



UK CITY OF CULTURE

UK City of Culture 2013 Outline Proposals – Feedback Form

Bidding City: Brighton and Hove

Assessors: Stephen Nicol (0161 926 9214) and Chris Paddock (0207 608 7206)

If you would like to discuss this feedback, please contact one of the two assessors named above directly.

Summary Feedback

The proposal outlines a set of activities that seeks to build upon Brighton and Hove's well established strengths in the creative and cultural sector and its established infrastructure for hosting a broad range of activities. It is clear that Brighton and Hove is 'ready to go' and could be well placed to deliver a high quality programme for UK City of Culture. However, at present the **thinking underpinning the bid seems to lack ambition** and this would disadvantage Brighton and Hove in the assessment of initial bids. With this in mind there are three key points to consider in working up your bid:

1. It is important that initial bid submissions illustrate clearly the nature of the step change that would occur as a result of the UK City of Culture designation
2. We need to see more clearly the added value that UK City of Culture designation would bring to the area (and beyond) – and in particular what enhanced or additional activities and events would take place beyond the excellent baseline of activity DCMS are seeking a UK City of Culture that is more than just a wrap around of existing activity.
3. You may also need to reconsider scale of funding needed to deliver a higher impact programme.

In addition to this, the following points / additions may be worth considering in developing the bid:

- Demonstrate much more clearly the specific involvement of local people, particularly those in deprived communities and how City of Culture will make a difference
- Consider Brighton and Hove as City of Culture in the wider context; how will the city extend its reach beyond London and the South East?

Your Area and the Overall Vision

The proposal focuses on a clearly defined area, which already has a strong brand and reputation as a visitor location. The vision is helpfully split into local, regional and national geographies, although this perhaps highlights the need to provide more detail on the 'local', particularly in relation to Brighton and Hove's most deprived communities.

Given Brighton and Hove's proximity and relationship with London, it will be important to illustrate how the City can involve and reach out to the rest of the country.

The themes outlined within the vision provide a broad basis and can clearly encompass a wide range of different activities as the programme evolves – at present they feel like broad concepts and will need more flesh on the bones. In future submissions, it would be useful if further analysis can be provided to show how this is different to what might be happening in Brighton and Hove anyway (and how 2013 will be different).

Cultural and Artistic Objectives

The approach put forward is described as "building on the existing cultural calendar". An element of this is fine, but a successful UK City of Culture would need to demonstrate substantial added value over and above baseline activity. Given your area's excellent baseload activity, there is an opportunity to really deliver an impactful year of cultural activity.

Clearly, Brighton and Hove already has the cultural and visitor infrastructure necessary to deliver a high quality, diverse cultural programme. An emphasis is placed on the balance between large and small projects, again it would be good to see evidence of how the smaller projects will reach out to harder to reach groups and build upon existing activities to engage people in culture.

Clearly, the specific projects alluded to in relation to each theme will need to be elaborated upon in subsequent submissions.

It is also suggested that the population of the city is a key asset. In this respect, it will be useful if you can demonstrate how they will be galvanised (perhaps through a volunteer programme).

Social Objectives

It is clear that there are interesting examples of engagement within the city, but at present the approach to engaging isolated neighbourhoods is weak (especially given that "reaching out" is a key part of the vision). The initial bid should build on this further, developing the ideas (such as the dance programme for the Turner Neighbourhood) to show how City of Culture would impact on the whole population of the city.

Economic Objectives

Given Brighton and Hove's existing success as a visitor location, we are pleased that the bar is set very high when it comes to seeing an increase in visitor numbers and spend. The existing strategy for festivals clearly creates momentum to increase this. In the initial bid, it will be important to consider the added value that the City of Culture designation would bring to this.

Likewise, Brighton and Hove is an important location for creative and cultural businesses. It is imperative that the bid shows how these strengths will be used to secure local, national and regional impact. The current description of the creative sector and what City of Culture would bring are a bit opaque.

Organisation and Partnership

It is clear that the partnership mechanisms are in place to deliver a high profile, high impact year of events and activities. We would like to understand how wider engagement in the design and delivery of a City of Culture programme would be ensured with grassroots groups and different parts of your area and its communities.

Funding

For a year's worth of enhanced events and activities the budget outlined is modest – our understanding is that you are seeking only £1m in additional funding. Although there are obviously limitations on the monies available, DCMS and the Advisory Panel will want to see an indication that the programme of activity will deliver high impact. This may mean including a broader range of activities (including 'associated projects and capital developments') under the UKCC2013 banner.

Elements of the budget (admin and marketing in particular) seem low for an event of this magnitude.

Legacy

The initial bid will clearly need to give more detail in the legacy. It is not clear how things will change from 2013 onwards as a result of City of Culture – for instance do you expect a lasting increase in engagement in previously un-engaged groups? Will this contribute to social inclusion amongst these groups?

