

**Report of Director of City Development**

**Report to Executive Board**

**Date: 18 October 2017**

**Subject: Leeds 2023 European Capital of Culture bid**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. This report seeks Executive Board approval for the city's bid to be European Capital of Culture 2023 to be submitted, as recommended to the Board by the Leeds 2023 Independent Steering Group.
2. The report also considers the requirements for the next stage should Leeds be shortlisted.
3. The compilation of the 80 page bid is the result of two years dedicated work by the Leeds 2023 Independent Steering Group and city partners, supported by officers of the Council. It is a flagship initiative of the new Leeds Culture Strategy 2017-2030.
4. The Inclusive Growth, Culture and Sport Scrutiny Board has provided additional input and advice to the process over the summer.

**Recommendations**

5. Executive Board is recommended to:
  - i) Agree that the Council should submit the bid for European Capital of Culture, attached as Appendix 1, for submission to the DCMS by 27 October 2017;
  - ii) Express its thanks to the Independent Steering Group and all the organisations and individuals in the city who have contributed over the last three years;
  - iii) Agree that the decisions made in respect of this report be exempted from the Call-in process, for the reasons detailed within the Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In section of the report.

And, should Leeds be shortlisted to the second stage:

- iv) Note that a second and final application will need to be submitted during 2018, incorporating further developments and feedback from the judging panel;
- v) Request the Chief Officer Culture and Sport supports a recruitment process to appoint a Chair of Leeds Culture Trust;
- vi) Request the Chief Officer Culture and Sport initiates a Readiness Board within the Authority across the different Directorates to start to plan for supporting the delivery of the year.

## **1. Purpose of this report**

1.1 To agree the Leeds submission to become European Capital of Culture 2023.

## **2. Background**

2.1.1 Leeds is a growing city with the future including significant population growth, the arrival of HS2 and, in the South Bank, Europe's largest city centre regeneration opportunity. The city's future is also impacted by international uncertainty, the context of Brexit, global population movements and a speed of change that continues to challenge us all. In this context the culture of the city - how we live together - becomes even more important to ensure current and future generations can thrive and be resilient through the years ahead. A bid to be European Capital of Culture brings the opportunity to focus on these areas. In addition to the proven and concrete social and economic benefits of hosting the title, it allows us to consider the longer term ambitions we have as a whole city and be able to demonstrate to Europe that we are ready.

2.1.2 Following the success of Glasgow 1990 and Liverpool 2008, a UK City will host the European Capital of Culture for the third time in 2023, alongside a city from Hungary. A city-wide consultation concluded in March 2015. A recommendation for Leeds to bid for the title in 2023 was approved by Executive Board with a mandate for the bid to be made on behalf of, and to benefit, the whole city.

2.1.3 An Independent Steering Group was appointed, chaired by Sharon Watson, Artistic Director of Phoenix Dance Theatre, with Councillor Judith Blake, Leader of Leeds City Council, as Deputy Chair. The Independent Steering Group includes representatives from the arts and cultural sector, higher education, private business and the three main political parties in the council.

## **2.2 What will a win do for Leeds?**

2.2.1 Should Leeds be successful it would mean a programme of cultural activity for the year involving every ward, estate, town and district in the city. In addition to world class shows in our galleries and theatres there could be programmes in schools, sports stadia, libraries and parks. Residents would have the opportunity, not only to see the very best local, national and international shows but to actively take part themselves. They would be able to experience the best Europe has to offer, the majority of it for free. But first we have to win.

2.2.2 Hosting the title could bring to the city increased international profile and tourism, inward investment and new employment opportunities. For Liverpool in 2008 the title brought over £750 million to the economy, a 34% increase in tourism, and major infrastructure development. Moreover, it transformed perceptions of Liverpool and engaged a huge 60% of the population and saw an increase in city pride.

