

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	2 June 2016
DIRECTOR	Gayle Gorman
TITLE OF REPORT	Culture Programme 2016/17
REPORT NUMBER	ECS/16/024
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to request approval for the 2016/17 culture programme, and the partnership and contractual arrangements proposed in the body of the report. The report also provides details of the priorities and objectives which underpin this investment, to support the delivery of a targeted number of events and activities aiming to improve Aberdeen's cultural sector.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Committee is requested to:

1. Agree as detailed in the body of this report the proposed themes, budget allocations and processes for Aberdeen's 2016/17 culture programme; and
2. Note as specified in the body of this report the benefits of this programme to the city and how it supports the strategic priorities of the Council.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All of the proposed investment programmes will be met from existing budget lines and there are no additional financial implications resulting from this report. Significant additional funds brought in to increase the value of the Council's allocations.

Officers of Education and Children's Services have consulted with Legal and Commercial and Procurement Services with regard to specific budget allocations that required consideration in terms of EU state aid rules and procurement legislation.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The Legal and Commercial and Procurement Services will be required to help scope and agree the commissions, and resulting contracts. Officers of Education and Children's Services have sought prior advice on the requirement for competitive processes when services are being purchased to assist with delivering the programme.

Officers of Education and Children's Services shall work closely with the Head of Communications and Promotions in the Office of the Chief Executive to ensure the culture programme provides an effective platform for the city's aspirations to develop a high quality events programme. Officers in Education and Children's Services and in the Office of the Chief Executive (City Events) manage the commissioning process and subsequent programme.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Following the city's bid to become UK City of Culture 2017, the Council publically committed to deliver a step change in cultural activity and infrastructure over the period up till 2018/19. During the bid process, staff and partner organisations identified a number of projects, themes and high level objectives which would support the city's ambitions for culture. These are key elements of a 'step change' in developing longer term cultural opportunities, which, as well as delivering the lasting change to make the city ready to bid for future accolades, delivers significant elements of the City Centre masterplan, as follows:

1. 'Changing Perceptions –promoting the view of Aberdeen as an energetic, inclusive and fascinating place'
- 8 'Culturally distinctive' – ensuring the city centre reflects its distinctive local culture so it is like no other place.

The Strategic Infrastructure Plan identifies key infrastructure projects which will make a significant contribution to the development of the city, including spaces and places for the cultural life of the city to grow and flourish; it also identified some of the key barriers to growth, including 'Attracting workers and visitors, and marketing of the city image' as being essential for the future sustainability of the city.

The consultants who managed the bid process on behalf of the DCMS said of Aberdeen:

'Aberdeen has great potential in terms of its potential resources and the significant interest that private and public partners have in upping Aberdeen's game. However, this bid does not deliver the quality and vision and assurance of deliverability. There is great potential from this bid to take forward development of its cultural offer, and deliver relationships with business sponsors'.

In summer 2014, RGU launched a policy paper 'Creating a New North' which identified an opportunity for organisations in the North East to work together to develop a new cultural narrative locally. The paper stated:

'What is required now is the development of a coherent vision (for culture) that a range of individuals and organisations can rally round and contribute to'

5.1 Key achievements to date

The Council has made important and progressive steps to develop the cultural profile and programming of the city. As well as the commitment to the Culture programme, which includes 'SPECTRA' the Festival of Light, this includes the redevelopment of the City's Art Gallery, Aberdeen Treasure Hub, the Museum's Collection Centre and Music Hall, 'Big Noise Torry' the El Sistema initiative, the opening of an artist's studio (with over 20 spaces for artists), the Anatomy Rooms and the establishment of Aberdeen Festivals in Visit Aberdeenshire, the strategic cultural tourism partnership within the regional destination marketing body. March saw the premier of GRANITE, a major partnership performance at Marischal Quad with the National Theatre of Scotland which sold out in the first few days of ticket sales.

<p>Spectra Aberdeen's Festival of Light</p>	<p>Granite A production by National Theatre of Scotland; 'The story of Aberdeen told by the people of Aberdeen'</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.5m total reach on Facebook and Twitter • 9,250 visitors in 2015: 35,000 in 2016 <p><i>'Congratulations! The Festival of Light was brilliant in more ways than one. It was enjoyed by all of our family from grandparents down to our three year old grandson. The inclusion of Marischal College was a brilliant idea. Well done!</i></p> <p><i>'Not often I praise ACC but 10/10 for this. Must be good for the city'</i> (Visitors comments)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,193 audience members over 3 nights <p><i>'...bringing together community and professional theatremakers, present and future artists, the vital story of a city and all the resources of a national theatre, to produce something beautiful, unique and full of transforming creative power'</i> (The Scotsman)</p>
<p>Aberdeen Festivals A collective of ten of the city's festivals working collaboratively to enhance and promote the city's festivals'</p>	<p>The Anatomy Rooms A new art and design studio facility housing creative practitioners, events and performances</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional £1.6 million of output created through festivals. Overall festival audience numbers increased • Private sponsorship and Visit Scotland Growth funding secured • First ever national and international marketing campaign launched to grow wider audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,300 visitors to the space since October 2015 • 20 artists housed • 2700 visitors during the four days of Spectra • 18 events, talks and workshops since October 2015 <p><i>"I have struggled since graduating from Gray's 10 years ago to have the head space and physical space to make new work. It found it impossible to find a studio in Aberdeen and I felt demoralised. This has now all changed!- I feel much more energised - and that's all thanks to the Anatomy Rooms project"</i></p>

<p>Creative Funding A dedicated fund to support individual makers and artists as well as community and voluntary groups to develop creative projects.</p>	<p>Big Noise Torry An inspiring and intensive orchestra programme supporting permanent social change in Torry</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 projects supported • Generated an additional £900,000 of creative activity (additional investment attracted): • 10,000 participants: • 500,000 audience members: • 1,000 volunteers: • 13,000 volunteer hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big Noise programme in Torry has been overwhelmingly positive with encouraging feedback from the community. • Children's uptake for the delivery of the programme remains extremely high (over 65% of available uptake). • Big Noise Torry participates in additional community engagement, including “take a musician home for tea”, parent/child lessons in holiday clubs, musicians performing at local care homes, and giving 1:1 lessons to children who require additional or specialist support. • The programme is inclusive, with a high level of ongoing participation from P3 children, and it continues to welcome new and returning participants.

5.2 Proposed culture programme 2016/17

Theme	Project	Funding	Process	Activity
Placemaking	Creative Spaces/Make	£75,000	Open application/contract with RGU	Contract for MAKE and awards scheme for small creative businesses
	Youth Arts Collective	£50,000	Partner project – Culture Network	Activities to support young people into the creative industries
	Aberdeen Festivals	£50,000	Partner project – Visit Aberdeenshire	Festivals collective funding – Marketing and promotion of festivals offer
	Made in Aberdeen- artists commissions	£20,000	Partner project - RGU	Fund to support commissions (culminating in April 2017)
Signature event	SPECTRA	£230,000	3 year agreement with Curated Place/internal Comms and marketing budget and infrastructure costs	Year 4 of Light festival
Building on our strengths	Libraries 125 years programme	£35,000	Internal	Initiatives to support reading and literature development, new audiences
	AAG redevelopment	£40,000	Internal	Match funding for HLF outreach programme
	Beach Ballroom enhancement fund	£20,000	internal	Support to attract new lets with charitable status
	True North Singer Songwriter festival	£40,000	Partner project -APA	Stepping out programme – Music Hall closure
	Granite Noir	£40,000	Partner project (Libraries, APA, Anatomy Rooms, Belmont cinema)	Multi art form weekend festival of crime literature and films
	Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology – Celebrating Aberdeen	£110,000	Existing cultural bodies / festivals / artists / residents – open application	Support for enhanced use of collections and new commissions as part of major event to celebrate the history and heritage of Aberdeen (culminating in July 2017)
	TOTAL	£710,000		

5.2.1 Culture programme and the City Council

The Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan and Delivery programme was unanimously approved by the Council on 24 June 2015. The proposed events programme, Aberdeen 365, is referenced as a specific project within the masterplan and is scheduled to be delivered during phase one. In February this year Finance, Policy and Resources agreed to commission an events strategy for the City Council to provide strategic direction for the development of infrastructure, activity, people and places connected to the City Centre Masterplan and Aberdeen 365 programme.

The review is intended to provide a framework for the allocation of existing revenue, a package of sponsorship opportunities and an opportunity for developer contributions. As both Common Good and revenue funding reduces, the events strategy will ensure the events delivered by the City Council are aligned to maximise the benefits of that limited investment, informed by a full review of all activity. This review will consider the need to reduce expectations amongst partners, working towards a streamlined and effective culture programme which retains quality, attracts additional investment, and is deliverable within the resource available. The review will be presented to Elected Members in September 2016 and will therefore form part of the budget setting process and be implemented for the financial year 2017/18.

