



To: Council

On: 25 June 2015

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Paisley's Bid for UK City of Culture 2021

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out a proposal for Paisley entering the competition to host the UK City of Culture in 2021, and seeks the full support of the Council to develop the bid in partnership with a range of stakeholders, for submission in 2017.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Council:
- (i) Authorise the Chief Executive to work with partners to put in place the necessary resources required to support and enable the development and delivery of a credible, and deliverable, partnership bid for UK City of Culture 2021, on behalf of Paisley.
 - (ii) Note the establishment of a Paisley City of Culture Partnership Board.
 - (iii) Agree that the Leader of the Council will chair the Partnership Board, and that the Depute Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Opposition and the Chair of Renfrewshire Leisure will also be members of the Board.
 - (iv) To note that regular progress reports on the activity surrounding the preparation of the bid will be reported to the Leadership Board.
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3. Background

- 3.1 “Working together to make Renfrewshire a fairer, more inclusive place where all our people, communities and businesses thrive” is the vision set out in our Community Plan 2013 – 2023.
- 3.2 A successful Paisley is vital to the economic and social performance of all of Renfrewshire. The Paisley Heritage Asset Strategy which was approved by Council in January 2014 set out a strategy for the town that seeks to exploit its wealth of heritage and cultural assets as a basis for regeneration.
- 3.3 It sets out an ambitious vision for Paisley including the development of a signature museum project of national status, developing opportunities to improve the visitor offer and rebrand Paisley as a visitor destination, providing employment and regeneration opportunities. As a regeneration platform the Strategy identifies the opportunities to ensure that the economic gains made are felt across Renfrewshire and are beneficial to local people in terms of training, employment and business development.
- 3.4 Heritage driven regeneration strategies have transformed the economic performance of towns and cities throughout the UK. In developing the strategy consideration was given to the journey of towns like Derry-Londonderry, Dundee and Hull, towns which face similar challenges to Paisley, and who have used the UK City of Culture programme as a positive lever for change.
- 3.5 The UK City of Culture programme will act as a significant catalyst for cultural and economic regeneration and as a rallying call for partners across Paisley, and beyond, to back the bid and develop a compelling case and vision to host this year long programme in 2021.

UK City of Culture

- 3.6 The UK City of Culture programme was developed by the UK Government to build on the success of Liverpool as European Capital of Culture 2008 and the Cultural Olympiad in 2012, by creating a national cultural event spread over a year, focused on a particular city or urban area. The City of Culture programme aims to:
 - encourage the use of culture and creativity as a catalyst for change,
 - promote the development of new partnerships,
 - encourage ambition, innovation and inspiration in cultural and creative activity,
 - align the cultural excellence of national arts organisations to support the year with cultural highlights that will attract media attention, encourage national tourism and change perceptions.

- 3.7 Winning the title and hosting a year of cultural events helps cities to:
- attract more visitors
 - increase media interest in the city
 - bring community members together
 - increase levels of professional artistic collaboration
- 3.8 Derry-Londonderry was the first UK City of Culture in 2013. A four year cycle for the programme has been established and Hull was selected as UK City of Culture 2017. Continuing the four year cycle results in the next UK City of Culture year being 2021.
- 3.9 The selection of the host city is a competitive process run through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). They assemble a judging panel and appoint independent assessors to consider submissions. The selection process for the 2021 competition will take place during Hull's host year 2017. Although no formal programme has been published it is anticipated on the basis of the previous bid processes that expressions of interest will be sought in February 2017, with entries required by the end of April. Thereafter a shortlist is announced and full and final bids will be required by the end of September, with the winner announced at the end of November 2017.
- 3.10 Our current understanding of other cities considering bidding for 2021 include Coventry, Hereford, Worcester and Sunderland, although it is likely that other candidates will step forward between now and the bidding date. At this point, we are the only known bid for Scotland.
- 3.11 Our research into the programme has emphasised the importance of a compelling case being developed to demonstrate the positive change that can be delivered by hosting the programme. The successful candidate will have demonstrated capacity and capability of hosting an interesting and engaging year long programme, and will have shown how the programme will deliver economic, social, cultural and tourism infrastructure benefits. All from a well understood and clearly articulated baseline. Judges also expect to see a high level of community engagement, grass roots understanding, support and involvement in the bid and programme.
- 3.12 Whatever the outcome of the bidding process, the overarching ambition is that Paisley's bid will raise its profile and change perceptions of the town, set new benchmarks for engagement and regeneration, foster new partnerships within the town and with national agencies, and accelerate the pace of economic and social regeneration.

