsuite, Lightful
Social Media Platforms	Tracking of Demographics and campaign management (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube)
Audience Finder	Now Northwich - Standard questions and linked to Without Walls set questions / benchmarking

4.5 Black Lives Still Matter

During 2021-22 the Cheshire Dance Board continued to support action on our Creative Case for Diversity and will continue as we move through 2022/23 to explore the Let's Create Inclusivity & Relevance Investment Principle and responded to the Black Lives Matter campaign, to ensure a deeper understanding within the organisation, to better inform future planning and responses to, issues of equality and diversity.

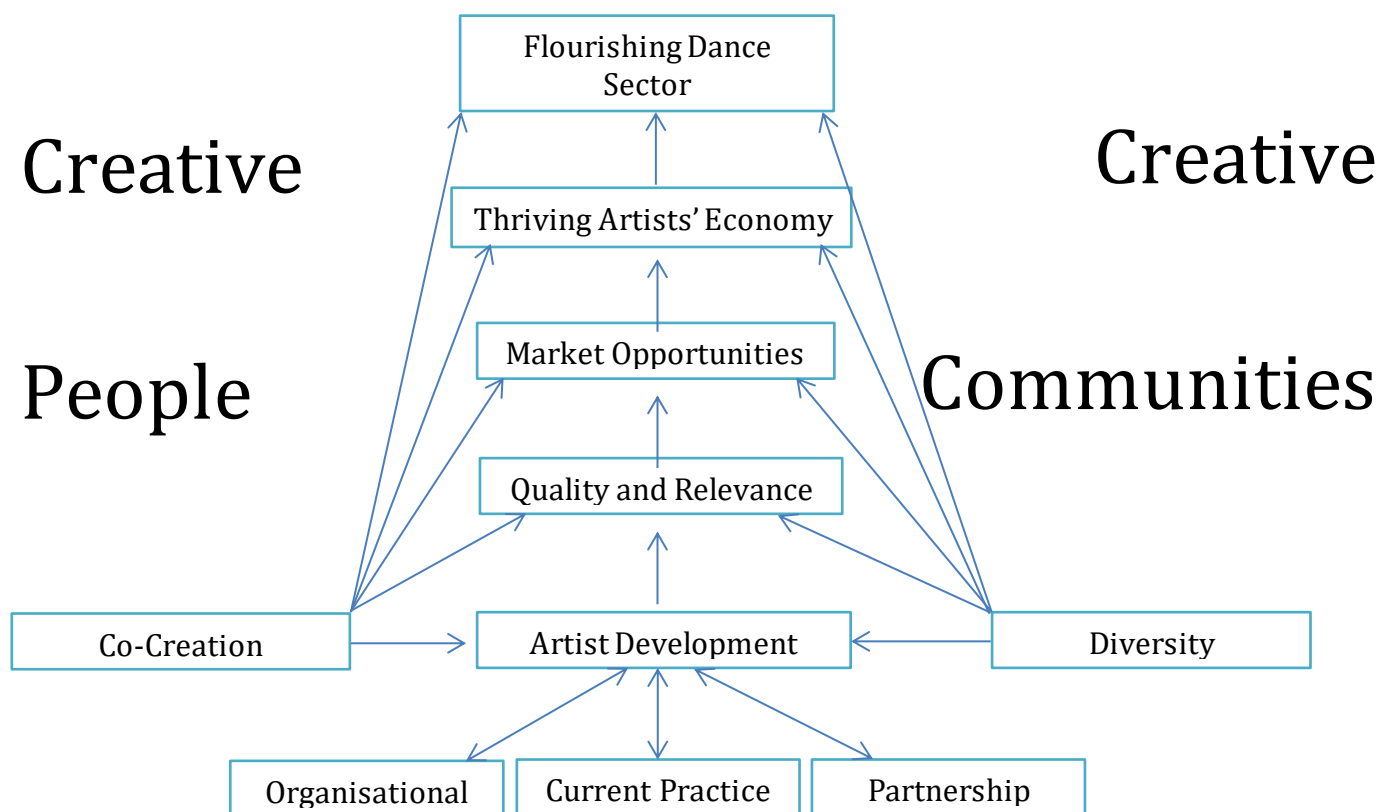
Cheshire Dance will continue to champion its response to Black Lives Matter and Let's Create Investment Principles within our programme and through Dance Consortia North West. As part of our response to Black Lives Matter we recognised that as a predominantly white organisation we may not be best placed to take forward some of our ideas and wanted more black voices to be integral to our plans. As a result in 2021-22 we deepened our relationship with Movema working in partnership to deliver Wild Fire Rising an Associate Artist Scheme designed with and for artists from African, South, East and South East Asian Diasporas; and embarking on deepening our understanding of and response to BAME Over. During 2022/23 we will explore opportunities to develop and build upon this programme and develop the partnership with Movema and the Associate Artists further.

4.6 2023/24 and beyond

Overview

At the core of Cheshire Dance lie co-creation, inclusion and diversity – a commitment to working with the wider dancing community including artists, participants and both arts and non-arts organisations across a wide range of public, cultural, voluntary and commercial sectors - in designing and running programmes of work that contribute to a flourishing dance sector which is bespoke to those stakeholders and therefore highly reflective and relevant to the society we live in. Enabling Creative People and Cultural Communities has always been the foundations of our work which sees people of all ages and abilities dancing week in week out – co-creating with us at all levels from making their own performance work within a weekly session, to co-designing new projects and festivals with us. This doesn't mean though that we don't still focus on addressing still more inequalities in society. Our work in 2021/22 in response to #BLM, will deliver outputs and should enable a longer-term partnership to emerge, for development in 2022/23 and beyond.

We want to make a profound and significant difference to the artists' economy and dance audience development in the North West. In order to do this, we have expanded our core work and begun to connect existing infrastructures, expertise and resources to focus on artist and audience development programmes, the needs of both the artists and their practice as well as the markets in which they operate. This work is current and developing through Dance Consortia North West's Dance Plan. We do this extensively in partnership with other organisations and provide the leadership to make it work.



Creative & Cultural Country

Our focus on practice and artist development is what makes Cheshire Dance stand out from the crowd – acknowledging that for the dance sector to flourish the core practice of its artists must be authentic, full of curiosity and be flexible or adaptive to both needs and emergent ambitions. We will support artists to develop the confidence and skills to practice across the diversity of peoples’ backgrounds in society releasing and developing the creative potential of communities. Alongside their creative practice, we will support artists to develop their organisational and entrepreneurial skills in order to flourish in markets as diverse as health, local authorities, third sector, education and performance, whether on stage, outdoors, in gallery/library/museum spaces etc.

High quality and relevant dance practice must then be made available (well-promoted, visible and at the right price) to meet the demand in various markets, for the work to grow and develop, leading to a thriving artists’ economy and a flourishing dance sector.

