

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda

Item No.

Report of Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

to
Cabinet
on

8th November 2016

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Celebrating 125 years of the Borough of Southend-on-Sea & the Centenary of Priory Park being gifted to the Town

Place Scrutiny Committee

**Executive Councillor: Councillor Holland
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To propose a programme of events in 2017 celebrating both the 125th anniversary of the Borough Charter for Southend-on-Sea and the centenary of Priory Park being gifted to the Borough.

2. Recommendations That Cabinet;

- 2.1 Approve the proposed series of celebrations to mark the 125th anniversary of the signing of the Borough Charter and the centenary of Priory Park.**
- 2.2 Note the nationally significant award of Poppies: Wave exhibition to Shoeburyness which will form part of the year's celebrations.**
- 2.3 Approve one-off financial support of the collective activity up to £580k and funded from the Business Transformation Reserve across 2016/17 and 2017/18**

3. Background

- 3.1 On Friday 5th August 1892 Her Royal Highness Queen Victoria signed the Royal Charter that incorporated Southend-on-Sea. On the day the charter was signed Southend had a population of 13,000 residences with a rateable value of £82,000.
- 3.2 Incorporation Day was held on Wednesday 19th September 1892, this was the day that the official letter and charter document from the queen were delivered to Southend from Osbourne House.

- 3.3 The official messenger arrived from London to be met by the Lord Mayor of London, Lord Lieutenant of the County of Essex, Brass Bands, and the Southend Lifeboat which had been specially taken from the water and placed in a wheeled cradle to parade through the town. The parade made its way down the High Street and then along the pier to the pier head.
- 3.4 Upon reaching the end of the pier a lunch was held, during which Thomas Dowsett became the first Mayor of Southend, the charter document was handed over and Southend became the newest town in England.
- 3.5 To commemorate the occasion of the charter the 1,743 school children registered within the new borough were each presented with medals. A tea party was held for them in a large marquee at the site that later became Whitefield Road.
- 3.6 In 1992 to mark the centenary of the Borough a series of events were hosted by the council all of which were badged under a special centenary logo and included:-
- Construction of a large scale stage along the seafront for a series of concerts
 - The Lord Mayor of London took part in a Civic Procession and opened the Centenary Garden in Priory Park (including the planting of a time capsule) also the extension and refurbishment of Cliffs Pavilion.
 - A marquee in Priory Park which hosted a Flower Festival.
 - A series of exhibitions and other events throughout the summer season (April – October) - see attached for a copy of the 1992 Centenary Programme which was covered extensively in the Southend Evening Echo.
- 3.7 2017 will mark 125 years of the incorporation of the Borough; in addition this year will also see the centenary of Priory Park, gifted to the borough by R A Jones in 1917, and also falls within the 4 year centenary commemoration of World War 1.
- 3.8 To mark these series of significant milestones for the Borough the Cultural Officers Working Party have put together a programme of potential activities which could take place across 2017 to mark each of these particular events.

The following are a list of the potential events / themes which could be incorporated into the programme:-

- 3.8.1 **Poppies: 14-18 NOW:** First World War Centenary Art Commissions invited expressions of interest from across the UK to host during 2017 and 2018 the iconic ceramic poppy sculptures *Wave* and *Weeping Window* from the installation *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* at the Tower of London in 2014.
- 3.8.1.1 The council submitted an Expression of Interest to host the iconic "Weeping Window" element of the sculpture in the town, ideally in 2017 to accentuate the celebrations for the 125th anniversary of the Borough.

