

REPORT TO: ARTS & HERITAGE COMMITTEE – 17 APRIL 2000

REPORT ON: CULTURAL QUARTER CONSULTANTS STUDY

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ARTS AND HERITAGE
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

REPORT NO: 241/2000

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek approval of funding for a Cultural Quarter Study.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Committee agree to allocate £15,000 towards the Cultural Quarter Consultancy Study.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The total cost of the study is £39,230. Scottish Enterprise Tayside are contributing £24,230 towards the study with Dundee City Council meeting the balance of £15,000.

3.2 The City Council contribution to the study costs will be met by Economic Development (£10,000) and Planning and Transportation (£5,000). It is anticipated these sums can be contained within these Departments' revenue budgets for 2000/2001. In the unlikely event these sums cannot be contained the Director of Finance has indicated the contribution can be met from the Revenue General Contingency.

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The creation of a Cultural Quarter in the city will improve accessibility to cultural, leisure, recreational and tourist facilities for all.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The creation of a Cultural Quarter in the city will improve accessibility to cultural, leisure, recreational and tourist facilities for all, and will take into consideration the requirements of the disabled and disadvantaged groups.

6 BACKGROUND

6.1 A Report to the Dundee Partnership on "The Establishment of a Cultural Quarter in Dundee" prepared by Economic Development was approved by Dundee Partnership Senior Officers' Group in June 1998 and by Policy and Resources Committee in October 1998. The report outlined the economic, social and cultural benefits to be gained by implementing such an initiative and recommended that the Dundee Partnership agree to develop a Cultural Quarter in Dundee, with specialist consultant support.

6.2 The benefits of developing a Cultural Quarter in Dundee include:-

- Job Creation – The cultural and creative industries are identified as a key growth sector for Scotland with an annual growth rate of 20% which is twice the average for other sectors of the economy. Dundee is well placed to build upon its growing creative cultural profile with particular emphasis on virtual reality, multi-media and the reputation of Duncan of Jordanstone College and University of Abertay. Currently there are an estimated 500 full time people employed in the creative industries, with the potential to grow by 100 per annum.
- Place and Culture – this involves promoting the image of the city to project a more up-beat, cosmopolitan and modern feel. It is, in part, form of boosterism aimed at attracting new investment to the city, but it will also increase cultural provision and the variety of things to see and do for the local community.
- Increasing audiences for the cultural sector - A key objective is to increase the audiences for existing and new cultural activities in the city.
- Physical Regeneration – An opportunity to target sympathetic and complementary development within the broad cultural quarter area will provide physical regeneration benefits.
- Inward Investment – Development of the cultural quarter will provide an opportunity to maximise private sector investment in the area as well as European, Lottery and other grant-aid funding as well as being an attractor for companies seeking to locate in the City.
- Enhancing the Tourism Product – The development of a focussed cultural quarter will add to the critical mass of things to see and do in Dundee which, in turn, will increase visitors numbers to the city.

6.3 The location proposed for the Cultural Quarter already contains a number of the key elements which are generally found within developed Cultural Areas and it would appear to make sense to include these in any defined Cultural Area in the City. Discussions related to the Cultural Quarter in Dundee have focused on the area surrounding the new City Arts Centre and have logically included a number of other existing facilities such as the Rep and the West Port Area, rationally extending to Blackness which presents opportunities for development.

6.4 It is acknowledged, however, that the development of Dundee's cultural quarter is still at a relative embryonic stage. Comparisons with successful European cities with thriving cultural quarters indicate a complex and integrated hierarchy of economic and social opportunities related to the cultural and creative industries. This major cojsultancy excercise will provide specialist expertise to research the opportunities for development in a Dundee context and provide a detailed achievable action plan ready for implementation. The key aims of the study will be to:-

- Test the feasibility of the Dundee Cultural Quarter by reviewing successful cultural quarters and identifying key components.
- Produce an exciting vision and a viable strategy to guide, inform and promote the future development of the Dundee Cultural Quarter as a cultural/media industries enterprise zone and as a themed tourist and visitor destination.
- Integrate and associate multi-media and education developments in the quarter.
- Identify and develop physical linkages to the wider city centre, universities and evening economy area.

- Develop an area action plan that includes high profile, early action, low cost interventions and a marketing strategy for the cultural quarter, that will attract private sector, European, Lottery and other grant-aided funding.

6.5 The Planning and Transportation and Economic Development Departments prepared a Consultants Brief for the Cultural Quarter Study and this was issued to nine consultants. Five responded to the Brief and a Client Group of officers from Planning and Transportation, Economic Development, Arts & Heritage and Scottish Enterprise Tayside, unanimously agreed to recommend appointment of a consultant team of EDAW and Urban Cultures to carry out the Study. This recommendation is based on the quality of the proposal, an understanding of the Study requirements and value for money. The EDAW team have been involved in the development of successful Cultural Quarters in Dublin and Manchester. Urban Cultures are acknowledged UK leaders in research and development of Cultural Industries and Quarters.

7 CONSULTATIONS

7.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Support Services, Director of Corporate Planning and Scottish Enterprise Tayside have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Dundee City Centre Cultural Quarter Brief.

8.2 Policy and Resources Committee - The Establishment of a Cultural Quarter in Dundee - October 1998.

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