2.2.3 Furthermore, the Competition is designed to have benefits to the whole of Europe. In 2023 it will be 4 years after the UK has exited the European Union. Leeds bid, if successful, could provide a model for an inclusive modern European city with strong international relationships based on the cultures of its peoples.

## **2.3 Recent Progress**

2.3.1 In 2017 the Leeds 2023 team have driven forward the following key actions, details of which have been provided in previous reports to Executive Board:

- A series of high profile public launches from March, to announce to local, national and international stakeholders the city's intention to bid;
- The establishment of Leeds Culture Trust to deliver the European Capital of Culture year of activity starting from 2018;
- Preparation of a realistic and credible budget for delivery of the European Capital of Culture and for the development of plans for a strong and sustainable legacy after the year.

2.3.2 The profile of the Leeds 2023 bid has risen exponentially over the past three months. The #MakeLeeds2023 campaign was launched on 19 July to mark the 100 day countdown to the city's bid. The campaign is securing wider ownership and encouraging people to be actively involved and it is creating excitement to make Leeds believe we really can win this bid. The campaign exceeded its first milestone of 2,023 online pledges with 50 days to go.

2.3.3 **I Am A Spark** a new 3 minute film made by Studio 12 with Mojo Films to promote the Leeds 2023 bid went live on 7 September and has been exceptionally well received in the press.

2.3.4 Arrangements for a public celebration are being put in place to mark the date of the submission. A free public event will take place around Quarry Hill on Friday 27 October from 12pm till 8pm and it will be open to everyone in the city to take part in and enjoy.

### **3. Main issues**

#### **3.1 Submission of the bid**

3.1.1 The bid is attached as Appendix 1. It is presented in line with the template provided for bidding cities and responds to the 52 questions on the basis of nearly 4 years consideration and debate. Our bid will be evaluated alongside other bidding cities by an independent panel, testing it against the published criteria.

3.1.2 The content of the bid was recommended to Executive Board for submission by the Independent Steering Group at its meeting on 7 September 2017.

#### **3.2 Appointment of a Chair of Leeds Culture Trust**

3.2.1 The majority of recently successful European Capital of Culture bids have been delivered through independent companies. It was agreed at Executive Board in July 2017 that Leeds Culture Trust would be the delivery company to oversee and implement the Year.

3.2.2 Should Leeds be shortlisted, an open application process seeking candidates to chair the Trust should begin immediately in the New Year, with Leeds City Council officers supporting the Trust to do so. This would mean that should Leeds then go on to win, the Trust would be in a position to immediately recruit to the roles of CEO and Creative Director at the earliest opportunity. Further details of the proposed relationship between the Trust and the Council, and the proposed staffing structure of the Trust are included as part of the bid at Appendix 1.

#### **3.3 Establishment of a Readiness Board**

3.3.1 The Authority will be responsible for getting the right infrastructure into place and on time so that the city is ready to host a whole year of new cultural activity across all areas of the city

in 2023. A recent visit by a group of elected members to Hull heard of the significant importance of this role for the authority.

3.3.2 Included in scope for a Readiness Board would be:

**Positioning:** city positioning and marketing;

**People:** audience development and participation; volunteer programmes and visitor welcome;

**Place:** management, maintenance access to and navigation of the city's spaces; and

**Projects:** on-time completion of capital investments and infrastructure plans.

Should Leeds win, the Authority will need to start preparation five years beforehand to maximise and realise all the opportunities presented by being the UK's next European Capital of Culture. Having researched the principal set by Hull City Council and by other cities, officers will start planning to establish a cross-council City Readiness Board.

### 3.4 Bid Schedule

3.4.1 Bidding to be European Capital of Culture is a two stage process. All the UK bidding cities will be informed in a public announcement at the end of November /early December following a panel interview in London with the EU judges, on whether or not they have been shortlisted.

3.4.2 Successful cities who go through to the second stage of the competition will receive extensive feedback from the first round interview and have an additional six to eight months to prepare the final and second stage of the bid.