Key Markets for Engagement

In developing artistic practice and the diversity of practitioners we support over the next five years we will focus on accessing and developing six key markets for that practice:-

- dance, health and wellbeing
- dance and disability (particularly those with PIMD)
- dance and older adults
- dance and young people (including dance in education)
- small scale and outdoor dance
- dance from and with people from different cultural backgrounds

5 Organisational and Sector Development

Cheshire Dance has a clear set of Organisational and Sector Development Aims and a commitment to delivering these through detailed SMART Objectives. Those Aims and Objectives relating to Dance Consortia North West are contained in DCNW documentation.

Aims

- To continue to secure the viability of Cheshire Dance, it's programme and the benefits derived by communities across Cheshire.
- To secure resources to support the growth of Cheshire Dance both in terms of artistic programme and staffing levels to deliver the ambitions of the organisation by investing in core assets and resource development to increase organisational resilience
- To produce evidence of need for and the impact of dance amongst priority groups

5.1 Finance and Major Risks

The Board reviews major risks on a quarterly basis and all relevant organisational risks on an annual basis, or more frequently as circumstances dictate. Options for Mitigating Action are reviewed at the trigger point, agreed and implemented as appropriate.

Context

In 2020/21 COVID restrictions forced a redesign of budget and programme, which developed rapidly in response to changing circumstances. Although a reduced programme, the Board considered it imperative to adapt to keep in touch with our artists, audiences and stakeholders. The programme redesign built in considerable flexibility around face-to-face sessions, live online sessions, digital content and offline resources to reach particular communities who were not able to access dance any other way. In 2021/22 (to date) the organisation has progressed to delivering more face-to-face sessions, some as blended sessions (online and in person) expanding the programme as restrictions are lifted and venues and participants are able to reopen and reengage. We recognise that there may be some disruption caused by participants and artists having to isolate and will remain dynamic and flexible to ensure that the artistic programme is delivered and accessible to all. In addition we are facing increases in space hire costs from public and voluntary sector venues.

Moving forwards through COVID-19 recovery, further risks / mitigations are identified in the **Cheshire Dance Recovery Scenarios 2022/23 and Risk Log** document See Appendix 3.

The 2022/23 Business Plan is based on the assumption that the COVID Vaccination Programme allows the country to continue to emerge safely from the pandemic to a new 'normal' thus enabling Cheshire Dance to continue to increase face-to-face sessions during the year.

Financial Outlook

Cheshire Dance remains a going concern, in fact a fast-growing organisation, underpinned by a range of artistic and public/voluntary sector partnerships and leads a significant new partnership in Dance Consortia North West. A **Detailed Budget and Cashflow for 2022/23** is contained in Appendix 9.

As at 31st March 2021 Cheshire Dance holds £46,790 of unrestricted, undesignated reserves. The Board has set a target reserve of £46,446 including £24,000 required to cover skeleton running costs and a further £22,446 to cover redundancy costs. At the date of this report Cheshire Dance has met its Reserves Policy.

New programme investments over the last few years have seen Cheshire Dance grow its remit in Festival producing through Now Northwich and sector leadership through Dance Consortia North West. The target for both growth initiatives to meet their own core costs (£10k each) is now 100% met for 2022/23.

- The Now Northwich budget for 2022 (annual festival) is now over £100k and includes contribution to Cheshire Dance increased core costs: target contribution £10k. £5k secured via CW&C and £5k via £47k ACE NLP.
- Dance Consortia North West, for which Cheshire Dance is the legal identity for fundholding secured a 4 year agreement with ACE, circa £200k in 2018 (just started year 4) and has just secured £170k NLP grant, again from ACE. Anticipated contribution to Cheshire Dance increased core costs: target contribution £10k, per year. £10k secured via ACE Managed until Sept 2022 (PID submitted for Oct 2022/23) and new NLP award announced Sept 21.

5.2 Policies and Action Plans

Cheshire Dance maintains a suite of Policies and Action Plans to ensure it functions within the law and in implementing best practice in the sector.

- All key programmes of work are either led or monitored by the core team, ensuring practice delivery is of consistently high standard.
- The organisation continually supports dialogue with stakeholders and beneficiaries to minimise risk and ensure quality in a co-created environment. Its policies and action plans are available for sharing in the sector. Cheshire Dance is often contracted by other organisations to deliver policy-related training in dance.
- A Continuing Professional Development offer in support of policy implementation is a fundamental part of the organisation's artistic programme and is accessible across the core and freelance team. Regular training, often championed in-house, supports all staff and freelance practitioners, all of whom are contractually obliged to top-up their training on a regular basis.
- All policies are up-to-date and monitored by the Board quarterly through a Schedule of Matters. Copies of all documents are available on request or via Board Papers.

Our **Single Equality Action Policy & Plan** has been updated and ratified by the Board 15th February 2022 - See Appendix 8

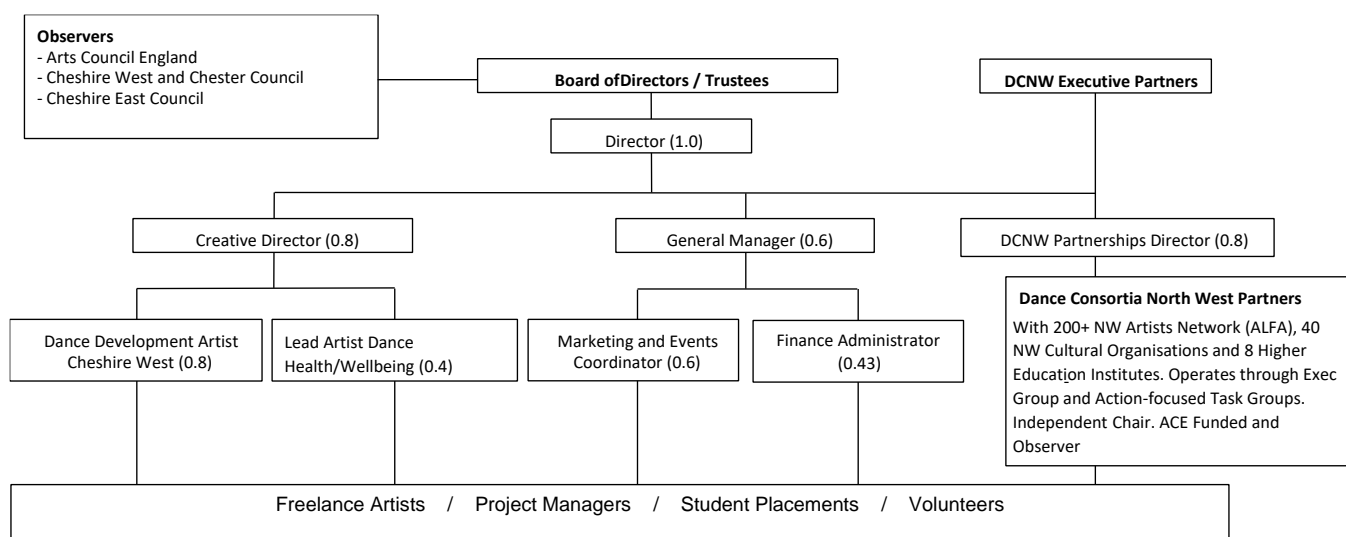
5.3 Organisational structure and decision-making mechanisms

The Board of Directors (the Trustees of the charity) is responsible for the governance of the organisation. Directors are elected by invitation and rotated as detailed in the Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Board is responsible for decision making with regard policy and overall direction linked to the aims of the organisation. The Board monitors progress of policy action plans, programmes, finance and other strategic developments relating to Cheshire Dance. The Artistic and Strategic direction of Cheshire Dance is developed by the Director in collaboration with both Board and Staff. Key decision-making can originate through any stakeholder group. Options are developed by staff and/or the Board in consultation with stakeholders and appraised by the Board for decision.

Succession Planning – Instances when Board Members, Senior Managers and Key Lead Artists leave the organisation

- Budget forecasts seek, but do not always achieve, competitive salary levels that are benchmarked across the sector.
- On joining the Board all potential members are asked to agree to the principle that at some point they may take on the official roles of Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer.

- The decision-making culture is open and insists on participatory leadership and ownership of the strategic context amongst both staff and Board. This presents the most viable way of progressing strategy when key people leave.



5.4 The Team and Artistic Community

Aim: To invest in core assets and resource development to increase organisational resilience.

Cheshire Dance has developed an enviable brand and reputation in artist development, for the quality of its delivery and for encouraging more people who are amongst the least engaged in the arts. Many organisations identify Cheshire Dance as their 'one-stop' shop in accessing excellence in the local dance sector. We will sustain and build this reputation by investing continuously in a range of key assets: -

- Our creative team are rich in expertise and have extensive experience in leading and developing dance in a vast range of delivery, making, producing and presenting contexts.
- Our freelance artists: developing our Freelancer Meetings as spaces for sharing, dialogue and exchange, providing opportunities for us to respond to artists needs and develop our services and working practices appropriately and;
- Our freelance artists: we will pay our freelance artists to attend CPD that is essential for their role and provide subsidised/free access to CPD workshops linked to projects. Use our reserves if necessary to do this whilst recognising that this is not sustainable and that there will be a need to secure income to do this going forward.
- Alongside retaining in-house expertise, our ability to act as 'agent', brokering relationships between the artistic community and partners in the arts and other sectors.
- Our creative leadership and ability to influence the sector through sustainable partnerships and a viable CPD programme and artist development offer.
- Our strong networks, working extensively in partnership with other organisations to utilise and contribute to a common understanding of excellence in the arts as well as in other sectors

5.5 Dance Consortia North West

The Consortia is a partnership of dance development organisations, venues, companies, independent artists and HE institutions that have co-authored its purpose, ambition and values and secured Arts Council England investment. DCNW was established in 2017 and is working to deliver the NW Dance Plan to support and grow dance in the North West. DCNW is working to:

- Expand the scope and scale of the dance that is produced and shared
- Amplify the investment that flows into dance
- Increase the sustainability and ability of dance artists and organisations to thrive
- Address pressing issues such as the environment; equity, inclusion and diversity; and the COVID 19 Pandemic
- Understand that creating and sharing art and dance benefits our society, so amplifying dance amplifies the benefits.

Cheshire Dance is the accountable body for the central Arts Council funding for DCNW and employer of the Partnerships Director and a 0.2 FTE Administrator posts. DCNW seeks to identify programme and financial support to further its aims.

Dance Consortia North West governance is held within Cheshire Dance's charitable objects and delivered through a signed Operating Agreement.

DCNW Operations Plan lists the following Action Priorities as the operational focus.

YEAR 4, POSITION AND REPUTATION

- Marketing, communications and advocacy projects, campaigns and initiatives
- Develop and deliver at least three projects with national or international partners
- Leverage national networks for and with NW artists and companies
- Support for extra-regional tours, teaching and dancing

5.6 Evaluation

Cheshire Dance ensures excellence is at the heart of everything it does by using self-evaluation and external assessments, supporting talent development, championing our Creative Values, the Creative Case for Diversity, Let's Create, Black Lives Matter campaign, developing local, regional, nationwide and international links and providing sector leadership through partnership working.

We will continue to undertake critical self-evaluation and utilise of a range of tools available to us including; our new Evaluation Framework devised with and for participants of our regular sessions, trailing the Impact & Insight toolkit, using our Creative Values to assess our practice and CPD offer to artists, using the new ACE self-assessment tool to help identify areas for development and if it once again becomes an option, use ACE's AQA process to engage external evaluators for more comprehensive and independent assessment of our work.

The Cultural Recovery Fund enabled us in 2021/22 to extend our work with University of Chester (Philip Barker Centre) to adapt research methods to better understand both re-engagement and non-engagement as we return to face-to-face engagement. During 2022/23 we will explore how the outcomes identified in our research with the University of Chester during phase one and the data from phase 2, our first survey in Autumn 21, and how this can be used to review our Creative Values and shape our Artistic Programme and our NPO application.

Through robust business planning, regular financial and risk monitoring, our Schedule of Matters and continuous evaluation of our practice Cheshire Dance continues to be resilient to external and internal factors enabling us to be focused on our key priorities and responsive to opportunities and challenges. We will ensure the staffing structure, the skills and knowledge of the team reflects the needs of the organisation.

5.7 Environmental Impact

We are mindful of the impact our working practice has on the environment and the challenges that

delivering across a rural setting presents in particular with regard to travel. We use ACE supported Julies Bicycle to monitor our progress to a lower carbon footprint.

During lockdown our environmental impact has been significantly reduced as staff work from home, activities and projects moved online or via non-digital resources and events such as Now Northwich and presentation platforms were cancelled. As we reopened during 2021/22 and were able to meet face to face again our outreach model, asking small numbers of artists, rather than large number of participants, to travel is environmentally low impact.

In 2022/23 we will challenge our plans for Now Northwich Festival finding new ways to reduce the environmental impact of the Festival whilst also using it as a platform to raise public awareness of the Climate Emergency.

Almost exclusively now, we use technology such as electronic distribution of marketing and communications, papers and documents. We decommissioned our main office server and transferred to cloud resources which means we no longer need to leave computers on overnight for remote login, we now have 24/7 digital access available wherever we have Wi-Fi or 4g.

Cheshire Dance is a member the Library Service Climate Emergency action group and are changing habits and recycling more to reduce our impact on the environment.

APPENDIX 1 - ARTISTIC PROGRAMME 2022-23

Programme Strand	Programme Activity	Digital	Artist Development	Let's Create Investment Principle & Core Characteristics
Classes and small commissions	<p>Regular classes programme face to face/online/blended according to restrictions.</p> <p>Maintain 22 regular sessions are running across the Cheshire Dance programme of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 older adult (1 online, 1 D2H Crewe supported) • 3 disability • 3 youth disability • 5 youth • 3 adult capoeira (1 online) • (+ 7 regular schools= 29 sessions) <p>New sessions can be developed but only with invested partners, financial backing and in built capacity building – co-creation approach. Focus instead on deepening practice with existing groups.</p> <p>Continuing focus on YP, Older Adults and people with Learning Disabilities.</p> <p>Safeguarding in Dance CPD workshop September 2022</p> <p>Testing new ideas through partnerships considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the audiences we're not engaging? • How do sessions become sustainable? <p>Evaluating Winsford Cultural Recovery Programme (Winsford Creates Festival, Creative's Network, Youth Dance Development) and working with CWaC to continue to develop and embed work within Town Centre Regeneration inc. The Spotlight Youth Project</p>	<p>Online session</p> <p>Zoom/live hybrid sessions</p> <p>Co-Creating film and digital work with individual participants/ groups</p> <p>New CD website profiling groups, projects, artists and partners.</p> <p>Connection to CineWindow and Winstopia</p>	<p>Opportunities for artists to develop practice through shadowing and engaging with new participant groups.</p> <p>Digital skills development (film, live streaming)</p> <p>Freelance Artist Consultations (1 per term)</p> <p>Build paid CPD opportunities into funded small commissions</p> <p>Development of practice in Digital and Hybrid delivery</p> <p>Artist Surgeries offered by all CD Team members to support freelance artist development within and beyond CD</p>	<p>Inclusion & Relevance Community Creative Case for Diversity</p> <p>Dynamism Mission & Business Model</p> <p>Ambition & Quality Understanding Perceptions Progression</p> <p>Environmental Responsibility Influence, Education and Advocacy</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #00a0e3; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NW Dance Plan Outcomes </div> <p>More people dancing</p> <p>Artists pursue working in the North West</p>

Programme Strand	Programme Activity	Digital Outputs and Outcomes	Artist Development	Let's Create Investment Principle & Core Characteristics
Youth Dance Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Now Northwich Young Producers programme (to include professional programming, youth programming and youth dance performance) Jubacana Youth dance development programme – collaborating with Jubacana and Movema (workshops, CPD, performance – including at Now Northwich) participating in and learning from their model. Rewind project in Blacon (CWaC targeted area) in partnership with Theatre in the Quarter – cross art form collaboration The Spotlight Project – youth dance project Winsford – legacy from Winsford Cultural Recovery Programme and Festival Project 1 – LGBTQ+ young people. Cross Art form. CAT – explore development of outreach/satellite group in Ellesmere Port 	<p>Potential to create digital outputs dependent on YP ideas and goals</p> <p>Film created '21 shared '22</p> <p>Film creation</p>	<p>Developing young people as artists/creative producers</p> <p>Jubacanca/Movema shared CPD opportunities for artists in world dance styles</p> <p>Cross art form learning.</p> <p>Co-delivery model enabling artists to share practice Co-creation with Connor Elliman</p>	<p>Inclusion & Relevance Community Creative Case for Diversity</p> <p>Dynamism Mission & Business Model</p> <p>Ambition & Quality Understanding Perceptions Progression</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #00a0e3; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> NW Dance Plan Outcomes </div> <p>More people dancing</p>
Schools and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing schools offer – cross curricular regular provision/after school/workshops etc. Building on success of CRF funded 'Connect, Move, Learn' programme to continue to develop long term relationships with schools in Cheshire with 5 priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND focus Developing primary provision CPD for teachers and artists Case Studies Evaluation + processes Archers Brook (SEMH setting for pupils with complex communication need from age 9 to 16) Storytelling and dance project 	<p>Developing film making and digital performance opportunities with schools</p>	<p>Dance in Education CPD for freelance artists – developing pool of freelance artists who can deliver dance in education.</p> <p>Cross art form development – co-creation and learning</p>	<p>Inclusion & Relevance Community Workforce, Leadership and Governance Creative Case for Diversity</p> <p>Dynamism Mission & Business Model</p>

Programme Strand	Programme Activity	Digital Outputs and Outcomes	Artist Development	Let's Create Investment Principle & Core Characteristics
Schools and Education contd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crossing Point Project – learning from first project in Spring 22 and developing into an annual programme. Programme no. 2 planned for Spring '23 	Crossing Point has digital performance outcome	<p>Crossing Point Support artist is paid development opportunity for emerging artist embedded within the project.</p> <p>Dance skills development for school teachers embedded in Crossing Point.</p>	<p>Ambition & Quality Understanding Perceptions Progression</p> <div>NW Dance Plan Outcomes</div> <p>More people dancing</p>
Wildfire Rising Associate Artist Programme with Movema (requires additional funding)	<p>Associate artist scheme in partnership with Movema for artists from African, South, East, & South East Asian diasporas.</p> <p>Learning from pilot programme (2021) to be embedded into future development of programme.</p> <p>Fundraising to support second phase of Wildfire Rising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network and Support Programme - broadening reach – supporting more ethnically diverse artists, continuing to support and work with current Wildfire Rising Associates Inquiring Bodies Events – profiling artists, building partnerships with other NW and national organisations to develop profiling and employment opportunities Movema and CD Associate Artist – paid employment opportunity for ethnically diverse artist developing artistic and coordination skills Movema & CD learning & wider sector learning – knowledge exchanges, presentation to DCNW, link to Inc Arts 	.	<p>Bespoke Artist Development programme</p> <p>Opportunities for artists to engage in regular workshops/training organised as part of the programme.</p> <p>Wildfire Rising Artists develop long-term working relationships with Cheshire Dance.</p> <p>Artists co-creating future of Wildfire Rising</p>	<p>Inclusion & Relevance Community Workforce, Leadership and Governance Creative Case</p> <p>Dynamism Mission & Business Model People and Skills</p> <p>Ambition & Quality Understanding Perceptions Progression</p> <div>NW Dance Plan Outcomes</div> <p>More people dancing</p> <p>Artists pursue working in the North West</p>

Programme Strand	Programme Activity	Digital Outputs and Outcomes	Artist Development	Let's Create Investment Principle & Core Characteristics
Dance and people with Profound Intellectual and Multiple Disabilities (PIMD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing Practice Sharing network meetings 2 per year (Connection with Now Northwich through Frozen Light Outdoor storytelling installation for people with PIMD) Sharing findings from 'Wanna Dance' work with staff from Vivo Care Choices (summer 2021) – focus on one to one dance sessions with participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic paper and conferences Report for Vivo/Cheshire Dance Participant 'dance passports' <p>Development and fundraising of next phase of Wanna Dance research project in partnership with Vivo Care Choices p using £4k Catalyst match funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How people with PIMD like to dance Embedding consent theory into research – how we know people with PIMD want to dance The role of the dance artist in working with people with PIMD within a social care environment Comparison with dance artist led vs staff led one to one dance sessions Potential for national/international significance 	Film and photographic documentation	<p>Unique, specialised practice sharing group to support artists nationally.</p> <p>Dance Artist training opportunities built into project. Partnerships with artists/practitioners such as Oily Cart, Frozen Light, Joanna Grace.</p> <p>Cross art form collaboration in documentation and sharing</p> <p>Importance of artistic practice and development in co-creation with people with PIMD</p>	<p>Inclusion & Relevance Community Workforce, Leadership and Governance Creative Case for Diversity</p> <p>Dynamism Mission & Business Model</p> <p>Ambition & Quality Understanding Perceptions</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>NW Dance Plan Outcomes</p> <p>More people dancing</p> <p>More people investing in dance</p> </div>

Programme Strand	Programme Activity	Digital Outputs and Outcomes	Artist Development	Let's Create Investment Principle & Core Characteristics
Now Northwich	<p>30th April 2022</p> <p>Focus on reconnection, rediscovery, recovery – no communities left behind. Care-‘full’. Diversity and accessibility as core values – reflected across programming</p> <p>Based in town centre within Covid secure spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museum of the Moon – Luke Jerram • Dandyism – Patrick Ziza • Bees! – Artizani • Pandora’s Boombox – DOPE • Taking Flight – Movema • Out of the Deep Blue – Autin Dance Theatre • Juba do Leao • Frock – Stopgap • Frozen Light – Night out in Nature • Lifted – Mimbire (Young Producers choice) <p>Young Producers (see Youth Dance Development)</p> <p>Community programme – Lead Artist Jenny Reeves plus film artist Nick Farrimond. Focus on creation of Salt Stories, A collection of films by our community exploring stories from a Town built from salt. Screened on big screen as part of an immersive experience in prominent festival location</p>	<p>Website</p> <p>Explore use of QR codes for additional info/engagement opportunities</p> <p>Dance film central to community programme in 2022</p>	<p>Commissions – Movema, DOPE, Salt Stories</p> <p>Potential artist development link to PIMD through Frozen Light</p> <p>Disability led and culturally diverse led companies central to programming</p> <p>Community Programme includes paid CPD opportunities for group leaders.</p> <p>Development of Connor Elliman in Community Co-ordinator Role</p>	<p>Inclusion & Relevance</p> <p>Community Workforce Leadership & Development</p> <p>Creative Case for Diversity</p> <p>Dynamism</p> <p>Mission & Business Model</p> <p>People & Skills</p> <p>Ambition & Quality</p> <p>Understanding Perceptions</p> <p>Progression</p> <p>Measuring Performance</p> <p>Environmental Responsibility</p> <p>Influence, Education and Advocacy</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #00a0e3; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> NW Dance Plan Outcomes </div> <p>More people dancing</p> <p>More people investing in dance</p> <p>Artists pursue working in the North West</p> <p>North West Dance is prized at home and elsewhere</p>

Programme Strand	Programme Activity	Digital Outputs and Outcomes	Artist Development	Let's Create Investment Principle & Core Characteristics
Dance and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop specialism in Dance and Health through delivery of regular programme (particularly older adults), small commissions and applications to larger, health specific funds. 'Breath of Fresh Air' dance and nature project with Cheshire Wildlife Trust (funding secured) 2 x 6 week interventions Feb – July 2022 – pilot to explore combined delivery model. 'Creative Health Placement' with University of Chester School of Nursing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 x 6 week placements March-June 2022 Delivery of Dance and Health CPD for Nursing students with placements in dance and health groups Build connections with social prescribers in CWaC and CE (Pathways CIC, Healthbox, Neston CYC) 	<p>Online/hybrid sessions likely especially initially</p> <p>Potential for groups to explore dance film creation</p>	<p>Include Artist development workshops in budget for any application.</p> <p>Dance and Health Lead artist development – shared planning with CD artistic team. Learning to be shared through CPD opportunities.</p> <p>Build shadowing artist opportunities in where possible.</p> <p>Developing specialism within CD freelance team.</p>	<p>Inclusion & Relevance Community Creative Case for Diversity</p> <p>Dynamism Mission & Business Model</p> <p>Ambition & Quality Understanding Perceptions</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #00a0e3; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;"> NW Dance Plan Outcomes </div> <p>More people dancing</p> <p>More people investing in dance</p>
Investing in Freelance Artists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free to access CPD programme 22-23 (moving towards aim of paid programme '23 onwards – bursaries available for some funded sessions.) Inquiring Bodies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating stronger links amongst the freelance dance community Supporting and showcasing the community of practicing dance artists who live and work in NW Freelance Consultations/Move & Connect/Go See opportunities 		<p>Ensuring accessibility of programme to support continuing diversity of freelance artist pool</p> <p>Artist Development designed by and with local artists</p> <p>Creating supportive environments for artists to take risks, develop, deepen, share and test practice.</p>	<p>Inclusion & Relevance Community Workforce Leadership & Development Creative Case for Diversity</p> <p>Dynamism Mission & Business Model People & Skills</p>

Programme Strand	Programme Activity	Digital Outputs and Outcomes	Artist Development	Let's Create Investment Principle & Core Characteristics
Investing in Freelance Artists contd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freelance Artist Surgeries offered by all of CD core team Supporting dance artists living and working in Cheshire on a bespoke basis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Space funding support and guidance mentoring small bursaries in kind match funding 		<p>Freelance artist voice key to development of Cheshire Dance and future development.</p> <p>Supporting artists to develop practice and markets for their work.</p>	<p>Ambition & Quality Understanding Perceptions Progression</p> <p>NW Dance Plan Outcomes Artists pursue working in the North West North West Dance is prized at home and elsewhere</p>
Evaluation Tool Development	<p>Continue to work with Phillip Barker Centre (University of Chester) building on findings from data collection in Autumn '21</p> <p>Roll out evaluation across artistic programme</p> <p>Ensure compatibility with ACE Audience Finder, Investment Principles and Let's Create</p>		<p>Artists consulted on and involved in shaping evaluation tool and collection methods.</p> <p>Evaluation Tool provides feedback for artists to reflect, respond and develop practice</p>	<p>Inclusion & Relevance Community Dynamism Mission & Business Model People & Skills Ambition & Quality Understanding Perceptions Progression Measuring Performance</p> <p>NW Dance Plan Outcomes More people dancing</p>
DCNW	<p>DCNW leads fulfilment of the NW Dance Plan and is governed by the Operations Plan</p> <p>Base funding from ACE</p> <p>Catalyse collaborative actions</p> <p>Maintain lean, fit for purpose structure and delivery.</p>	DCNW website and information resources	Mentoring Programme II 2021-22; Mentoring Programme III 2022-23	<p>Inclusion & Relevance Community Workforce, Leadership and Governance Creative Case for Diversity</p>

APPENDIX 2 - Audience Engagement and Development Plan (April 2022 - March 2023)

Situation Overview

The work of Cheshire Dance has a particular focus on engaging young people, older adults and those with disabilities (including PIMD – Profound, Intellectual & Multiple Disabilities) and strives to ensure that the art form is accessible to everyone. Cheshire Dance offers a safe environment in which everyone regardless of age, race, ability or disability can dance.

