

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 13 MARCH 2012
title: BOWLAND ARTS FESTIVAL
submitted by: JOHN HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: CHRIS HUGHES, HEAD OF CULTURAL & LEISURE SERVICES

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To ask Committee to endorse our involvement in the Bowland Arts Festival as accountable body for the external funding, secured on behalf of partners to deliver the Festival.

1.2 Relevance to Council Priorities / Ambitions

- Council Ambitions – to make people’s lives safer and healthier and, more specifically, to increase opportunities for people to access cultural activities and improve outcomes for children and young people.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Bowland Arts is a collection of local authorities, artists, and the Forest of Bowland AONB, who come together to facilitate the Bowland Arts Festival, now in its fifth year.

2.2 The purpose of the festival is to;

- Provide creative activities for residents of the Bowland area;
- Provide a festival to attract visitors to help them appreciate the heritage and ecology of the area;
- Provide employment opportunities for local artists;
- To promote Bowland as a vibrant, creative and attractive place to live and visit.

2.3 The Council has been involved in similar collaborative activities over the years, and has acted as the main co-ordinator in some circumstances. The Forest of Bowland goes across more than one Borough Boundary, so a collaborative project is the most effective way of delivering a ‘Bowland’ branded activity.

3 ISSUES

3.1 The role of accountable body has been shared amongst the partners since the festival began, and this year the responsibility falls upon ourselves. In doing this, it commits the Council to the following:

- ‘An accountable body generally takes responsibility for the legal and financial management of any funding given to a particular project. The accountable body will receive all funding, and is therefore responsible for putting in place an audit trail, overseeing contract management with suppliers, and ensuring the project has sufficient cash flow.’

3.2 In terms of the Bowland Festival, we would be responsible for placing orders, paying bills, holding funds on behalf of the partners, accounting for expenditure and ensuring that any grant conditions are adhered to.

3.3 To protect ourselves, we will produce a memorandum of understanding for all partners to sign, outlining their commitment and a clear decision making process.

4 **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Approval of this report may have the following implications:

- **Resources** – the total project cost is £22,250 and is funded as follows:
 - Local Authority contributions £5,250 (of which RVBC contributes £1400)
 - Arts Council England £10,000
 - Forest of Bowland AONB £1,000
 - Lancashire County Council £6,000 (awaiting confirmation)

The role of accountable body will be an additional 'in kind' contribution by the Council.

- **Technical, Environmental and Legal** – it is extremely unlikely that there will be any major contractual arrangements needed, but there will be the need to commission artists for some elements of work. Our arts development unit has a good deal of experience in this, and so it will not pose a particular problem.
- **Political** – our involvement in the project will enhance an already strong relationship with the Forest of Bowland.
- **Reputation** – The Bowland Festival continues to develop a strong reputation in the local community, thanks, in part, to our ongoing support.

5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

5.1 Notes the contents of the report and endorses the Council's involvement in the festival;

5.2 Agrees to the Council acting as accountable body.

JOHN C HEAP
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

For further information, please contact Chris Hughes 01200 414479