

Question: CQ10.02&03

Cabinet – 22 June 2021

Re: Agenda item 10 – Extension of The Cultural Investment Programme

Question submitted by: Councillor Tessa Fitzjohn

Whilst I fully appreciate the difficult choices the culture team has had to make, in cutting arts funding, I am pleased that there is funding at least for some of our city arts providers, as well as opportunities for individuals and less established organisations to apply to the originators fund in 2022-23.

Given the impact of the pandemic it seems to me there is an opportunity to re-evaluate the way funding decisions like these are taken. For example, both Arts Council England and National Lottery Heritage Fund have changed their emphasis and are now prioritising 'building back better' providing opportunities for training and jobs in particular for young people, supporting the local economy and using the arts to strengthening our communities mental health and wellbeing through co-production of art encouraging personal creativity.

Question 1: In light of this are the aims stated in the Council's Cultural Investment Prospectus 2018-2022 (last updated 2019) still fit for purpose?

Answer:

- **The Council's Cultural Investment Prospectus aims and objectives are due for revising as the current programme is nearing a close.**
- **We are updating all our plans. But, it would be unreasonable to change the terms and conditions of a support package in the middle of the pandemic.**
- **The Cabinet Paper explains (Evidence Base point 8.) that, alongside the proposed CIP extension Culture and Creative Industries officers will be enabling a thorough review of the CIP aims and objectives, to ensure the next 4 year plan 'addresses sector needs, and is aligned with city strategic priorities outlined in One City Plan and Economic Recovery Strategy.'**
- **In 2020 we reviewed the Originators strand, working with a diverse, representative focus group including artists and freelancers to enable a more streamlined process, simpler application form and guidance, and improved accessibility.**
- **The overarching review will learn from and continue this more participatory, deliberative approach to ensure CIP 2023-27 is fit for purpose for the complex challenges the sector and city has ahead.**

Question 2: What work has been done to ensure that the individual organisations who will receive an extra years funding have robust and sustainable plans in place that support the wider arts community?

Answer:

- The organisations funded were selected through a process which includes scrutinising their support of the wider arts community and finance.
- Quarterly grant payments are made through a structured schedule of conditions which include twice yearly meetings with BCC Relationship Officers.
- Since March 2020 BCC Relationship Officer contact has been increased to support funded organisations and monitor the impact of Covid on operations and financial risk.
- With cabinet approval for an extension we will be asking all the currently funded organisations to provide robust and sustainable plans for the year, whilst bearing in mind these plans still need to be able to flex to meet the still changeable of Covid restrictions.
- All Imagination and Openness funded organisations will have demonstrated how they plan to support the wider arts ecology and community in their original applications. We will be asking all to update on these plans in the context of Covid recovery.