

# Gloucester City Council

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>10 February 2021</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Events and Festivals Report on 2020 &amp; Plan for 2021-22</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
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<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>1. Proposed Civic and Cultural Events &amp; Festivals Programme 2021</b>		
	<b>2. Review of Festivals and Events 2020</b>		
	<b>3. Overview of Events Process &amp; Sample Event Analysis</b>		

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To agree the programme for Proposed Civic and Cultural Events & Festivals 2021 (Appendix 1)
- 1.2 To provide a review of Festivals and Events activity 2020 (Appendix 2)
- 1.3 To present an overview of the Events process including a sample analysis of an event in 2020 (Appendix 3).

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that:
  - (1) the proposed Civic Events Programme for 2021 set out in the table 1 Appendix 1 be approved to be managed by the City Council Cultural Services team
  - (2) approval be given to support key city festivals and events programme 2021 as set out in table 2 Appendix 1.

### 3.0 Background and Key Issues

#### 3.1 Review of the City Events Programme 2020

Since early 2020, the city council took on the responsibility for co-ordination of the city events programme. As a direct consequence of the covid-19 pandemic resulting

in a national lockdown in the UK, all mass-participation events in the UK were either cancelled or postponed from mid-March until end June 2020. From July, some events began to return to Gloucester, however covid-safe restrictions meant that most events were not viable to be run in the usual way. Some of the civic events were also prevented from taking place or proceeded with covid-safe measures in effect. Many other events planned by third-party event and festival organisers and community groups were shelved for 2020 or cancelled. See Appendix 2 for a review of the festivals and events which went ahead in 2020.

### **3.2 New activity and commissions**

As a result of the cancellation and/or postponement of many of the cultural and civic events planned for 2020 – Gloucester Culture Trust (GCT) and the city council events team instead developed a successful socially-distanced multi-site art installation by the acclaimed artist Luke Jerram. *Of Earth and Sky* is an example of an event that took place in Gloucester developed in partnership as a way to provide greater value to the city's cultural programme. This approach to city-wide collaboration in the development and presentation of festivals and cultural activity leveraged in additional funding from sources including Arts Council England and Sports England and the activity met funders objectives in relation to culture and active lifestyles. The experience and success of this approach was followed up with an even more ambitious winter programme called *Bright Nights* – consisting of artist and community-made illuminations across Gloucester during December 2020 to Feb 2021.

### **3.3 Budget for Festivals and civic events 2020**

Of the budget of £215,000 a total of £177,402 to date has been allocated to support festivals and events in 2020-21. Subject to council year-end financial position underspend from this area may be rolled forward to 2021-22 budget. The budget has enabled the planned activity to be delivered safely and that artists and organisations were being supported and Gloucester communities across the city benefited from the investment into the festivals and events programme. The Creation fund administered by GCT, helped to support artists and organisations deliver against the aims and objectives of the Cultural Strategy, eight artists being commissioned to produce artworks which also featured in the Life in Lockdown exhibition at Museum of Gloucester. The city council contributed £6,740 to the Creation Fund with over 1,500 Art Packs being distributed by Community Builders to communities across the city. Where events were cancelled budget was used instead to support covid-safe programmes including *Of Earth and Sky* and *Bright Nights*.

### **3.4 Film and event hire income**

The projected income has been affected by the pandemic, the closure of the Guildhall and a reduction in the number of third-party events hires taking place in the city during 2020. Income is down on previous years, although some was achieved. Film-making was suspended during the first national lockdown and again in Nov 2020. Total income to date in 2020-21 from events hire is £8,480 (gross) or £7,583.33 (net). However, this falls short of the income target of £21,000 from events hire this year.

### **3.5 City-wide co-ordination**

In the early part of 2020 officers convened a city-wide strategic events group – inviting the main events and festival producers and commissioning organisations. The aim of the group was to agree the overall direction of programme and explore opportunities and collaborate to maximise the offer and where relevant and beneficial, pool funds and resources to create greater impact from city events. This group consisted of representatives of Gloucester Quays, the Gloucester Business Improvement District (BID), Gloucester Cathedral, Gloucester Culture Trust and Gloucester City Council. Monthly meetings were held until April 2020 after which time, these meetings were expanded in membership (to include the retail, hospitality and sports and leisure sectors) and repurposed to form the Visitor Economy and Cultural Recovery group.