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience –

In the 35th city voice questionnaire, 65% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that cultural activity is important to the quality of life in the city. 78% agreed or strongly agreed that culture is important in attracting visitors to the city.

The outcome of the bid for UK City of Culture 2017 raised the level of investment in culture in Aberdeen and the residents of the City have responded very favourably to the enhanced culture programme, as evidenced by the feedback from SPECTRA and other initiatives. The Council's commitment to culture is seen as a positive investment in the perception of Aberdeen as a culturally vibrant city. The programme provides improved opportunities to participate in the arts as audience member, volunteer and participant: access to emerging technology at affordable costs: a range of support initiatives to support community groups and creative individuals; and opportunities to experience the city centre in a positive, creative environment for all ages, for individuals and families.

The Council teams involved in the delivery of the Culture programme are World Host trained. The culture programme supports the Council's ambitions to be a World Host accredited city.

Improving Staff Experience –

The Council, through its cultural events, revenue and capital programmes, a cohort of staff committed to improving the cultural life of the city, The events strategy under way will ensure the correct structures, processes and conditions exist for staff to effectively and efficiently deliver the programme with the capacity to do so under an agreed framework.

Improving our use of Resources –

The Council's investment in culture represents only a proportion of the total investment: for example, the Youth Arts Hub contribution is £50,000 per year towards an overall investment of £400,000 (Creative Scotland); Granite: Council investment of £200,000 for a project costing £450,000: Spectra received additional investment of over £80,000 from Event Scotland, Creative Scotland, the EU and Arts Council England.

A longer term approach to contracting activities enables better use of resources and providing open opportunities which require partners to raise additional resources maximises the benefits of council funding. Aligning the culture programme to the national 'Year of' programme has enabled some additional resources to be brought in to increase opportunities and gain national publicity.

Working collaboratively across the Office of the Chief Executive has maximised the skills set needed to effectively manage the activities, reducing marketing, organisational and administration costs.

Corporate -

The Single Outcome Agreement: Culture is a multi – lateral priority

Strategic Infrastructure Plan: A better image for Aberdeen:

- Boost the external appearance of the city as a place to live, visit and invest
- Foster greater civic pride
- Celebrate and showcase existing strengths

Education and Children's Service Plan priority 2-Culture

City centre masterplan objectives 1 and 8:

- Changing perceptions- promoting the view of Aberdeen as an energetic, inclusive and fascinating place
- Culturally distinctive – ensuring the city centre reflects its distinctive local culture so it is like no other place

Smarter Aberdeen: Quality of Life

- Enhance the well-being of our communities by creating a stimulating environment for them to work through the delivery of high quality arts and cultural services
- 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

Each element of the cultural programme is devised and delivered collaboratively through a contractual or partnership arrangement with members of the Culture Network (the Community planning culture theme lead) or with an appropriately constituted and qualified outside body.

Public –

This report is likely to be of interest to the public, in part due to the prior commitment to an enhanced cultural programme and resident's interests in the civic life of Aberdeen. The recent large scale events GRANITE and SPECTRA have increased local interest in and appetite for high quality events of a significant scale.

A Privacy Impact Assessment has been judged as not required for the purposes of this report. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) is appended to the report.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The budget for the 2016/17 programme was approved at the Council budget setting meeting in February this year. Each element of the programme has a lead officer who monitors all aspects of the financial, contractual, and where other responsibilities do not lie with the partner or contracted organisation, other aspects including health and safety and employee welfare.

Should the proposed culture programme not be approved, the delivery of discrete elements could be affected or cancelled by the delay and the reputation of the Council, with regard to its stated commitment to culture across a range of strategic priorities, could be affected.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Festival reports on Techfest, NEOS (North East Open Studios), Mayfest, Dancelive, Aberdeen Jazz festival, AIYF (Aberdeen International Youth Festival), and Aberdeen Festivals Collective by Culture Republic in 2015
- 35th city voice questionnaire 2015
- Culture programme and Cultural Awards 2015/16
Committee report, Education and children's Services 2 June 2015
- City Events 2016/17
Committee report, Finance, Resource and Policy 16th February 2016

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Lesley Thomson
Cultural Policy and Partnerships Manager
lthomson@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 522499