

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	13th June 2012
LEAD OFFICER	Valerie Watts Chief Executive
TITLE OF REPORT	UK City of Culture 2017
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/12/030

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report presents information on the potential social and economic benefits of a proposed bid for UK City of Culture 2017, and the financial requirements to prepare a bid, as requested by the Lord Provost's Motion to Council 14/12/2011.

A bid from Aberdeen for UK City of Culture represents a significant commitment to and investment in the city and its citizens, through the life changing experience of culture and participation, to bring lasting benefits beyond the City of Culture year itself.

The bid for UK City of Culture, if successful, would begin a four year process of step-change to transform the city through developing opportunities to engage in cultural experiences and to raise the city's profile as a great place to live, work, study and visit.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Council:

- i. Instructs officers to prepare and submit a bid for UK City of Culture 2017;
- ii. Instructs officers to further research the potential social and economic benefits of UK City of Culture status for Aberdeen City;
- iii. Instructs officers to work with local and national cultural partners on themes to structure the bid;
- iv. Approves the financial cost details in tables 1 and 2 and refer to the Finance and Resources Committee to identify funding;
- v. Delegates powers, as appropriate, to scope and recruit a bid development team;
- vi. Instructs officers to update Council regularly on progress;
- vii. Instructs officers to commence discussion with potential investors to ascertain financial support;
- viii. Instructs officers to commission, as appropriate, research to support the bid development

- ix. Consider identifying an appropriate cultural champion to provide leadership and act as a figurehead

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The main resource implications for Aberdeen City Council in developing a bid would be:

Costs subject to confirmation from Finance:

Table 1: Culture Bid Development Team

Post	Proposed Grade	18 Month Estimated Cost (Inclusive of Oncosts)	Schedule for Finance Committee approval
Bid Manager	G16	£100,000	June 21st
Artistic Programme Manager	G15	£85,000	October 4th
Funding/International Officer	G14	£67,000	October 4th
Marketing/Comms Officer	G14	£67,000	October 4th
Cultural Policy Officer	G14	£67,000	June 21st
Admin Officer	G11	£45,000	June 21st
Total		£431,000	

Table 2: Budget for approval at Finance and Resources Committee June 21st

Office IT and Telephone (at a cost of £3200 per officer)	£19,200
Public Engagement Activity	£15,000
PR and Comms	£10,000
Developmental Programming	£50,000
Total	£94,200

Additional support

- Dedicated staff time to support the bid team as required across all 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

- Creative Scotland has committed additional financial support of £250,000 to support the bid thematic development. This funding will also support required research.

- 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 proposed bid team includes an officer with a specific remit to raise funds from external partners to support the bid development and programme.

The recruitment of the Bid Development Team would be an incremental process. The initial appointment would be a Bid Manger with a proven track record of leading, developing and delivering an equivalent accolade bid proposal. Their experience would shape the Bid Development Team structure.

The estimated costs of delivering a UK City of Culture programme in 2017 will be included in the draft initial bid, and be brought to a future Finance and Resources Committee for consideration.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There no other implications relating to this report at this time.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 UK City of Culture Award

- 5.1.1** In July 2009 the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) launched the 'UK City of Culture' (UKCoC) competition. The inaugural competition stemmed from the success of the European Capital of Culture Programme, most notably Liverpool in 2008. The winner of the first UKCoC in 2013, from a shortlist including Sheffield, Birmingham and Norwich, was Derry ~ Londonderry. On 27 February 2012, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport announced the United Kingdom Government's intention to hold a competition for UKCoC 2017. The opening of the competition is expected to be announced in the summer to coincide with the 2012 Olympic celebrations. Aberdeen will then have an opportunity to bid for the title.

The phased bidding process is expected to be completed by winter 2013 with the final stage of the competition held in Derry towards the end of their year as UK City of Culture 2013.

5.2 Social and Economic Benefits

- 5.2.1** Initial research, with a view to Aberdeen applying to become UK City of Culture in 2013, found that developing a bid for a major title such as the UKCoC or European Capital of Culture (ECoC) can bring substantial social and economic benefits to a City. This research clearly illustrated that the process of developing a bid, provided it is developed in partnership and can successfully bring the whole City together, can provide the catalyst for lasting change.

Aberdeen was unable to prepare a viable bid for UK City of Culture status in 2013 and the Council withdrew from the bidding process. At Council on 19th December 2009, Committee agreed to: 'Approve the recommendation to defer any potential bid in 2013 and endorses officers and partners to develop proposals for a potential bid for 2017'.

Feedback received from the DCMS on the outline bid from officers was positive, with recognition that Aberdeen had both the infrastructure and expertise to deliver a quality bid in the future.

The research conducted by officers also found that the respective Cities all used the platform of a 'City of Culture' as a key driver in delivering visions for the short, medium and long-term. It is notable that for all Cities the development of a bid was firmly placed within a wider strategic vision. The clear message was that while culture was one of several key areas of development required to establish and maintain a thriving City, it did not sit alone and was capable of providing a catalyst for development across a range of social and economic agendas. Bidding for UKCoC 2017 therefore needs to be considered in the wider context of Aberdeen City Council's Business Plan as a potential driver for reaching solutions for key objectives.

