

|                                    |                                |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Item No.</b>                    | <b>Classification:</b><br>Open | <b>Date:</b><br>25 May 2021        | <b>Meeting Name:</b><br>Cabinet Member for<br>Equalities,<br>Neighbourhoods and<br>Leisure |
| <b>Report title:</b>               |                                | Cultural Celebrations Fund 2021-22 |  |
| <b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b> |                                | All                                |  |
| <b>From:</b>                       |                                | Culture and Events Manager         |  |

## RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities and Neighbourhoods approve the Cultural Celebrations funding for the maximum amount of £60,000 for 2021-22.
2. That the Cabinet Member note the reduced amount of this fund for 2021/22, which is due to: a requirement for budget savings in response to the pandemic; the re-allocation of some funds to enable implementation of Covid mitigation measures at events; and the direct commissioning of a reduced Bermondsey Carnival, to honour a commitment made to deliver the community event in 2020.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. In the last decade Southwark has developed into one of London's most vibrant and innovative locations for cultural and event activity.
4. Southwark Council's Culture team usually commission and deliver an exciting series of free events, which take place throughout the year. The events programme supports the Council Plan 2018-2022, Fairer Future theme 'a vibrant Southwark' and specifically:
  - Promotes Southwark's diversity and cultural richness
  - Supports a range of cultural celebrations across the borough
  - Continues to make culture in Southwark accessible to all.
5. The free events programme also supports the aims of Creative Southwark, the Council's cultural strategy 2017-2022, by:
  - Ensuring that Southwark continues to be a borough for cultural excellence
  - Embedding a cross-council and partner approach to culture
  - Aligning with the strategy of the Council Plan Fairer Future Commitments
  - Protecting, preserving and growing cultural venues, spaces and provision

- Supporting the economic prosperity of the borough, including the night time economy
  - Enabling our diverse community to have access to cultural opportunities
  - Collecting, conserving and celebrating our local heritage for future generations.
6. The council has in the past supported an annual free events programme that has included funding for:
- Bermondsey Carnival
  - Rotherhithe Festival
  - Central Southwark Festival Fund
  - Dulwich Events programme
  - Southwark Fireworks Night
7. Support has also been given to cultural events and activity by other departments, including via Regeneration and development partners, the Local Economy Team's High Street Challenge programme, the Neighbourhood Fund, and Cleaner, Greener, Safer funding.
8. In 2019/20 and 2020/21 expenditure on events was apportioned as in the two tables below.
9. **2019/20 events actual net expenditure**

| <b>Event programme</b>          |                 | <b>Award</b>    |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Bermondsey Carnival             | Direct delivery | £72,000         |
| Rotherhithe Festival            | Grant           | £5,000          |
| Central Southwark Festival Fund | Grants          | £44,000         |
| Dulwich Events programme        | Commissioning   | £14,000         |
| Southwark's Firework Night      | Direct delivery | £102,000        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    |                 | <b>£237,000</b> |

10. **2020/21 events expenditure net budget**  
 (Actual figures unavailable as events programme suspended due to pandemic.)

| <b>Event programme</b>     |                 | <b>Award</b>    |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Bermondsey Carnival        | Commissioning   | £41,000         |
| Cultural Celebrations Fund | Grants          | £95,000         |
| Southwark Fireworks Night  | Direct delivery | £65,000         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               |                 | <b>£201,000</b> |

