

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

26th February, 2020

Extract of Minute

A City Imagining Investment Programme – Cultural Multi-Annual Grants

(Ms. E. Henry, Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism, attended in connection with item.)

The Strategic Director of Place and Economy reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 28th August, 2019, it had approved a new ten-year cultural strategy, namely, 'A City Imagining'. The Committee had, as part of the strategy, approved a new investment model, which had included the phased implementation of new funding programmes. The first phase of that work had commenced with the opening of a competitive funding programme for cultural multi-annual grants.

The Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism, explained that the cultural multi-annual grants scheme was comprised of two funding strands, namely, Arts and Heritage and Festivals and Events. Each strand included a two-year and a four-year tier of investment and had replaced the existing core multi-annual funding for arts and heritage, which was due to end in March, 2020, and the previous one-off funding agreements for events and festivals which had been awarded on an annual basis through the Committee process, respectively.

She reported that applications for funding under each strand had opened on 7th October and had closed on 22nd November. The scheme had been advertised through various websites, existing networks, social media and information sessions. In total, eighty-four applications, requesting £4,446,113.50, had been received. She reviewed the various steps in the assessment process and confirmed that, following that exercise, fifty-four organisations were being recommended for funding totalling £2,363,264 across the four funding streams.

She highlighted the fact that it had been acknowledged from the outset that the core funding programme accompanying the new cultural strategy would not be the best fit for every organisation currently in receipt of core funding. It had, therefore, been agreed that, where any organisation currently in receipt of core funding was deemed to be ineligible for funding under the cultural multi-annual grants programme or had been unsuccessful following the assessment process, one-year of transition funding, up to a maximum of £30,000, would be offered. She reviewed the process which would underpin the transition programme and confirmed that eleven organisations were being recommended for funding totalling £168,000.

The Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism, went on to point out that, although an application for cultural multi-annual grant funding from the Cathedral Quarter Trust to deliver a scaled-up Culture Night had been unsuccessful, the importance of holding a large scale shared cultural event in the City had been recognised. It was, therefore, being recommended that support continue to be provided in 2020 to the Trust to enable it to

deliver, in partnership with the Council and other stakeholders, such an event and that funding of £50,000 be allocated for that purpose. An independent strategic review of Culture Night would be undertaken in parallel, which would examine, for example, governance arrangements and a sustainable partnership model to be considered in the context of the City's overall events calendar.

She then drew the Members' attention to the fact that the outcome of an equality screening of the investment model element of the Cultural Strategy, which had included the cultural multi-annual grants programme, had found that there had been an under-representation of groups from or representing the PUL (Protestant Unionist Loyalist) community. Capacity building had been identified as a mitigating action and, accordingly, it was recommended that that be addressed by allocating funding of £80,000 towards the development of a capacity building programme.

She concluded by pointing out that the next steps in the process would involve awareness raising around the increase in the Council's investment in the cultural sector, the provision of advice, debriefs and support for all organisations involved in the process, including information on project funding, and the undertaking of a cultural mapping exercise of the City.

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. agreed that funding totalling £2,363,264 be allocated under the Cultural Multi-Annual Grant scheme to those organisations set out within Appendix 5 of the report;
- ii. approved the proposed approach for addressing issues which had emerged during the Cultural Multi-Annual Grant process, including the allocation of transition funding of £168,000 to those organisations set out within Appendix 6 of the report;
- iii. agreed that funding of £50,000 be allocated to the Cathedral Quarter Trust to deliver, in partnership with the Council and other stakeholders, a large scale shared cultural event in the City;
- iv. agreed that funding totalling £80,000 be allocated to a capacity building programme, with the PUL community to be proactively targeted;
- v. agreed that the aforementioned capacity building programme be extended to include LGBT and all other recognised Section 75 groups; and
- vi. noted that the funding commitments set out above would be met from within agreed Departmental budgets for 2020/21.

It was noted that the restriction on the Committee report and the appendices would, with the exception of Appendix 4, be removed immediately following the Council meeting on 2nd March.