

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	6 March 2013
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Executive
TITLE OF REPORT	UK City of Culture 2017 Outline Bid

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report sets out the proposed arrangements for the submission of Aberdeen City Councils UK City of Culture 2017 outline bid, and the requirements for Aberdeen City Council to act as financial guarantor for the City of Culture bid programme.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Council:

- (a) Approves delegated powers for the Chief Executive and the Director of Education, Culture and Sport to approve and submit the outline bid, in order to meet the DCMS (Department of Culture, Media and Sport) deadline of 30th April.
- (b) Refers the requirement for the Council to act as financial guarantor to the Finances and Resources Committee on 25th April 2013 for approval subject to the additional investment identified in the outline bid.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

On 13th June 2012, Council approved revenue expenditure of £149,620 in 2012/13 and £392,370 in 2013/14 in support of the development of a bid for UK City of Culture 2017. The report also identified the following:

Additional support

- Dedicated staff time to support the bid team as required across the directorates.
- The existing contribution to culture and sport commissioned services and staff time.
- The current Council investment in cultural and sports grants valued at £479,029 in 2011/12 will support the community based cultural organisations to achieve the step change required.

External support

- Previous bidding cities have received additional support from their respective national tourism and events bodies: research suggests that this may be the case for Aberdeen bidding for the UK City of Culture 2017 title.

- External staff and in kind support from cultural partners in Scotland's cities, the local Universities, the national performing companies and local cultural organisations.
- The bid development team includes an officer with a specific remit to raise funds from external partners to support the bid development and programme.

The estimated costs of delivering a UK City of Culture programme in 2017 will be included in the draft initial bid which is currently being developed by the recently appointed Bid manager and UK City of Culture staff team.

Creative Scotland has committed additional financial support of £250,000 to support the City's placemaking aspirations: this will complement the development of a bid. This funding will also support the current Cultural Asset mapping work commissioned by the Council.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications are outlined in section 5.4 of the report.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Council approval

- 5.1.1 On 13th June 2012 Council approved a series of recommendations with regard to a bid for UK City of Culture 2017, to be submitted by Aberdeen City Council. The report highlighted the benefits to be gained from the bidding process, and the likely requirement that a bid should be led, coordinated and submitted by Aberdeen City Council to meet the requirements of the DCMS (Department of Culture, Media and Sport)

5.2 Timescales and Guidelines

- 5.2.1 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) released the guidelines and timescales for the UK City of Culture 2017 bidding process on the 22nd January. The timescales are more condensed than anticipated, and differ from the 2013 bidding process. The timetable reads as follows:

28 February 2013:	Deadline to register interest
30 April 2013:	Initial bid application
May 2013:	Clarification questions and meetings with expert assessors
June 2013:	Shortlisted cities announced
30 September 2013:	Final bid (shortlisted cities only)
October 2013;	Clarification questions and meetings with expert assessors
November 2013;	Winner announced

The shorter timescale has been put forward by the DCMS to ensure that bidding cities do not have to commit all the associated expenditure prior to being shortlisted. The guidelines do however acknowledge that additional resources are required to submit a proposal and that they will be looking for

'proposals that can be developed and delivered whether as a UK City of Culture or as a close runner up'

The timescales pose a challenge for Aberdeen City Council in respect of the need to submit a bid by the deadline of midnight of 30th April. With the next Council meeting on 1 May 2013, it is proposed that the outline bid be approved by the Chief Executive and the Director of Education and Sport, to ensure the deadline is met, and the time to prepare the bid is maximised. Whilst acknowledging the tight timescale, the DCMS have advised that local authorities should plan on the basis of the published timescales, with deadlines extended only if there are clear benefits to do so for ALL the bidding cities.

The outline bid consists of a 30 page document with weighted questions and a requirement for additional appended information. The bid guidance is appended to this report.

5.3 Progress to date

5.3.1 On Wednesday 20th February Aberdeen City Council announced the bid team who will work with existing Council officers under the Head of Service, Communities, Culture and Sport to deliver the bid for UK City of Culture. The team consists of: Rita Stephen, Bid Manager; Ektor Tsatsoulis, Bid Co-ordinator; Andrew Learmonth, Marketing and Communications Officer; and Richard Stewart, Funding and International Officer. The team has an excellent track record of working with partners to plan and deliver large scale projects and events. Good progress is being made with all aspects of the work needed to deliver the bid timeously. Programmes of community engagement are being planned for the first and second stages. The Bid Board, consisting of senior representatives from the key partners met on 20th February, and the UK City of Culture Sub committee is now established.

5.4 The financial requirements of a bid for UK City of Culture

5.4.1 The bid guidance for UK City of Culture has a number of requirements outlined with assessment criteria and indicative scores. In addition to an outline of the year of Culture programme, information is requested on the funding and budget attributed to the year (Part C.3). Whilst the guidance does not specify the amount of new investment (over and above the City Council's current expenditure on cultural activity) there is an expectation that there will be some additional funding provided to support revenue programmes. This will come from a variety of sources, public and private, both local and national. The DCMS acknowledge at this stage it is not possible to specify in detail either the sources of funding or a defined budget. However, there is a specific requirement in the documentation to indicate the financial guarantor for the UK City of Culture programme,

As the outline programme is developed, the financial requirements will become clearer, and will be available to support the decision of the Finance and Resources Committee on 25th April, a week prior to the submission of the bid.

6. IMPACT

This report relates to 'Aberdeen – the Smarter City'

- We will improve access to and increase participation in arts and culture by providing opportunities for citizens and visitors to experience a broad range of high quality arts and cultural activities
- We aspire to be recognised as a City of Culture, a place of excellence for culture and arts by promoting Aberdeen as a cultural centre hosting high quality and diverse cultural events for the whole community and beyond

The scope of this opportunity encompasses culture in its widest sense, including Arts, Sports, Technology, Education, Tourism and heritage.

The report links to Outcome 13 in the Single Outcome Agreement – 'We will take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity'

The development of the bid will provide opportunities for community engagement with schools and communities to enable citizens to actively shape what the City of Culture can mean for them. This will provide opportunities for innovative approaches to budgeting and decision making to transform local communities. This will link to the city's Learning Strategy, support the experiences and outcomes of the Curriculum for Excellence and impact on the outcomes of the city's Anti-poverty strategy.

The report also has a significant impact on our ability to support the delivery of the city's Cultural Strategy, 'Vibrant Aberdeen'. This strategy is aspirational in its outlook, ambitious in its plans for improving the cultural life of the City, and the social and economic benefits associated with the arts and cultural activity. The strategy enhances the city's strong cultural tradition and develops the cultural life and tourism for the benefit of practitioners, residents and visitors.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

UK City of Culture, Education, Culture and Sport Committee 24th November 2009

UK City of Culture 2017, Council, 13th June 2012

UK City of Culture 2017, Guidance for Bidding Cities, DCMS, 22 January 2013

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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