

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education, Culture and Sport
DATE	7 th June 2012
ACTING DIRECTOR	Patricia Cassidy
TITLE OF REPORT	Mary Garden Fund 2012/13
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/12/020

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report brings to the attention of the Committee a proposal from the Aberdeen International Youth Festival (AIYF) in relation to the Mary Garden Fund which is already agreed within the Common Good Fund budget. Up to five fully funded placements will be funded from the Mary Garden fund to local young singers, subject to application and audition.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee agrees the AIYF proposal to use the Mary Garden Fund to support up to five young promising singers from Aberdeen to attend an opera residency.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The allocation towards the Mary Garden Fund within the Common Good fund is £1,500. There are no other financial implications.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional legal, resource, personnel, property, equipment, environmental or health and safety implications arising from this report at this time.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Within the Common Good fund, £1,500 is allocated to the 'Mary Garden Opera Fund'. In 2009, following Resources Management approval, the fund was utilised by AIYF for the first time in a number of years. Previously, and more traditionally, it was used as a cash award and for a

silver medallion which was presented to outstanding opera singers at AIYF.

5.1 The AIYF and Mary Garden Opera Fund partnership aims to:

- Provide the young students with a range of artistically challenging and creatively rewarding opportunities.
- Explore ways of making opera more accessible and to produce high quality performance opportunities for a range of audiences.
- Provide vocal and technical workshops for both student participants, the general public and local young singers.

5.2 Report back on 2011 Activity

In 2011, with the support of the Mary Garden fund, AIYF were able to accommodate 5 full placements to local students. This included expert tuition from senior Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (RSAMD) musicians and directors and with local and internationally acclaimed opera singer Lisa Milne, including bespoke sessions for this particular group. Further to this the participants were given the opportunity to be part of productions during the residency period, such as working with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra at the Proms in London. All the singers received a certification of award for their participation.

The placement student element has now become an important part of the project for a number of reasons that go beyond just enabling young singers to experience the opportunity of working in this intense way.

- It challenges the young singers from RSAMD
- It keeps the project fresh and outward looking and more than a change of scenery for the RSAMD performers and staff
- It allows more variety in the programming
- It offers more contact for AIYF to the local education and music sectors

It builds another key relationship with the University of Aberdeen Music department through the Opera society

5.3 2012 Proposal

For 2012 AIYF propose to continue the work they have developed to date and the Mary Garden fund will support

- 5 Subsidised placements to local singers, subject to application and audition.
- Expert tuition for the placement singers from the senior Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.
- Opportunities to be part of productions as part of the residency programme.

- A certificate and award memento in recognition of their participation
- Opportunities to see other festival shows
- Subsistence for the period of the residency

5.4 Promotion of the residencies

The Opera and Song residency will be promoted through a number of formal and informal sectors including:

- The University of Aberdeen Music department including the Opera Society
- North East Scotland Music School
- Aberdeen City Music School
- The Instrumental Music service manager, and through the school music service
- Private schools and singing teachers
- Creative cultures and Aberdeen City websites
- AIYF website
- General press release.

6. IMPACT

The proposal will involve up to five placements being made available to young people from the City to participate in a residency, with expert tuition and opportunities to perform during the Youth Festival. The Mary Garden Fund supports the delivery of Single Outcome Agreement National Outcome13: 'We take pride in a strong and inclusive national identity'. The project proposed also directly relate to strands of the following Local and National Outcomes:

Outcome 3, 'People of all ages take an active part in their own learning to achieve their full potential' and 'Learning and training is appropriate and accessible to learner's needs.

Additionally, the initiative relates to both local outcomes for National Outcome 4, 'Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens', and Outcome 12, 'Aberdeen is widely recognised as a City with high quality natural assets, biodiversity, architecture and heritage which instill civic pride.'

The Aberdeen City Cultural strategy, 'Vibrant Aberdeen' has five objectives:

- Establish a cohesive cultural sector.
- Increase community engagement in cultural activity.
- Improve the city's cultural profile.
- Increase investment in culture.

- Effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of culture.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Mary Garden Opera Fund Resources Management Committee 050509
Mary Garden Opera Fund Finance and Resources Committee 060510
Mary Garden Opera Fund Education, Culture & Sport Committee 240311

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Mark Bremner
Cultural Policy and Partnership Officer
markbremner@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 523805