

# Decision Pathway – Report



**PURPOSE:** Key decision

**MEETING:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 02 August 2022

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Bristol Harbour Festival 2023-2027</b>	
<b>Ward(s)</b>	Harbourside (with City wide potential)	
<b>Author: Becky Peters/Steffy Clements</b>	<b>Job title: Head of Audience Experience, Culture &amp; Creative Industries/Senior Events Officer</b>	
<b>Cabinet lead: Cllr Ellie King, Public Health, Communities and Bristol One City</b>	<b>Executive Director lead: Stephen Peacock, Executive Director Growth and Regeneration</b>	
<b>Proposal origin:</b> <i>BCC Staff</i>		
<b>Decision maker:</b> Cabinet Member <b>Decision forum:</b> <i>Cabinet</i>		
<b>Purpose of Report:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To explain the position of Bristol Harbour Festival and outline the development required for its future.</li> <li>2. To seek approval (subject to confirmation of authority to utilise the current budget) for contract extension and variation 1 year contract of £160k (as per current Culture service base budget) to deliver the event in 2023 with current event contractor.</li> <li>3. To seek approval for continued BCC investment of £640K (as per current Culture service base budget) over a four-year period, with re-tender of event contract for a reframed Festival 2024-27 subject to funding.</li> </ol>		
<b>Evidence Base:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Bristol Harbour Festival Future</b> <p>The end of the current contract (2022) presents an opportunity to review the role of the Bristol Harbour Festival and how it responds to the City's history and recent global and local events - the pandemic, BLM movement, Climate and Ecological Emergencies and activity surrounding the history of Colston and slavery in the city. Through consultation and research during 2023 we will develop the festival vision and tender package as a response to a changing city:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Establish the Harbour Festival as major flagship event that celebrates Bristol's identity, using evidence-based decision-making and engagement with targeted stakeholders and communities to become a more participatory, accessible and attractive tender contract and sponsorship opportunity.</li> <li>b. Continue to develop the programme for the festival to ensure greater diversity of participation and representation, through stronger community engagement and cross city collaboration. Creating more opportunities for young people to develop their skills by providing opportunities for training, leadership and presentation, leading to increased employability and ensure that the festival helps children and young people from all communities develop a sense of connection to their city.</li> <li>c. Reimagine the Harbour Festival brand, explore other city celebration models and tie in with the One City Plan to deliver a festival where it is recognised as being safe and welcoming, and can be enjoyed by the whole family.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>		

- d. Respond to Bristol’s Climate and Ecological goals and better reflect the Food Equality Strategy. There will also be scope to further develop the good work delivered around accessibility, building upon the Gold standard award status from Attitude is Everything in 2019. Average spend on power at recent Bristol Harbour Festivals was £23,834 per year. With increasing energy prices, we anticipate power costs of around £100k over the next four-year Festival delivery period. Through new tender development year we hope to build upon work exploring options for increasing green power and make a business case for increased infrastructure.

## **2. 2023 Contract Extension and Variation**

A contract award for delivery of the 2023 Harbour Festival will start to address some of the long term ambitious for the event and will support Bristol Ideas’ ‘Bristol 650’ programme, a city-wide festival that marks the 650th anniversary of Bristol becoming an independent county separate from Somerset and Gloucestershire. The harbour festival will be one of the events and activity that showcase Bristol as an independent British and global city: creative in thinking, radical in outlook, entrepreneurial in spirit and committed to environmental and social justice.

To carry out a mini tender process at this stage that is not a viable option in the timeframe available and poses significant risks to the quality of the event due to (potentially) awarding an untested event operator. There is insufficient time to carry out a tender process and award prior to the 2023 Festival. Subject to confirmation of authority to utilise the current budget, a contract extension is required with a variation to the terms and conditions.

