

Report of: Executive Member for Economic and Community Development

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	22 March 2016		All

Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt
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SUBJECT: Islington Assembly Hall: Free Community Use July – September 2016**1. Synopsis**

- 1.1 Each year, local community and arts organisations have the opportunity to apply for free hires of Islington Assembly Hall. Applicants are assessed against published criteria and, if successful, have to meet any additional costs (e.g. equipment or technical), which are not covered by the scheme. From 2016, the scheme has amended criteria and application process, with two application rounds each year, one for the period July-September and one for January-March, amounting to a total of eight free hires.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To allocate one free hire for July-September 2016 to each of the following:
- MoveMe Dance
 - Cubitt Artists
 - Sports Islington
 - Copenhagen Youth Project
- 2.2 To hold the following two applicants in reserve, in case of inability of the above applicants to negotiate appropriate dates and timings:
- Islington Council Choir
 - Creative Islington

3. Background

- 3.1 The scheme was oversubscribed, receiving 15 applications from a variety of organisations supporting a wide range of events.
- 3.2 Applications have been assessed against the published criteria which asks applicants to demonstrate a commitment to provide events and activities that:

- a) Have a strategic value, and in particular a focus on at least one of the following four areas:
 - Community cohesion
 - Children and young people
 - Diversity
 - Creative ways of engaging local residents
- b) Have a borough-wide impact.
- c) Demonstrate a commitment to good practice (events that are viable, of high quality, well managed and evaluated).
- d) Promote the Islington Assembly Hall as a focus for high quality events, making best use of the high quality facilities available in the venue.

The scheme does **not** support:

- Groups that are not based in the borough.
- Events or activities from commercial organisations.
- More than one use of the Assembly Hall per applicant in any 12 months.

3.3 Some of the proposals received did not make the most effective use of the high quality technical facilities and the audience capacity of the Assembly Hall. It was considered that some of these might be better staged in smaller or more appropriate venues, such as one of Islington Town Hall's committee rooms, or the Platform and White Lion Youth hubs. This could also help applicants to develop mutually beneficial partnerships with partner organisations with similar objectives and remits.

3.4 Wherever possible, unsuccessful applicants will be supported, to secure alternative premises for their work.

4. Free Hire

4.1 The following organisations and events most closely meet the criteria and are recommended for free use of the Assembly Hall.

MoveMe Dance	MoveMe - Borough wide dance event bringing together young people and elders
Cubitt Artists	Annual Spring Ball (part of Islington Word Festival) - Arts event and dance showcase for local older people
Sport Islington	Sport Islington Award Ceremony - Celebration of the sporting achievements of children and young people in Islington
Copenhagen Youth Project	The Black History Month Experience FlashBLack - Multi-artform event for young people exploring Black cultural history

4.2 The following organisations and events met the criteria and are recommended to be held in reserve, in case of inability of organisations recommended for free hires listed in 4.1 to negotiate dates and timings with Assembly Hall management.

Islington Council Choir	Islington Choirs Concert - Concert involving 15+ community/amateur/school choirs from across Islington
Creative Islington	Creative Islington - A Ten Year Celebration - Showcase and marketplace for the borough's arts organisations and local schools

4.3 We will prepare a press release announcing the free hires. Organisations will have to submit information about their events to the Council's events diary.

5. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications other than the loss of income as a result of waiving the fees for the eight hires which has been built into the business plan for the Assembly Hall.

6. Legal Implications

The Council can support voluntary and community sector organisations under the wellbeing power in Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000. The gives the Council the power to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the whole or part of its area or all or any of the persons resident or present in that area.

7. Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications.

8. Equality Impact Assessment

The organisations identified meet the needs and priorities of a wide range of Islington's communities and help to improve equality within the borough.

9. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

The scheme provides an opportunity for the council to support local organisations through free use of the Assembly Hall. Applications have been assessed through a clear and transparent process.

10. Appendices: Attached Documents

10.1 Appendix 1: Islington Assembly Hall Free Community Hire Guidance and Criteria 2016

10.2 Appendix 2: Free Hires Applications Summer 2016 Assessments Final Summary

Final report clearance:

Signed by:

Executive Member for Economic and Community Development 9 March 2016

Received by: Head of Democratic Services

Date

Report Author: Segun Lee-French

Tel: 020 7527 2234

Email: segun.lee-french@islington.gov.uk