

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 14 April 2016	Decision Taker: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Business, Employment & Culture
Report title:		Arts Grants Programme 2016 to 2017	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Fiona Dean, Director of Leisure	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Business, Employment & Culture approves the arts & culture grants 2016/17, as attached at Appendix 1, effective from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Approval of grants over £2,500 for the arts are a matter for the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Business, Employment & Culture (Constitution: Part 3D para 5). The culture commissioning plan (approved in January 2016) sets out the priorities and themes for 2016/17, the expected links between council priorities and outcomes that are to be delivered by the organisations that receive grant aid.
3. The cultural strategy and the commissioning plan objectives support the Fairer Future promises by setting out the broad and powerful ways that culture affects key council priorities through impacting upon employment, place making, cohesion, wellbeing and creative vibrancy.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4. In the last decade Southwark has developed into one of London's most vibrant and innovative locations for cultural activity, attracting many new and emerging artists and cultural organisations that offer high quality opportunities to local people to benefit from culture across a range of disciplines. Many of these organisations operate on limited resources.
5. There are 16 Arts Council England (ACE) funded National Portfolio Organisations within Southwark. This represents an investment of £4,893,433 for 2016/17. The Southwark Council grants programme aims to further diversify the support provided to the sector ensuring its continued vibrancy, as well as playing a role in enabling the leverage of this investment.
6. Opening up the grants programme in 2015/16 provided an opportunity to broaden the artistic scope of the programme and fund work which directly delivers against the cultural strategy objectives and action plan, ensuring a

balance of funded activity by new and emerging artists alongside the long established organisations.

7. The impact of this grants programme will be evaluated during the year and reviewed to determine an appropriate approach for 2017/18.
8. In 2016/17 the total budget for the arts grants programme is £251,829. This figure is inclusive of an existing commitment of £70,013 as a direct rent transfer for four organisations that are based in council premises. The total amount, therefore, which is open to applicants for project funding, is £181,816. As part of the review and impact assessment made during the year officers will undertake a review of the rent arrangements given the limited resources available to fund new work.

Application and assessment process

9. Arts and cultural organisations were invited to apply to the new grants programme through an online application form.
10. The programme was open to all applicants, regardless of whether or not they had been previously funded. There was no maximum grant level, to ensure that all organisations could apply for what they genuinely needed and to encourage partnership/consortia applications to deliver against the cultural strategy action plan.
11. The commissioning plan set out clearly the criteria for funding, including the requirement to deliver work within the key themes of the council's cultural strategy.
12. A set of detailed guidance notes were provided as part of the application pack, to support the applicants through the process, as well as a list of FAQs, based on experience from the previous year. 16 applications were received, with a total sum of £404,782 requested. Assessment was carried out against how well each project addressed the criteria set out in the commissioning plan, including whether or not the organisation had 40% income confirmed from other sources.
13. Particular focus was given to how the application met the cultural strategy objectives and how it would deliver against the strategy action plan. It was stipulated in the guidance notes that all projects must meet theme 5 (people and audiences) and all must address at least one of themes 1-4. A score was given of between 0-5 (5 being the highest) based on how well both themes had been addressed and a minimum score of 6 out of a possible 10 was required to be considered for funding.
14. Focus was also given to the financial information provided in the income and expenditure / revenue budget. A score between 0-5 on both income and expenditure was given and a minimum score of 6 out of a possible 10 was required to be considered for funding. Financial breakdown of income and expenditure was assessed based on the following principles:
 - The level of detail and clarity in the budget breakdown
 - Value for money
 - Correct calculations
 - Is it realistic and achievable

- Is 40% match funding confirmed
 - Financial viability of the organisation.
15. It is recommended that eight organisations are recommended for funding; the successful and unsuccessful applications are summarised in Appendix 1, attached. Two of the recommended organisations will be new to the portfolio in 2016/17. Six of the recommended organisations were funded in 2015/16.
 16. The total amount of grant requested by the eight organisations exceeded the total grant amount available by 16%. A number of different approaches have been considered in how to most fairly allocate the grant. On balance it is recommended that a 16% reduction to the amount applied for is offered equally to each organisation. Assurances would need to be given that this reduction in funding applied for would still allow a viable programme or activity.
 17. Southwark funding enables these organisations to secure an additional £1,004,976.00 in match funding, for the benefit of Southwark residents.