### **BCC Investment 2024-27**

Bristol Harbour Festival is the largest free event contract that the Bristol City Council manages and attracts over 250,000 attendees over the weekend. The festival has now gone on to receive a Gold Award from the Attitude Is Everything team for the festival’s access offer and inclusion policies and won The South West Tourism Awards silver award. In 2019 survey data showed 41% of an estimated 250,000 visitors travelled from outside Bristol to attend meeting our visitor objective to attract both a diverse local, regionally and national audience. The annual investment of £160,000 represents between 28 – 38% of the total festival costs, the event contractor is then required to make up the remaining through sponsorship and other investment. The contractor is responsible for delivery of all aspects of the event including production, Health and safety, marketing and programming. Details of current contract income and expenditure are set out in exempt appendix I.

The 2024+ contract continues to commit to the current level of BCC investment, exploration of reduction in investment would be highly unlikely due to inflation levels and consistent changing supply chain and unstable market where event suppliers adversely affected by CV19. We would, however, seek to investigate additional investment sources beyond corporate sponsorship. The new contract will also require review of the current distribution of responsibilities, division of operations and creative production.

### **Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:**

1. Authorise the Executive Director Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member Public Health, Communities and Bristol One City, subject to confirmation of authority to utilise the current budget, to award a contract for one year to Richmond Events Management to deliver the Harbour Festival in 2023 at a cost of £160k.
2. Authorise the Executive Director Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member Public Health, Communities and Bristol One City to take all steps required to incur the cost to procure and award a contract for delivery of the Harbour Festival from 2024-27 at a total cost of £640k, subject to confirmation of funding.

### **Corporate Strategy alignment:**

1. Our proposal for beginning to transition the Festival to new vision from 2023 followed by a re-tender for improved Festival delivery in 2024-2027, responds directly to the key principles of the Corporate Strategy as

follows:

**Development and Delivery:** Build greater partnerships, learn from city-wide Festival expertise and empower communities to inform the planning of future Harbour Festivals. Align with and work alongside, the Harbourside Vision project: “To create an experience that inspires and enriches by showcasing the unique assets of the water, highlighting the diverse range of attractions and promoting the wide range of places to live, work, learn and unwind.” Continue to deliver the largest free Festival that takes place attended by circa 250,000 people across the three-day weekend, working more closely with direct cultural neighbours in the Harbourside such as Arnolfini, Design West, Watershed, We the Curious and the new Afro-Caribbean Culture Centre.

**Environmental sustainability:** Build a business case for more sustainable power and infrastructure, with an aim to eliminate event generator power for the Harbour Festival for 2024. Explore modelling on sustainable power, waste reduction and sustainable food offers, using our BCC event as a gold standard for other events to aspire to.

**Equality and Inclusion:** Centre Harbour Festival as a flagship event that is shaped and owned by the people of Bristol. We will develop and grow our 50<sup>th</sup> Festival community steering group to inform the development of the event and continue to improve accessibility offer to improve the Attitude is Everything gold charter standard.

**Resilience:** Build on our learnings from the challenges and changes of the last two years, share and communicate with the City-wide festival network to enable us to build resilience and risk management into our planning. Explore different financial models to support long term resilience of the Festival funding and delivery model. We will work with BCC departments to better our monitoring techniques to inform our future development.

**World Class Employment:** Acknowledge the breadth of talent and specialisms for greater cross-service working which will see us work towards a one team approach within the internal stakeholder departments at BCC, and the multiple external stakeholders the Festival involves. We will support local talent, businesses and industry. The results of development work during 2023 will support BCC key priorities including the delivery of children and young people, economy & skills, health, care & wellbeing, environment and sustainability and a development organisation.

