

Report of: **Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy and Community Partnerships)**

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Voluntary and Community Sector Committee	5 March 2013	BA	All

Delete as appropriate		Non-exempt
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**SUBJECT: Islington Assembly Hall: Free Community Hire**

**1. Synopsis**

- 1.1 The Assembly Hall Free Usage Scheme aims to support organisations based in Islington with the opportunity to engage local residents in events at the venue by providing up to ten free hires per year. Under the scheme free hires are available on Mondays, Tuesdays or Wednesdays. All other additional costs such as AV or technical costs are not covered by the scheme and must be met by applicants.

**2. Recommendation**

To allocate the ten free usages to the following applicants:

- Angel Shed Theatre
- Baluji Music Foundation
- Cubitt Arts
- Disability Action in Islington
- Islington Giving
- Islington People's Rights
- City YMCA
- Music for People
- Sport Islington
- Young Actors Theatre

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The scheme was oversubscribed receiving 22 applications from a broad range of organisations supporting a wide range of events. Full details of all the organisations that submitted applications have been submitted to all members of the committee.

- 3.2 The applications have been assessed against the published criteria. Organisations must demonstrate a commitment to provide events and activities that:
- Have a strategic value, and in particular a focus on at least one of the following four areas:
    - Arts and Regeneration
    - Children and Young People
    - Diversity
    - Arts and Older People
  - Have a borough-wide impact
  - Demonstrate a commitment to good practice (events that are viable, of high quality, well managed and evaluated).
  - Promote the Islington Assembly Hall as a focus for high quality events.

The scheme will not support:

- Groups that are not based in the Borough of Islington
- Events or activities from commercial organisations
- More than one usage per applicant in any 12 month period.

- 3.3 Given the capacity of the Assembly Hall, it was considered that some of the events would be better staged in smaller venues. Similarly, given the nature of some of the events, it was considered that alternative venues such as the Platform hub or White Lion Youth hub would be more appropriate, facilitating the development of longer term, mutually beneficial partnerships between applicants and these alternative facilities.

Unsuccessful applicants will be supported, wherever possible, to secure alternative premises for their work.

- 3.4 It is proposed that Officers from the Chief Executive's Office work with the council's media office to prepare a press release announcing the free hires. Organisations will be required to submit information about their events on the council's events diary. Wherever possible, the Arts and Cultural Development Manager will help event organisers to develop their marketing materials and press and publicity information.

## 4. Implications

### 4.1 Financial implications:

There are no financial implications arising from the proposals other than the loss of income as a result of waiving the fees for the ten hirings, which has been built into the business plan for the Assembly Hall.

### 4.2 Legal Implications:

The Council has power to give support to organisations for the provision of support services for the voluntary and community sector under the well being power in section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000. The well being power provides the Council with 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.

### 4.3 Environmental Implications:

There are no environmental implications arising from this proposal.

### 4.4 Equality Impact Assessment:

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

## 5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 The scheme provides an opportunity for the Council to support local organisations through free use of the Assembly Hall. It is important that the process is clear and transparent.

**Background papers:** (available online or on request)

Final report clearance:

**Signed by:**

**Received by:** Asst. Chief Executive (Governance and HR) Date

Head of Democratic Services Date

Report Author: Peter Courtie / John Lynch

Tel: 020 7527 3021 / 3002

Email: [peter.courtie@islington.gov.uk](mailto:peter.courtie@islington.gov.uk)  
[john.lynch@islington.gov.uk](mailto:john.lynch@islington.gov.uk)