3.4.3 In mid-2018 following a visit to each shortlisted city by the European judges involving a second panel interview, one winning UK city will be announced.

## 4. Corporate Considerations

### 4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 Over the past two years the Leeds 2023 team has been working through the Independent Steering Group and Advisory Group members and through Leeds City Council Directorates to engage and consult with different communities.

4.1.2 While it is difficult for members of the public to feel engaged with an event 5 years out, this will change as soon as it is known whether Leeds is shortlisted to go through successfully to the second stage of the competition.

4.1.3 By autumn 2018 Leeds will know if it has won the designation. Should we be successful and win the competition, our community engagement activity will escalate to work with partners in every area of the city within a defined five year build up to, increase capacity and engage local communities in the delivery and legacy of the year.

### 4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 People living in Leeds and organisations working with local people are integral to the preparation and delivery of the Leeds 2023 bid, which in turn must reflect the diverse make-up of the city. The bid itself reflects on the advantages which being such a diverse city brings, and the cultural richness which the communities of Leeds have to offer.

4.2.2 A key aim is to enable people to feel they can access and embrace a range of different cultural experiences. The new Culture Strategy 2017-2030 which provides the over-arching framework for the bid seeks to firmly and finally dispel any myth that “culture” is another name for ‘high art for the better off’.

4.2.3 An equality impact assessment has been carried out and is attached at Appendix 2.

### **4.3 Council policies and Best Council Plan**

4.3.1 The bid to become European Capital of Culture 2023 will support the council’s ambition to be a compassionate city with a strong economy, whilst tackling inequalities. The bid will seek to engage all the city’s diverse communities and encourage active citizenship. It has potential to support the family agenda.

4.3.2 A bid to become European Capital of Culture 2023 underlines the stature of the city as a host city for world class events which is a key element of our ‘Best City’ ambition. The bid will enhance the city’s relations internationally and create new and stronger ties with European partners and investors. It has potential to initiate a lasting transformation of Leeds as a confident, outward facing European cultural city.

### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 Members will recall that at their meeting of 17 July 2017 they agreed both the overall budget for the bid, the council’s contribution over a 5 year period, and a legacy budget for 2024 onwards. These figures are now reflected in the bid document.

4.4.2 Should Leeds be shortlisted, it is currently anticipated that the cash investment in bidding by the Council over 4 years and up to the final decision in 2018 will have been £195k. This investment will have levered in support from other organisations of approximately x 4.

4.4.3 The initial set up of Leeds Culture Trust has incurred a minimal cost to the Council.

4.4.4 Significant investment to deliver the European Culture Capital year will not have to be committed until the decision of the European judges is known.

4.4.5 The budget and budget implications associated with the bid and outlined in the submission is based on forecasts that every £1 of Leeds City Council investment is likely to lever a further £4 cash from other sources at least. This figure doesn’t include the indirect impacts and longer-term benefits to the visitor economy and reputation of the city.

4.4.6 We know from research by previous cities that there are extensive economic benefits from being a European Capital of Culture. As part of the research around the bid the Council has commissioned in depth visitor surveys. The results of the survey, alongside other research will contribute to an economic impact study which will enumerate the likely benefits to Leeds. This study will be ready in time to inform the second bid book in 2018.

### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 The decisions requested in this report constitute a key decision and should therefore be eligible for call-in. However, European Capital of Culture is a competition between cities and it would prejudice the Council’s interests for its bid to be revealed to competitors any closer to the submission deadline of 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Furthermore, should Leeds be shortlisted a second bid book will be required which responds to any feedback at stage 1. It is therefore proposed that in accordance with Executive and Decision Making procedure rule 5.1.3, the decisions within this report be exempt from call-in in to be able to submit the

bid by the required deadline of the 27 October 2017. The implications of not exempting the decision from call-in is that Leeds City Council may not be able to submit the bid to become European Capital of Culture 2023 and forgo the opportunity that this would bring to the City.

