

Report to: Executive Board - 2 December 2002

OXFORD'S BID TO BE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2008

		WARDS AFFECTED
Report of:	<i>Strategic Policy and Research Business Manager</i>	ALL
Report Author:	<i>David Steel ext. 2538 dsteel@oxford.gov.uk</i>	
Lead Member Responsible:	<i>Councillor Maureen Christian</i>	
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:	<i>Finance and Performance Monitoring Overview and Scrutiny Committee</i>	
Key Decision:	<i>No</i>	
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS		
<p>Oxford has been included on the short-list of six British cities from which government's nomination to be European Capital of Culture in 2008 will be selected. Selection to the short list has resulted in the city being at least a Centre of Culture in the eventuality of Oxford not being selected as Capital of Culture. Five of the short-listed cities will become Centres of Culture which along with the Capital of Culture will work together to develop a spectacular programme of activities leading up to 2008. The British nomination for Capital of Culture will be announced by the Prime Minister in May 2003.</p> <p>Executive Board is Recommended to request that Council commit an additional £50,000 in 2002/03 to match the commitments of the other three major stakeholders. Council is recommended to provide the additional funds from reserves.</p>		

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Work on Oxford's bid to be European Capital of culture in 2008 started in early 2001. The key funding stakeholders were City and County Councils, the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University, and Southern Arts. Total expenditure currently stands at approximately £200,000 of which the City Council has provided £40,000. Oxford's bid was submitted at the end of March 2002, following which were various visits by ministers and the assessment panel, and a formal presentation at the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) in September.

1.2 Oxford's place on the shortlist was announced at the end of October, along with Newcastle/Gateshead, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol and Cardiff.

2. CURRENT POSITION

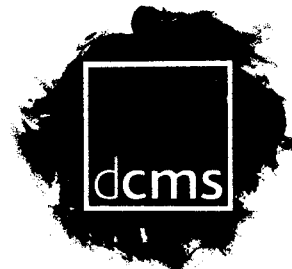
- 2.1 DCMS has announced that all shortlisted cities will be designated Centres of Culture, and as such they will work in collaboration with the Capital of Culture to deliver a spectacular year of cultural activities in 2008. DCMS have not yet identified the information required to enable the panel to make its final decision or government expectations from Centres of Culture. However Professor Langford, chairman of Oxford Inspires (the not-for-profit bid promotion company) and David Steel will be attending a meeting on 27 November at which DCMS are expected to make more information available.
- 2.2 As a consequence of the shortlisting additional funds have been sought from the key stakeholders. The County Council, the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University have already committed an additional £50,000 each to enable Oxford to resource additional work on the bid over the next 12 months - both to stand a good chance in the competition for the Capital of Culture award, and to begin to put together a programme of cultural activities and developments leading up to 2008. The successor to Southern Arts has recently committed £30,000 and may fund other specific elements.
- 2.3 The City Council has been requested to provide an additional £50,000 for the year 2002-03. As there is no budgetary provision in the Strategic Policy business unit and a budget variation will be required, it is requested that the funds be taken from reserves. The Constitution requires that this decision will need to be taken by Council; the next meeting is on 9 December. A bid for £50,000 to cover works in 2003-04 is in the Strategic Policy Business Plan. Should Oxford be successful in its aspiration to be Capital of Culture 2008, members might recall an additional commitment made in principle by Executive Board in April 2002 to a level of £100,000 per year from summer 2003.
- 2.4 The detailed work programme will be determined over the next few weeks with the agreement of the Oxford Inspires Board. It will include flagship projects such as the regeneration of Oxford's West End and major improvements to public access to the Ashmolean Museum and Bodleian Library, as well as other significant improvements to Oxford's waterways, tourism management in the county and provision for creative, cultural and high tech industries.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The letter from the Secretary of State is appended for information. Oxford's bid document and other supporting information is available from www.oxford.gov.uk.

This report has been seen and approved by the Portfolio Holder, Dave Higgins (Finance), the Legal and Democratic Services Business Manager and the Business Manager for Strategic Policy and Research.

C02/04928/mk



Professor Paul Langford
Chair
Oxford Inspires
c/o Oxford City Council
Town Hall
Oxford
OX1 1BX

30 October 2002

Dear Paul

EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2008 – SHORTLIST

I am very pleased to inform you that Oxford's bid for has been placed on the shortlist for European Capital of Culture 2008. I am announcing details of the full list this morning.

The field was a strong one and the Panel was impressed by the potential of your bid. Congratulations and many thanks for all your hard work so far.

My officials will be in touch with you again shortly with information about the next stage of the competition.

Tessa Jowell

TESSA JOWELL



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE