



## Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Housing

### Outer South Area Committee

Date: Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2006

### Subject: Executive Summary of Morley Literature Festival Suggestions for Development Report

<b>Electoral Wards Affected:</b>  Morley North  Morley South	<b>Specific Implications For:</b>  Equality and Diversity <input type="checkbox"/>  Community Cohesion <input type="checkbox"/>  Narrowing the Gap <input type="checkbox"/>	
Council Function <input type="checkbox"/>	Delegated Executive Function available for Call In <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report <input type="checkbox"/>

## Executive Summary

The Area Committee at its November meeting, having considered the Morley Literature Festival - Evaluation Report requested a further report to this meeting detailing options for the future organisation of the Morley Literature Festival. This report provides an executive summary of the Suggestions for Development report compiled by Rachel Feldberg, Director of Ilkley Literature Festival. It covers a wide range of subjects from vision, rationale & aims, partnerships, audience development and suggestions to construct a relevant and creative programme of events. The report also explores the organisational issues which need to be considered in more detail such as constitutional arrangements for a committee, the pros and cons of becoming a charitable independent organisation and the roles and responsibilities for the Morley Literature Festival Committee and the appointment of a Festival Director.

### 1.0 Purpose of This Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the suggestions made to progress the Morley Literature Festival in 2007 and highlight for Members key areas which require decision to enable the further development of the festival to build on the success of last years inaugural event.

### 2.0 Background

2.1 In September 2006, the inaugural Morley Literature Festival took place. The festival attracted over 1000 visitors and proved to be a huge success. The Morley Literature Festival Committee agreed that this event shouldn't be a one off and should become

a feature of the town's annual events calendar. The November Area Committee gave in principle approval to this.

- 2.2 An evaluation report on the festival was presented to the last Area Committee meeting. This outlined the strengths and weaknesses of the festival, as well as highlighting lessons learnt from methodology applied and issues which should be addressed before progressing with preparations for the 2007 festival.
- 2.3 To help inform the future development of the Morley Literature Festival, Rachel Feldberg the Director of the Ilkley Literature Festival was commissioned to produce a report detailing suggestions for development of the Morley Literature Festival, using the report to the November Area Committee as a guide.
- 2.4 The Director of Ilkley Literature Festival produced the Morley Literature Festival - Suggestions for Development report which details options for consideration when developing the content, structure and focus for the 2007 Literature Festival. The detailed guidance provided is key to establishing a successful structure to drive this event forward.
- 2.5 The report is summarised here and appended in part. It is intended to present the full report to the first meeting of the Morley Literature Festival 2007 Organising Committee.

### **3.0 Vision for the Morley Literature Festival**

- 3.1 The report acknowledges the broad range and increasing number of literature festivals held across the country, all with very different visions. These examples are explored by type. It recommends that Morley considers focusing on four types of festival. This vision should provide the rationale for the festival but with a clear link to the aims of the festival. The following themes are:-
  - Initiating original, cross cultural and unusual live literature events
  - Encouraging people to use and enjoy their local library
  - Persuading people to see the area in a new light and enhancing a sense of local pride
  - Widening access to live literature events and encouraging local people to enjoy books reading and writing

### **4.0 Aims of The Morley Literature Festival**

- 4.1 Suggested aims for the Morley Literature Festival (an appropriate title and logo should be identified) would include:
  - Encouraging local people and others to see Morley in a new light, enhancing a sense of local pride and achievement
  - Promoting the town and all it has to offer
  - Encouraging local people to enjoy and celebrate books, reading and writing
  - Encouraging local people to get involved with Morley's refurbished library
  - Making a wide range of live literature events accessible to local people who might not otherwise engage with books and reading
  - Encouraging children, young people and families in the Morley area to have fun with books and reading
  - Working with local schools to offer literature related workshops and projects which enhance the curriculum and increase attainment

- Encouraging local people from a wide variety of backgrounds to share and appreciate live literature events from a variety of cultural perspectives, for example, Asian writers, performers and poets; traveller writers and story tellers; Irish writers
- Critically aim to use the festival as vehicle to regenerate the town through a variety of methods, promoting community pride and identity.

## **5.0 Audience Development**

5.1 The report identifies a range of groups with whom the Morley Literature Festival might want to develop a relationship, these include: local residents, keen readers, book group members and library users living in Morley and other areas of South Leeds. People with specific areas of interest e.g. Crime, fiction, sport or humour. More specifically families with young children, primary age school children.

