

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Urgent Business Committee
DATE	29 July 2009
CORPORATE DIRECTOR	John Tomlinson Lead for Education, Culture & Sport
TITLE OF REPORT	Grants to Cultural Organisations

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents to elected members a request for additional grant funding to the SOUND festival and an allocation of grant funding which will see Aberdeen City Council become a formal partner in the Growing Audiences North East (GANE) project.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee approves:

- a) £2,500 in additional cultural grant funding to the SOUND festival;
- b) the allocation of £10,000 to support the GANE project;
- c) in principle to allocate £10,000 per annum to GANE for a further two years subject to availability of adequate budget.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Following the approval of Cultural grants by the Resources Management Committee on March 10th 2009 (copy of paper is attached to this report) there is £21,424 remaining in the 2009/10 Cultural Grant budget.

An additional grant of £2,500 to the SOUND festival and an allocation of £10,000 to the GANE project would leave £8,924 remaining in the Cultural grant budget for this financial year. Proposals for the use of this remaining grant budget will be brought to the relevant Committee in due course.

Applicants for 09/10 grants were invited to be considered for grants of up to 50% of the costs of their projects, showing either match funding or an in kind contribution.

If the recommendations within this report are approved, the SOUND festival with a full budget of £173,660 will be delivered for a cost of £7,500 to Aberdeen City Council, ensuring Best Value.

The GANE project has committed funding of £135,000 from the Scottish Arts Council and £30,000 from Aberdeenshire Council. This report seeks approval for a £10,000 contribution from Aberdeen City Council in 2009/10 and an in principle decision to allocate £10,000 per annum for a further two years thereby matching the contribution from Aberdeenshire Council.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

There is a requirement for all successful applicants to illustrate how their projects connect to one or more of the local outcomes in the Single Outcome Agreement. The Cultural forum for Aberdeen City leads on National Outcome 13 'We take pride in a strong and inclusive national identity' with local outcome 'To maintain and develop arts and heritage activities and venues which have a positive impact on the social, economic and cultural development of the City'. The projects proposed also directly relate to local outcome 2, 'Aberdeen will have high quality employment opportunities for it's citizens' and local outcome 3 'Encourage and support people of all ages to take an active part in their own learning'.

The recommendations within this report will contribute to the following Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking commitments:

“Support arts venues to bring the best and most innovative performances to the city.”

“Continue to support the best city festivals.”

“Recognise the contribution of Sport, Culture and Arts to promoting the area as a tourist destination.”

“Recognise the role of Sport and the Arts in tackling anti-social behaviour.”

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

A Committee decision on these matters is sought before the 31st July 2009 to ensure that:

- a) the finalisation and printing of the 2009 SOUND programme at the end of July is based on confirmation of the Council's total grant allocation.
- b) the recruitment in early-to-mid August for the GANE audience development manager can be for a period of 30 months.

There are no other legal, resource, personnel, property, equipment, environmental or health and safety implications. The approval of this report will result in improved delivery of national and local Cultural objectives.

6. REPORT

6.1 SOUND

SOUND is the North East of Scotland's festival of new music. It will take place for the fifth year in a row from 28th October to 22nd November 2009. SOUND aims to make new and contemporary music more accessible to audiences of all ages and backgrounds by presenting an eclectic but broad range of music – classical, traditional, popular, jazz and experimental. Participation is ensured through workshops and talks in addition to concerts that secure attendance. The Festivals intention is to find ways of developing musical awareness and the desire to take creative risks.

In 2008 SOUND worked with 34 partners, including four local music societies, two local music schools, the University of Aberdeen, Woodend Arts Association, Interesting Music promotions, dancelive, Peacock Visual Arts, Jazz Aberdeen and many others. In 2008 they achieved 28 articles in the national press as well as radio coverage on BBC Radio Scotland and BBC Radios 2 and 3.

The principal aim of SOUND is to benefit the population of Aberdeen and the North East of Scotland, by giving them access to new music events otherwise only available in the Central belt and beyond, widening horizons, encouraging creativity and participation. SOUND attracts 7,000 participants per year, including over 1,000 children and young people.

