

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education, Culture and Sport
DATE	8 October 2009
DIRECTOR	Annette Bruton
TITLE OF REPORT	Future plans for Reading Bus Project
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/09/040

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Committee Meeting on 28th April welcomed the achievements of the Reading Bus team during the three year pilot project in the St Machar Community and instructed officers to report back with options for developing and sustaining the work of The Reading Bus.
- 1.2 The external evaluation by the University of Aberdeen, January 2009, highlights the significant impact on pupils, teachers and parents in relation to achieving the aims set out by the project. This report builds on the considerable successes of the three year pilot project and expands on the outcomes from the research that relate directly to the Curriculum for Excellence and make a significant contribution to informing the development and roll out of the Aberdeen Learning Strategy.
- 1.3 This report provides Members with options for developing and sustaining the work of The Reading Bus. This work will be crucial to ensuring that education provision in Aberdeen City Council fully integrates best practice underpinning the Curriculum for Excellence across the city.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 Continues to support Aberdeen City Council's flagship Reading Bus by considering options that will sustain the work developed in the St Machar Community as well as the roll out of the core programme to the regeneration areas of Northfield and Torry, noting that that the funding is subject to the budget review process that will follow this committee cycle
- 2.2 Considers the development and extension of the following entrepreneurial and self-funding strands, which are dependent on the core programme being in place:
 - expansion of Reading Radio, the broadcasting programme developed in partnership with Station House Media Unit

- establishment of a high quality specialist film studio, building on the pioneering film work already delivered
- expansion of Reading Bus Press, the in-house publishing company established by The Reading Bus as an income generating strand

2.3 recommends in principle that The Reading Bus project is mainstreamed with plans to expand, thus adding value to other communities, but that the funding is subject to the budget review process that will follow this committee cycle.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Over the three year pilot programme, core funding from Aberdeen City Council has been **£205,000** (including contribution to build and conversion of Bus)

Over the three year pilot programme additional funds has been raised from funding applications and income generation totally over **£476,800** (including build and conversion of Bus) Appendix A

		Core Funding from ACC	External Funding
2005/2006	Purchase, & Conversion of Bus	22000	128000
2006/2007		33000	95000
2007/2008		50000	76800
2008/2009		50000	82000
2009/2010		50000	95000 (projected)
	Total	205000	Total 476800

The Reading Bus would now like to build on the successful track record of funding applications and income generating strategies to expand and roll out the programme across the City.

This will need a commitment of funding.

3.2 Capital Costs already met
 Reading Bus – Cost £150,000, in place
 Office in Kittybrewster Primary School, in place

3.3 Revenue Costs for Core Strand

Option 1 – Expand and Add Value

	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Core Funding requested from ACC	£100,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000
Estimated Income Generated	£100,000	£150,000	£200,000	£200,000

Option 1 will require a substantial injection of money during 2010/2011. However once the post of Full Time Project Manager and Part Time Fundraiser are in place the commitment from Aberdeen City Council will return to £50,000 per annum. Initially the post of Fundraiser will be for a fixed term of 51 weeks. This option will allow The Reading Bus project to be sustained in the St Machar Community as well as being rolled out to Torry and Northfield Communities. It will also allow the three additional entrepreneurial and self-funding strands of Reading Radio, Film Studio and Reading Bus Press to be developed.

Appendix B – Option 1

Option 2 – Sustain Current Level

	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Core Funding requested from ACC	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000
Estimated Income Generated	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000

Option 2 will allow the Reading Bus to operate at the existing level with a part time Project Manager. It will allow the Reading Bus to either sustain the work in the St Machar Community or for the project to be rolled out to Torry or Northfield. Because of the lack of man power there will be limited scope to develop the three additional entrepreneurial and self-funding strands of Reading Radio, Film Studio and Reading Bus Press and income generating opportunities will be decreased.

Appendix B – Option 2

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

The proposal sits with the vision in the Community Plan to develop Aberdeen as a 'City of Learning'.

The proposal supports the vision of Aberdeen as a City of Learning with an emphasis on delivering social inclusion.

The project supports the commitment of Aberdeen City Council to providing equal opportunities for all children and young people.

The project aims to raise standards in core skills of literacy and supports family Learning.

