

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Cabinet	Date:	11 January 2023
Subject:	Events and Festivals Report on 2022 & Plan for 2023-24		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Philip Walker, Head of Cultural Services		
	Email:	Philip.walker@gloucester.gov.uk	Tel: 396355
Appendices:	1. Review of Festivals and Events Activity 2022		
	2. Proposed Civic and Cultural Events & Festivals 2023-24		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide a Review of Festivals and Events activity 2022 (Appendix 1)
- 1.2 To provide the Proposed Civic and Cultural Events & Festivals budget 2023-24 (Appendix 2)

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE** that:
 - (1) the Review of Festivals and events activity 2022 (appendix 1) is noted
 - (2) the proposed events for 2023 (Appendix 2) be endorsed
 - (3) the budgets for Bright Nights and Kings Square be used as financial match to support future funding bids.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 Overview of 2022 festivals activity

A full programme of outdoor festivals and events took place in 2022 with the return of both the Tall Ships Festival and Gloucester Goes Retro. New or additional events for the year included the launch of Kings Square, the Queen's Baton Relay and the Women's Tour of Britain. The Bright Nights light festival attracted an additional £39,043 of funding from Arts Council and brought activities into several new locations across the city including GL1 swimming pool, Gloucester Cathedral and Robinswood Hill. There were also some notable challenges with the death of the Queen later in 2022 which resulted in the cancellation of the Men's Tour of Britain stage due to take place in the city and Gloucester History Festival which was postponed to April 2023 (as detailed in Appendix 1).

3.2 Civic Events 2022-23

A successful programme of Civic Events took place with the addition of the Beacon lighting for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations (see appendix 1) and support of a service of remembrance to commemorate the death of the Queen.

3.3 Support of other activity in 2022-23

The council supported a range of other festivals through funding and financial contributions and other means in 2022 including Kings Jam, Jamaican Independence Day, City Voices, Gloucester Day, Gloucester History Festival, Pride In Gloucestershire, The Music Works and Strike a Light. The New Projects and Commissions fund distributed £30,000 to support new activities that without the support of the city council would not have been delivered.

3.4 Festivals and Events budget for 2023-24

The anticipated revenue budget for the delivery of the 2023-24 city events programme is £210,000. The 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. Specifically, applications for funding will be made to the National Lottery Climate Action Fund and the Arts Council for project grants to support the programme. This budget is managed by the council's Cultural Development team and includes an income target to help off-set costs. It includes funds allocated to the city's flagship events – Tall Ships Festival, Gloucester Goes Retro and Bright Nights. The breakdown of allocation of the funds is shown in Appendix 2.

3.5 Civic Events 2023-24

There is a Civic Events budget of £5,000 allocated to support the annual programme of civic events in 2023. This will include Flag Raising event for Armed Forces Day, Gloucester Day, Remembrance Sunday, Mayor's Christmas Party, Three Choirs Festival reception and the Mayor's Annual service. To celebrate the Coronation of HRH King Charles III a Lamprey Pie or its equivalent will be commissioned and presented to the Lord Lieutenant.

3.6 Proposed calendar of civic events for 2023-24 (where dates are known)

Date	Event
6 th May	The Kings Coronation
20 th May	Armed Forces Day
22 nd – 29 th July	Three Choirs Festival reception – (date tbc)
2 nd September	Gloucester Day
12 th November	Remembrance Sunday
18 th November	Christmas Lights Switch on
December 2023	Mayor’s Christmas Party (date tbc)

3.7 Hi! Street Fest, Emergency Exit Arts

This event has mostly been funded by Emergency Exit Arts (EEA), Arts Council and Historic England. Gloucester is one of six High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) locations to have been selected by EEA to participate in Hi! Street Fest. The event will consist of large puppets which will be dressed to represent a local theme and these puppets will be presented “gifts” by community groups in the city. The puppets will be part of a procession which will start in Kings Square and end in Westgate Street.

3.8 Outdoor Events Fund

The Outdoor Events fund is open for festivals and events organisations to apply for each year for activity taking place the following year. For 2023-24 there is a £55,000 funding pot available for applicants. The applications are scored against funding criteria and are assessed by a panel of staff from the council and Gloucester Culture Trust. £52,000 is allocated with the remaining £3k allocated to support Hi Street Fest.

Six applications were received, and the panel recommends the following applicants for funding in 2023-24:

Gloucester History Festival	£5,000
Voices Gloucester	£10,000
Jamaican Independence Day & Tredworth Street party	£10,000
Pride in Gloucester	£12,000
Three Choirs Festival	£15,000

3.9 New Projects and Commission fund

Following on the success of the New Projects and Commissions Fund in 2022 funding will be available for new commissions again in 2023. The grants will range from £5,000 - £10,000 and applicants must be able to demonstrate that any funding provided by the council will be matched, so the council’s contribution is not more than 50% of the total project cost.

There is £30,000 available for new commissions in 2023-24.

3.10 The Future of the Bright Nights festival

Bright Nights will now take place on a rolling calendar with the next full schedule of events planned to take place in the Winter 2023. A smaller programme will take place in February 2023 with Strike a Light delivering a Light Games event in Matson. This event is part of the Global Streets' national street arts programme – the partnership held by Strike a Light enables Gloucester to programme international works in the city at a subsidised level. The allocated budget of £40,000 from 2023-24 will be used to leverage additional funds.

3.11 Kings Square Programme

A programme of activity for Kings Square is being developed to ensure a balance is kept between commercial and cultural activities. Programming decisions will be made in consultation with the newly-formed Kings Square management company. An allocation of £25,000 in 2023-24 will be used to leverage further funding.

3.12 Fundraising and additional resource

A freelance creative producer was recruited to work on development and delivery of both the Bright Nights festival and the Kings Square programme. A fundraising strategy is being developed to cover activities across the Bright Nights Festival, Kings Square, the Lantern Parade and our Global Streets partnership. This will allow for a longer-term strategic plan for programming and a cohesive approach to fundraising. Funding bids will be submitted during 2023 to a variety of sources using the Festival and Events budget allocation for Kings Square and Bright Nights to demonstrate match from the council to Arts Council and National Lottery and other funding schemes. This will result in a larger, more ambitious programming over more than one year leaving a stronger and more sustainable legacy.

3.13 City-wide co-ordination

The city-wide strategic events group meets quarterly – this group consists of the main events and festival producers and organisations. The aim of the group was to agree the overall direction of programme and explore opportunities to collaborate to maximise the offer and where relevant and beneficial, pool funds and resources to create greater impact from city events. This consists of representatives of Gloucester Quays, the Gloucester Business Improvement District (BID), Gloucester Cathedral, Gloucester Culture Trust and Gloucester Rugby and is convened by Gloucester City Council.

City Events Meetings take place every two weeks with representatives from departments across the Gloucester City Council including Environmental Health, Licensing, City Centre Management and Parks to review plans for upcoming events in parks and open spaces.

4.0 Social Value Considerations

4.1 Applicants for funding need to demonstrate how their festival or event delivers the Cultural Strategy, including the Social Value considerations. Local businesses are used as contractors and suppliers for events where possible, bringing in external companies if local companies are unavailable or unable to deliver the quality or ambition required.

- 4.2 As part of Hi! Street Fest three young people will be recruited into paid roles as event producers and offered mentoring, funded through the project at no cost to the council.

5.0 Environmental Implications

- 5.1 The environmental impact of festivals and events will become a key consideration of decision-making 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. The producer for Bright Nights is particularly interested in creating a sustainable light festival. This will include reusing and recreating assets owned by the city and targeting partners and funding with sustainable objectives.
- 5.2 In order to hold festivals and events accountable to these environmental sustainability targets, organisers will be expected to demonstrate clear policies and procedures and commitment towards sustainability. This will be a condition of funding issued by the City Council to any festival or event organiser and the Evaluation Criteria for funding from the City Council for events currently asks how the event considers the impact on the environment.
- 5.3 Internally steps are being taken to reduce the impact of events on the environment, everything from replacing plastic cable ties for signs with reusable string, assessing catering cartons and cutlery before contracting, to reducing the need for petrol or diesel-powered generators where practicable. Site litter clearance and recycling and the use of low-carbon materials will be encouraged in all third-party events.

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 2024 to review the 2023 programme).

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 The main events programme detailed above is financed from the Council's Festivals and Events budget allocation of £215,000 of which £5,000 is allocated for Civic Events supplemented by external fundraising as outlined in Appendix 2.
- 9.2 Any shortfall in the external fundraising would lead to a budget pressure that would need to be managed by the Festivals & Events team.
- 9.3 Budget allocated within 2023-24 will be used to demonstrate match funding for bids to external funding sources.

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 – financial support of festivals from third parties – e.g. sponsorship is reduced which may put some festivals viability in question. Mitigation: business plans for all festivals and events requiring funds will be scrutinised 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 2021-2026
[gloucester-cultural-vision-and-strategy-gct-gcc-min.pdf](#)