

Report to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference: FPM-021-2014/15
Date of meeting: 19 January 2015

Portfolio: Leisure and Community Services
Subject: Community Arts - Proposed Budget Saving
Responsible Officer: Julie Chandler (01992 564214)
Democratic Services: Rebecca Perrin (01992 564532)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) That the Cabinet Committee considers the attached Community Arts Business Case for potential CSB Saving/Income.

Executive Summary:

The Council's Community Arts Programme has been considered as part of the cost savings exercise for 2015/16.

A previous review of the Arts Service took place in 2011/12, which resulted in the deletion of one part-time post and a reduction of approximately 35% of the Arts activity budget at the time. The total amount saving made on this occasion was £35,000.

The Community Arts Programme has been delivered over the last four years, with a total operational budget (excluding staffing costs) of just £24,500 per annum. This leaves no room for further reduction within the Arts budget, without making forced staff redundancies.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

It is not possible to reduce the Community Arts Budget further, without making forced redundancies.

Other Options for Action:

None at present

Report:

1. At the last meeting of the Cabinet Committee, the Leader of Council requested that the Council's Community Arts Programme budget be considered as part of the cost savings exercise for the Council in 2015/16.
2. A previous review of the Arts Service in 2011/12 resulted in the deletion of a post and reduction in the arts budget, with a total saving of £35,000. This left the operational budget for the Arts at £24,500 per annum, with the remaining budget of £174,000 allocated to staff salaries.

3. Although within the Council's Budget Book, the 2015/16 budget estimate for Community Arts is estimated at £322,000, this figure includes a range of re-charges which amount to £134,000.

4. In addition, an income figure of approximately £10,500 is generated from holiday and fee paying activity provided by the service, which is offset against the budget cost.

5. Therefore, there is very little room to make further reductions in the operational budget of £24.500 and any savings would need to be found by making forced staff redundancies.

6. A Business Case has therefore been developed, which proposes for Community Services to secure a minimum £10,000 additional external funding and income from fees and charges in 2015/16. The Business Case is attached.

7. As a contingency, should this additional income target not be achieved during 2015/16, savings would be made from the Community Arts Budget through the cessation of the Arts and Leisure Bursary Award Scheme, in order to achieve a net reduction in costs totalling £10,000.

8. Accordingly, in anticipation of the Cabinet Committee wanting to see these income/savings for 2015/16, increased income/funding of £10,000 has been included within the Communities Directorate Budget to be considered later in the meeting.

9. Further to this, officers will investigate whether or not there are any potential opportunities to include all, or elements, of the Community Arts Service within the new Leisure Management Contract, as part of the Competitive Dialogue process.

Resource Implications:

It is proposed to increase income for the Council's Community Arts Service, through generation of external funding and additional income from fees and charges.

Legal and Governance Implications:

None.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None.

Consultation Undertaken:

Initial consultation with staff from Community Arts.

Background Papers:

Community Arts Business case for potential CSB saving/income.

Risk Management:

A contingency position has been considered should the additional income not be achieved in the financial year 2015/16.

Due Regard Record

This page shows **which groups of people are affected** by the subject of this report. It sets out **how they are affected** and how any **unlawful discrimination** they experience can be eliminated. It also includes information about how **access to the service(s)** subject to this report can be improved for the different groups of people; and how they can be assisted to **understand each other better** as a result of the subject of this report.

S149 Equality Act 2010 requires that due regard must be paid to this information when considering the subject of this report.

The Business Case Proposal contained within this report would not have any negative impact on people within the protected characteristic groups. It is however very likely that any external funding secured will be utilised to work with groups of people which the Equality Act aims to protect, thus providing a positive impact.