Policy implications

18. The council's cultural strategy was approved in July 2013. The projects that have been recommended for funding are those that best meet the cultural strategy objectives and have clearly demonstrated how they will deliver against the strategy action plan.

Community impact statement

19. The council's cultural strategy was approved in July 2013 and clearly set out the need for sustainable investment and development of cultural provision within Southwark. The revised grant application process mirrors the strategy's objectives and clearly sets out the criteria and expectations that organisations must meet.
20. The process by which organisations have been recommended to receive funding is transparent and focused on delivering the most beneficial impact to the wider cultural sector.
21. The application process has specifically sought clarification around target users, participants, audience and the community areas in which they will be delivered in order to identify where there may be an overlap of provision or where alternative activities are being targeted at similar audiences. This was to provide opportunity for minimising the impact on audiences and protected equalities groups wherever possible. All of the groups applying for funding clearly have developed and target audiences for their activities.
22. The process is such that the awards being made are likely to deliver the most beneficial impact whilst maintaining provision to protected groups. As such there are no detrimental equality impacts resulting from this decision.

Resource implications

23. The proposals set out in this report can be delivered within the allocated department budget for 2016/17.

24. Recommendations for funding have been made following robust assessment of the financial information provided. This is to ensure projects deliver value for money and that council resources will have a positive impact and be used effectively, by organisations that operate on a mixed income model and are financially viable.

Financial issues

25. The recommended budget for 2016/17 for arts & culture services has an allocation of £251,829 for grants.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Democracy

26. This report seeks approval of the arts grants for 2016-17 as listed in Appendix 1.
27. As noted in paragraph 2 the decision to approve the report recommendation is one which is expressly reserved to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Business, Employment & Culture under the council Constitution.
28. The Director of Law and Democracy (corporate team) has provided advice and assistance in connection with the preparation of the application pack which had been issued to interested arts and cultural organisations. Officers devised a clear and robust application process, which included guidance notes, workshops and relevant key criteria for the purpose of assessing the applications submitted.
29. The Director of Law and Democracy notes the Community and Equalities Impact Statement at paragraphs 19 to 22 of this report. In recommending the grant allocations officers have had due regard to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained within the Equality Act 2010 in order to ensure that, as far as possible those allocations do not exclude any individual or group having protected characteristics (under the Act) from participating in or accessing any element of the programme and that the programme provides suitable alternative provision with a good spread of activity across different areas of the borough. Paragraph 16 illustrates how the council has demonstrated an equitable approach to the allocation of funds in the context of the budgetary reduction.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (EL15/031)

30. This report recommends that the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Business, Employment & Culture approves the arts & culture grants 2016/17 as attached in Appendix 1 and the approach to allocating grants set out in the report.
31. The strategic director of finance and governance notes the financial implications that the proposed grant allocations will be contained within the current budget of £251,829.
32. Officer time to effect the recommendation will need to be contained within existing resources.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Cultural strategy and action plan	www.southwark.gov.uk/culturestrategy	Coral Flood 020 7525 5231
Culture commissioning plan	www.southwark.gov.uk/artandculturegrant	Coral Flood 020 7525 5231
Application guidance notes	www.southwark.gov.uk/artandculturegrant	Coral Flood 020 7525 5231

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Grants recommendations 2016/17

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Ian Wingfield, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Business, Employment & Culture	
Lead Officer	Fiona Dean, Director of Leisure	
Report Author	Coral Flood, Arts Manager	
Version	Final	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Legal Services	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	14 April 2016	