

REPORT TO Executive
Date of Meeting: 9 October 2018
Report of: Karime Hassan
Title: TEDxExeter

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 This report seeks authority to allocate £10,000 from the existing council events budget to TEDx Exeter and the volunteer organisation that makes the hosting of this event possible.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That £10,000 from existing sponsorship budget be used to support TEDxExeter.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1 TEDx are independently organised local events that bring people together to share ideas. They are run by grass root volunteers. The licence is granted free by TED.com
- 3.2 They are run by a team of volunteers from across Exeter who hold a sold out annual event every April in the city. Full price tickets help subsidise those which are ring fenced for hard to reach groups. The livestream of the speakers is broadcast to varied international audiences including schools and colleges, the NHS, local government and police.
- 3.3 The purpose of the cultural portfolio is to provide great things to see and do. TEDxExeter is one of the standout events in the Exeter calendar, the event held at the Northcott Theatre typically sells out within minutes. The Northcott Theatre has a modest seating capacity and the event organisers provide live streaming of the events to other venues in the city to give as many people as possible a chance to see the presentations. Speakers from TEDxExeter have received 20million views as ideas from a stage in Exeter are shared around the world. TEDxExeter are ranked 4th in the world for talks with 1m+ views on TED.com. The Exeter organisation come in ahead of New York, Brussels, Cambridge, Boston and Toronto. There cannot be many things that Exeter ranks on a world stage ahead of these cities.
- 3.4 The return on investment of 'brand Exeter', combined with the pioneering speakers, tone and topics, would not be achievable through conventional marketing means. Exeter appears on every one of the 20million views.
- 3.5 The network event organised as part of the event is extremely popular and provides a learning and networking space for community groups and businesses to exchange ideas and build collaboration. As part of the event the organisers bring to the city notable speakers and they make an effort to engage with stakeholders in the city, for

example, Cormac Russell held a workshop in the city on asset based community development, and the RSA held a workshop on inclusive growth.

- 3.6 I am in no doubt that the success of TEDx is in large part a consequence of the exceptional leadership shown by Claire Kennedy and the team of volunteers that support this event. The editorial control and preparation to support the speakers result in a quality product that engages millions of viewers. The effort that goes into this event is enormous and a major challenge is to secure funding to cover the cost of the event, the logistical support for the speakers and maximising the impact of the events through video clips etc.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

- 4.1 A sponsorship budget has already been approved by members. This year it has already supported the premiere of Shrouds of the Somme before touring the country. Decisions at this level continue to be made by officers.
- 4.2 The premise of publicly recognising the achievements and impact of the team of volunteers via this council process is as important as the financial contribution. The partnership would be reviewed under delegated powers annually in light of financial constraints.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

- 5.1 The amount forms part of the approved £25,000 budget for Sponsorship and therefore there are no additional financial implications arising from the report.

6. What are the legal aspects?

Whilst sponsorship could amount to state aid, the sum of £10,000 is considered de minimis and therefore the rules on state aid do not apply.

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

Decisions regarding sponsorship are usually made by the Director in accordance with the Council's scheme of delegated authority. However, the decision as to whether the Council should sponsor the TEDx event has been brought to the Executive for a decision because the Director has declared an interest in this matter having formally volunteered his services to this organisation. In addition, both the Director's wife and his sister volunteer their services to TEDx.