### **3.6 Visitor Economy and Cultural Recovery**

The economic impact of the pandemic upon many of the businesses that have previously supported events through sponsorship and in-kind support means that there will be fewer organisations able to contribute financially to supporting the programme. However, it is also recognised that festivals and events can be a driver of footfall that would support the economic recovery of Gloucester. Attracting people to Gloucester will knock on to providing a boost to city businesses, especially, but not exclusively in the hospitality sector. The Gloucester Good To Go campaign arose from the discussions held in this group – and extra funds to support the campaign were pledged by members of the group, using the cultural programme to encourage visitors back into the city. Whilst much of the activity in 2020 was focused upon Cultural Recovery, the council will continue to take a lead in co-ordinating the city's events programme and re-convene the strategic events forum with key organisations that deliver, commission or fund events in 2021. The Visitor Economy and Cultural Recovery group recognised the value that events and festivals will play in the economic recovery of the city in the years ahead.

### **3.7 City and Civic Events Programme 2021**

#### **3.8 Civic Events 2021**

There is a small Civic Events budget of £5,000 allocated to support the annual programme of civic events in 2021. This covers production budget but does not include the staff time which is provided by city council staff. In 2021 there will be an additional civic event to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Imjin, which marked a decisive point in the Korean War and at which the Glosters' regiment played a key role.

#### **3.9 Cultural Events 2021**

A Cultural Events Programme budget of £210,000 is used to support other Festivals and Events (as shown in Appendix 1 Table 2). Building on the model of providing support and funding to organisations in the cultural sector there will be allocation for Heritage, Community, Music and New Commissions including events in the redeveloped Kings Square which is due to be ready in November 2021.

### **3.10 New commissions**

A proportion of the budget for 2021 is allocated to commission new festivals / events / productions. Taking a more strategic and proactive approach to the events programme will ensure that Gloucester can grow its reputation as a city that values innovation and culture, supports emerging festivals and arts and builds on its strengths in terms of heritage. This is articulated within Gloucester's Cultural Vision and Strategy 2016-2026. The strategy is integrated with the City Council's other strategic plans, particularly the City Vision 2012-2022 and the Regeneration and Economic Development Strategy whose vision is that 'Gloucester will be a flourishing, modern and ambitious City which all residents can enjoy' (see Background documents). The Creation fund will also be able to continue to seed-fund emerging ideas, events and festivals.

### **3.11 Strike a Light partnership with Greenwich & Docklands International Festival**

Strike a Light (Gloucester) are currently the only arts organisation in Gloucester to be funded as a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) by Arts Council England. They have developed a strong multi-disciplinary arts practice in the city and have a growing national profile in recognition of delivering ambitious co-created activity embedded within communities across Gloucester. They are a formal partner of Global Streets – an initiative of the Greenwich and Docklands International Festival (GDIF) which gives them access to high-quality international outdoor performing arts projects. GDIF is London's leading festival of free outdoor theatre and performing arts and together with its partners programmes large-scale works that are available to tour to UK cities. A benefit of the partnership means that Gloucester can host world-class outdoor arts activity at a fraction of the costs, as 50% of the production costs are supported by Global Streets. This partnership will run to 2022/23 and in an effort to support this national partnership a portion of the Festivals and Events budget will be ring-fenced to support this partnership and to explore other opportunities to commission new work. The benefits of having a commissioning partner for new work brings profile to Gloucester and opens the doors to more ambitious work to be staged and/or originated in Gloucester in future, raising the city's profile in line with the Cultural Strategy. An allocation within the 2021-22 budget for new commissions will be able to support this partnership and others.

### **3.12 Gloucester Carnival and Gloucester Goes Retro Festival**

The city council is committed to the ongoing support and development of these events for the city. Retro festival has established a strong following which drives footfall to the city centre, benefitting Gloucester businesses and attracting visitors to the city. Gloucester Carnival involves broad community participation and the city council recognises that ongoing support and investment is required to ensure these events continue to be strengthened. Both events require support from the city council events team to develop them in 2021 and beyond to devise robust business plans and ensure their future sustainability.

### **3.13 Festivals and Events budget for 2021-22**

The anticipated revenue budget for the delivery of the 2020/21 city events programme is £210,000. The delivery costs of the programme are higher than this budget, however, with a mixed-model of public investment and private sponsorship, careful business-planning, strategic commissioning, exploiting commercial opportunities and working collaboratively across the city and beyond an ambitious city events programme is still achievable. This budget will be managed by the Cultural Development team.

The budget is divided into the thematic areas of festivals and events that relate to Heritage, Community, Music, New Commissions (including Kings Square launch).

Any remaining underspend from the Festivals and Events budget in 2020-21 will be rolled forward to 2021-22 as there will be greater need to support returning festivals and events – particularly those which rely upon sponsorship and income from footfall. It is anticipated that 2021 will continue to be a challenge for the events and festivals industry – with an ongoing level of uncertainty and audiences showing a low confidence in attending large events until a vaccine is in place and the risks of infection are reduced. It is expected that to deliver events under government guidelines will increase costs (for example for increased stewarding, restricted capacities and other covid-safety measures) in order to ensure that they are run safely.

### **3.14 Delivery models - including Tall Ships Festival 2021**

The city council events team will not deliver each and every event in the calendar of events shown in Appendix 1. The responsibility of the delivery of the events will sit with the event organisers themselves. In most cases this will be an organisation or individual who will be provided budget and support to deliver the event under contract from the city council – or to an agreed set of outcomes. During 2020 the Tall Ships Festival 2021 was contracted to a professional events contractor Richmond Event Management who won the procurement tender to provide an event on behalf of the city in May 2021. With investment from GCC of £50k, they will deliver a large-scale cultural event that is likely to cost over £250,000. They will achieve this through a combination of sponsorship and in-kind contributions, partnerships, fundraising, income generation from bars and market stalls and ticket income. During 2021, it is likely that Carnival and Gloucester Goes Retro will consist of a hybrid of city council festival and events team delivering in partnership with external partners.

## **4.0 Social Value Considerations**

- 4.1 Recipients of funds from the Events and Festivals budget will need to demonstrate how their festival of event delivers social value outcomes. This will be measured using an evaluation framework and in accordance with the Council's Social Value policies

## **5.0 Environmental Implications**

- 5.1 The environmental impact of festivals and events will become a key consideration of which events and festivals to support in the city. There is an aspiration for the city to

be net carbon neutral and so the Festivals and Events that take place in the city will need to work towards this common goal.

- 5.2 In order to hold festivals and events accountable to these environmental sustainability targets, festival and event organisers will be expected to demonstrate clear policies and procedures and commitment towards sustainability. This will be a condition of future funding issued by the city council to any festival or event organiser and forms part of the Evaluation framework.

## **6.0 Alternative Options Considered**

- 6.1 None.

## **7.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 7.1 This approach builds on the strengths of the festivals and programme in the city, whilst introducing new opportunities for the city to strengthen partnerships and continue to raise its profile in line with the ambitions of the Cultural Strategy.

## **8.0 Future Work and Conclusions**

- 8.1 The programme of events will be reviewed on an annual basis (January - March 2022 to review the 2021 programme) and a sample of the individual festivals and events will be evaluated using the evaluation framework.

## **9.0 Financial Implications**

- 9.1 The Money Plan 2020 - 24 has identified a budget of £215,000 in 2021-22. This budget is subject to full approval at annual budget Council in Feb 2021.
- 9.2 Underspend from 2020-21 Festivals and Events might be rolled forward to 2021-22 Festivals and Events budget, subject to council's overall budget position at year end.

## **10.0 Legal Implications**

- 10.1 The delivery of this programme by the Council through outside bodies or in collaboration with outside bodies will need to ensure compliance with relevant legislative requirements and the Council's Contract Rules.

## **11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

- 11.1 Risk 1 – Covid restrictions continue to be in place during 2021 resulting in further festival and event cancellations. Mitigation – all festival and events planned for 2021 need to have contingency measures in place and have options to present with/without covid restrictions on numbers and type of activity and possible postponement to the following year.
- 11.2 Risk 2 – financial support of festivals from third parties – eg. sponsorship is reduced which may put some festivals viability in question. Mitigation - the Festival and Events officer will scrutinise business plans for all festivals and events to ensure that there are adequate contingency plans in place.

## **12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:**

12.1 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 Community Safety Implications**

13.1 Events and Festivals follow a robust process via the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) meetings and following advice and permitted activity agreed at the point of issuing site permissions. SAG meetings are co-ordinated by the city council and are multi-agency meetings that challenge the organisers to produce effective plans that mitigate risks and ensure safety measures are considered, planned for and implemented.

## **14.0 Staffing & Trade Union Implications**

14.1 None arising directly from this report.

**15.0 Background Documents:** [Gloucester's Cultural Vision and Strategy 2016-2026](https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/media/1372/cultural-strategy.pdf)  
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