

Report to:	Cabinet	Date of Meeting:	3 October 2019
Subject:	Borough of Culture 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director	Wards Affected:	(All Wards);
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member - Communities and Housing		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

Sefton will be the Liverpool City Region's Borough of Culture for 2020, and an outline programme and business plan have been developed for the year following consultation and engagement with partners and communities across the borough. This feedback recommends focus on local history and the environment as the two priority areas for the programme, with emphasis in all events, activities and initiatives on participation (inclusive of all communities), permanence (assets, activities and relationships lasting beyond 2020), partnerships (working with partner organisations and communities across the borough), and on engendering local pride in Sefton.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) To approve the outline structure of the programme and the business plan;
- (2) To delegate authority for finalisation of the detailed programme to the Cabinet Member (Communities and Housing);
- (3) To note that a supplementary revenue estimate of £0.200m to be fully funded by the Liverpool City Region, be approved by the Executive Director in consultation with the Cabinet (Communities and Housing) and the Section 151 Officer in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules;
- (4) To delegate authority for approval of allocations of available funding in excess of £5,000 to the Cabinet Member (Communities and Housing); and
- (5) To delegate authority for approval of allocations of available funding below £5,000 to the Borough of Culture Steering Group, chaired by the Executive Director, in accordance with the approved detailed programme.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

These recommendations will support finalisation of the detailed actions relating to key events and initiatives, as well as pursuit of further funding opportunities. They will also

enable finalisation of plans for further discussion with partners and communities, including in advance of the proposed launch of the programme in November 2019.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

- (i) Develop an alternative programme structure – this is not recommended due to the quality and quantity of feedback received from partners and communities that has informed the programme development process.
- (ii) Do not delegate authority for finalisation of the programme – this is not recommended given the time constraints it would place on the finalisation of planning for initiatives and events across the year; efficiency in this process will enable maximum investment in the ideas and initiatives proposed by partners and communities.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

The cost of the programme will be met by funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and from other external funding sources to be secured. The sum due from the combined authority is £200,000. In accordance with Financial procedure Rules grants in excess of £100,000 up to £250,000 (including from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority) will be approved by the Executive Director in consultation with the Cabinet Member and the Section 151 Officer (need to change this if the grant is less than £100k). Any additional external funding will also be approved in line with Financial Procedure Rules.

(B) Capital Costs

There are no capital costs associated with the programme.

Implications of the Proposals:

Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):

The proposals aim to maximise community participation and benefit with the funding available. The cost of the programme will be met by funding from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and from other external funding sources, which will be approved in line with financial procedure rules.

Legal Implications:

There are no legal implications.

Equality Implications:

There are no equality implications.

Contribution to the Council's Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable:

The programme will be finalised to ensure engagement of all communities, supporting positive health and wellbeing outcomes through participation, and reflecting the ethos of a borough for everyone.

Facilitate confident and resilient communities:

Engagement has been undertaken and will continue with communities across the borough, reflecting their objectives and opportunities and supporting engenderment of local pride.

Commission, broker and provide core services:

Not applicable.

Place – leadership and influencer:

The focus of the programme will be on stories about us, by us, and for us – this will support engenderment of local pride in Sefton and the places within.

Drivers of change and reform:

The programme is aiming to increase participation in a range of cultural activities.

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity:

Not applicable

Greater income for social investment:

The programme team will maximise opportunities from external funding sources to support the implementation of ideas, events and initiatives with communities across the borough.

Cleaner Greener:

A key element of the programme will be on environmental sustainability, supporting the Council's objectives in this respect.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Head of Corporate Resources (FD5798/19) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD4022/19) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

Communications via local press and radio in April and May 2019 ascertained a wide range of feedback from partners and communities across the borough, in terms of ideas, initiatives and proposals. This feedback has been used to develop the structure and focus of the programme, and the key priorities and stories therein.

Engagement with partners and communities has continued in response to this feedback, and informal and proactive consultation has taken place with existing partner organisations across the borough.

A consultation event was hosted on 18th July 2019, at which further perspectives and ideas were sought. That feedback has informed the programme and the proposals within the report.

External consultation and engagement will be ongoing throughout the balance of 2019 and into 2020, with the programme structured to enable further progression of new ideas and opportunities as communications continue with partners and communities across Sefton.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

1. Introduction/Background

1.1 Following discussion with Cabinet earlier in 2019 once Sefton was confirmed as the Liverpool City Region's Borough of Culture, focus for the Borough of Culture (BoC) 2020 programme has remained on **Sefton people and stories – stories about us, stories by us, and stories for us – all of us**. This is broad enough to support a wider range of ideas and opportunities, and aligns with the prioritisation of Sefton's communities in the development of ideas, initiatives and events. It has also resonated with communities and partners in engagement to date on the BoC opportunity.

1.2 The Liverpool City Region's Borough of Culture framework identified five key elements proposed to underpin the programmes across the years. These comprise:

- **Children and young people** – accessing, enjoying, learning and thriving through culture and creative engagement with skills and talent pathways.
- **Positive outcomes** – wellbeing, health, education, cohesion and future world of work.
- **Communities** – increased participation, particularly the ageing society. **All communities / parts of Sefton.**
- **Distinctiveness of place** – promoting the creative and culture offer to local people and visitors.
- **Infrastructure** – leaving a **legacy** through better infrastructure for culture and creativity.

1.3 Moreover, we have identified what would be additional Core Principles for Sefton's Borough of Culture 2020 programme, using "four Ps" which have been identified to support discussion and prioritisation regarding opportunities for the BoC programme:

- **Participation** – initiatives that maximise opportunity for participation; not just event attendance, but in the cultural activities themselves (arts, music, writing, etc); and ensuring **inclusivity** – reflective of a borough for everyone (irrespective of gender, age, ethnicity, geography, ability, demography, etc).
- **Partnerships** – working with partners to deliver 2020 and beyond together; this is the borough's year of culture, not the council's.
- **Permanence** – ideas, installations, events and relationships that will remain in place beyond 2020.
- **Pride** – opportunities that help engender pride in our community and the communities within Sefton

2. Themes and programme structure

2.1 The theme of the year will be stories – it is proposed to use the tagline "**Myths and Realities**" to support this. The shape of the year would be:

- Focused on much of the storytelling across the earlier parts of the year – relating to local heritage, and recognising the nature of history and stories and how myth, memory, perspective and subjectivity influence such stories over time.
- Becoming increasingly focused on the environmental theme over the second half of the year, culminating in the notable events and initiatives to be developed for November 2020, hopefully to coincide with the UN Climate Change Summit (which London is bidding to host). Whereas a story such as Napoleon III in Southport could border on “myth”, the climate change emergency would be the “reality”.

2.2 The nature of the challenges involved in storytelling and myths is recognised. It is therefore critical that evidence is used where it exists to support such stories, or that there is transparency on where such evidence may not exist. This ought not to hinder the BoC opportunity given the wealth of stories, ideas and opportunities emerging, but will require management in the appropriate manner.

2.3 The shape of the year outlined above reflects the key themes identified by our communities and our partners through feedback, engagement, and the Sefton CVS event held in July 2019. This has been consolidated and captured as well to support engagement with potential funding partners.

2.4 **Local History** is consistently identified as a key area of opportunity, with the stories people want to tell, or that people want to celebrate, being identified through the engagement to date. This is discussed further in section 3.

2.5 **Environmental sustainability** is the other key theme identified by partners and communities. It is therefore intended that the shape of the year reflects these focus areas and demonstrates that we have listened to communities and partners in maximising the BoC opportunity. Section 4 discusses this area further.

2.6 The above identifies the basis for the stories to be told across the year (the “what”), and there are a range of means through which these stories can be told (the “how”). By way of example, the story of Isaac Roberts is one that resonates with communities in Maghull (see section 3), and this can be progressed through such means as blue plaques, events, performances, creative writing and photography.

2.7 While there might be some major new events across the borough, across the year, the foundation of Sefton’s programme for BoC 2020 is a **large number of community-led initiatives and events**, in all areas of the borough, celebrating stories of our people and our place.



3. Local History and Heritage

3.1 Local history and heritage has been identified as a priority by our communities and partners, and provides a large number of ideas and opportunities for stories across the year.

