

## **URGENCY ITEMS - MINUTE OF DECISION**

### **Delegation arrangements for dealing with matters of urgency**

Paragraph 7.2.1 of the Council's Constitution provides that Chief Officers may take urgent decisions if they are of the opinion that circumstances exist which make it necessary for action to be taken by the Council prior to the time when such action could be approved through normal Council Procedures. They shall, where practicable, first consult with the Leader and Chairman (or in their absence the Vice-Chairman) and the Opposition Spokesperson of the appropriate committee.

### **Subject:**

**Application to the Arts Council - National Portfolio Organisation Funding**

### **Appropriate Committee:**

Policy and Finance Committee

### **Details of Item** (including reason(s) for use of urgency procedure):

The report presented at Policy and Finance Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> March 22 described the ambition on the Heritage and Culture Business Unit to apply for National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding for the 3 year period 23/24 – 25/26 from the Arts Council England (ACE). At that time, detailed plans were still in development and the level of funding and any implications to NSDC were not fully determined. The report explained that due to the timescales for this application, it would not be feasible to present a further report confirming the level of funding, and members approved the recommendation that a delegated decision be taken prior to submission based on more detailed financial plans.

The plans for our 3 year programme, now titled 'Open Doors', have now been formalised in preparation for the application deadline of 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022. This includes a detailed activity plan and investment principles plan as explored in the previous report, and a proposal to set up an Open Doors Board that meets the requirements of the NPO.

In order to achieve our targets, we will be requesting funding for three new members of staff:

- 1 x Open Doors Programme Manager NS11 (subject to job evaluation) 30hrs per week
- 1 x Community Engagement and Partnership Development Officer NS07 37hrs per week
- 1 x Creative Arts Officer NS09 (subject to job evaluation) 37hrs per week

In year 2 we are proposing to recruit an apprentice using knowledge gained from our work with young people and under-represented community groups in year 1, and to support succession planning and the industry-wide loss of key cultural sector skills.

The funding will:

- Fund 2 artists in residence each year to deliver workshops, and work creatively with disadvantaged communities

- Commission a major outreach project each year
- Deliver a language project working with diaspora communities and d/Deaf communities to better reflect their needs in our cultural activity
- Design and deliver a CPD programme for teachers and schools in the district
- Develop a Youth Panel to advise our work, and support them to deliver an annual project
- Deliver an 'Our Heritage' project of workshops linked to our collection, co-create touring exhibitions across the district, and take our mini-museum on tour, to reach a wider audience and break down barriers to access
- Design and create both formal and informal learning programmes for the theatre that complements and enhances the work of the Learning and Participation team
- Deliver an annual festival in up to 3 locations across the district that celebrates the work of the community, creatives and organisations involved in the programme
- Increase our family offer and provide opportunities for young people to earn Arts Awards
- Deliver training and development within our team and with the newly created Board
- Deliver interventions to increase accessibility
- Fund consultancy work to support us in becoming an Energy Conscious Organisation

In total, Heritage and Culture is proposing to apply for £309,000 per annum to deliver the above activity. There is no match funding required as part of this application, as organisations are assessed on the basis of their core income and/or subsidy. The ambition is to re-apply for the next round of NPO funding, if available, in 2025/26. However, if unsuccessful, or if this funding stream is discontinued, there would be a small cost to NSDC in making the funded staff redundant.

There are numerous variables in calculating redundancy, however HR have provided an estimate based on the oldest age bracket, but excluding pension strain. The statutory amount for these roles is estimated at £8,817. The maximum discretionary element is estimated at £10,667. In total, this represents a potential 2% contribution from NSDC to support delivery of this programme.

### **Equalities Implications**

Delivery of this programme as an NPO will include a targeted plan to increase cultural activity and engagement in under-represented and / or socio-economically deprived groups, and to improve access to our service, becoming more inclusive.

### **Financial Implications (FIN22-23/2451)**

Should the Council be successful in its application for the Arts Council funding, it will generate an additional £927,000 worth of inward investment to the Council.

The funding will allow further activity to take place within the Business Unit, rather than contributing towards reducing the existing budget provision. Therefore it is anticipated that there will not be an additional funding burden on the Council in respect of this grant funding as additional expenditure will match the receipt of the grant funding received.

The funding is anticipated to last for three financial years from 2023/24 to 2025/26, hence this would therefore require a commitment to the delivery of the programme for that period of time.

The draft terms of conditions of the grant do not require any match funding from the District Council in order to leverage the grant, nor is there a requirement for the Council to maintain a level of spend post the three year period.

As there will be additional officers added to the establishment for the three year period, should the programme come to an end at that point in time, there may be a redundancy implication for the Council to fund, as this could not form part of the grant value. It is difficult to predict the total value at this stage, as any redundancy figure would be calculated based on length of local government service and age. Conservative estimates at this stage would be circa £20,000 as described above. This would need to be funded from the Councils Restructuring and Pay reserve where applicable during 2026/27 subject to any extension of the NPO programme at that point in time.

Where the bid is successful the impact of this will be built into the General Fund budget setting process for 2023/24 and the Medium Term Financial Plan.

### **Decision**

To approve the submission of the NPO application for a total of £927,000 over a three year funding period starting in 2023/24.

### **Reason for Decision**

To capitalise on the opportunity through the Arts Council England to apply to become a National Portfolio Organisation in 2023, maximising our impact through sustained, targeted funding.

### **Members Consulted:**

David Lloyd

Keith Girling (*consulted & supported via telephone 15:58 on 13.5.22*)

Rhona Holloway

Paul Peacock

Signed:



**Matthew Finch, Director Communities & Environment**

Date: **13 May 2022**