

Appendix 2 – Grants Recommended for Rejection – for Approval

CENTRAL GRANTS PROGRAMME

ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: c) Inspiring London through Culture

Becket Pageant for London, acting through the Skinners' Malmesbury Foundation (ref. 17580)

Amount requested: £15,000

Amount recommended: £15,000

Purpose of grant request: A landmark outdoor musical theatre work and crafts fair celebrating London's heritage, with community involvement and schools outreach programmes.

The Applicant

The BP for London is being applied for through the Skinner's Malmesbury Foundation who will act as budget manager for the project. The Skinner's Malmesbury Foundation are a charity that provides grant funding to advance education and other charitable purposes.

Background and detail of proposal

The BP for London will return London's famous son, St Thomas Becket, and the lost tradition of open-air community theatre, to the City on the nine hundredth anniversary of his birth on Cheapside. It will be delivered through a compelling new musical theatre production which re-imagines an historic Becket pageant staged by Londoners in 1519 together with an immersive Tudor Crafts Fair in Guildhall Yard, on 18 and 19 June 2021.

The pageant of 2021 is a new piece of musical theatre written by Emmeline Winterbotham and inspired by the only known Becket pageant staged in London (by the Skinners' Company in 1519 as part of the annual Midsummer Watch celebrations* on the occasion of the 400th triple anniversary of the City's Patron Saint.) It will dramatise the life and legend of Thomas Becket for a contemporary London audience five hundred years on with little or no knowledge of him or his history. Full advantage will be taken of the pageant's historic setting within Guildhall Yard which will be styled as an early Tudor environment – with crafts displays, themed food and drink (including a new Becket branded beer) and costumed street entertainers enhancing the immersive effect.

The BP Team have a robust Covid-19 mitigation policy in place with regular review points built into the project plan.

Financial Information

Financial Information for the Skinner's Malmesbury Foundation has only been provided for 2019. Any grant will be made subject to receiving the additional year required to make a full financial assessment.

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Year end as at 30 June	2019	2020	2021
	Signed Accounts	Forecast	Budget
	£	£	£
Income & expenditure:			
Income	239,531	263,477	240,000
- % of Income confirmed as at	N/A	0%	0%
Expenditure	(236,841)	(307,524)	(251,000)
Total surplus/(deficit)	2,690	(44,047)	(11,000)
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	2,960	4,160	(3,000)
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	0	(48,207)	(8,000)
	2,960	(44,047)	(11,000)
Operating Expenditure (unrestricted)	190,927	246,579	191,000
Free unrestricted reserves:			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	6,060,376	6,012,169	6,004,169
No of months of operating expenditure	380.9	292.6	377.2

Recommendation

From Assessment it was clear that there was a passion for this work and a range of stakeholder buy in from Livery Companies, historians, producers and musicians. Eight Individuals attended the assessment call which lasted well over an hour. The project is well planned and celebrates a key historical moment.

The panel considered the application and its viability in light of the Coronavirus Pandemic and deemed the project to be very expensive to prioritise at this time. The number of beneficiaries of the performances was low when considered against the cost of support. The panel had to view this application against all of the others received and felt they could not support at this time.

Grant is recommended for rejection.