## **6.0 Strategic Partnership**

6.1 The report reiterates the imperative to create strong partnerships in order to reach the intended audience and maximise resources. This would be strongly linked to the marketing strategy through targeted mailings; publicity material and press coverage. The report mentions strategic partners that are already involved in the literature festival at present but emphasises the need to link in with schools and community groups. It also suggests the need to link in with cultural organisations such as local theatres, amateur arts organisation, variety and light opera societies, poetry groups and reading clubs.

## **7.0 Programming and Content**

7.1 The report firmly recommends that all proposed events that make up the festival programme only be considered if they clearly link with:

- A target audience and clear strategy to reach them
- A suitable venue, ensuring that all venues have full disability access and provision.
- A realistic appraisal of the numbers the event will attract
- Realistic appraisal of additional costs
- The income the event can realistically expect to create.

7.2 The report illustrates the need for a cash cow or headline event that will provide the basis for the festival. This event should create the most publicity and be almost certain to sell out and so generate the finance that could subsidise less popular events. The report adds a note of caution that only the most famous speakers, BBC and ITV journalists or major poets such as Ian Macmillan would make money while others if marketed well might break even.

7.3 Developing on from this, the report advocates linking in a theme to the festival. The theme could be taken from a recently published book. For example if you had an auto-biography of a local footballer, you may expand on this by putting on workshops on sports journalism or sports writing for young children etc. The report gives a detailed summary of possible content and themes for the festival.

## **8.0 Finance**

8.1 It is recommended that Morley Literature Festival in keeping with all similar events should operate as a business and expect at least to break even and possibly even make small amount for a reserve for the following year.

- 8.2 Crucially, the report points out that unless the festival establishes itself as an independent organisation there is little if no opportunity to gain funding from external bodies. If the Area Committee does decide to follow this route then discussions should be held early in order to establish development ideas for the festival that are in line with funding priorities for example involving young people. It's also worth noting that funders are unlikely to pay for core costs such as expenses and will be more interested in funding specific revenue projects.

## 9.0 Organisational structure

- 9.1 The Evaluation Report considered by the Area Committee in November gave the organisational structure of the festival particular scrutiny. It opined that future events might not realise their full potential without a constituted committee with terms of reference and clear objectives. Rachel Feldberg's report outlines the need to make a decision on the structure of organising committee urgently in order to move forward. The report recommends that the Area Committee should agree that the Morley Festival Committee should ultimately become a charitable organisation and progress with the constitutional arrangements presented at **Appendix 2**. In order to progress membership will need to be agreed and the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer elected at its first meeting. The agenda should address all outstanding issues raised in the November Evaluation Report as well as other issues from Rachel Feldberg's report to include: establishing clear aims and objectives for the festival with outcomes, the setting up of a bank account and a draft timetable for action.
- 9.2 The following membership is suggested for the Morley Literature Festival Organising Committee. Two Members of the Outer South Area Committee, a representative of Morley Town Council, a member of the South Leeds Area Management Team, a representative from Education Leeds, a representative from Leeds Library & Information Services, a representative from Joseph Priestley College, a representative from Leeds Youth Services, and a representative of Bertram Library Services. This should be the core organising structure and from it appropriate networks should develop to deliver a successful festival.

## 10.0 Festival Director

- 10.1 Members will recall that a key recommendation to the November Area Committee was that consideration should be given to establishing clear leadership by the appointment of a Festival Director. To facilitate the festival's development Rachel Feldberg's report proposes that if at all possible a Festival Director should be recruited on a freelance basis, contracted to work a number of days spread over the year. Such an appointment would provide the festival with clear direction and provide a necessary level of expertise, particularly in terms of appropriate programme content, links with other literature and arts organisations and knowledge of possible funding streams. **Appendix 1** is a draft outline of a possible job description, key tasks and management arrangements as well as a process for recruitment. It is expected that the Director's costs will be covered through additional income generation.

## **11.0 Recommendations**

Members of the Outer South Area Committee are requested to:

- (a). Note the contents of this report and consider any actions
- (b). Agree the proposed constitutional arrangements at Appendix 2
- (c). Agree the composition of the Morley Literature Festival Committee as detailed at 9.2.
- (d). Agree the appointment of a Festival Director on a freelance basis as detailed in Appendix 1.
- (e). Agree to allocate £10,000 Well-being funding to commission the festival in 2007. This amount to cover the Festival Director's fees at about £5,000 and £5,000 towards general programme costs.