The recommendation to the Resources Management Committee on 10 March 2009 was for a £5,000 grant. This level of funding was considered to be appropriate and was assumed to be equivalent funding to that provided in 2008/09. However, the report contained an error in that the 2008/09 allocation was detailed as £5,000 as opposed to the actual £10,000 as was approved by committee on 22 April 2008.

Following the approval of £5,000 at Resources Management Committee on 10 March 2009 (as per attached report), SOUND volunteers requested that their application be reconsidered as the grant of £5,000 allocated represented a 50% reduction to their allocation in 2008/9. As a result officers met with SOUND in May 2009 and requested that the work of the organisation be considered more fully in terms of the SOA outcomes required of Cultural grant holders. Assurances were received that this evidence would be provided and officers agreed to seek consideration of an additional grant of £2,500. Specifically, the additional £2,500 grant requested would be allocated towards SOUND's overall venue and technical hire budget.

If Committee approves the additional £2,500, SOUND will be required to provide additional supporting information in their grant feedback report to evidence the impact on SOA outcomes, and detailed statistical information.

The festival's programme goes to print at the end of July, therefore confirmation of the total level of funding available is desirable to minimise risks associated with having to potentially make changes and reductions to the programme after

publication. This would have implications on the festival's reputation and credibility with artists, venues and audiences as well as potentially affecting the flexible funding agreement in place with the Scottish Arts Council.

6.2 Growing Audiences North East (GANE)

Following on from the establishment of two audience development agencies, The Audience Business (TAB) in Edinburgh and Glasgow Grows Audiences (GGA), the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) commissioned work to recommend two other geographical areas in Scotland that would benefit from the introduction of an audience development initiative. This work recommended the North East and East of Scotland on the basis of existing arts provision, known attendance patterns and population numbers. SAC has allocated £270,000 to be shared equally between the North East and East i.e. £135,000 allocated to the North East.

The GANE initiative has been established in the North East and its primary objective is to help cultural organisations and creative individuals across the region increase audiences for their activities. The project aims to open the cultural doors to all and allow for both cultural groups and the city's residents to benefit from increased participation in the arts.

The project is managed by HI~Arts, the arts development agency for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, who have significant experience in the delivery of training and coordination of marketing activity in the north of Scotland. The project currently has a project officer to develop the project and is seeking to appoint an audience development manager in 2009 to take the initiative forward.

This post is scheduled to commence in October and the recruitment process will involve advertising the post in early to mid August. Confirmation of whether Aberdeen City Council will contribute to this project is required prior to the advertisement being placed, as the funding directly affects the duration of contract affordable (without Aberdeen City Council funding, the duration of the post would require to be of 18 months duration rather than the desired 30 month contract). It is anticipated that the duration of the contract will directly affect the quality of applicant attracted to the post, even if that duration was later increased due to a later Aberdeen City Council decision.

GANE will provide an extensive development and consultancy service for cultural organisations and individual practitioners. This will include an annual series of training roadshows, individual consultancy and computer software to develop systems geared around improving various factors involved in increasing audiences. Specifically the project will seek to improve collaboration between Cultural organisations in terms of sharing knowledge and resources to help meet mutually beneficial objectives.

A Steering Group comprising a range of the north east's cultural organisations is overseeing the project, including *Aberdeen Performing Arts, North East Arts Touring (NEAT), Peacock Visual Arts, Puppet Animation Scotland, University of*

Aberdeen, Banchory's Woodend Barn, as well as officers from Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council.

Currently Aberdeenshire Council has committed £10,000 per year, over three years, to facilitate the roll out of the infrastructure required to develop a sustainable audience development model in the North East of Scotland. As a key stakeholder, it is recommended that Aberdeen City Council provide an equivalent amount to the project from the Cultural Grants budget.

7. AUTHORISED SIGNATURE

John Tomlinson
Corporate Director, Lead for Education, Culture & Sport
jtomlinson@aberdeencity.gov.uk, 01224 814500

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Gary Cameron
Culture and Leisure Strategy Officer
gcameron@aberdeencity.gov.uk, 01224 814627

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Grants to Cultural Organisations 2009/10 - Resources Management Committee –
10/3/2009
Grants to Cultural Organisations 2008/09 – Resources Management Committee
– 22/4/08