

Committee	Dated:
Police and Resources	18/02/2016
Subject: Thames Festival Trust – Rivers of the World	Public
Report of: Director of Economic Development	For Decision

Summary

Thames Festival Trust is a charitable trust established in 1998. From 2000 to 2013, it organised the Mayor's Thames Festival. Since 2014, it has organised the Totally Thames festival each September. The main education project of Totally Thames is Rivers of the World, in which schools from the UK and overseas take part in activities related to their local rivers and produce artworks which are displayed by the River Thames as part of the Totally Thames programme. Rivers of the World involves 36 overseas schools and 36 British schools, with 18 in London, including the City's Academy in Hackney. The overseas aspect of the project is funded by the British Council.

The City of London Corporation has contributed funding towards educational projects organised by Thames Festival Trust since 2000 and provided £36,000 for Rivers of the World from 2013 to 2015, divided into three annual contributions of £12,000.

Thames Festival Trust has asked the City Corporation to renew its funding for the project. Members are asked to agree to provide £15,000 for Rivers of the World in 2016. This would help the City Corporation to continue to support London's communities and support London's culture and heritage.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Agree to provide £15,000 from the Policy Initiatives Fund to support the Thames Festival Trust's Rivers of the World project in 2016.

Main Report

Background

1. Thames Festival Trust is a not-for-profit charitable trust established in 1998 to advance education, music and the arts; and to promote the conservation and public appreciation of the River Thames, its tributaries and adjoining areas. From 2000 to 2013, it organised the Mayor's Thames Festival each year. Since 2014, it has organised Totally Thames, a free festival to celebrate the River Thames through arts, music and education and to showcase London's artistic talent,

history and cultural mix. It is held each September and its main funder is the Greater London Authority. The City of London Corporation is represented on the Thames Festival Trust board of trustees by Deputy John Alfred Barker OBE.

2. Rivers of the World is the main educational project organised by Thames Festival Trust. It is a year-round education programme which encourages secondary school pupils to value and learn more about their local rivers. It is aimed at pupils in Years 8 and 9. 325 British secondary schools have taken part since 2006. The City Academy in Hackney has taken part along with other schools across the City's neighbouring boroughs.
3. The project also involves schools in river cities in other countries, who are partnered with schools in the UK. All the overseas parts of the project are funded by the British Council. To date, schools in 22 countries have been involved.
4. In the first stage of the project, teachers are given study packs and other online resources, as well as an interactive web-based platform, to allow their pupils to compare their own waterfront with those of others. In the second stage, pupils work in class group teams for a day and a half to design and finish large-scale artworks inspired by their studies, under guidance from professional artists. In the third and final stage, school artworks are exhibited in central London locations on the riverside walkway by the Thames for six weeks and promoted as part of the Totally Thames programme. Once this exhibition is completed, the artworks are donated to the participating schools for display within their own school environment.
5. The City of London Corporation has contributed funding towards educational aspects of the Festival since 2000. On 27 June 2013, the Policy and Resources Committee approved funding of £36,000 for the Rivers of the World project, split into three annual contributions of £12,000 for 2013, 2014 and 2015.

Current Position

6. Each year, 36 British schools participate in the project, of which 18 are in London. Thames Festival Trust writes to all secondary schools in chosen London boroughs and invites them to take part. 36 overseas schools also participate in the project each year.
7. The British Council has committed to funding the project again in 2016 and 2017. The Thames Festival Trust is also seeking private sponsors. Recent sponsors of Rivers of the World include Artemis Fund Managers, CH2M Hill, CVB, Sharpe Pritchard LLP and Viking River Cruises.
8. The Thames Festival Trust has asked the City Corporation to provide funding of £40,000 for Rivers of the World 2016 in 2017, split into two annual contributions of £20,000 in 2016 and £20,000 in 2017.
9. The Thames Festival Trust has also asked the City Corporation to suggest particular schools to be nominated for involvement in the project.

Proposal

10. Members are asked to approve funding of £15,000 for Rivers of the World for 2016, from the Policy Initiatives Fund. This would enable Thames Festival Trust to continue working with 36 British schools and for the City Corporation to continue its involvement, while avoiding making a funding commitment for more than one year. This will allow members and officers to consider the success of the project in 2016 before making any decisions on funding in 2017.
11. As a sponsor, the City Corporation's logo would feature on Rivers of the World artwork boards displayed along the riverside walkway by the Tate Modern, the National Theatre and Tower Bridge. It is estimated that the display is seen by over 1million people during the six week exhibition. The City Corporation logo would also be displayed at an exhibition of the art work in City Hall and on newsletters, booklets, web pages and school certificates related to the project.
12. The City Corporation would receive four invitations to the Rivers of the World launch event in March, 20 invitations to the Totally Thames launch event in August and 40 invitations to a private viewing of the Rivers of the World display at City Hall in September.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

13. The project aligns with our corporate objectives to support London's communities and raise educational standards, by working with schools in neighbouring boroughs and across London. It also aligns with our objective of supporting London's culture and heritage, by celebrating and educating people about the River Thames.

Implications

14. This proposal requires £15,000 from the Policy Initiatives Fund.

Conclusion

15. It is recommended that £15,000 funding be given to the Thames Festival Trust's Rivers of the World project for 2016, from the Policy Initiatives Fund. Continued funding for the Rivers of the World project will help the City Corporation to support London's communities and will ensure that the City Corporation continues to be recognised as a supporter of this well-established and popular celebration of London.

Giles French

Assistant Director of Economic Development

T: 020 7332 3644

E: giles.french@cityoflondon.gov.uk