3.2 The approach has been to understand what these stories are, and the range of ways in which those stories can be captured, communicated and celebrated. There is a long list of stories that provide opportunities to engage local communities during the programme, and it is proposed to identify and finalise those priorities through further consultation with communities.

3.3 **Sefton's Interactive History Trail** – this would comprise 30 locations across Sefton, based on the finalised list of priorities, where as well as, or instead of, a traditional blue plaque, would be a permanent “**Comic Strip Board**”. This would tell the story in a small number of boxes, with a final box including a link which would take the reader into an online application. This would include further details or information relating to the person or story. The app would enable the reader to “collect” these, with incentives particularly for young people across Sefton to collect all 30. Anticipated benefits would include:

- A phasing that supports continued engagement of communities across the year
- An approach that engages the interest of young people in local history and heritage
- A physical product that is distinctive
- A framework for the programme across the year
- Legacy - a trail that should last beyond 2020
- A trail of stories that will help engender and celebrate local pride

3.4 The board would comprise a short story about the person, event or place in question over 6-7 boxes. There would be a final box that includes a QR code, or similar, to take the reader to an online application which would include a video or animation telling more detail, or the next stage of a story (depending on how the board in question is written). The reader would be encouraged to “collect” all 30 boards via the app, with incentives for young people to participate in local history and to explore the borough beyond their own community.

3.5 It is proposed to use the trail as the basis of an Arts Council funding bid, which could include:

- Design and artwork
- Story curation
- Construction and installation of the boards
- Development, implementation and maintenance of the app and the online content
- A number of events associated with the board unveilings

3.6 The maintenance of the boards will be discussed with the Council’s street scene management team, to ensure that they are maintained to a suitable standard for a sustainable period, and / or that they have a life span before which they are moved or removed, to ensure that they reflect the street scene of the borough. Partner and sponsor engagement will be relevant in this respect, in terms of location, maintenance, and potentially costs of production and installation.

3.7 A potential partner has been identified to deliver the artwork – a local professional artist who works with children’s magazines. However, procurement processes, intellectual property, etc, will be discussed to ensure the correct approach to commissioning and delivering the trail.

3.8 The aim would be to have a board unveiled for each of the 30 across the year, linked to related events or other activities associated with those stories. For example, if one of the BoC2020 launch events would relate to Isaac Roberts, that board would be unveiled at that event; or if a wall mural were to be installed and unveiled, the board would be unveiled at the same time.

3.9 In the finalisation, development and implementation of the boards, we would engage with historical societies across the borough, as well as with those who’ve raised some of these ideas through their feedback.

3.10 Myths and Realities

It would be proposed in the curation of each story to be transparent and respectful in terms of which elements of each story are historical fact, and which may have less evidence. This approach would align with such programmes as *Horrible Histories*, which uses a narrator to add detail to stories on screen in terms of what is true, and what can’t be evidenced. This would be woven into the boards, the online element, and the wider story

curation, perhaps using a squirrel image as the narrator to communicate this where necessary.

4. Environment

- 4.1 The other key theme that has emerged strongly from community engagement is the environment. This would align well with the Council's brand and vision for the borough, as well as presenting a range of opportunities.
- 4.2 In terms of the "Myths and Realities" tagline, this would be positioned as the "reality". There may be events and initiatives throughout the year, but it would be proposed to focus on this particularly in October and November 2020, to align with the timing of the UN Climate Summit that London is bidding to host. Regardless of their success, this timing would offer opportunity for national profile of suitable events and installations.
- 4.3 As well as events and initiatives focused on the same themes – participation of communities, permanent legacy, and pride – it would be proposed to commission a series of permanent installations across the borough to reflect this "reality".
- 4.4 It is proposed to develop this element of the programme as part of the strategic and organisation-wide discussions that are commencing following the Council's climate emergency motion.
- 4.5 Moreover, it would be proposed to implement an environmental policy for the year that ensures that our activities and events are reflective of the council's ethos and vision for the borough in this regard. (e.g. single use plastics in catering provision at events).
- 4.6 One notable opportunity that will be progressed is the proposal for every child in the borough to plant a bulb during the year, potentially as part of the November 2019 launch programme, and potentially designed to grow into the BoC logo, or something aligned to one or more of our stories. The plan and the funding route will be developed by Green Sefton.