- 3.8.1.2 The expression of interest identified the Heavy Duty Quick Firing Battery Gun structure within Gunners Park as the preferred location for the sculpture. However, during unannounced visits to the location by 14-18 NOW, the artists involved identified Barge Pier as a location they wanted to pursue. They also considered that the “Wave” element of the sculpture would be more suited to the site.
- 3.8.1.3 14-18 NOW and the artists involved with the project felt that the history of the Old Ranges and the feel of the site offered a location that fitted with the sentiment of the sculpture and in particular liked how Barge Pier would add to the experience.
- 3.8.1.4 Barge Pier currently belongs to the Avant Homes, the developer of the Garrison, but is due to be transferred to the Council as part of the sea wall transfer.
- 3.8.1.5 Given the limitations and potential challenges of siting the sculpture on Barge Pier, 14-18 NOW agreed to part fund a structural survey of the pier; from their perspective the outcome was to determine if the site could be considered by the final judging panel.
- 3.8.1.9 The survey took place at the ends of September 2016; the findings of which were shared with 14-18 NOW. Subsequently, the Council was informed at the beginning of October that it had been selected and will be one of 6 locations in the country to host one of the prestigious Poppies Installations.
- 3.8.1.10 Shoeburyness will be the only location of any exhibition in the South East of England in 2017 providing a significant opportunity to attract new audiences and cross promote the Southend cultural and tourism offer.
- 3.8.1.11 The 2017 locations and dates are:
- WAVE:**
12TH April – 25th June: Barge Pier, Shoeburyness, Southend-on-Sea
15th July – 19th November: Plymouth Naval Memorial
- WEEPING WINDOW:**
22nd March – 29th May: Maritime Museum, Hull
9th June -23rd July: Silk Mill, Derby
5th August – 25th September: National Assembly of Wales, Cardiff
14th October – 3rd December: Ulster Museum, Belfast
- 3.8.1.12 Now that the award has been finalised; the news of which can be shared publicly. The required preparatory work to host a successful exhibition in Southend is underway and project plans are being developed to maximise the opportunity that this provides for raising the profile of the borough locally, nationally and internationally.

3.8.2 Southend - 125 years pageant

It is proposed that consideration be given to a pageant type of event which will re-enact key historical events and milestones in the history of Southend over the last 125 years. This is likely to take the form of a series of performances within Warrior Square Gardens on the weekend prior to the 125th Anniversary date of 19th September 2017.

It is intended that a local arts organisation would be invited to make an application for funding for the delivery of the pageant activity to the HLF; it is anticipated that the Council would make a match funding contribution in the region of £7,000.

3.8.3 Priory Park Centenary

The main focus of activity will be the replacement of the Crowns on the entrance gates with copies of the original lions which were installed on the gates when the park was gifted to the public. There will be other park related events such as a significant flower festival to celebrate the park's centenary year.

3.8.4 Silk River

The Council have been invited by Kinetika to participate in their Silk River project which will take place in 2017. The project will be a series of artistic exchanges between UK and Indian Artists to mark 70 years of Indian Independence as part of the UK Year of Indian Culture.

Kinetika have recently been successful in their application for project funding through Arts Council England's "Re-imagine India" funding stream. There would be a contribution of £10,000 required by the Council (plus an in-kind contribution).

Kinetika are researching communities, schools and groups situated along the Thames who have historical or current links with India and might be interested to participate in the project outlined below.

British artist **Ali Pretty** and her company [Kinetika](#) is developing a creative project [Re-imagining the River](#) in partnership with Indian Arts organisation [Banqlanatak](#)

It explores the unique relationship between London and Kolkata through a year-long artistic exchange between communities along the Thames Estuary and West Bengal drawing inspiration from the Thames and Hooghly rivers.

In both India and the UK the project will:

- Engage with 10 communities along the river selected from locations of cultural and historical importance.
- Work with schools and local artists to create new stories through drawing and oral storytelling activities.

- Host an artistic workshop for a team of selected contemporary artists and craftspeople to create silks, reflecting the stories, landscape and heritage of each community.
- Work with a team of local people/children to create an animated walk using the silks in a way that draws upon the Bengali tradition of Patua to share their stories.

An international group of artists, writers, photographers, and musicians will journey on foot and by boat along these two mighty rivers and connect to the communities that lie along them through a series of animated walks; the grand finale of which will be on Sunday 24th September 2017 in Southend-on-Sea at the Royal Pavilion.

The outcome of the project will be:

- 20 hand-painted Murshidabad silks designed under the artistic direction of Ali Pretty. 10 silks created in London and 10 in Kolkata; all 20 will be exhibited in both places.
- An illustrated publication capturing the story of the project with contributions from writers, photographers and artists in both places.
- An international exchange online, creating the opportunity for an international artistic and literary community to follow and contribute to the project via digital platforms.
- This project will continue the momentum of focus around the Thames to further the new Museum message.

