

CABINET

Development of the 2015/16 Festival Programme 20 January 2015

Report of Chief Officer Regeneration & Planning

PURPOSE OF REPORT			
To seek a decision to submit applications for external funding for the Light up Lancaster and Vintage by the Sea Festivals			
Key Decision	X	Non-Key Decision	Referral from Cabinet Member
Date of notice of forthcoming key decision	19 December 2014		
This report is public			

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) Cabinet gives delegated authority to relevant Chief Officers to bid for external funds (where relevant) for the Light up Lancaster and Vintage by the Sea Festivals, to take place in 2015/16, subject to them being within the budget and policy framework
- (2) Subject to recommendation 1, if successful in securing funding, the Council acts as accountable body where necessary, subject to being within the Budget and Policy Framework
- (3) Cabinet notes that due to urgent timescales a bid for £18,000 has already been submitted to Morecambe Town Council for the Vintage by the Sea Festival and has been successful. The Council will be expected to take on the role of accountable body for this funding should they accept this offer of funding
- (4) That delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer(Resources) to update the General Fund Revenue Budget in 2015/16 as and when funding offers are accepted, subject to there being no additional call on City Council resources
- (5) Cabinet gives officers delegated authority to research and develop proposals for a 'Northern Lights' partnership, with the aim of seeking funding from the Arts Council Strategic Touring Fund for 2016/17 onwards, and with any proposals being brought back to Cabinet for consideration as part of the 2016/17 budget prior to any such funding bids being submitted.

1.0 Introduction

Vintage by the Sea

This year's Vintage by the Sea Festival held in September attracted an audience of approximately 40,000 locals and visitors, a 60% increase on the visitor numbers reported for the Seaside Festival in 2013. Many local businesses benefitted from those who attended the festival with one reporting a 30% increase in takings when compared to same weekend in 2013 and another stating that they had taken £2,000 more over the weekend than they would normally have taken. Over the two days audiences were entertained by live music, dance, street theatre, exhibitions, vintage craft fair and a WWII fly-past. The festival was organised and delivered in partnership with Deco Publique and Wayne Hemingway Design. The Council provided event safety management for the outdoor programme over the two days of the festival and were also responsible for leading on the marketing. Deco Publique were responsible for artistic programming, concessions, volunteers and the indoor evening ticketed events. Wayne Hemingway Design was responsible for branding and public relations.

In 2014/15 the Council contributed £20,000 (not including staffing) and also acted as accountable body for Morecambe Town Council funding of £15,000. Deco Publique also secured additional funding for the event in the region of £18,000 (income from concessions and an Arts Council Grant for the Arts Application).

Light up Lancaster

This year's Light up Lancaster Festival held in November attracted an estimated audience of over 21,000 locals and visitors with many city centre businesses extending their opening hours to take advantage of those attending the festival. 93% of those people surveyed as part of the evaluation of the festival stated that they had visited Lancaster specifically to see the festival and 23% said that whilst they were in Lancaster they did some shopping and 50% said that they did some socialising/eating out. Over 2,500 people viewed installations at the Storey on the Friday evening, many were new visitors to the building. The Visitor Information Centre, open for the first time on a Friday evening, recorded its busiest weekend ever at the Storey. On Saturday the centre experienced a 52% increase in visitors when compared to the same Saturday in 2013.

On the Friday evening audiences were entertained by performances and exhibitions of visual arts, delivered by the Lancaster Arts Partners. The festival also included Lancaster's annual fireworks event that attracted over 14,000 people on the Saturday evening. Various children's workshops were also delivered during the day on the Saturday.

In 2014/15 the Council's budgeted contribution to the Light up the Skies (fireworks) was £35,000 (£24,000 core events budget/£6,600 one-off budget virement from the Platform and £4,400 from the Arts Development budget). Members are reminded that as a result of service re-structuring and a reduced in-house capacity to deliver the event, a decision was made to commission an external event company. As set out above, although this incurred additional costs of £11,000 for core delivery, this was still a more cost effective way to deliver the fireworks compared to the previous 'in-kind' cost of £56,100 (including £9,500 for 'time off in lieu') provided across all of the Council's major events, including the fireworks event.

The Council's contribution to Light up the Streets was £16,000 (not including staffing) including a £12,000 one-off budget virement from the arts development budget (in addition to the virement for the fireworks) and also acted as accountable body for Arts Council funding of £48,000. Lancaster Arts Partners (LAP) also secured additional funding in the region of £29,000 (£10,000 Heritage Lottery, £10,000 Lancaster BID and £9,000 Lancashire County Council).

2.0 Proposal Details

The Council has been approached by partners from both festivals wishing to organise similar events for 2015/16. The report provides outline information on a number of emerging funding opportunities for 2015/16.

Light up Lancaster

- Arts Council Grants for the Arts 2015/16 – To be developed in partnership with Lancaster Arts Partners and submitted by Lancaster City Council who would act as the accountable body. This would contribute to the main artistic content of the festival (it is recommended that we don't apply for more than £55,000 broadly in line with the last 2 years). The Arts Council has indicated that this could be the last year where the Council could apply to Grants for the Arts funding for this festival as this funding is supposed to be for one-off projects. The Arts Council has suggested that future funding could come by way of their Strategic Touring Fund. However they also suggested that in order to apply for this funding it would be necessary to be part of a larger partnership. One way that this could be achieved is outlined below
- Arts Council Grants for the Arts for 2015/16 – To be developed in partnership with a select group of light festival organisers from across the North of England and submitted by one of the partners who would then act as the accountable body (not Lancaster City Council). The funding would be used to research and develop a 'Northern Lights' partnership and build capacity to allow partners to work together to create a longer term joint vision for our light festivals and develop a follow up funding bid to the Arts Council's Strategic Touring Fund for 2016/17 onwards. Any bid for 2016/17 onwards would come back to Cabinet for consideration, prior to it actually being submitted; clearly in the interim, the Council's affordable priorities could change.