11. In 2020/21 the Central Southwark Festival, Rotherhithe Festival and Dulwich event commissioning funding streams were amalgamated in order to create one borough-wide Cultural Celebrations Fund. The change to the way funding was allocated and awarded was made because existing arrangements were historic and, as a result, funding was not accessible to many organisations in the borough. Southwark required a new and more appropriate events funding system in order to become more diverse, fair and transparent. In 2020/21 the delivery model for the Bermondsey Carnival was also revised (from a direct delivery to a commissioning model) to support its transition towards becoming an independent event in the future.
12. By March 2020, the new Cultural Celebrations Fund (CCF) had been announced and the call-out for applicants had gone out.
13. By the call-out deadline of 19th March, approximately 50 applications had been received. Applications were from a broad range of community groups, Community Interest Companies, cultural organisations, Tenants and Residents Associations, site user groups, Friends Groups and charities who between them proposed a broad range of events including outdoor theatre and cinema, health and wellbeing, cultural activity, festivals, carnivals, community picnics and BBQs, street parties and fêtes.
14. The Culture team were in the process of shortlisting applicants when event activity had to be suspended due to the pandemic. As a result, no Cultural Celebrations Fund grants were awarded in 2020-21.
15. While significant savings have had to be made from the events budget in the wake of the Covid pandemic, it is proposed that £60,000 of the remaining events budget be allocated to a Cultural Celebrations Fund in 2021/22.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **Policy implications**

16. The launch and awarding of the 2021/22 Cultural Celebrations Fund will enable the implementation of the new grants system that had been intended for implementation in 2020, and will also serve to support the borough's post-pandemic recovery and renewal, especially around community cohesion and wellbeing.
17. It is suggested that the application criteria to the Cultural Celebrations Fund in 2021/22 reflect both the ongoing impact of Covid and activity restrictions during the national roadmap out of lockdown, and the ethos and commitments of the council's Southwark Stands Together programme. The timeline for application processing, grant awards and event planning and management for 2021-22 will be modified to ensure

that summer events can still be supported but that the timeline for supported events extends until March 2022.

18. Applications for Cultural Celebrations Fund grants will be assessed on:

- How they support the Council Plan 2018-2022, Fairer Future commitment of creating 'a vibrant Southwark'
- How they support the themes of the council's Cultural Strategy 2017-2022:
  - a) Creative economy
  - b) Creative growth
  - c) Creative people
- How they support the council's Borough Plan 2020-2022 priority 'Southwark Together – tackling racism and inequality'
- How the event supports the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration and accompanying ambition to be a carbon neutral borough by 2030
- Cost and value for money
- Feasibility of event proposals, with particular consideration given to Covid-safe events that can be delivered in line with government guidance
- Feasibility of delivering event at requested event venue, with particular consideration given to Covid-safe events in line with government guidance
- Organiser's previous experience of delivering outdoor festivals and events
- Event impact on the local environment and public realm
- Event accessibility and inclusivity
- Location, in terms of the geographical spread of hosting events across the borough

19. Applications will be assessed by a panel including Culture Service and wider Council officers, a cabinet member, community representatives and a young resident.

### **Community impact statement**

20. It is anticipated that the fund, when announced, will be very popular, which will mean we should be able to support multiple events serving a diverse range of residents across the borough, thereby contributing to this year's renewal and recovery programme for neighbourhoods, the cultural sector and Southwark's local economy.

21. The council's Cultural Strategy was approved in March 2017 and clearly sets out the need for, and importance of, cultural provision within Southwark. The Cultural Celebrations Fund is an inclusive borough-wide programme. The funding process is such that awards made will focus on delivering the most beneficial impact across the borough. The fund

supports economic and cultural renewal and recovery initiatives within Southwark.

22. The fund supports the Council’s Southwark Stand Together and Climate Emergency programmes as well as supporting community engagement and cohesion. The event evaluation process will produce important information regarding the social and economic impact the events and funding have had.

**Resource implications**

23. If used, the council’s new online funding portal, managed by the Communities team, will apply a £2,500 charge for the administration of the Cultural Celebrations Fund grants, meaning a maximum amount of £57,500 will be available for direct grants. However, given the need to conduct the application process as quickly as possible in order to still be able to award grants for summer events, it may not be practical to use the new portal this year.
24. We anticipate setting the maximum individual grant amount at £10,000, in line with 2020’s callout, but would expect most grants to be around £5,000 to ensure as many events and communities as possible around the borough benefit from support.
25. Suggested timeframe for fund processing and event delivery:

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| Announcement of funding                                      | 1 June 2021                  |
| Deadline for applications                                    | 21 June 2021                 |
| Shortlisting   | 22 – 25 June 2021            |
| Interviews   | 28 – 29 June 2021            |
| Successful applicants notified of recommendation for funding | 2 July 2021                  |
| IDM published to confirm grant awards                        | 5 July 2021                  |
| IDM ratified (subject to call-in period)                     | 12 July 2021                 |
| Festival/Event delivery                                      | 17 July 2021 – 31 March 2022 |

26. Event delivery start date falls comfortably beyond the commencement of step four of the government’s roadmap out of lock down. Step four suggests that all restrictions on social contact could be lifted, theoretically allowing all events, whatever the size and nature, to take place.
27. Given that the above timetable for the issuing of grants falls later in the year than would usually be the case, the events delivery period for eligible activity will run until the end of March, with indoor events also eligible over the winter, subject to covid guidance.

**Legal implications**

28. Please see the concurrent report of the Director of Law and Governance.

## **Financial implications**

29. The total net budget available in cost code CM717 for the Cultural Celebrations Fund is £60,000, potentially to include £2,500 online administration costs.
30. Costs for staff to administer this funding programme, process event applications and monitor events will be contained within existing departmental budgets.
31. All fund awardees are subject to contract and will be monitored closely to ensure that funding criteria is met. 20 per cent of each funding award is issued to event organisers after the event and upon receipt of an event evaluation report.
32. Staff and any other grant monitoring costs connected with this proposal will be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

## **Consultation**

33. Consultation is not required, but the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities and Neighbourhoods will be kept informed.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

### **Director of Law and Governance**

34. This report seeks approval of the Cultural Celebrations Fund for 2021-22. The decision to approve the Recommendation is one which is expressly reserved to the Cabinet Member under the council Constitution.
35. The proposed future distribution of the Fund is consistent with corporate policy in this area and the report confirms the steps that have been taken to consult interested individuals and groups before launching the Fund and inviting grant applications and proposals. The report also describes that a planned and robust process is to be carried out for the purpose of attracting proposals from interested groups and organisations and evaluating those proposals.
36. The intention of the Fund is to engage all individuals and groups within the local community by offering the opportunity to apply for funding and to benefit from the projects which arise from the funding allocations. This is consistent with the requirements of the council's statutory duty (the Public Sector Equality Duty) as prescribed by the Equality Act 2010.
37. Following the allocation of the Fund to successful applicants appropriate legal terms and conditions will regulate the various grant awards.

### **Strategic Director of Finance and Governance (EL21/001)**

38. The report seeks the Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities and Neighbourhoods to approve the Cultural Celebrations funding for the amount of £60,000 for 2021-22.
39. The Strategic Director of Finance and Governance notes that the costs can be contained within existing resources as mentioned under the financial implications. It is expected that continued monitoring will take place with all grant recipients to ensure conditions of grant are met.
40. Staffing, subsequent grant monitoring and any other costs connected with this proposal to be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

| Background Papers                                  | Held At   | Contact                         |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| Creative Southwark: Cultural Strategy 2017 to 2022 | <a href="#">Cultural strategy - Southwark Council</a> | Michelle Walker<br>07523 919585 |

## APPENDICES

| No   | Title |
|------|-------|
| None |       |

## AUDIT TRAIL

|   |   |                          |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Lead Officer</b>   | Michelle Walker, Culture and Events Manager |                          |
| <b>Report Author</b>  | Charlie Simm, Senior Events Officer         |                          |
| <b>Version</b>  | Final                                       |                          |
| <b>Dated</b>  | 21 May 2021                                 |                          |
| <b>Key decision</b>   | No  |                          |
| <b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b> |   |                          |
| Officer Title   | <b>Comments Sought</b>                      | <b>Comments Included</b> |
| Director of Law and Governance  | Yes   | Yes                      |
| Strategic Director of Finance and Governance                            | Yes   | Yes                      |
| Cabinet Member  | Yes   | Yes                      |
| Date final report sent to Constitutional Team                           | 25 May 2021                                 |                          |