#### **City Benefits:**

The investment and recognition resulting from continued BCC investment in the Bristol Harbour Festival enable us to develop a sector leading free public event, celebrating the culture and people of the City, that is accessible for everyone. The investment ensures we can continue to respond to and meet the needs of both Bristol citizens as well as reaching out national and internationally to raise the profile of the city as one that is creative, caring, diverse and ambitious. The investment will directly and positively impact on the following:

1. Equalities – The funding supports service provision and opportunities for everyone to participate in culture through the development of an inclusive programme of performances and activities, celebrating the unique creative and cultural diversity in Bristol.
2. Health – The funding supports activity that encourages everyone to be creative or participate in cultural experiences which support wellbeing and fuel a sense of belonging.
3. Sustainability – The funding will enable us to build economic resilience, and long-term sustainability for the event. It will enable improvements in sustainable power, waste reduction and sustainable food offers, using our BCC event as a gold standard for other events to aspire to.
4. Social Value- By embedding equality and inclusion in Bristol Harbour Festival there will be enhanced social value in terms of well-being by promoting identity, belonging, tolerance and cohesion. The event and associated programme, will be a source of inspiration, creativity, and celebration in the city.

#### **Consultation Details:**

1. An extensive community consultation was undertaken in 2017 and 2021 which has informed these papers.

2. Soft marketing testing was undertaken with potential event contractors in January 2022 that elicited 4 responses which informed this report.

**Background Documents:**

**[Bristol Harbour Festival tender 2017 – 22](#)**

Refer to Appendix A

- The Future of BHF Paper (including 2023 – 27 planning)
- Draft Tender Specification for Development
- External community consultation report

<b>Revenue Cost</b>	£160,000 (2023) £640,000 (£160 p/yr 2024-27)	<b>Source of Revenue Funding</b>	Bristol City Council
<b>Capital Cost</b>	£0	<b>Source of Capital Funding</b>	
<b>One off cost</b> <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>Ongoing cost</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
		<b>Saving Proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
		<b>Income generation proposal</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	

**Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:**

**1. Finance Advice:** The report is seeking Cabinet approval to extend the existing Bristol Festival Contract for another year while it commences another tender process for a new 4-year contract. It also seeks approval to maintain the existing level of funding of £160,000 per annum for the new contract.

The Current contractor has been running the BHF for the last 9-10 year after being successful as part of previous tender exercises, both in 2013 and 2017 (there was no festival during 2020 & 2021).

There had been some previous consultations that had highlighted the need for change and improvements, likewise the festival has not proved to be self-sufficient since inception. However, some recent soft market testing suggests that the market is prepared to take on greater risk, and as a result, the council should be seeking to transfer a greater level of the funding burden to the new contractor and explore such as part of the tender specification, especially considering the current financial climate.

The Directorate is currently reviewing its current spending plans in a bid to identify options to mitigate current financial pressures. The service currently has an approved annual budget of £160,000, therefore, Cabinet approval will not constitute any additional financial obligation to the Council. Both approvals sought will be subject to funding.

**Finance Business Partner:** Kayode Olagundoye, Interim Finance Business Partner, 19th July 2022

**2. Legal Advice:** It is recognised that the further extension of the contract places the Council in a situation where it may breach the procurement regulations. The fact that the extension is required to allow time for the Council to follow a fully compliant procurement process, will help mitigate the risk of challenge. Legal services will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the proposed procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

**Legal Team Leader:** Husinara Jones, Team Manager/Solicitor 20 July 2022

**3. Implications on IT:** I can see no implications on IT in regards to this activity.

**IT Team Leader:** Gavin Arbuckle – Head of Service Improvement and Performance 15 June 2022

**4. HR Advice:** ‘There are no HR implications evident’

**HR Partner:** Celia Williams, HR Business Partner: Growth & Regeneration 31 March 2022

<b>EDM Sign-off</b>	Stephen Peacock; Executive Director Growth and Regeneration	1 June 2022
<b>Cabinet Member sign-off</b>	Cllr Ellie King, Public Health, Communities and Bristol One City	9 June 2022
<b>For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off</b>	Mayor's Office	9 June 2022

<b>Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal</b> <b>Background Documents:</b> 1. Draft Tender Specification for Development 2. External community consultation document 3. The Future of BHF Options Paper	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix D – Risk assessment</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Appendix G – Financial Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix H – Legal Advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix I – Exempt Information</b> 1. The Future of BHF Options Paper (full version -includes commercially sensitive information).	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Appendix J – HR advice</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix K – ICT</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Appendix L – Procurement</b>	<b>NO</b>