The project fully supports the Aberdeen Learning Strategy, in particular :

Priority 1 – Curriculum for Excellence

Priority 3 – Working together

Priority 5 – Technology

Priority 8 – Learning in the wider Community

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Risk Analysis

Nature of Risk	Likelihood	Severity of Risk	Risk Mitigation
Failure to accrue the external project funding	Low	Medium	a) reduce Core Programme b) seek funds from existing resources in Education, Culture and Sport

6. REPORT

6.1 The proposal is to extend and financially support Aberdeen City's core Reading Bus programme by sustaining the work already developed in the St Machar Community as well as rolling the programme out to the regeneration areas of Northfield and Torry. This work will be underpinned by a city wide staff training programme to ensure improved learning is sustained. This will build on the work which has gained considerable national and international recognition and will include the selling of tool kits already developed. Key areas for development will include:

- expanding pioneering work with parents and families through key initiatives including: *Reading is Fundamental; What Motivates Boys to Read; Reading Champions in the Community* in partnership with CRIS: *City Libraries and Adult, Family and Community Learning;*

- expanding core programme in schools to meet aspirations of the literacy of strand of A Curriculum for Excellence through working in partnership with staff in schools and professional storytellers, poets, authors, artists and health partners;
- expanding after school and summer holiday programme delivering aspirational courses in partnership with Community Learning; and
- expanding staff training and tool kits already established and highly commended both at city wide level. There will be an emphasis on Broadcasting, Film Animation, Storytelling, Language across the Arts, Scots Language in the Classroom. We propose to market these initiatives to other local authorities. More detail is set out at Appendix C.

6.2 Consideration could also be given to the development and extension of the following entrepreneurial and self-funding strands. These would build on the core programme:

6.2.1 Expansion of Reading Radio, the broadcasting programme developed in partnership with Station House Media Unit. This work has been highlighted as an example of cutting edge practice by HMIE and is showcased on their website, Journey to Excellence. Funding application has been made to *Children in Need* for a dedicated radio worker to build and expand programme with a dedicated radio worker to target Primary 7 / Secondary 1 pupils across St Machar, Northfield and Torry with training at a city wide level. This initiative will be expanded to include work with families, after school and community groups. More detail is set out at Appendix D.

6.2.2 Proposal to seek external funds to establish a high quality specialist Film Studio. This work will build on the highly successful programme of digi blue films already in place as well as the exceptional and pioneering work already delivered in partnership with Station House Media Unit in creating high quality animated films. This work will be showcased at the Scottish Learning Festival in September 2009. The creation of a Film Studio will target regeneration areas across the city but will also be a valued city wide learning hub. providing life-long learning opportunities both for school and community learners. An in-house comprehensive programme of training for staff working with young people will be integral to this proposal to ensure sustainable learning and teaching. Detail at Appendix E.

6.2.3 Expansion of Reading Bus Press, the in-house publishing company established by The Reading Bus, as a self-generating strand. This will build on the enormous success of producing high quality commercial publications that have a dual role as key tools for use in classrooms and community settings as well as generating income. Reading Bus Press also has a very successful programme of publishing children's work. Detail set out at Appendix F.

6.4 The outcomes from the research, January 2009, relate directly to Curriculum for Excellence and have the potential to contribute significantly to the development and roll out of the City's learning strategy.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

A folder containing further background information about The Reading Bus project is available in the Members' Library

An Interim Evaluation of the Reading Bus Project (2006 – 2008) University of Aberdeen's External Evaluation January 2009

The Aberdeen Reading Bus – Journey to Excellence" (2008) Jenny Watson, Education in the North-East

Education and Leisure Committee 24th April 2007 Interim progress report on the Reading Bus
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=9161&sID=46>
34

Breakdown of Funding

	Core Funding from ACC	External Funding
2005/2006 Purchase, Conversion of Reading Bus	22000	128000
2006/2007	33000	95000
2007/2008	50000	76800
2008/2009	50000	82000
2009/2010	50000	95000 projected
Total	205000	Total 476800

Breakdown of External Funding

Local Business / Industry	178000
Grant Applications	284000
Income Generation	14,800
Total	476800

Additional Strands - Anticipated Sponsorship

Film Studio

Pledges of £20,000 from two International Companies
Additional funding to be sourced from variety of local business, industry and grant applications