## **4.6 Risk Management**

- 4.6.1 The Council is developing a new Culture Strategy which will set our ambition and direct our actions until 2030. The new Culture Strategy will frame and ensure that the proposals within a successful bid for European Capital of Culture will have a meaningful and significant long-term legacy. The new Leeds Culture Strategy will also provide a framework for moving forward should the bid for European of Culture not be successful for any reason.
- 4.6.2 The 2023 Independent Steering Group has discussed a Risk Assessment for the bid itself and it is referenced in the bid document.
- 4.6.3 The risk of a public misconception that the city will not be allowed to submit a bid because of Brexit is being addressed through all our communications; also through the Leeds 2023 volunteers who interact with members of the public. In the past three months the Leeds 2023 team has stepped up all communications to reach the public with the key facts.
- 4.6.4 The financial risk to the council is minimal at this stage since it is the final bid rather than this initial bid which would form the basis of a contractual arrangement with Leeds Culture Trust. At that point legal advice will be taken in order to protect the Council's interests.
- 4.6.5 There is a reputational risk for the Council in bidding. The funding required to be European Capital of Culture is significant and, whilst the social and economic benefits are well documented (and evident from other events such as the Tour de France), the Council is making a choice about investing in this project and not elsewhere. Whilst the overall 'project' can clearly be shown to be value for money, there is a risk that investment in individual artistic projects can be compared, for instance, with immediate pressing concerns protecting our most vulnerable people. Ultimately by investing in the project the Council is stating its belief that the longer term benefits in terms of social cohesion, economic impact, inward investment, tourism, jobs and pride are realisable and good value for money.
- 4.6.6 There is of course a risk of a major incident occurring in the city during the Year of activity. Should Leeds win the competition, preparations with partners will be undertaken early, including through the proposed Readiness Board, on to adopt measures to prevent situations arising during or as a consequence of hosting the Year and to protect the safety of all our citizens and visitors leading up to and during the Year.

## **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 Much of the work involved in bidding has already brought many benefits to the city such as securing essential new baseline research to inform audience development and tourism initiatives and to facilitate our cultural organisations to reach and engage new audiences.

The support of our education and media partners and business sponsors has been overwhelmingly positive and resulted in new collaborations and greater public awareness of the city's creative and cultural attractions; it has produced sources of new in-kind and financial support and is beginning to generate popular interest and huge appetite amongst local communities for Leeds to win the bid.

- 5.2 The potential for a thrilling and momentous year of activity has brought a wide range of partners together in a joint mission to be European Capital of Culture 2023.

The Leeds 2023 Independent Steering Group and a large number of partners across the city have collaborated to prepare the bid to meet the deadline of 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

## **6. Recommendations**

6.1 Executive Board is recommended to:

- i) Agree that the Council should submit the bid for European Capital of Culture, attached as Appendix 1, for submission to the DCMS by 27 October 2017;
- ii) Express its thanks to the Independent Steering Group and all the organisations and individuals in the city who have contributed over the last three years.
- iii) Agree that the decisions made in respect of this report be exempted from the Call-in process, for the reasons detailed within the Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In section of the report.

And, should Leeds be shortlisted to the second stage:

- iv) Note that a second and final application will need to be submitted during 2018, incorporating further developments and feedback from the judging panel;
- v) Request the Chief Officer Culture and Sport supports a recruitment process to appoint a Chair of Leeds Culture Trust;
- vi) Request the Chief Officer Culture and Sport initiates a Readiness Board within the Authority across the different Directorates to start to plan for supporting the delivery of the year.

## **7. Background Documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None.

## **8. Appendices**

8.1 Appendix 1 – First Stage Bid Submission to be European Capital of Culture in 2023, as recommended to Executive Board by the Independent Steering Group.

8.2 Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment.

---

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.