5. Community-led events and initiatives

- 5.1 Our external communications activity to date, our partner engagement, and the CVS event in July, have all identified a large number of community-led events, initiatives and ideas that will form the foundation of Borough of Culture 2020. Feedback has been extremely positive from almost all parties with whom we have engaged, reinforcing that the focus recommended by the Leader and Cabinet has resonated very well with our communities across the borough.
- 5.2 In programming and in presentational terms, it is proposed that this large range of activity will form the core of our plan for BoC 2020, complemented by the larger events. This will be developed and finalised over the balance of 2019 and into early 2020, but we are confident based on what we have seen already that this programme will be truly inclusive of the whole borough, in every sense.
- 5.3 We already have a large range of examples to start to illustrate the strength and breadth of community feedback and ideas. This list continues to grow and remains under development, and will be brought to Cabinet Members for review in line with the approach to funding allocation.
- 5.4 In terms of funding, it is proposed to allocate a portion of the core budget to this programme of initiatives. However, a sizeable contribution to this will be a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a community grants fund, which would be used to support a wide range of events and initiatives across 2020. We will also explore commercial sponsorship opportunity, and Sefton CVS and NLHF are also facilitating a funding workshop in October 2019 for partners to directly access this funding (for larger sums).
- 5.5 In terms of identification or priorities, allocation of funding, and exploration of alternative funding opportunities, it would be proposed to also explore options for use of Sefton Crowd.

6. Calendar

6.1 To illustrate the shape of the year, and some of the key events proposed, this section captures the outline calendar for BoC2020 at this stage.

6.2 November 2019 – Launch Events

The Wirral BoC year in 2019 culminates in November, and it is proposed to use this month for handover to Sefton, and for a series of launch events across the borough. These would include a civic event, with a formal handover at the LCR Cultural Awards in Wirral, 28th November 2019; the Constellations event in Crosby, of which there will be one in each LCR borough in October / November 2019; the opening of the Kingsley & Co café / library / bookshop by Y-Kids in Bootle, and the Bootle Children’s Literature Festival; and other events to be confirmed.

6.3 Other events

The programme will also include an event across the borough in February or March 2020, focused on light and projection onto notable buildings across the borough – this will include artwork as well as writing by residents from across the borough.

The Jockey Club are keen to be a key partner across the programme, across the whole borough, and across the year, and opportunities for a launch event in November 2019 and opportunities relating to the Grand National are being explored. A key story for them is Red Rum, which they believe is being forgotten or is unknown by younger generations. Close engagement is ongoing with their marketing and communications team, to ensure leverage of their resources to maximise the profile of the programme all year, including at the Grand National itself.

Given the history of the borough and the 75th anniversary of VE Day in 2020, it is proposed to ensure that the programme recognises this event. It would be proposed to unveil a Bootle Blitz board at this time, and to explore some of the community-led projects proposed on this subject area. Sefton CVS have proposed to lead on undertaking similar arts projects on the beaches as were undertaken with the Olympic rings and the poppies, which could be appropriately themed for this anniversary. This would be designed to align to the wider council and borough programmes for this anniversary.

The Council has a wide range of material that would enable a more comprehensive exhibition on the subject during the month, and across the year, and the Atkinson will develop a plan (using a new mobile wall system and smart tables) to exhibit this in Bootle as part of the programme.

6.4 We are also exploring a range of other ideas, many led by communities and partners, including some “pop-up” events that will benefit from the element of surprise.

