



**Cabinet**  
13 November 2017

**Report from the Strategic Director  
of Community Wellbeing**

Wards affected: all

**Bid to become London Borough of Culture 2020**

**1.0 Purpose of the Report**

The Greater London Authority (GLA) has launched a new competition to award two boroughs the title of London Borough of Culture for 2019 and 2020. This award brings with it a £1.1 million revenue grant for each winning borough. A further six boroughs may receive grants of between £50k and £200k for exemplar projects. The application period closes on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017 with winning boroughs announced in February 2018. Brent Council is preparing a bid for 2020.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1. To confirm the Council's commitment to submitting a bid to the Mayor for Brent to become the London Borough of Culture 2020
- 2.2. To agree that should the bid be successful the Council will make available the required match funding.

**3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 Brent has a diverse and growing cultural offer including world class venues such as Wembley Stadium, Wembley Arena and the Tricycle theatre. We have a thriving arts and culture programme delivered through the Council's cultural facilities as well as community locations and a variety of distinct local cultural identities across the Borough's neighbourhoods such as Harlesden and Ealing Road. The London Borough of Culture campaign would crystallise this offer, developing Brent as a borough-wide cultural destination, celebrating the diversity of our cultural activity and communities and supporting the Council's vision to ensure Brent is a great place to live, work and visit.

3.2 The London Borough of Culture bids will be assessed on 'the journey a borough wants to take, rather than what is already achieved' and will be scored on three criteria: Celebrating Creativity (40%), Making an Impact (30%) and Deliverability (30%). Proposals should outline the long term vision for the borough and state how the London Borough of Culture would help achieve or support these ambitions. This framework is advantageous for Brent as a place with a wide range of creative activity taking place, a distinct identity as a place that celebrates diversity and with the resources and experience as a Council to deliver successful high level projects.

3.3 A successful bid presents a number of opportunities for the borough including:

- Significant investment through revenue grants if successful
- Raised profile for the borough amongst public, fundraising and cultural sector audiences
- Significant income generation opportunities in the borough through increased footfall from visitors
- Attraction of longer term investment in the borough due to improved cultural infrastructure and profile
- Enhanced community cohesion and civic pride amongst residents through increased cultural participation
- Stronger working relationship and greater involvement of partners in delivery of a cohesive cultural offer in the borough

However, regardless of success the process of developing our application brings a number of benefits including:

- Opportunity to gain sector expertise in refining and developing the borough's cultural offer
- Development of borough wide cultural identity and offer with key external partners
- Creation of a vision and framework for culture in the borough to use in bidding for other fundraising opportunities
- Increase the profile of Brent as a cultural destination within the sector

3.4 In relation to the Deliverability component of the scoring, the Council has a proven track record in delivering high profile and high quality cultural programmes and events across a range of artistic and cultural disciplines. These include: facilitating elements of the 2012 Olympics; hosting the 2016 London Mela; delivering annual Brent Dance Month festivals and working in partnership with the Tricycle theatre to deliver Takeover 2017: Mapping Brent featuring performances at venues around the borough. There is also a positive precedent for receiving grant funding to deliver programmes and the Council has a solid framework in place to ensure all monitoring, reporting and evaluation requirements of grant funding are met.

3.5 Engagement with residents suggests a bid would attract support. In the recent 2017 survey to identify priorities for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funded projects, cultural facilities featured strongly in the responses and was a top priority in four of the five neighbourhoods.

3.6 The GLA has stressed the importance of developing bids through working across Council services and with partners. A successful bid will be one which has engaged and represents local communities and is about bringing culture to local people rather than attracting more people to cultural venues.

3.7 Engagement with Council staff and partners has revealed an appreciation of the role of culture in the life of the Borough and an enthusiasm for contributing to the bid. External partners supporting the bid include Wembley Park, the Tricycle theatre, Wembley Stadium, SSE Arena, the Lexi Cinema, Young Brent Foundation, Westminster University, Mahogany Arts.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

4.1 The winning boroughs will receive £1.1 million revenue grant to deliver the year as London Borough of Culture. It is a requirement of the application process that boroughs have 30% match funding, totalling £330,000. The funding award is being supported by City Bridge Trust, Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. These organisations are official partners of the fund and cannot be used to supply matched funding. Other funding and sponsorship is likely to be available to the winning boroughs including from other GLA funding streams.

4.2 There is support from the GLA for boroughs during the application stage which includes small grants to pay for expertise in areas such as creative direction, partnership development, governance and business case support. The Council has claimed its support grant from the GLA and secured external creative consultancy.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications as a result of this report

#### **6.0 Equality Implications**

The bid will require the Council to demonstrate how we propose to address our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

#### **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications**

The bid is being developed by staff from the Culture service, Partnerships Policy and performance, Communications, CYP supported by a creative consultancy

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