
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	3 November 2020
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/63/20/RB
Contact Officer:	Ruth Binks	Contact No:	712761
Subject:	Use of Emergency Powers Procedure - Festive Film		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee on the use of powers delegated to the Chief Executive (emergency powers) to approve funding from the events budget for a Festive Film in the place of an annual Inverclyde pantomime.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Due to COVID-19, most events in Inverclyde have had to be either postponed or cancelled. This has included the annual pantomime held at the Beacon Arts Centre. The cast of the pantomime have teamed up with Soundsmove to propose that a short Christmas film in the style of a pantomime be created in the absence of a pantomime. The film will be specifically created for Inverclyde and filmed around various locations in the area. The film will be available digitally and the intention is to show it to all school children in Inverclyde in the first instance and then make it available free of charge to the wider community.
- 2.2 The intention of this film is to lift the spirits and morale of the people in Inverclyde at Christmas after a hugely difficult year. This is not an income generating project and will be made available free of charge. Whilst external funding is also being sought for this project, the proposal is to use money that would have been used for events that have had to be cancelled this year. This project links to the Education, Culture and Sport partnership recovery plan within which £80,000 was allocated for Events. The project will be promoted widely by corporate communications and national networks will be approached.
- 2.3 The use of emergency powers to allocate the funding was authorised by Councillors Clocherty, Murphy and Robertson and the Chief Executive.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Committee notes the use of emergency powers for up to £25,000 to fund this project from the Recovery Plan £80,000 Events allowance.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The annual Beacon pantomime in Inverclyde is a firm favourite with families and communities. Many schools attend the pantomime as do community groups and families. Most recently the pantomime has starred some of the cast from Still Game cast who have proved to be very popular.
- 4.2 Because of COVID-19 pantomimes across Scotland have had to be cancelled. This has included the pantomime that would have been held in the Beacon Arts Centre in Inverclyde.
- 4.3 In October 2020, the spread of COVID-19 has meant that many events have had to be cancelled. The virus will almost certainly affect Christmas celebrations.
- 4.4 The partnership recovery plan for Education, Culture and Sport has recognised that events will need to be adapted during COVID-19 and also the importance of ensuring that events are celebrated to keep up morale. Young people report that whilst they are adapting to the new normal, the lack of the extra-curricular events means that morale can be low across the community.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The cast who perform in the annual pantomime are working with Soundsmove to propose that a Christmas film in the style of pantomime be filmed in Inverclyde. They propose not to simply film the on-stage production of a pantomime but rather to use venues across Inverclyde to produce a half hour long Christmas film.
- 5.2 The intention is to stream the film in the first instances to all schools in Inverclyde free of charge. It is hoped that schools will be able to have a sense of occasion around the watching of the film in the same way that they may experience at a pantomime. The film will allow for some limited audience participation
- 5.3 After the film has been streamed into classrooms the intention is to make it available online free of charge. Whilst the appeal will predominantly be for the people of Inverclyde, the production will be heavily promoted through the corporate communications team and link to the Discover Inverclyde website. As far as the company are aware, this type of production is not happening elsewhere in the UK.
- 5.4 The use of emergency powers was requested because time is extremely pressing for the writing, filming and editing of the Christmas film. The use of emergency powers to allocate the funding was authorised by Councillors Clocherty, Murphy and Robertson and the Chief Executive. Usually a production such as this would take about 6 months from inception to post production. COVID-19 filming restrictions and social distancing add an additional complexity to the project. Because of restrictions, it is unlikely that children will be able to appear as part of the film.
- 5.5 The cost of the film is £25,000. An approach has been made to a local business for funding but at the time of writing no external funding has been confirmed. Because most events that the Council undertake have had to be cancelled this year, the proposal is to allocate funding of up to £25,000 to the project from the current events budget. It is the intention of this project to lift the morale of the Inverclyde community at Christmas after an exceptionally difficult year and not as an income generating project. The project will be promoted widely by the council corporate communications team and national networks will be approached.
- 5.6 The Beacon Arts Centre will produce the film on behalf of Inverclyde Council and ensure that the project is delivered to a high standard, on budget and on time. The Beacon Arts Centre will oversee the project and will provide the digital platform. The Beacon will also provide facilities for filming and liaise with the company.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Finance

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Recovery Plan	Events	20/21	Up to £25K		£80,000 has been approved for events during and post COVID

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

6.2 Legal

The Council will retain, as a condition of its funding, the right of ownership of the film and all rights for its distribution. Soundsmove will retain the copyright of the script and score for any separate commercial use. All filming and production must comply with the public health restrictions of all Coronavirus legislation and regulations.

6.3 Human Resources

N/A

6.4 Equalities

Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce

	inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
X	NO

6.5 **Repopulation**

This project will provide a positive platform for Inverclyde externally and link to the Discover Inverclyde website.

7.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

7.1 N/A

8.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 N/A