



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism

Cabinet – 18 February 2021

### Cultural Services Covid-19 External Funding Paper

<b>Purpose:</b>	To report on and gain retrospective agreement for external grant funding received by Cultural Services in connection with Welsh Government's cultural sector COVID-19 recovery funding.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Transformation and future council development; Covid Recovery Planning
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that Cabinet:  1) Notes the efforts to access external / government funding for the Cultural Sector resulting in applications being made with little notice;  2) Confirms retrospective approval for the acceptance and utilisation of the funding received, and to authorise the acceptance of amounts pending, subject to criteria being fulfilled as outlined in item 4.3.
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#### 1. Background

- 1.1 Cultural and sporting activities have been particularly badly hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, and concerns for recovery remain given social distancing, which limits the prospects for reintroducing audiences and viable sales figures.
- 1.2 The service has historically operated on an income generating model that accounts for around 45 – 50% of its costs overall. However, the majority of our venues and services closed to the public from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 and

have reopened on a limited, temporary or sporadic basis, removing our opportunity for sales, hires or other partnership income.

- 1.3 Many staff were temporarily redeployed to the Covid response, whilst others focused on moving activity to online platforms, advisory and digital services and new business strategies, ways of working and operating models that could be developed for a new 'covid secure' environment – including the partnership model for the Grand theatre.
- 1.4 These plans were vital in us being able to access funding streams made available by UK Govt. for 'Cultural Recovery', devolved via Welsh Govt, and delivered through bodies and agencies such as Sport Wales, Arts Council Wales, and MALD.
- 1.5 The Government recognised the fragility of the sector in not being able to operate or qualify for other business grants and created a specific funding programme for 'Cultural Recovery', focused on financial stabilisation through plugging gaps from lost income and supporting new ways of working to enable the sector to reposition itself post covid.
- 1.6 A significant number of organisations and freelancers in Swansea have benefited from Government grants for the sector as a result, but this report refers to those monies awarded to the Council run cultural services.

## **2. General Issues**

- 2.1 Any duplication with applications to WG for lost income, submitted corporately, has been addressed and does not need accounting for herein. Grant funding received, or pending, is detailed below in Item 4.3, the grants being arranged by service area. In each case the funding agency and the purpose/ status of the grant is outlined alongside the amount received.
- 2.2 The majority of small amounts were made retrospectively to cover lost income or compensate for costs incurred and goods to be purchased; others are reliant on programme and spend approvals in line with current legislation. All but one required no match funding from the Council – and all came with a very tight turnaround, save for the Sport Wales award, which was provided based on current business strategy for delivering health and wellbeing, requiring no application procedure.

## **3. Equality and Engagement Implications**

- 3.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
  - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

- 3.2 An EIA Screening Form has been completed with the agreed outcome that a full EIA report was not required. This is because the purpose of the funding is to maintain services and allow them to resume once the period of lockdown is ended, not in any way to reduce or remove them as would be the case if they became economically unsustainable.

#### 4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The financial implications associated with this report are limited since most of the grant aid has been given with no match funding required from the Council. Only one of the grants listed (repurposing of the Arts Wing of the Grand Theatre) requires a 33% contribution of £25K, which is available through the restoration fund. Cabinet previously approved the partnership model based on the development needs of the venue. We are grateful that the ACW recovery fund has helped accelerate a reciprocal approach to programming and Race Council Cymru objectives, creating a stronger recovery scenario than could have been achieved otherwise.

- 4.2 The Awards relate to the current financial year due to them being based on losses this year, and the situation at the time of the awards, that we were heading toward easing/ reopening and recovery. We now know this not to be the case, as lockdown and tighter restrictions inhibit the delivery of the programmes. We are currently liaising with our colleagues in MALD, ACW and Sport Wales to ensure adequate planning, re-profiling and adjustment to outcomes is in place before year end.

#### 4.3 Summary of Covid specific Grant awards received by Cultural Services 2020/21

Service Area	Funding provider	Name of fund and process	Amount and status	Purpose of grant
Sport Development	Welsh Government through Sport Wales	Over 60s Active Leisure Fund – no formal application – awarded on the basis of previously agreed contract for delivery.	£31.3K Received	Cover loss of income, staff redeployment etc
Sport Development	Welsh Government through Sport Wales	Sport Wales Recovery Fund – as above.	£157K Received	To support post-COVID physical activity and measure community response to sport

Grand Theatre	Welsh Government through Arts Council Wales	Cultural Recovery Fund CRF – awarded on submission of the current and future business plan, approach to programming, partnership and post covid operating model.	£890K On confirmation of quotes and programme finalisation – requires a roll forward.	Cover loss of income, staff redeployment etc £718K Use of consultancy for transformation review £15K Grant for 2021 programming £157k
Grand Theatre	Welsh Government through Arts Council Wales	Cultural Recovery Fund – as above	£50K (match funding of £25K taken from GT Restoration Fund) On confirmation of quotes.	Re-purposing of GT Arts Wing for multicultural community use – nb. RCC also received a grant to the same value for the same purpose.
Swansea Museum	Welsh Government through MALD	Cultural Resilience Fund – application stating costs of materials such as signage, screens, ppe etc. and reopening plan	£5K - received	Purchase of materials required for re-opening COVID-secure service
Glynn Vivian Art Gallery	Welsh Government through MALD	Cultural Resilience Fund – as above	£5K – received	Purchase of materials required for re-opening COVID-secure service
Glynn Vivian Art Gallery	Welsh Government through Arts Council Wales	Arts Council; Recovery Fund – as per the Grand theatre process for CRF.	£100K – on confirmation of quotes, programming details and revised timeline	Cover loss of income, staff redeployment etc £40K Help to programme for new and diverse audiences £60K
Swansea Libraries	Welsh Government through MALD	Local Government Cultural Support Fund	£14.75K – received	Develop a marketing programme and purchase equipment for post-COVID service recovery
Swansea Libraries	Welsh Government through MALD	Estyn Allan	£5K – received	Contribution to a pan-Wales project to upgrade library staff IT skills and buy IT equipment

Swansea Libraries	Welsh Government through MALD	Cultural Resilience Fund – as per the GVAG and Museum purchases and reopening needs for ppe etc	£5K – received	Purchase of materials required for re-opening a COVID-secure service
West Glamorgan Archive Service	Welsh Government through MALD	Cultural Resilience Fund – as above	£1.3K – received	Purchase of materials required for re-opening a COVID-secure service
		Totals	1,264,350m	

## 5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

**Background Papers:** EIA screening form.

**Appendices:** None