3.8.5 Other potential events / activities:-

- Royal visit
- Planting 125 trees / creating an orchard
- Local organisations supporting their 125 related events some with grant support / seed funding future community focused events.
- Series of Bandstand concerts (programmed around the celebrations)
- Flower festival in Priory Park
- Planting of floral displays with a specifically designed logo
- Hosting a concert / musical event during the Village Green weekend – utilising the large stage already in situ. This event could include a performance of “Anthem”, the 2012 Olympic Torch Relay commissioned choral work
- Series of sporting events badged under “125” banner
- Public Art commission to mark the anniversary (the lions sculpture on top of the gates at Priory Park
- Incorporation day itself will take place on Tuesday 19th September 2017; this will be marked by a Civic Charter Service at a local church; this will be attended by the Mayor and other local dignitaries

The financial implications of these activities are set out in section 6.2 of this report.

4 Other Options

The council could choose not to mark the occasion on such a large scale and opt for the celebration events to be limited to the Poppies exhibition, Silk River Project a formal civic event / service on 19th September 2017 and the recreation of the lions on the Priory Park Gates for its centenary or alternatively pick a selection of the proposed events indicated above.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

To mark the anniversary and use the occasion as an opportunity for community cohesion and for the residents of the Borough to be aware of their own local history and create a sense of Civic Pride.

The Poppies: Wave installation will provide significant national publicity. We will develop linked communications to maximise the opportunities to support tourism and the wider economy.

The wider celebrations will provide further opportunities for marketing of the town and its cultural offer.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

The celebrations will contribute to the following Corporate Priorities:

- **Prosperous-** *Ensure continued regeneration of the town through a culture led agenda*
- **Excellent** – *Enable communities to be self-sufficient and foster pride in their town*
- **Healthy** – *sports participation will be included in the programme to address health objectives.*
- **Clean** – *Make Southend sparkle will be an intrinsic part of the message through civic pride.*

6.2 Financial Implications

In order to host a memorable programme of activities a budget in the region of £580k is proposed. Much of this activity will also lever match and external funding to the area. Outline costs for the proposed activity is shown below:

Event	Indicative costs
<p>Poppies exhibition- (based on discussions with Liverpool and Lincoln who have both hosted the exhibitions as well as our own costings in terms of security costs, transport and construction).</p> <p>This exhibition will require on-going maintenance as directed by the artist who will be very involved in the day to day appearance of the exhibition throughout its display. The</p>	£300,000

biggest anticipated cost with this exhibition will be the requirement to have a security presence 24 hours a day throughout the whole period of time; this will include the building and deconstruction stages.	
Silk River Project - to deliver the finale event of both the Silk River Project and the anniversary celebrations.	£10,000
Pageant: A local arts organisation will be procured to make an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for this - there is likely to be a requirement for match funding contribution from the Council	£7,000
Priory Park Gates: this will include the commissioning of an artist to create and install the replica lions	£35,000
Publicity: - to raise the profile and promote participation in the events.	£10,000
Royal visit	£5,000
Grants to local organisations to support their 125 related events: aimed at engaging and involving the local community and creating a sense of belonging and civic pride	£25,000
Planting 125 trees / creating an orchard	£37,500
Series of Bandstand concerts (programmed around the celebrations)	£1,000
Flower festival in Priory Park: to mark the centenary of the Park	£75,000
Encourage local organisations to badge their planned 2017 events as part of the 125 years anniversary celebrations	Free
Planting of floral displays with the logo: new logo to be created for the celebrations	£5,000
Concert / musical event during the Village Green weekend: this would be either the Friday evening or the Sunday utilising the large stage which will already be in situ. This could include a performance of "Anthem", the 2012 Olympic Torch Relay commissioned choral work.	£33,000
Picnics in the parks across the borough	£500
Series of sporting events badged under "125" banner.	£5,000
Civic Service: Incorporation day itself will take place on Tuesday 19 th September 2017; this will be marked by a Civic Charter Service at a local church; this will be attended by the Mayor and other local dignitaries.	£500 (refreshments)
Project Manager: to have oversight and co-ordinate the programme of events and activities throughout the year; in particular the Poppies exhibition.	£30,000

Total	£579,500
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The estimated budget has not taken into account the potential for various elements of the programme to attract sponsorship. The centenary celebrations benefited from some sponsorship support. It will be important to get sponsors on board and a project manager appointed as early as possible to realise these opportunities. Any sponsorship generated will be used to offset the funding for the project.

There is no existing budgetary provision for this project and if Members approve the project then one-off funding could be met from the Business Transformation Reserve. The profiling of this funding across 2016/17 and 2017/18 will be determined with the Project Manager.

6.3 Legal Implications

Licensing / event applications will need to be made where appropriate. All events will be subject to a risk assessment. We do not anticipate the need for road closures for any of the celebratory events.

There will be very stringent branding, merchandising and marketing guidelines associated with the Poppies: Wave exhibition. The council will be required to enter into an agreement with 14-18 NOW to adhere to those guidelines.

In terms of Barge Pier, this location is currently in the possession of Avant Homes. Ownership is due to be transferred to the Council as part of the sea wall transfer.

Whilst currently being owned by Avant Homes, Barge Pier is located within MOD land. The appropriate discussions are being held with the MOD to gain the necessary permissions required during the period the sculpture will be on display.

6.4 People Implications

The delivery of a large scale celebration will undoubtedly involve a large HR element; the programme will be overseen by the Cultural Events Officer Group; many of the planned events will be delivered in conjunction with local partner organisations.

For the celebrations to be successful it is imperative that a Project Manager is identified to have oversight and control over the celebrations.

Initial resources will be needed to develop a Communications and Engagement Plan for the celebratory year. This initial piece of work can be undertaken within the Cultural Events Officer Working Group.

Many of the planned events will rely heavily on volunteers and a recruitment campaign will need to be undertaken.

6.5 Property Implications

The events will utilise cultural assets across the borough including Parks, Museums, Theatres and libraries as well as the seafront and Pier.

6.6 Consultation

A range of discussions have taken place with officers from a range of departments as well as volunteers. Some of the proposed events will involve competitions and will naturally involve members of the local community.

One of the proposals involves a “Community Fund” whereby local groups / organisations and individuals will have the opportunity to submit a bid for a small amount of funding to support any 125 related event they wish to deliver (we have capped this pot of funding at £25,000).

A means of determining criteria for fair allocation of this fund will be developed.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

The programme will be wide ranging and we will look to incorporate specific events to celebrate the diversity of the borough as it is today.

6.8 Risk Assessment

Each event will be subject to the appropriate Events Permit requirements and will need to have a full risk assessment and Event Management Plan. These will be monitored by the Officers Group and in some instance, the SAG (for larger events).

Risk	Likelihood (L) & Impact (H)	Mitigation
Outdoor events will be subject to weather conditions	H / M	All outdoor events will be publicised as subject to weather conditions and advice given to dress appropriately Selling of 125 branded ponchos at events
Finding unexploded ordinance at the Poppies location	M / H	Included costs for a specialist ordinance scanning company, however, may be additional costs for disposal of any items found.
Unforeseen cost associated with the Poppies exhibition	M/ M	Draft budget collated for Wave. Will seek support from colleagues in Finance to have oversight on budget projections. Any large scale damage to the Poppies during the exhibition will

		be covered by the Council's insurance policy.
Capacity to deliver the scale of events identified	H/H	Project Manager role has been built into the costings for the celebrations.
Higher level of Policing costs than anticipated due to their change in focus of local policing	H / M	Policing costs will only apply to larger scale events. Early opportunity through the SAG to understand and identify any excess policing costs.
Insufficient numbers of volunteers to support and deliver the events	M / H	Use Museums & Libraries Volunteer Co-ordinator to recruit appropriate numbers and will connect with existing volunteer networks within the town. Southend Sparkle Co-ordinator will be able to assist with recruitment & mobilisation of existing volunteers.
Inability of Pageant Organiser to attract external funding	M / H	Review programme against allocated overall budget & sponsorship monies and prioritise events for delivery
Clash with the planned events as part of the Alternative City of Culture	H/M	Negotiate with event organisers to agree which events will be 125 related, which will be Alternative City of Culture and those that can be branded jointly.

6.9 Value for Money

We will work with external partners and local organisations, including the Southend BID to ensure that events delivered in the Borough during 2017 are done so under the 125 Banner.

We will need to work with a range of local media partners to raise awareness and promote the events with the local community. Social Media and websites will be key to informing people of the events at relatively low cost.

Communications across the year will be drawn together with a project manager and other resources working closely to ensure a media plan reaches external as well as internal markets adding to the economic value of the year's activity.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

Each of the events will have its own Risk Assessment. We will share the programme of events with the Safety Advisory Group as soon as possible so that all safety implications and potential resources required by emergency services can be identified as early as possible.

Road closures will be minimised and only considered for key events which have the capacity to attract large numbers.

6.11 Environmental Impact

Consideration will be given for each event in terms of accessibility, parking, travel, noise and litter.

7. Background Papers

Copy of 1992 Centenary Celebrations Media Coverage
Borough Charter

8. Appendices

There are none