Bus Stop Press

Anticipated income generated from publications during 2009/2010 is estimated at £20,000
This will be reinvested in future publications

Reading Radio

Application with Charity organisation seeking funds for £90,000 for funding for a three year dedicated Radio Worker

The Reading Bus Proposed Budget 2010 - 2011

Revenue Costs - Salaries - to be met from Core Funding from ACC

Post	FTE	Salary	Salary pro rata	Superann and NI	Salary - (S & NI)	Total per annum
Project Manager	1	44000	44000	12188	56188	56188
Administrator	0.5	992	992	3063	26021	13010
Fundraiser	0.6	35000	21000	6468	27468	27468
Bus Driver	10 hours per week		3650			3650
Total						100316

Running Costs - Others - to be met from External Funds

Admin Costs	8000
Running Costs for Bus and Transport Costs	9000
Storytellers, Authors, Poets, Artists	26000
Resources, including books, IT equipment, posters	12000
Publicity, Printing Costs, Production of Books	16000
Exhibitions, Seminars, Launches	8,000
Development of online resources, both for Reading Bus and website	6,000
Research	15,000
Total	100000

The financial commitment from Aberdeen City Council will decrease after 2010 / 2011 to £50,000

The Reading Bus Proposed Budget 2010 - 2011

Revenue Costs - Salaries - to be met from Core Funding from ACC

Post	FTE	Salary	Salary pro rata	Superann and NI	Salary - (S & NI)	Total per annum
Project Manager	0.5	22000	22000	6094	29094	28094
Administrator	0.5	992	992	3063	26021	13010
Bus Driver	10 hours per week		3650			3650
Total						44754

Running Costs - Others - to be met partly from ACC but mainly from External Funds

Admin Costs	4000
Running Costs for Bus and Transport Costs	9000
Storytellers, Authors, Poets, Artists	15000
Resources, including books, IT equipment, posters	6000
Publicity, Printing Costs, Production of Books	5000
Exhibitions, Seminars, Launches	4,000
Development of online resources, both for Reading Bus and website	3,000
Research	4,000
Total	50000

The Reading Bus



Core Programme – A Journey to Excellence

Background

The Reading Bus provides a context for innovative practice that promotes and develops children's literacy. The context it provides is different from that provided by a school. It therefore opens up possibilities for new and different arrangements for learning which relate both to school and to the children's home and community. Not all work is carried out physically on the Bus – rather the Bus, with its principles and philosophy, creates a range of activities which actually take place in a variety of settings in school and in the community.

Proposals

To sustain the programme in the St Machar ASG and to roll out the core programme to Northfield ASG and Torry ASG. This will include the

- Further programme onboard The Reading Bus including Storytelling, Read Together, Puppet Work, Reading Champions and Author / Poet visits
- expansion of Reading is Fundamental programme to work with additional 50 families in each neighbourhood
- building of partnerships with Family Learning, Adult Learning, Community and Health Partners to target vulnerable families by regular Reading Bus visits in the community
- roll out of Scots Dimension using resources already established including the books published, animated films created and Doric section on Reading Bus website
- introduction of Abertoun, the virtual town created on GLOW to each of the new schools
- expansion of after school sessions to include aspirational courses in broadcasting, storytelling and film animation
- further development of research and evaluation

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

To expand the programme at a city wide level meeting aspirations of the Curriculum for Excellence to include

- city wide CPD sessions on broadcasting, film animation, Scots Dimension, storytelling, literacy and arts
- teacher exchange of knowledge models to cascade skills developed amongst teachers currently working with The Reading Bus across the City
- cascading models of excellence developed through the heritage lottery funded programme "A Journey Through Old Aberdeen"
- expansion of teacher resources and CPD using Scots dimension at local and national level
- further development of online resources both on The Reading Bus Website and on GLOW at a local and national level
- expansion of national profile of presenting at conferences
- sharing of research at local, national and international level

The Reading Bus

Reading Radio – Broadcasting Strand

Background

The Reading Bus, in partnership with Station House Media Unit has a track record of delivering a highly successful programme, Reading Radio, across the St Machar Community working with Primary 7, Secondary 1 classes as well as after school clubs.

This work has been highlighted as cutting edge practise by HMIE and a video showcasing the excellent practise is on the Journey to Excellence website. The work delivers the aspirations of the Curriculum for Excellence. The programme has included a successful programme of CPD for teachers.

Proposal

In partnership with Station House Media Unit, the Reading Bus will now seek funding from Children In Need for a dedicated Radio Worker to extend the excellent practice already established.

A comprehensive programme will be developed to include

- a programme across Primary 7 and Secondary 1 classes in St Machar, Northfield and Torry in partnership with teachers and schools. This will include the classes preparing, recording, editing and presenting their own live radio shows on SHMU 99.8 FM
- particularly targeting youngsters at risk of early failure and providing opportunities to widen their horizons and aspirations through engaging and empowering them in authentic projects with tangible outcomes and fully meeting the aspirations of the Curriculum for Excellence
- extending the programme to work with parents from the targeted neighbourhoods in creating their own radio shows
- extending the CPD programme for staff working with young people to provide sustainable learning
- extending after school sessions and school holiday programmes for youngsters as well as a programme for adults
- developing meaningful partnership links between youngsters, education providers and the business world

The Reading Bus

Film Studio

Background

The dynamic work already pioneered by The Reading Bus and Station House Media Unit proves that we support young people to make exceptional work and in doing so to expand their horizons. This work offers even the most disadvantaged youngsters the opportunity to improve their quality of life, divert them from becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour and to contribute to their local community by developing sustainable life skills.

Proposal

The Reading Bus has recently received two extremely attractive proposals from two international companies.

In partnership with Station House Media Unit, the Reading Bus would like to propose harmonising these two proposals and seeking additional funds to establish a high quality specialist centre, A Film Animation Studio. This will be located in a central location and be staffed by a team of professional artists including storytellers, artists, musicians, writers and animators. The Studio will target regeneration areas but will also be a valued city wide resource providing opportunities for all citizens of all ages.

A comprehensive programme will be developed to include:

- opportunities to widen the horizons and aspirations of youngsters at risk of early failure; engaging and empowering them in authentic projects with tangible outcomes and fully meeting the aspirations of the Curriculum for Excellence
- working with 16 – 19 year olds, particularly in the MCMC group; providing training, skills and vocational courses as well as opportunities to mentor and support younger students
- developing a comprehensive CPD programme for staff working with young people to provide sustainable learning
- after school sessions and school holiday programmes for youngsters as well as a programme for adults
- developing meaningful partnership links between youngsters, education providers and the business world
- showcasing the work at regular film premieres at community and city wide venues
- developing social enterprise opportunities with the business world to generate additional income

The Reading Bus

Reading Bus Press

Background

The Reading Bus has established its own in house publishing company. Over the last two years ten books have been published. Seven of these have been children's illustrated books of writing or poetry and three have been commercial publications.

Commercial Publications

Fit Like, Yer Majesty? and Nae Bad Ava! are both Doric anthologies of verse. They serve two purposes; firstly as a curriculum resource for schools and pre-school establishments in helping to deliver the Curriculum for Excellence, and secondly they aim to bring enjoyment and pleasure to a wide range of readers. The books are complemented by comprehensive series of learning experiences. These innovative approaches use a variety of tools including storytelling, film animation, broadcasting, dramatisation and film making. These resources are available on The Reading Bus website and have been shared with teaching staff at a variety of in-service sessions both in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

Fit's for Supper? was launched at the Royal Highland Show on 25th June 2009. This cookery book aims to empower youngsters to have a go at cooking simple, healthy dishes with a Scottish flavour.

Children's Books

Using funding from a variety of sources including sponsorship from Shell U.K. Limited and funding from Heritage Lottery Fund a series of books have been published by pupils. The pupils have worked with a team of professional artists to create, write, illustrate and publish their own high quality books. These books have also been created as resources for schools in meeting the aspirations of the Curriculum for Excellence and are webmounted.

Future

Two commercial books are at the planning phase

- Eat More Fish! Sponsorship is being sought from Scottish Government and from Seafood Scotland
- Dreams and Aspirations – anthology of writing from 8 different schools, in partnership with University of Aberdeen and funded by Taqa
- Abertoun – anthology of Doric verse by children with the poetry generated from the creation of the virtual town on Glow – city wide initiative

Four more children's books are in process through funding from Heritage Lottery Fund. Plans to build on the strength of good practice established and to expand both the commercial