

Management Committee

6th March 2018

Award of grant to Activate Performing Arts for centenary commemoration event

For Decision

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Richard Kosior – Tourism, Culture & Harbour

Senior Leadership Team Contact:

M Hamilton, Strategic Director

Report Author:

T. Hurley, Leisure Commissioning Manager

Statutory Authority

Localism Act 2011 – ‘general power of competence’.

Purpose of Report

1. To present to the committee a request for grant funding from Activate Performing Arts as a contribution to its event to commemorate the centenary of the ending of First World War.

Officer Recommendations

2. That Management Committee:
 - a) awards a one-off grant of £4,000 to Activate Performing Arts Ltd (registered charity no. 1069622) as a contribution towards the cost of staging the Furious Folly centenary commemoration event in September 2018;
 - b) gives delegated authority to the Head of Economy, Leisure & Tourism, in consultation with the relevant briefholder, to agree the terms of the grant agreements with Activate Performing Arts Ltd should the committee agree to award a grant as recommended in 2 (a).

Reason for Decision

3. To enable the council to respond to a funding request from Activate Performing Arts.

Background and Reason Decision Needed

4. Activate Performing Arts is a Dorset-based charity that has, over the last 25 years, specialised in organising large-scale arts performances and events across the county – including events that formed part of the 2012 Cultural Olympiad.
5. As part of its annual *Inside Out Dorset* festival, Activate is planning to deliver two large-scale performances on 19th and 20 September 2018 of *Furious Folly* by the writer Mark Anderson, at the former MoD training camp on the border of Wyke Regis and Chickerell. The two events, on consecutive evenings, should attract a total of 3,000-4,000 visitors. Based on the experience of previous events, the performances should attract both local residents and visitors from outside the area.
6. In its funding bid to the borough council, Activate provide the following description of the performance:

Mark Anderson's Furious Folly was co-commissioned by the town of Poperinge in Flanders to mark the anniversary of the first use of poison gas and by 14-18 Now, the UK's World War One centenary programme. It is a large-scale outdoor production for up to 2000 people per night that takes place over 40 minutes on a greenfield site, chosen to represent an open battlefield landscape. It takes place as night falls, in a no-mans-land on the battlefield between the two lines. Disorientated, the audience find themselves immersed within an open-air collage of sound, light, pyrotechnics and performance.
7. In addition to the performances, the project will involve significant outreach activities involving work with local schools and local community groups to focus on both the First World War centenary and the history of the Anzac troops at the camp and in Weymouth.
8. As part of the Inside Out festival, the performance of *Furious Folly* will receive considerable media interest and it is anticipated that it will be promoted by *14-18 Now* as part of the final year of the national First World War centenary commemorations.
9. Activate is in the process of fundraising the £80,000 budget for the project. Some funds will be generated by ticket sales, although the ticket price will be low in order to prevent cost being a barrier to attendance by those on low incomes. To date, Activate has secured £22,000 from Arts Council England and £5,000 from West Dorset District Council. A grant of £5,000 has now been requested from Weymouth & Portland Borough Council.
10. The borough council still has a limited arts budget of which approximately £4,000 remains unallocated. However, there is an annually recurring element of this and so a further £2,525 will be available in 2018-19. It is proposed, therefore, that the council awards a grant of £4,000 to Activate for the *Furious Folly* project and thereby allocates all available arts funding for 2017-18.

11. The request set out in this report falls within the remit of the council's *Discretionary Grants, Loans and Subsidies Policy*. To assist the committee in its consideration, this funding request has been assessed against the most relevant sections of the Policy, as follows:

Discretionary Grants, Loans and Subsidies Policy – most relevant requirements	Officer assessment of application Activate Performing Arts
The applicant must demonstrate a clear link to at least one corporate objective and one evidence-based community priorities.	The proposed performance will contribute to Corporate Plan priority <i>Empowering thriving and inclusive communities</i> , and to community priority <i>Supporting our Young People</i> .
Applicants must demonstrate how the grant will benefit the residents of Weymouth & Portland.	A significant proportion of those attending the events and taking part in the outreach programme will be from within the borough. The national profile that the event will attract will indirectly benefit the residents: a contribution to the 'place-making' agenda for the borough.
Applications will not be considered from organisations intending to support or oppose any particular political party or to discriminate against any section of the local, national or international community.	Activate's operation is not in contravention of this requirement.
Applications will <u>not normally</u> be considered from organisations operated primarily to make a profit or surplus as a business to make a profit or a surplus.	Activate is a charitable organisation that operates in accordance with Charity Commission guidance.

Implications

12. **Corporate Plan.** The project relates to the following Corporate Plan objective: *Empowering Thriving and Inclusive Communities*.
13. **Financial.** The council has a small budget for arts activities, carried forward from previous financial years. The proposed grant to Activate of £4,000 can be accommodated within this budget.
14. **Equalities.** Activate is very experienced in making its events accessible to those with disabilities and makes use of the Access Toolkit provided by the Independent Street Arts Network. A full access audit will be undertaken for the event site as part of an Event Management Plan. Although those attending the events will need to purchase tickets (primarily for crowd

control purposes) the price will be sufficiently low to ensure that it does not exclude those on a low income.

15. **Economic Development.** Based on experience from previous Inside Out festivals, the performance should attract visitors from outside of the borough. Activate is working with the Weymouth BID and the council's Town Centre Manager to maximise the economic benefits of the event for businesses in the town.
16. **Risk Management (including Health & Safety).** The most significant risks that the council faces is that of financial risk. This will be managed by the use of a grant agreement and the release of the grant in tranches.

Consultation and Engagement

17. Consultation has been undertaken with the briefholder for culture and with the Member Arts Advisory Panel.

Appendices

18. None.

Background Papers

19. Funding bid from Activate Performing Arts, December 2017.

Footnote

20. Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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