Vintage by the Sea

- Morecambe Town Council – Due to the closing date for this funding, a joint funding application in partnership with Deco Publique has been submitted, subject to the caveat that this remains an in principle approach until council funding can be confirmed. Lancaster City Council is to act as the accountable body should the Council accept this offer of funding (£18,000). This would contribute to the artistic content of the festival

Note: Members should be aware that funders will expect the Council to provide match funding including In-kind match funding at the same level as previous years for both festivals.

3.0 Details of Consultation

Officers have met with the Arts Council and representatives from a number of other Arts Council funded light festivals (including York, Gateshead, Leeds and Salford, Durham couldn't attend but want to be involved) to discuss the advantages of working closer together. The Arts Council has encouraged this group of festival organisers to submit an initial funding application for 2015/16 to research and develop a 'Northern Lights' partnership, with the aim of submitting a follow up funding application in 2016/17 to the support the partnership and the individual festivals.

Officers have had further discussion with the Arts Council about a specific Grants for the Arts funding application to support Lancaster's Light up Festival for 2015/16. They have indicated that as this fund is normally used for one-off projects that this could be the last year where the Council could apply to this fund.

Officers have also had a discussion about both festivals for 2015/16 with local partners including Deco Publique, Morecambe Town Council and Lancaster Arts Partners.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

	Option 1: Seek and accept external funding for both festivals	Option 2: Do not seek external funding for either festival
Advantages	<p>Opportunity to secure funding for one or both major festivals for 2015/16 and potential to enter into a 'Northern Lights' partnership to develop funding bids for Light up Lancaster from 2016/17 onwards</p> <p>Enhancing the district's festival programme and significantly contribute to the visitor and night time economy.</p> <p>The proposed 'signature' events would fit and raise the profile of the new approved destination brands developed for Lancaster and Morecambe Bay</p> <p>Fits well with the emerging arts strategy for the district and the aims of Marketing Lancashire</p> <p>The 'Northern Lights' partnership should result in</p>	<p>No officer time required to seek, secure and manage external funding</p> <p>No need to redirect the entire arts development budget, therefore a number of smaller arts projects could be delivered in 2015/16, or savings could be taken`</p> <p>No requirement to undertake the role of accountable body for external funding</p>

	raising Lancaster's profile regionally, nationally and Internationally as a key visitor destination and lead to an increase in visitor numbers	
Disadvantages	<p>Officer time is required to seek, secure and manage external funding</p> <p>Council would be required to provide match funding at the same levels as 2014/15</p> <p>Redirection of Council resources from the arts development budget in its entirety for 2015/16 to deliver Light up Lancaster</p>	<p>Without external funding the festivals would have to be significantly scaled down</p> <p>Reduction in visitor numbers and visitor spend from scaled down festivals</p> <p>Might not achieve aims of arts strategy or Marketing Lancashire in terms of promoting the District as a key visitor destination</p> <p>Might prevent the Council from being involved in the 'Northern Lights' partnership and gaining numerous benefits including longer term funding for a Lancaster based event</p>
Risks	The Council would be the accountable body for some or all external funding	Significant lack of additional economic impact from scaled down festivals

5.0 Conclusion

Cabinet is asked to give officers a clear indication of which option to proceed with given the timescales involved with applying for external funding and subsequent planning time required to arrange the festivals themselves.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

It contributes to the following Council priority: Sustainable Economic Growth and the following success measures: Economic Impact of the Arts in the District will be measured with the Council moving towards an ensuring role to support a range of delivery partners.; visitor numbers and spend will be increased and cultural, retail and tourism offer will be improved. It also contributes to the Council's Heritage Strategy and Arts Framework.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, HR, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

No impact on the above.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal Services have been consulted and there are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is assumed that the cost of delivering both festivals in 2015/16 will be broadly similar to those incurred during this financial year. There should be no additional financial implications arising from the proposed recommendations, therefore, subject to the Arts Development budget being used in its entirety to support the Light Up Lancaster festival (split £12K Light up the Streets / £11K Light up the Skies).

It should be noted, however, that in allocating the whole of this budget to LUL, there will be no budget remaining in which to support the smaller arts development projects within the district during 2015/16 unless savings from elsewhere within the Regeneration & Planning Service are identified during the year. Similarly, the Arts Council bid may not be successful or the LUL festival be able to proceed on the same scale as 2013/14 if a similar level of match funding is not in place.

If external funding bids for the festivals are successful, the General Fund Revenue Budget will need to be updated to reflect the additional grant awards and associated expenditure. Where the Council also takes on the role of Accountable Body, then City Council officers (working with its partners) would be responsible for determining how the grant is allocated and spent in line with its financial regulations and procurement rules, etc.

It should be further noted that the festivals programming and budgeting beyond 2015/16 will be reviewed as part of the 2016/17 budget, along with other services and activities, and in context of the Council's priorities and funding outlook at that time. The proposals for researching a 'Northern Lights' partnership fit with this approach.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

HR - Staff: Previously both festivals have been facilitated by external partners, any staffing implications for the Council have been covered from existing resources.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The s151 Officer has been consulted and her comments reflected within the report.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

none

Contact Officer: Richard Hammond

Telephone: 01524 582638

E-mail: rhammond@lancaster.gov.uk

Ref: