

West Dunbartonshire Council

Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services

Corporate Culture Sub-Committee: 20 March 2008

Subject: Scottish Arts Council Inspire Fund - Creating a Cultural Hub in West Dunbartonshire

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report asks the Sub Committee to consider an application to the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) Inspire Fund.

2. Background

- 2.1** On 11 February 2008 the SAC announced the launch of a new fund, supported by the National Lottery, called Inspire. This fund has up to £8 million pounds (no maximum and no minimum amount for single grants) to distribute to projects which will engage the community in wider access to the Arts.

The priorities for allocation of funds are:

- making the arts available to those who have had few or no opportunities to appreciate them;
- increasing the numbers and broadening the range of people enjoying and taking part in the arts;
- increasing arts activity for and by children and young people;
- making sure there is a fair geographical spread of buildings and activities throughout Scotland.

- 2.2** The launch of this fund is potentially a golden opportunity for West Dunbartonshire to create a state of the art 21st century Arts hub incorporating all of our current educational and cultural sections as well as being a centre for community arts groups, support organisations and independent artists. With backing from Council this could represent a tremendous opportunity to access significant amounts of external funding and put cultural entitlement in the heart of the community.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Currently many of the arts and cultural sections within the Council are spread over a wide area, working in environments not ideally suited to them.
- 3.2** Some locations are not easily accessible by public transport and this is a barrier to participation.

- 3.3 Some council owned cultural spaces are in need of refurbishment and/or modernisation. Even if substantial amounts of money were spent on these spaces, some would still not be ideal flexible venues catering for the vast diversity of cultural activities taking place in the twenty first century.
- 3.4 A suitable building/space would need to be identified in an accessible area.
- 3.5 Public awareness raising about the project and public consultation with community arts groups would need to be driven by the Council to meet the outline application submission deadline of 5 May 2008.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1 This project would require input from many different sections within the Council and would require significant commitment by officers.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1 Applications to the Inspire fund require the applicants to show 25% of costs met by partnership or in kind support and of this 10% must be cash. Funding can be used towards both capital and project expenses. However, as with most SAC projects, the SAC will only fund up to 75% of total costs. Capital for construction within the project can be no more than 50% of the total project costs.
- 5.2 Should the outline application be short listed, then the SAC are offering grants of up to £10,000 (more in some cases) to assist develop the outline application into a full project application. There is no guarantee at this stage that a fully developed project application will be successful in the final round of awards.
- 5.3 Core revenue funding will be required to maintain the arts hub if the bid is successful.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1 There is no risk analysis required at this stage. If the bid were to be successful, a full risk analysis would be carried out based on the details of any actual offer.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The Scottish Arts Council has a new competitive eight million pound fund which councils and arts organisations are being encouraged to apply to. An outline application should be submitted for consideration by 5 May 2008 and short listed projects will be given grants to assist them turn their outline into a full application which is then due by Monday 27 October 2008. Successful applicants will be

informed by 2 February 2009 and project implementation should start from March/April 2009.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 The Sub Committee is requested to approve the consultation and development of a bid to the Inspire fund of the Scottish Arts Council for an arts hub in West Dunbartonshire.

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Appendix: Inspire Fund Arts Hub Document

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All wards