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**To: Leadership Board**

**On: 4 December 2019**

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**Report by: Head of Policy and Commissioning**

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**Heading: Cultural Organisations Development Fund**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Leadership Board for the award of grants recommended from the second round of Cultural Organisations Development Fund applications.
- 1.2 The Leadership Board agreed to establish a new Cultural Organisations Development Fund at the meeting of 19 September 2018. The fund was established as one of the legacies of the UK City of Culture bid process to transform Paisley and Renfrewshire. It is a key mechanism in building a thriving local independent cultural sector and delivering the benefits of the bid process.
- 1.3 The fund's purpose is to strengthen and build the capacity of local cultural and creative organisations. The fund will provide core funding to organisations to allow them to be better sustained, more resilient and capable of expanding and / or improving the quality of their operations and programmes. Renfrewshire Leisure administers the fund on behalf of the Council, with decisions on funding continuing to be made by the Leadership Board.
- 1.4 The current funding round was launched in June 2019, with the deadline for submissions of 1 October 2019.
- 1.5 A total of £302,318 was awarded in Round 1 of the fund at the Leadership Board of 1 May 2019.
- 1.6 A total of four applications with a total value of £149,769 were received in the current round, of which two recommendations for grant award are made in this round with a total recommendation of £66,425 leaving a balance of £11,257 from the total £380,000 available in this fund.

- 1.7 It is recommended that the balance of £11,257 be used to support small grants of up to £3k to support the development of organisational development and sustainability plans for local cultural organisations. It is proposed that the two unsuccessful applicants be invited to apply to this. It is further proposed that authority to award these grants be delegated to the Director of Communities, Housing and Planning Services, following an assessment process.
- 1.8 The allocated funding would therefore be distributed, and there are no further funding rounds currently scheduled.
- 1.9 Further work will be undertaken on addressing the long-term sustainability of the CODF, in the context of Renfrewshire's refreshed cultural strategy, Right for Renfrewshire and in conversation with national funders regarding partnership opportunities.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the board:
  - i. notes the continued level of interest generated in this second round of the Cultural Organisations Development Fund;
  - ii. approves the recommended grant awards, as detailed in Section 5 of this report to the total value of £66,425
  - iii. approves the use of the balance of £11,257 for a further round of small grants to support growth plans, and delegates authority to the Director of Communities, Housing and Planning to make the awards; and
  - iv. notes that officers will undertake further work on the longer term sustainability of the fund.

## **3. Background to the Fund**

- 3.1 At the Leadership Board meeting of 28 February 2018 it was agreed that the financial resources committed to the delivery of what would have been Paisley's UK City of Culture in 2021 would be maintained as the Council contribution to actions seeking to deliver benefits from Paisley's bidding process.
- 3.2 A Culture, Heritage and Events Fund was established in 2016 to support Paisley's UK City of Culture bid through specific local cultural projects. This has been successful in supporting many arts, heritage and events projects and demand for the fund remains high.
- 3.3 The bid process identified that there was a need to strengthen capacity of the local independent cultural sector. The Leadership Board agreed to establish a new Cultural Organisations Development Fund at the meeting of 19 September 2018, as a key mechanism in this capacity-building process.

- 3.4 The Cultural Organisations Development Fund is a three year fund with the purpose of strengthening and building the capacity of local cultural and creative organisations. A budget of £360,000 over three years from 2019 to 2022 was identified from the resources committed to the delivery of the UK City of Culture 2021 bid legacy, with further £20,000 from bid legacy budgets resulting in a total budget of £380,000.
- 3.5 The objectives of the fund are to:
- i. support organisations with a track record of delivering successful cultural programmes, to become more sustainable and to take the next steps in their strategic development;
  - ii. support organisations that can play a role in delivering Paisley and / or Renfrewshire's ambitions, by developing cultural excellence; and
  - iii. support organisations which have an ongoing commitment to diversifying and expanding cultural participation.
- 3.6 The fund can support a range of organisational development activities, which could include:
- i. Governance - such as board recruitment, company development needs, enhancing skill sets, improving diversity, gender balance, training and awareness;
  - ii. Leadership and management – which could be cultural, financial, legal or other administrative and funding & evaluation;
  - iii. Workforce – creating new staff posts, developing key skills, supporting training and experience;
  - iv. Pathways – developing creative learning programmes and/or skills and pathways projects that recruit internships, apprenticeships and other placements;
  - v. Engagement – improving social media, communications, marketing and public relations and supporting wider engagement with cultural sectors across Scotland and the UK;
  - vi. Reach – developing new areas of organisational activity, deepening art form knowledge, developing quality, diversifying your cultural offer, supporting new artistic partnerships and collaborations.

Exclusions: The Fund is not for programming or artistic costs for workshops, events or festivals. Those requests should be directed to the Culture, Heritage and Events Fund.

- 3.7 It is envisaged that grants through the fund will support development plans for organisations and that these may cover one to three years of activities. The grant can be available for all three years to give organisations the security of having that funding committed to them. The maximum grant for one year's development activity is £40,000. Applicants are encouraged to apply for the amount most appropriate to their organisation's development needs at the point of application. All applicants must demonstrate how the amount requested and the timeframe proposed is appropriate for achieving their intended organisational development outcomes.
- 3.8 Grants are available to Renfrewshire based organisations or groups only. They should be established or developing organisations who have a primary cultural or creative purpose. Private individuals and shareholding organisations that generate private profits are excluded from the fund.