- 5.2.2** The rationale and aims for a City to develop a bid to become a 'City of Culture', while exclusive to each City, can generally be grouped under the wide terms of 'social' or 'economic'. For Cities such as Liverpool, European Capital of Culture alongside Stavanger in 2008, these objectives were explicit. Working under strategic themes the bid aimed to, amongst other things, enable an inclusive and dynamic community and to achieve long-lasting cultural and economic benefits for the City and its future generations. A series of specific targets included access to education and learning, celebrating the City's unique heritage and diversity, increase tourism and ultimately ensuring the City became an attractive place to live, to invest and to visit, then followed. While the legacy of the year is still in its relative infancy, the immediate impacts have been hugely positive.

While the scale and scope of Liverpool would be difficult to replicate, smaller Cities have shown the ability to use a City of Culture bid to make significant progress on delivering their vision for the future. This has included providing a focus to tackle a range of challenges, many of which can be related to those facing Aberdeen. On a social level there have been examples of Cities utilising a 'City of Culture' bid to both highlight and have an impact on issues such as social inequality, closing the poverty gap, improving educational performance, health improvement and

connecting disparate cultures and communities. This has been delivered through a range of means both at bid and delivery stages of the project. The profile and focus of a 'City of Culture' bid can galvanise a community: cities have shown that a collective ethos can galvanise a City to work towards a shared goal. The most recent example of this is perhaps the successful UKCoC 2013 bid by Derry-Londonderry which utilised the process to bring communities together to celebrate and create a narrative about a City in which they are deeply proud to live and work.

- 5.2.3 The tourism, leisure and creative industries have a proven track record of resilience in difficult economic times: also the potential to play a role in the regeneration, health and well being of communities and areas. Both Liverpool and Derry-Londonderry focused on the potential skills and training opportunities that came with the development of a bid. To achieve the UKCoC title will require a creative approach to contracting and procurement of variable scale, and within that process there is the potential to harness a mix of 'Social Clauses' and 'Community Benefits' package that can ensure a lasting positive legacy for Aberdeen's Regeneration areas and beyond. The Games Legacy for Glasgow's 2014 Commonwealth Games provides for a range of such benefits.

There is evidence that developing a bid can bring a wide range of lasting economic benefits. Research is conclusive in terms of immediate and tangible benefits, while less tangible and longer terms benefits are also now becoming apparent. The Liverpool Culture Company reported that the economic benefit of the title was £800 million. Derry-Londonderry's bid estimated that UK City of Culture could lead to additional Gross Value Added (GVA) of £40 million between 2010 and 2013, as well as 2,800 net additional workplace jobs by 2020. The experience of others implies that there are significant benefits, even for those locations which are unsuccessful, such as Birmingham and Durham, evidencing benefits in profile, tourism and infrastructure.

The majority of Cities who have developed bids point to a marked increase in tourism and subsequently related employment. In part, this can be attributed to the profile and perception change provided by the 'City of Culture'. This change in perception can also provide a huge catalyst for long-term change. Glasgow used the EUCoC as a platform for its hugely successful 'smiles better' campaign. Cities have also approached the 'City of Culture' process as a method to drive forward the quality of life agenda. With Cities competing on a global level to attract and retain investment and people, 'City of Culture' titles have focused on how an improved cultural offering can play a pivotal role.

- 5.2.4 It is clear that the UKCoC or similar competition provides a focus which, if harnessed correctly, has the potential to help transform a City. Crucially, successful Cities shown it must also relate strongly to a wider regeneration plan for its future and that it cannot be viewed as the sole answer. It is a process which demands that the citizens of a City work together to use culture as a real driver which will lead to a lasting positive change for each and every one of its residents and visitors.

5.3 Next steps

- 5.3.1 Preparations must start immediately with the appointment of the bid team to enable the development of a robust bid document. This is clear from the 2013 UKCoC feasibility work undertaken by officers and feedback from the DCMS. Aberdeen has the potential to develop a strong proposal for UK City of Culture 2017. The city will need to be ambitious and innovative to be successful.

Experience in other cities has shown that the role of Elected Members as champions for a bid is critical for success. It is important to identify a cultural champion early in the process to provide clear leadership for the city and its partners.

A steering group needs to be established to oversee all aspects of a potential bid. The composition of this group has not yet been determined; however experience from other successful Cities shows a need to have representation from a wide range of key stakeholders. This steering group will have a strategic overview, with an operational group responsible for practical aspect of the research. An initial stakeholders and cultural partners information session on the UKCoC 2017 was held in March 2012 and was met with unanimous support for the bid process.

The steering group and bid team will develop, through community and partner engagement, the key themes that will underpin the City of Culture bid. This will build on some existing developments, including links with Argentina regarding community arts development and arts education, twinning, international loans of artwork and collaboration with other creative cities including Ghent, Eindhoven and Stavanger.

The bid team will develop the existing knowledge exchange with Derry-Londonderry to inform the bid,

It will be important for the success of this initiative to take a corporate approach to realise any potential benefits through any other planned developments, for example transportation links, planning gain and community benefits.

Although the bidding process requires leadership from the Council, the bid requires engagement with all interested stakeholders. The team will need to develop existing and new partnerships to realise the potential opportunities, for example building on the recent AB+ cultural conference and relationships with Creative Scotland, Arts and Business Scotland and local businesses.

6. IMPACT

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

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

The bid development will provide opportunities for community engagement within 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 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 24 November 2009
'Cracking the Cultural Code' - Derry /Londonderry 2013 Bid Proposal

8. REPORT AUTHORS DETAILS

Patricia Cassidy, Acting Director of Education, Culture and Sport
pcassidy@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 522473

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