- 6.5 Although the existing array of exciting events across the borough runs across the year (notably the Grand National in April, as above), many take place between August and October. These include Southport Flower Show, Southport Air Show and the British Musical Fireworks Championships, each of which includes opportunity for alignment with the BoC programme and themes, and in some cases a “new take” on the event. These will continue to be led by the existing teams, with income and expenditure budgeted separately, as previously.
- 6.6 Although various community-led initiatives and events across the year will include an environmental aspect, and the related policies will influence the whole programme, it is proposed that the month of November is focused on sustainability and the environment. This not only reflects the feedback from our communities from consultation to date, but also aligns with the ethos and vision for the borough and for the council. London is presently bidding to host the UN’s Global Climate Change Summit in November 2020, so there will be strong alignment with an event with national and international profile, irrespective of London’s success in their bid (but strengthened if they are successful).
- 6.7 Although a range of initiatives and ideas have been proposed by communities and partners, it is proposed that this element of the programme be developed in collaboration with a working group reviewing the council-wide challenges and opportunities in this area, to ensure alignment of approach and output, and maximisation of the opportunity this element of the programme provides.
- 6.8 The Atkinson and Library Services teams have an existing programme under development for 2020, and a range of new ideas and opportunities for the BoC programme.
- 6.9 This calendar will be further developed by the team over the coming months, and although a fuller programme will be mapped out in advance of the November 2019 launch, including a range of the opportunities identified by partners and communities, this would continue to grow throughout 2020 as engagement builds across the borough.

7. Business Plan

7.1 The Business Plan for BoC 2020 remains draft, but is described for illustrative purposes to reflect the priorities of the programme.

7.2 Funding routes include the core Liverpool City Region Combined Authority funding, as well as opportunities to be pursued with Culture Liverpool, the Arts Council, National Lottery Heritage Fund, and commercial sponsorship.

7.3 The business plan will ensure focus on and prioritisation of the community-led events and initiatives, with a review and approval process in accordance with the delegation of authority proposed.

7.4 **Measurement of Success** - Liverpool City Region plans to place Culture and Creativity at the heart of the strategic objectives:

- i) to accelerate economic growth
- ii) improve skills and
- iii) further develop its distinctive visitor offer
- iv) to support a place-based strategy and the city region's plans for a Local Cultural Partnership (LCP).

Indicators of impact and success on each borough are the core underpinning of the success of the Borough of Culture programme.

In partnership with the Borough of Culture Evaluation working group, the Institute of Cultural Capital (ICC) and Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) have developed an evaluation framework for each borough to implement before, during and after their year of culture.

This framework will provide the longitudinal evaluation of the Borough of Culture programme for the next 4 – 5 years and will develop a methodology which will attribute causality to a large-scale cultural invention.

The framework is designed to help each borough to plan evaluation / research methods for the programme of culture, which will range from business/ residential surveys, case study examples, feedback sessions to commissioned research for major events through the Liverpool Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

The research and evaluation will also provide a local picture of the impact of cultural intervention for Sefton in 2020 and beyond.

Implementing and collating research will take time and the need to be realistic to what extent we can carry out this research will need to be considered.

An essential part of the bidding process for funding of an event and/ or space will need to have a research condition which can be used to develop the framework.

Major events (new and existing) will have major research (carried out by the LEP) and existing events will have previous research which can be used in comparison.

The total cost of the Borough of Culture research and evaluation is a £5k contribution from each of the Boroughs towards the costs.

8. Communications and Marketing Plan

8.1 A Communications Plan has been developed for Borough of Culture 2020 and the aim is to ensure key audiences are engaged, involved, able to participate and feel it is inclusive. Our overall vision is to engender pride and belonging across the borough.

8.2 Key communications objectives are to:

- Encourage ideas/involvement from staff, partners, communities and businesses
- Ensure key audiences are engaged and support the programme
- Highlight/promote the cultural programme to key audiences
- Encourage participation
- Instil a sense of pride and celebrate Sefton's cultural distinctiveness

8.3 So far, communications activity has focused on 'warming people up' to Borough of Culture 2020 opportunities with staff engagement, exploring potential collaborations with partners and encouraging ideas from our Sefton residents. A video is in production and will be unveiled in September to visually show how our communities are embracing this opportunity, what culture means to them and also some of the ideas they would love to see come to life in 2020.

8.4 As part of the communications plan, given that the Council does not intend to set up a new cultural team on the back of Borough of Culture status, it has been agreed that it would be much better and more productive to utilise existing Council websites and social media channels, given the strength of these channels and their followership. All the Council's existing digital channels will clearly emphasise that Sefton is Borough of Culture 2020 with appropriate branding and profile biographies to maximise this opportunity

8.5 The next stage for communications is to develop a more detailed marketing plan and identify the funding that will be needed for essential activities, including outdoor advertising, paid-for media, social media advertising, marketing collateral, printed programmes, sponsorship opportunities and the setting up of media partnerships.