

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Cabinet	Date:	7th February 2018
Subject:	Festivals and Events 2018/19 and Update on Progress 2017/18		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Jill Shonk, Head of Cultural & Trading Services		
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Appendices:	1. Review of Council Funded Festivals & Events 2017/18		
	2. Proposed Schedule of Festival & Event Activities 2018/19		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To review Council-funded Festival & Event activities in 2017/18, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 1.2 To seek approval for proposed Council-funded Festival & Event activities in 2018/19, as set out in Appendix 2 of this report.
- 1.3 To seek approval for reviewing and updating the criteria for Council-funded Festival & Events, as set out in Section 4 of this report.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked, subject to any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet, to note the contents of the report.
- 2.2 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that:
 - (1) The 2018/19 programme of Council-funded Festival & Event activities set out in Appendix 2 of the report be approved.
 - (2) The criteria for Council-funded Festival & Event activities be reviewed and updated, as set out Section 4 of this report, and brought back to a future meeting of Cabinet for agreement.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 In Feb 2017 the City Council agreed to award Marketing Gloucester Ltd (MGL) £348k in return for services, including the delivery of an agreed schedule of Festival & Event activities, that: promote Gloucester; increase tourism; support business; encourage inward investment; generate income; and support Gloucester's growing cultural offer.

It also awarded £16k to other partners: £10k to the organisers of Gloucester History Festival; £5k to Three Choirs Festival; and £1k to the Armed Forces Day committee (not spent/being carried forward for a future Armed forces Day event). The Council's proposed Festivals & Events budget for 2018/19 is: a proportion¹ of the annual payment awarded to MGL for services that include Festival & Event activities – this will be £249k² in 2018/19. In addition there will be funding of £10k for Gloucester History Festival and £5k for Three Choirs Festival. There is scope for these organisations to lever additional funding from grants and sponsorship.

- 3.2 MGL's activities in 2017/18 included the production of festivals and events led by MGL and financial/ in kind support for city-based festivals and events led by other organisations. The in kind support included promotional activities; MGL will be reviewing the nature of this provision as part of its Destination Management activities for Strand 4 of the [Great Place \(GP\) project](#)³ (ref paragraph 3.3).

MGL often delivers remarkable value for money because of its ability to lever sponsorship and commercial income. Useful cost comparators in 2017 include Greenwich Council's £2m expenditure on support for a Tall Ships festival, Lewisham Council's £96k expenditure on Blackheath Fireworks and Bristol Council's £160k grant to the organisers of Bristol Harbour Festival.

- 3.3 [Gloucester Culture](#) (GC)⁴ is now leading the development of Gloucester's distinctive cultural offer: "innovative and excellent, quirky and edgy, diverse and community-based with a strong focus on young people", as highlighted in [Gloucester's Cultural Vision & Strategy 2016 – 2026](#)⁵.

GC's activities include delivery of the three-year Great Place (GP) project, which began in April 2017. As part of the £3m total scheme, GP has a £360k Destination Management component (Strand 4) and a £832k Festivals & Events component (Strand 6). Last year's scheduled Strand 6 activities included a review of festivals and major events held in Gloucester, led by Festival & Events International Ltd (FEI). GC is currently considering FEI's draft report and hopes to publish the final version in early February 2018.

- 3.4 The changing festivals and events landscape is bringing fresh opportunities for collaborative programming. This is helping to grow and diversify Gloucester's offer:

3.4.1 In October 2017 the Council asked GC to set up a steering group that would develop programmes for the '1100th anniversary of the Death of Aethelflaed' and '375th anniversary of the Lifting of the Siege of Gloucester' celebrations

¹ To be determined by MGL

² In line with the Council Money Plan 2017 and £1k more than 2017 as we already hold £1k for AFD from 2017/18.

³ gloucesterculture.org.uk/great-place

⁴ gloucesterculture.org.uk

⁵ gloucester.gov.uk/council/Documents/Strategies%2CPlans%20and%20Policies/Cultural%20Strategy.pdf

in 2018. The group is made up of about 14 people from various city-based organisations/ networks⁶. It has developed narratives, outcomes and outline event schedules for each of these celebrations and agreed a plan for taking things forward.

3.4.2 GC's [partnership with Roundhouse, London](#)⁷ (GP Strand 2) will help accelerate the development of Gloucester's emerging creative scene, offering exceptional creative opportunities to the young people of Gloucester, who will be able to remain in the city to realise their ambitions. The result of this will be events led by young people going from strength to strength.