- 3.13 The recent Commission on Tackling Poverty in Renfrewshire highlights that Renfrewshire is an area with many strengths and much to be proud of, however, it also emphasises the need to “nurture and grow our potential; otherwise the deep-rooted deprivation issues which have developed over many decades will persist”. Those cities who have been successful candidates for the UK City of Culture programme have been those who have demonstrated that the programme will bring a step change for their community. Derry-Londonderry hosts some of the most deprived communities in Northern Ireland, has a struggling retail and town centre economy with high vacancy levels, and had issues of high unemployment rates and a divided community. Early feedback from Derry-Londonderry is that the most remarkable success of the bid has been in the bringing together of the community and building of civic pride. Similarly, Hull, the host city for 2017, faces challenges in terms of unemployment, educational attainment, health and external perceptions.
- 3.14 In preparing to bid for UK City of Culture 2021, the benefits of a Paisley Bid would include:
- Raising Paisley’s national and international profile as a visitor destination.
 - Building the civic pride of residents, and changing perceptions of Paisley as a place to visit.
 - Encouraging investment and promoting a new vibrancy for the town centre.
 - Creating new employment opportunities, in particular the visitor and creative economy.
 - Through art and cultural programmes, engaging with communities, and citizens of all ages across Renfrewshire.
 - Galvanising community participation and connections.
 - Building capacity and aspiration among our young people.
 - Providing a strong and compelling ambition for the area that will be a catalyst for partnership working.

4. A Partnership Bid

- 4.1. Feedback from previous candidates has consistently emphasised the importance of a “whole town” bid, and the need for cross business, community and political support. With this in mind a Paisley City of Culture Partnership Board will be established, and is proposed to be chaired by the Council leader. The role of this group will be to draw together all of the necessary partners (national and local) across the civic, political, business, educational and community interests of the town, to support the formation of the Bid and to submit it on behalf of Paisley. This will be supported by a City of Culture Executive Group with key representatives from across the partnership who will deliver the key work-streams associated with the bid, coordinated by a Bid Manager, and chaired by the Council’s Chief Executive.

5. Resourcing the Bid

- 5.1 While there is no cost for entering the City of Culture competition, preparing the best bid possible will incur costs with investment in staff time, specialist and advisory services required to support the bid. The experience of other Cities who have entered in the programme is that costs in the region of £250k to £300k can be envisaged.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – There will be costs associated with the bringing together of a bid for UK City of Culture, this will include staff costs, and costs of any expert advisors which will be commissioned to support the development of the bid. The experience of other Cities is that these costs can range from £250k-£300k. These costs will be met from existing resources. If the bid for UK City of Culture is successful then the financial implications will be more significant. The process of developing the bid will assist in defining the potential cost of hosting the UK City of Culture programme and the funding strategy required to support this.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – A small team will be required to resource the development of the Bid. A Bid manager will be appointed to coordinate the development of the bid.
3. **Community Planning** –

Empowering our Communities – Community engagement and building capacity through cultural programmes is a key element of the bidding process.

Jobs and the Economy – The UK City of Culture programme can act as a catalyst for increased visitors to the town, and provide opportunities for social and economic regeneration and job creation. The experience of other cities who have participated in the programme is of a positive economic impact.
4. **Legal** - *None*.
5. **Property/Assets** – none at this stage, although a successful bid will require venues that are suitable to host large scale events. The extent of any property requirement will be scoped through the development of the bid. -.
6. **Information Technology** – *None*
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -

- (a) 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. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – N/A
9. **Procurement** – There will be a requirement to procure expert advice on aspects of the development of the Bid. Any procurement will be conducted in accordance with legislation and the Council's standing orders.
10. **Risk** – There is a risk that Paisley's bid for UK City of Culture may not be successful, however, the feedback from previous participants in the programme is that the process of bidding itself brings many positive benefits including raising of civic pride and aspiration, and assists in the development of strong engagement with the local community and partnership working.
11. **Privacy Impact** – N/A.
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List of Background Papers

The foregoing background papers will be retained within (*Development & Housing Services*) for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is *Stuart McMillan, x7850*

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