During the pandemic it placed great emphasis on the message: *“Keep Healthy, Keep Social, Keep Active – Keep Dancing with Cheshire Dance”* and reported circa 66K Total Dance Experiences across all audience segments despite lockdowns and restrictions during this time. (Only 35% less than during non-pandemic times).

During 2021/2022 Cheshire Dance worked to reawaken enthusiasm amongst participants, audience, stakeholders and the wider public. It revived “CREATIVE PHYSICAL CONNECTIONS and worked to meet audiences’ renewed desire for a creative, connected and physical NEW beginning.

For 2022-2023, the organisation will now focus on building upon this. Its communications approach will work to strengthen the feeling of confidence and safety amongst participants, and strive to satisfy appetites to engage in the art form across its three strands of young people, older people and those with disabilities.

“Dance is for Everyone” will continue to be the key message that is conveyed across all mediums in 2022/2023, and there will be a stronger push on engaging those within protected characteristic segments and those that may sometimes feel left behind.

Strategy Overview for April 2022 – March 2023

Looking ahead to 2022/2023 and through its extensive programme that reflects and supports its communities whilst proactively addressing inequalities – particularly amongst underrepresented and underserved communities – Cheshire Dance will look to not only keep-engaging existing participants and audiences, but will further its reach amongst those new to the art form and organisation.

For the period from April 2022 to March 2023, the marketing team will focus its efforts on:

- Deepening engagement within the regular provision with messaging that continues to inspire confidence in existing/post-pandemic times
- Expanding reach within hard to access communities, inc. disability centres, youth groups and among older adults.
- Brand strengthening to raise more awareness that ‘Dance is for Everyone’.
- Further expansion of online audiences with enhanced digital methods
- Strengthening further relationships with artists and professionals, and showcasing local talent
- Consolidating partnerships with co-collaborations to help reach new, untapped audiences.

Deepening participation within regular provision:

Using both online (social media marketing, new website, email marketing and video etc.) and offline activities (non-digital such as print material, press releases, networking et al...) to continue to renew and revive interest in the art form in a safe and inclusive environment.

We look to heighten confidence amongst existing participants and build attraction for new participants; to engage with our audiences across our geographical target area and to reinforce the message that Dance is For Everyone.

This is particularly pertinent to the following planned activity: Regular classes (face-to-face and online sessions), schools/education development programme, work in health settings and disability settings, as well as the legacy from the Winsford Regeneration & Recovery Programme (Winsford Creates, March 2022) and Now Northwich 2022.

Expanding reach within harder to access communities

The 2022/2023 programme will continue to target harder to access communities and look to further its reach among older adults and those with disabilities, particularly those in more rural, under-connected and under-served locations. It will reach younger people with protected characteristics via its enhanced schools programme, Crossing Point.

Digital will play a key role in this; however more traditional marketing methods are more likely to achieve healthier engagement amongst some harder to reach audiences. An environmentally conscious organisation, Cheshire Dance will, however, consider evidence-based data before embarking on mass outreach print activity. Greater emphasis will be placed on disseminating the message through the extensive network of partners and relationships in the region – and beyond.

Of key importance is that this period's activities will work towards continuing to engage more people from more diverse communities – from its youth development work to its dance and health work (inc. PIMD), amongst others.

Any and all events / activities (Now Northwich, et al.) will again adhere to an Accessibility and Inclusion Strategy and will remain respectful that Covid19 is still very much a concern – particularly amongst some audience groups.

Brand strengthening with reinforced messaging that 'Dance is for Everyone'

During this period, Cheshire Dance will continue to strengthen its presence amongst participants, audiences, funders, partners and the community. It will use its brand's presence to strengthen the desire for creative physical connections.

The catalyst for this will be the **new Cheshire Dance website** that launched at the end of 2021. This new website has started to not only tell the stories of Cheshire Dance, but it is now acting as a platform for artists, groups (participants) and partners' voices to be heard. From the showcasing of work and case studies, to profiling digital co-creation projects and even possible digital performances / experiences, this website will heighten engagement with a variety of audience-types across all segments.

In conjunction with the launch of this website, Cheshire Dance has started to embark on a new journey with the **Google Not-for-Profit programme** (January 2022). This programme will allow the organisation to disseminate its messages across Google Search platforms with smart campaigns. Acceptance on this programme will give Cheshire Dance a spend of up to \$10K per month to help it attract new audiences and strengthen its identity online.

Better serving audiences online

Whilst digital content within the website will play a dominant role in this period's activity, cohesive social media campaigns, email marketing and digital promotion (SEO, PPC etc.) will be implemented to ensure Cheshire Dance continues to serve its audiences online.

Cheshire Dance will build upon the digital transformation that took place during (and post) pandemic. From targeted campaigns to strategic messaging, video content and the creation of digital outcomes (films etc.), Cheshire Dance will produce high quality material that will create a legacy for its participants, participating schools, groups/projects and artists alike.

The team will continue to further its exploration of digital technologies to engage, encourage and inspire others to/with the art form in the North West region.

Going forward, digital will start to be integrated into project plans and will follow through to evaluation stages. In this manner, digital content can be repurposed, enjoyed and shared with different audiences at different times.

Strengthening relationships with artists and professionals

Relationships sit at the core of the organisation and Cheshire Dance will continue to strengthen its relationships with artists and professionals. This includes freelancers of Cheshire Dance, independent artists and artists within other organisations.

An open policy is already in place to allow artists to reach out to Cheshire Dance for support – whether artistic support, hot desking/resources, marketing support or guidance with reaching audiences.

The organisation will use a number of platforms to continue to reach artists, including its own Facebook page, a dedicated freelancers Facebook page, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and targeted email database for direct communications. What's more, Cheshire Dance will continue to engage with artists in its regular meet ups, its bespoke artist events (Inquiring Bodies, etc) and CPD sessions (Safeguarding etc.).

For 2022/2023 Cheshire Dance will also offer Artist Surgeries to those that work within its network. These surgeries will provide consultation on a variety of practises such as Audience Development, Funding and Commissions, Finance and Administration and Marketing & Communications.

Co-collaborations & Partnerships

Cheshire Dance will continue to work closely with partners both locally and nationally to reach more people and to access harder to reach communities. Partnerships with connector organisations such as Vivo, Healthbox, Sanctuary Housing, Down 's Syndrome Cheshire and Active Cheshire etc. are instrumental in developing our audiences and participants, and forming new relationships with other youth, health, education and community partners will help to ensure we connect with under-served groups.

During 2022/2023, Cheshire Dance will continue to work closely with Dance Consortia North West and will continue to strengthen its links with other sector organisations in the northwest.

Audience Segments 2022/2023:

Existing Cheshire Dance audiences can be segmented by the following:

- Participants - Those who engage in classes/events
- Dance Artists /Professionals – Freelancers of Cheshire Dance, independent artists and artists within other organisations
- Partner organisations – Funders, connectors (Vivo, Healthbox, Sanctuary, etc.) other agencies /organisations / venues, Education & Health Facilities... and others
- The general public – Attendees to events such as Now Northwich who may or may not regularly engage with the arts
- Internal Audience – Staff, Board Members, Freelancers

Evidence Data Sources for Audience Engagement Tracking 2022/2023:

- New Website – Tracking of event occurrences
- Google Not-For-Profit Programme – SEM, PPC campaigns etc
- Dance Biz – Tracking of participants
- Marketing Automation – MailChimp, Hootsuite, Lightful
- Social Media Platforms – Tracking of Demographics and campaign management (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube)

APPENDIX 3 - Recovery Scenarios & Risk Log 2022/23

2022/23 Context

In 2020 Covid restrictions forced a redesign of budget and programme, which developed rapidly in response to changing circumstances. Throughout 2020/21 Cheshire Dance delivered 66% of its 'normal' engagement programme, predominantly focused of Protected Characteristic Groups. This programme was supported by the ongoing regular investment from Cheshire West and Chester Council and Arts Council England and employment sustainability through the Government's Furlough Scheme.

At the start of 2021/22 Cheshire Dance benefitted from Cultural Recovery Funding (CRF). This enabled us to relaunch face-to-face sessions alongside some that continued online. In June 2021, the CRF criteria changed with the 3 month period of funding extending to December 2021. Whilst this late notice meant most of the funds were used in the April to June period we planned and are now implementing a second push to re-engage participants and support artist development through the Autumn 2021 term. Already we are experiencing strong demand from our groups for this return to face-to-face sessions. Meantime we are working with Cheshire West and Chester Council on a Winsford High Street Recovery programme (complimented by similar culture-lead recovery across the Borough) that will see a new engagement programme develop through Autumn 2021 and into Spring 2022 that will culminate with an event in the Town Centre sometime in March 2022. Also, during 2021 Cheshire Dance has once again partnered with Liverpool-based Movema, this time to launch a new initiative, Wildfire Rising, an Associate Artist scheme responding to Black Lives Matter.

Planning Scenario – Full Steam Ahead

Looking forward into and beyond 2022/23, Cheshire Dance is anticipating with some confidence an ongoing Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Cheshire West and Chester Council and is here applying for Arts Council England NPO Extension Funding for the year ahead. With this support we are able to plan for the full recovery and renewal of our programme across community, education, health and cultural sectors. Cheshire Dance has proven its resilience to date and through a range of partnerships is well positioned to tackle the widening inequalities gap made worse by peoples' lived experience of the Pandemic and Economic fallout.

Cheshire Dance has secured £45,000 match funding for Now Northwich, planned for 30th April 2022 and received a positive outcome of a Cheshire West and Chester Council lead application to ACE National Lottery Projects Grants scheme to support 2 COVID-safe festival scenarios. Further COVID-adaptation support is also in place through the original CRF. This is a strong financial position for the festival with just a few months to go before culmination. Also in partnership with the Local Authority Cheshire Dance is well-positioned to derive cultural and social benefit as part of significant regeneration work taking place and resourced in Winsford, the organisation's home and base for its outreach programme for more than 25 years.

Cheshire Dance is one of many cultural organisations and ACE NPO's that is part of the newly recognised National Policy on the Culture-lead economic renewal of our Town Centres.

Cheshire Dance continues as the lead organisation of Dance Consortia Northwest supported by ACE Managed Funds. The NW Dance Plan published is now being adopted across the sector, present in many Business Plans of NW based cultural organisations and institutions, strong foundations for sector growth. It is also currently awaiting a decision on the Research Programme application that will mean significant new investment into the North West Dance sector and further activation of the partnership base of the Consortia. The Consortia model is also proving resilient to the Pandemic.

Strategic Position 2022/23 and Beyond

Cheshire Dance has made and continues to make the case for the organisation's cultural significance both in terms of national and international reputation as well as our role in providing cultural opportunity in England

and sector leadership in the region. It is well positioned to attract support from the Government's Levelling Up policy and champion a region-wide dance and cultural leadership emanating from the North West.

We are able to evidence our significance because, up until now, we've done the work we've needed to do to secure such a reputation whether through the programme we've delivered or the partnerships we've created or are part of. Having responded with creative flexibility during the pandemic, facing fewer restrictions than many organisations, we can be confident in the sustainability of our business model. And in the changing cultural landscape being brought about by Let's Create we are increasingly suited to policy changes across all 3 Outcomes and 4 Investment Principles of ACE 2020-30 strategy.

The pandemic has heightened mainstream awareness of what has been enshrined in Cheshire Dance's mission for more than 40 years - that inequalities are rife in our society, towns and communities and getting worse but through creative endeavor and an open and collaborative mindset it is possible to realise systemic change. As a result, as in the last 5 years, over the next 10 years we can and should anticipate an increase in demand for our services and for the services of cultural organisations like us.

Major Risks

The Board reviews major risks on a quarterly basis and All Relevant Organisational Risks on an annual basis, or more frequently as circumstances dictate. Options for Mitigating Action are reviewed at the Trigger point, agreed and implemented as appropriate. The Risk Log includes ongoing adaptation and recovery risks associated with the Covid 19 Pandemic.

The most significant recent risk to our Planning Scenario related to the growth in core costs brought about by Dance Consortia North West and Now Northwich. Whilst the most cost-effective route to bring about new cultural activity and benefit, these costs are real and up until recently has been addressed by the Cheshire Board as Loss Leaders. The headers of agreements are now in place for both initiatives to ensure Cheshire Dance significantly reduces its incurred losses from these initiatives. Our challenge now will be to ensure these and in fact all our investment agreements keep on-track with our growing programme and our growing cultural significance and reputation.

Our most major risk now is clear. It is important to back up our growing reputation and growth in audiences/stakeholders with a commitment to ensure our production values and how we work with artists is consistent right across our programme, not just for those initiatives in the spotlight. Within that lies sustainable growth.

Cheshire Dance Risk Log – February 2022

Adopted: February 2022

Monitoring: Risk Update at all Board meetings

Next Review: February 2023

Organisational structure and decision-making mechanisms

The Board of Directors (the Trustees of the charity) are responsible for the governance of the organisation. The Board is elected by invitation and rotated as detailed in the Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Board is responsible for decision making with regard policy and overall direction linked to the aims of the organisation. The Board monitors progress of programmes, finance and other strategic development relating to Cheshire Dance. The Artistic and Strategic direction of Cheshire Dance is developed by the Director in collaboration with both Board and Staff. Please refer to latest Organisational Chart below to see current staffing structure.

Related Parties

Cheshire Dance works in partnership with a range of organisations in pursuit of common goals. Partnerships are negotiated for each joint initiative, and any financial transactions are noted in the accounts and supported by Service Level Agreements, Funding Agreements and/or Offer Letters.

Reserves Policy and Funds Structure

Please see separate Reserves Policy or refer to the Latest Report and Accounts. A reserves policy is noted separately in the annual report and accounts. The company adheres to the relevant legislation regarding financial control and operating as a Registered Charity Limited by Guarantee.