3.4.3 Gloucester Heritage Forum and Gloucester History Trust are leading activities to develop the city's heritage programmes. Both have expertise in audience development and a good reputation/ strong appetite for partnership working.

3.4.4 In April 2018 [Strike A Light](#)⁸ will become one of Arts Council England (ACE)'s [2018 – 2022 National Portfolio Organisations](#)⁹ and the first NPO in Gloucester, crediting the city with some of the best arts practice in the world and securing four years' of investment that will help to progress the city's cultural offer.

3.5 Initial feedback from the November 2017 Peer Review suggests relationships between MGL and GC could be strengthened to improve the alignment of outcomes. The approach outlined in 3.4.1, which sees GC leading on strategic development of content and MGL as a delivery organisation, is one way of achieving this.

3.6 As a result of Together Gloucester, the Council's workforce is becoming more agile, flexible and efficient. This is creating new capacity for joint working, internally and externally.

3.7 The City Council has been awarded a place on the ACE-funded [Pioneering Volunteer Makers](#)¹⁰ programme, designed to involve more and a wider range of people in volunteering, particularly the growing number of young people and teenagers that want to become volunteers. Operating along the lines of [Parkrun UK](#)¹¹, it uses technology (a gamified website and free app) to provide, log and celebrate personalised volunteering activity. Staff in Cultural & Trading Services and Community Wellbeing are working with representatives from Gloucester Heritage Forum, Gloucester Culture Trust and MGL to set this up. Once established it will help to grow a much-needed volunteer base that reflects the city's demographic profile. And festival and event organisers will be able to tap into this.

4.0 Criteria for Council-funded festival and event activities:

⁶ Including the City Council and Marketing Gloucester Ltd

⁷ gloucesterculture.org.uk/gloucester-culture-trust-announces-major-creative-partnership-with-the-roundhouse-london

⁸ strikealightfestival.org.uk

⁹ artscouncil.org.uk/our-investment-2015-18/national-portfolio-organisations#section-2

¹⁰ pioneers.volunteermakers.org

¹¹ parkrun.org.uk

- 4.1 The Council last reviewed its criteria for Festival and Event activities in 2010 and agreed the annual schedule should include:
- A strong Christmas offering;
 - At least one, ideally more, large scale ‘signature’/brand building events;
 - Events that bring many visitors into the City from a wide catchment area;
 - A cycle of major events (not the same one each year);
 - Events that celebrate and bring life to Gloucester’s rich history;
 - A broad range of events appealing to all communities; and
 - Events that foster civic pride in Gloucester.
- 4.2 The Council requires MGL’s Festival & Event activities to help achieve the outcomes outlined in paragraph 3.1.
- 4.3 It is proposed the existing criteria should be reviewed and updated in 2018 to ensure they remain aligned with key Council priorities and strategies, including the Cultural Vision & Strategy 2016 – 2026 and the Regeneration & Economic Development Strategy 2016 - 2021. The review should also consider the Council’s aspiration to bid for City of Culture 2025, the Council’s view that the diversity of audiences and participants should reflect the diversity of contemporary Gloucester, Gloucester Culture’s emerging strategic plan for festivals and events¹², the changing festivals and events landscape in the city, and the priorities of key grant awarding bodies.
- 4.4 Additionally, the Council will liaise with MGL to introduce Key Performance Indicators, linked to agreed criteria, for the annually agreed schedule of Council-funded Festival & Event activities, beginning with a pilot in 2018/19. This should provide both organisations with useful evidence for external funding bids and award applications. And it responds to issues raised in the 27 November 2017 Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting.

5.0 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Considerations

- 5.1 The City Council’s approach to the delivery of Festivals and Events is based heavily on existing strengths within the community. Events directly funded by the City Council, but delivered by MGL, involve significant community and voluntary participation and collaboration. And there are opportunities for this to develop further.
- 5.2 The Council has supported the establishment of Gloucester Culture Trust – a charitable interest organisation – to champion the arts, culture and heritage in Gloucester and lead the delivery of the City’s Cultural Vision and Strategy and the Great Place programme.
- 5.3 The council-funded Festival and Event schedule is supplemented by a wide range of other organisations that add to the City’s developing cultural offer, including: independent theatre and cinema; Gloucester History Trust; The Civic Trust; Peel Group; Gloucester Heritage Forum; Strike-a-Light; Multi Styles Battle; Music Works; Theatre Glos and Café René.

¹² Following publication of the FEI Review of Major Events & Festivals in Gloucester

- 5.4 ABCD can also guide how Festivals and Events develop in the future by, for example, supporting and investing in activity that contributes to the Cultural Vision and Strategy and has the potential for sustainable growth. The Council should also consider how to maximise the opportunities offered by Gloucester Culture Trust to provide independent, collaborative, multi-dimensional cultural leadership and lever external funding to support Gloucester's growth.

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 The Council has an existing contract for services with MGL, including the delivery of a schedule of Festival & event activities; so alternative options for funding Festival & Event activities have not been considered as part of this report. However, for 2018/2019 new Performance Indicators will be introduced against which MGL will be expected to deliver.

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 The schedule of Festival & Event activities events set out in Appendix 2 meets the Council's current Festivals & Events criteria (ref paragraphs 3.1 and 4.1).
- 7.2 The proposed schedule will help to ensure the City is animated throughout 2018/19 and support plans to develop the city's Festivals & Events offering.
- 7.3 The proposed schedule reflects some of the recommendations in the draft Festivals & Events report (ref paragraph 3.3), aimed at improving the city's offering.
- 7.4 The activities reflect a move towards a more collaborative approach to festival and event programming, enabling the Council to make more of community assets and increase the return on its investment.
- 7.5 The proposed MGL-led events will complement those being created or staged by other organisations, helping to ensure the city has a diverse annual events programme.

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 8.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, MGL will progress the schedule of Festival & Event activities in Section 6.
- 8.2 Subject to Cabinet approval, the Head of Cultural & Trading Services will consult with the Culture & Leisure Portfolio Holder to lead a review of the Council's criteria for Festival & Event activities. This will be the subject of a future report to Cabinet.
- 8.3 The Head of Cultural & Trading Services will liaise with MGL to introduce KPIs for Festival & Event activities, in consultation with the Culture & Leisure Portfolio Holder.

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 The Council's overall funding to MGL in 2016/17 was £464,000 and £348k in 2017/18.
- 9.2 In 2018/19 the figure available is £249,000. The reductions are all part of the Council's savings plan. MGL has been asked to maximise its ability to work commercially and lever external funding so the reduction does not reduce the City Council's overall funding for Festival and Event activities.
- 9.3 In addition £10,000 will be available for Gloucester History Festival and £5,000 for the Three Choirs Festival,
- 9.4 The funding allocations are in line with Council Money Plan for approval by Council in February 2017.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

10.0 Legal Implications

- 10.1 The City Council has a contract with MGL to deliver Festival & Event activities for the period of five years from 1 April 2016. The contract provides that MGL shall produce a report in December, commenting on delivery during the year and proposing a list of Festival & event activities for the next calendar year. Once approved by Council the list of proposed activities becomes the programme MGL shall deliver in accordance with the contract. The annual programme may be varied at any time by agreement between the Council and MGL.
- 10.2 The collaborative arrangements discussed in section 3 of the report are permitted by the general power of competence contained in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. Such collaborations should be formally documented though in order to safeguard the Council's financial and reputational position. This can be done via legal agreements with the partner bodies, either on a case by case basis or via a single overarching agreement, as appropriate.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 11.1 There is a risk MGL will not be able to raise sufficient additional external funding to compensate for the reduction in its Council grant. The Council will need to monitor this, supporting MGL to secure additional sources of finance or making appropriate revisions to the programme as appropriate.

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 12.1 The proposed schedule of festival and event activities involves partnership and collaborative working to deliver programmes that are widely accessible to people who live/ work in and visit the city.

- 12.2 Promotional support for the Gloucester Volunteer Makers programme (ref paragraph 3.7), which will be known as EngageInGloucester, will help to ensure more and a wider range of people are involved in festival and event activities.
- 12.3 Marketing support for Strike a Light will help to widen and increase participation in cultural activities.
- 12.4 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

13.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

- 13.1 Events that bring people together, particularly at night time create a healthy vibrant evening economy that brings with it a view that places are safer.

Sustainability

- 13.2 As part of its commitment to sustainability and legacy aspirations associated with the Rugby World Cup 2015 bid, the Cultural Services team and MGL are working towards BS ISO 20121 (Event Sustainability).

Staffing & Trade Union

- 13.3 Funding for staffing additional hours will be built into the costs of each event.

Background Documents: None