#### **4. Application and assessment process**

- 4.1 The fund was launched in June 2019, with a deadline of 1 October 2019 for Round 2 applications.
- 4.2 A total of four applications were received by the deadline of 1 October 2019, totalling a funding request of £149,769.
- 4.3 Each application was assessed by an assessor from Renfrewshire Council's Economic Development team, and a Lead Assessor from a pool of officers drawn from Renfrewshire Council Regeneration Service and Renfrewshire Leisure Cultural Services.
- 4.4 Applications were assessed against three main criteria:
1. The proposed activity's fit with the purpose and objectives of the fund;
  2. Effective management and governance;
  3. Financial viability.
- 4.5 For applications recommended for approval, assessors also undertook an assessment of risk and identified if any special payment conditions were required.
- 4.6 A panel of Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Leisure officers considered the recommendations, based on written assessments, with assessors attending to present and be questioned on the assessment. The panel also ensured that the assessment process was fair and consistent across all applications.
- 4.7 Where applications are recommended for refusal, full feedback, support and guidance for organisations on further development and alternative sources of funding will be offered.

## 5. Assessment recommendations

- 5.1 Two applications are recommended for approval, totalling £66,425, leaving a total of £11,257 remaining in the fund.
- 5.2 Two applications are recommended for refusal, and one application is recommended for part award. Requests not funded total £82,344
- 5.3 The organisations recommended to be funded by the Cultural Organisations Development Fund are Right2Dance (full award) and Paisley Opera (part award). They join the organisations funded in the first round to form a developmental cohort over a three year period: Erskine Music and Media Studio, STAR Project, Outspoken Arts, CREATE Paisley and PACE Theatre Company.

Applications recommended for refusal are: Coats Memorial Preservation Trust and Creative Renfrewshire.

Details of successful and unsuccessful applications are provided in the attached appendix.

Full feedback and guidance will be offered to those organisations which were not awarded funding.

- 5.5 Following Board approval, an officer from RL Cultural Services will be matched with each successful organisation to act as their relationship officer, monitoring progress against objectives, and offering support and guidance. Applicants awarded the highest levels of support over three years will be required to attend an annual review meeting and to evidence their progress towards agreed milestones, with subsequent years' funding dependent on satisfactory progress being achieved. We will also bring the cohort together as a collective, to look at the opportunities presented through a group of organisations working on their development and long-term sustainability.

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## Implications of the Report

- 1. **Financial** – The grant awards outlined in the report will be funded from existing resources earmarked for the Cultural Organisation Development Fund over the period to 2021. The applications are subject to the Council's new grant conditions which were revised and implemented April 2016.
- 2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
- 3. **Community Planning** – The Funds form an important part of the bidding legacy plan that contributes directly to the community plan targets for a place-based approach to the cultural regeneration of Paisley and Renfrewshire.

**Community Care, Health & Wellbeing** – A number of applicants to the Cultural Organisations Development Fund aim to deliver positive impact on wellbeing

**Jobs and the Economy** – The bid legacy programme aims to deliver positive economic impacts.

4. **Legal – None**
5. **Property/Assets – None**
6. **Information Technology - None**
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report the projects and criteria have been developed to provide opportunities across equality groups.
8. **Health & Safety** - not applicable
9. **Procurement** – not applicable
10. **Risk** - not applicable
11. **Privacy Impact** - not applicable
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – not applicable
13. **Climate Risk** - none

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**List of Background Papers:**

- a) *Cultural Organisations Development Fund and Management of Cultural Grant Programme, Leadership Board 19 Sep 2018*
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**Author:** Laura McIntyre, Head of Policy and Commissioning

Recommended for Funding			
Applicant	Project Summary	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
Right2 Dance	Right 2 Dance are a well-established organisation with a strong track record in developing excellence in dance, who have set out their strategic development pathway clearly within their application. The proposal strongly met the purpose of the fund in building capacity within the organisation. The proposed activity covers three main areas - staffing and governance, branding and communication and participation opportunities. The additional capacity will support Right2Dance to do more work in schools	£57,425	£57,425
Paisley Opera	Paisley Opera have a successful track record of developing and delivering culturally excellent operas with strong community benefit. There is strong potential for Paisley Opera to grow and develop as a unique cultural organisation in Renfrewshire through additional investment. Whilst a clear case was made for the fundraising consultant, it was not made clear how the proposed artistic and marketing posts at low cost would produce additional tangible outcomes nor how these posts would be sustained in the longer-term without further business development. It is proposed to support the fundraising consultant and the development of a growth plan	£33,144	£9,000

Recommended for Refusal			
Applicant	Project Summary	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
Coats Memorial Preservation Trust	Coats Memorial Church is a valuable heritage asset. The application focuses on the development of a multi-purpose venue as a commercial organisation, the proposed activity did not focus on the development of cultural excellence for Renfrewshire, and therefore does not meet the fund's objectives of supporting organisations with a strong track record in delivering successful cultural programmes, and in developing cultural excellence. The application presented some inherent financial risks and the longer-term sustainability of the venue or venue manager post were not sufficiently addressed. There were therefore a number of weaknesses in meeting the criteria of the fund. It is recommended that the applicant meets with officers from Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Leisure to pursue other avenues for support	£40,000	-

Creative Renfrewshire	<p>Creative Renfrewshire exist to support the local creative sector in Renfrewshire. However, there were a number of issues with the application which mean that it is not possible to recommend a CODF grant to the organisation at this stage. There is a definite need to support the development of the creative sector, particularly creative freelancers, in Renfrewshire. However, the application did not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the proposed activity would meet this need. There was a lack of evidence that CODF investment would produce tangible outcomes. Furthermore, there were a number of inherent financial weaknesses and risks. It is recommended that Creative Renfrewshire work with Renfrewshire Leisure to pursue other avenues for supporting the creative sector in Renfrewshire</p>	£18,200	-
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