Asset Policy

Assets valued at less than £400 are not capitalised.

Scoring	Likelihood 1=Low, 5=High. Impact 1=Low, 5=High Score = Likelihood x Impact The Highest Risk Items are Highlighted in Red		
Score Range	1 – 8=Low	9 – 16=Medium	17 – 25=High

RISK	Likelihood	Impact	Score	TRIGGER	MITIGATING ACTION
Organisation unable to operate	1	5	5	Covid 19 Pandemic	Proven resilience, experience of effective adaptation to sustain programme. Transition to online deliver ready to face to face
Financial Insolvency, Reduction in Core funding	1	5	5	Loss of ACE/Local Authority core funding	Budgets monitored on a quarterly basis. Reserves policy adequate and met. Maintain stable and progressive relationships with key investors
Non-delivery on agreements	1	5	5	Drop in ACE/Local Authority core funding	Monitor funding agreement deliverables and SMART Objectives with appropriate action. Maintain positive profile amongst customers and stakeholders. Request regular feedback from funders (inc. ACE Artistic and Quality Assessments) and ensure prompt response to issues raised.

RISK	Likelihood	Impact	Score	TRIGGER	MITIGATING ACTION
Unsustainable core costs increase of £20k relating to programme growth	1	5	5	All applications that included mitigation were successful	Partners recognised extensive but in-part unsustainable nature of in-kind support given by Cheshire Dance. CW&C agreement, inclusive of core cost, has been signed. Verbal support received at both Relationship Manager and Senior Relationship Manager level at ACE. Reduced delivery is planned if support not forthcoming. Cost-ineffectiveness of this path is understood.
Inflation and standstill funding Reduction in Non-Core Income	1	5	5	Not keeping pace with increasing income targets	Early warning - monitor income targets quarterly (via projects, contracts, boroughs). Integrate technologies - Dance Biz, Zoom and Quick Books Online to increase real time data (cash/attendance) and other remote assets – Dropbox / MS365 Make prudent longer term projections. Do not commit expenditure prior to securing income. Ensure marketing effort focuses on income as well as artistic profile. Review pricing/fees annually. Maintain contingency/reserves fund.
Mission Drift Work outside Charitable Objects	1	4	4	Agreements made that challenge Governance (e.g. DCNW)	Board fully informed of risk / benefit and monitor closely. Ensure agreements include investment in capacity, other real costs and limit in-kind commitment. Involvement of key individuals invested in DCNW on the Board of Cheshire Dance.
Inability to meet staff contractual agreements	1	4	4	Legal action against Cheshire Dance	Regular review of pricing policy, insurance, staffing costs & staff contracts, reserves. Consider ACAS, ACE and Local Authority support and ensure legal representation on the board or access to suitable advice.
Tax Increase	1	1	1	Inability to meet contractual agreements	Continued scanning of future government policies and wider financial climate (Cheshire Dance is exempt from Corporation Tax and reviews its VAT exempt position annually).

RISK	Likelihood	Impact	Score	TRIGGER	MITIGATING ACTION
Fraud	1	3	3	Unexpected finance drain	Ensure legal expertise is available. Maintain stringent financial control. Review insurance annually.
Damage to building / contents	1	3	3	Fire & Burglary	Ensure contents insurance in place (Cheshire Dance rents space only). Back up of digital data every day off site
Virus attack / Data Breach	1	5	5	Destroys computer data	Maintain up to date Data Management Policy and Action Plan.
Inability to recruit and retain Board members with relevant skills	1	4	4	Resignation of Board Members Conflict of interest	Implement memorandum and articles of association for non-quorate conditions. Enact recruitment early and ensure robust induction re roles and responsibilities. Regular Board skills audit
Inability to recruit and retain staff	1	5	5	Staff leave Skill drain	Promote and support positive culture. Maintain competitive rates of pay, terms and conditions Promote reputation as a good employer Ensure realistic contract notice periods
Noncompliance with Health & Safety Regulations	1	4	4	Accidents in the workplace	Ensure H&S and Safeguarding Policies are regularly reviewed. Ensure training is offered to all practitioners. Maintain adequate Insurance Cover. Ensure Accident / Incident Book available and used. Contracts with artists & public liability. Conduct risk assessments in all new spaces.
Reputational Noncompliance with Safeguarding	1	5	5	Abuse reported	Ensure Safeguarding Policy is up-to-date with legislation, DBS checks conducted, a code of conduct exists and training is offered and policy plays out in practice.
Noncompliance with Equal Opportunities	1	5	5	Discrimination reported	Ensure Single Equality Policy and Action Plan is up-to-date with legislation. Ensure training offered and policy plays out.
Unsustainable Programme	1	4	4	Consistent low take-up amongst target audience	Adequate marketing Analysis of sector needs. Consult target audience and partners. Negotiate changes to agreement if necessary. Use of cancellation clauses in contracts.
Negative perception of Cheshire Dance	1	4	4	Being made aware of stakeholder negative views Lack of take up	Seek regular feedback on profile and standards from across stakeholder groups. Monitor programme through line management and useful data.

APPENDIX 4

LET'S CREATE CONSULTATION ROADMAP - Who we are going to consult with. What we are going to do. Between Sept 2021 and Feb 2022

Key:  Consultation Meetings  Artistic Programme Lead Consultation



Appendix 5 - MAPPING OF CHESHIRE DANCE ARTISTIC PROGRAMME 22/23 AGAINST LET'S CREATE INVESTMENT PRINCIPLES

CHESHIRE DANCE ARTISTIC PROGRAMME 2022-23	INCLUSION & RELEVANCE	DYNAMISM	AMBITION & QUALITY	ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY
Regular classes - Older Adults, Disabled People, Young People	X	X	X	X
Commissions - Older Adults, Disabled People, Young People	X	X	X	
Youth Development	X	X	X	
Schools & Education	X	X	X	
Wildfire Rising with Movema	X	X	X	
Dance & people with PIMD	X	X	X	
Now Northwich	X	X	X	X
Dance & Health	X	X	X	
Investing in Freelance Artists	X	X	X	
Evaluation tool development	X	X	X	
DCNW	X	X	X	X

ANALYSIS OF CHESHIRE DANCE ARTISTIC PROGRAMME 22/23 AGAINST INVESTMENT PRINCIPLE – INCLUSION & RELEVANCE

CHESHIRE DANCE ARTISTIC PROGRAMME 2022/23	INCLUSION & RELEVANCE	Community	Workforce, Leadership & Governance	Creative Case for Diversity
Regular classes - Older Adults, Disabled People, Young People	X	x		x
Commissions - Older Adults, Disabled People, Young People	X	x		x
Youth Development	X	x		x
Schools & Education	X	x	x	x
Wildfire Rising with Movema	X	x	x	x
Dance & people with PIMD	X	x	x	x
Now Northwich	X	x	x	x
Dance & Health	X	x		x
Investing in Freelance Artists	X	x	x	x
Evaluation tool development	X	x		
DCNW	X	x	x	x