



**Committee and Date**  
Gobowen, St Martins and  
Weston Rhyn Local Joint  
Committee

17<sup>th</sup> May 2011 - 7.00pm

**Item/Paper**

**13 (a)**

Public

## **DELEGATION OF ARTS BUDGET (2011/2012) TO OSWESTRY AND DISTRICT ARTS ASSOCIATION**

**Responsible Officer** Kate Garner, Community Action Manager

Email: [Kate.garner@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Kate.garner@shropshire.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01691 677318

---

### **Summary**

This report outlines the rationale for delegating the arts budget of Gobowen, St Martins and Weston Rhyn Local Joint Committee (LJC) to the Oswestry and District Arts Association (ODAA) to enable the ODAA to run an arts funding programme on behalf of the LJC, with the objectives of promoting the concept of the Big Society and simplifying the process of approving funding for projects that cover Oswestry town and its surrounding hinterland – an area that is now covered by 4 LJC's and referred to as the Oswestry LJC cluster.

### **Recommendation**

That Gobowen, St Martins and Weston Rhyn LJC agrees delegation of £1,306 it has received to support art activity within its area, to Oswestry and District Arts Association who will utilise it to run a small Arts Grants programme on behalf of the LJC.

### **Background**

1. The former Shropshire Council Arts Development Fund budget has now been allocated to each of the 28 LJC's across the county according to its population. It is open to each LJC to add any further funding it may wish to this initial sum to support arts activity in their respective area.
2. The LJC's that make up the Oswestry cluster are LJC 1 – Gobowen, St Martins and Weston Rhyn, LJC 6 – Oswestry, LJC 7 – Five Perry Parishes and LJC 8 – St Oswalds and Llanymynech.
3. The Oswestry and District Arts Association (ODAA) created in 1974, is a registered charity and over the last 37 years has been operating an "arms length" arts grants scheme within the geographical area of the old Oswestry Borough Council on behalf of its funding bodies which included the former Oswestry Borough Council, Shropshire County Council plus Oswestry Town Council

4. Similar Arts Associations existed in South Shropshire and Bridgnorth performing a similar role, but with the active involvement of professional officers. At the formation of the Unitary Council these bodies came to an end, but the ODAA, operating independently, has continued to receive funding from Shropshire Council, and Oswestry Town Council. It is therefore unique in Shropshire.

5. The Objects of the ODAA as defined by its Constitution are:

*'the fostering, promotion, maintenance, improvement, development, extension, appreciation, knowledge, and understanding of the Arts and the facilitation and improvement of their accessibility among people in "the area of benefit"*

6. The Activities are defined as:

- *to act as co-ordinating body for and of individuals and organisations whether amateur or professional in relation to activities which promote or are in pursuance of The Objects of The Association in the area of benefit;*
- *to provide the means of liaison between the individuals and organisations ....and Local Authorities or other funding or advisory bodies;*
- *to establish encourage and further the work of charitable bodies which will promote or assist in promoting The Objects of The Association ;*
- *to present or assist in presenting public concerts, dramatic performances, recitals, art exhibitions, lectures, arts festivals, and other arts events;*
- *to bring or assist in bringing to the attention of the people in the area of benefit the work of creative artists in all branches of the Arts;*
- *to do all such other things as are necessary to achieve the (aims)..... provided they are charitable.*

6. The Association organises its grants through a sub-group which meets four times a year, but which can meet more frequently to deal with an urgent need. There is a simple application form, which is considered by the members of the sub-group and applicants are interviewed about their application. Applicants are notified the day after the meeting and a cheque is usually issued within 2-3 days. Details of projects recently approved are detailed in Appendix A.

7. Any arts based LJC funding applications from the area received by the local Community Action Officer would be referred to ODAA. The LJC and the local Community Action Officer and Arts Officer would be able to comment on the applications received as part of the assessment process.

8. ODAA would assess the applications and comments received, interview the applicant and make a decision on whether to support it and what amount of funding the project should receive.

9. A report on the funding decisions made would be provided to the LJC at each of its meetings.

## The benefits of the recommendation include:

Delegation of funding will promote the concept of the Big Society demonstrating a clear confidence in the ability of the voluntary and community sector to carry out functions on behalf of Shropshire Council.

If all the LJCs in the Oswestry cluster, namely LJC 1 – Gobowen, St Martins and Weston Rhyn, LJC 6 – Oswestry, LJC 7 – Five Perry Parishes and LJC 8 – St Oswalds and Llanymynech, agree to delegate their arts funding to ODAA it will provide a single point of reference for the community groups seeking funding for an arts project benefitting the whole cluster area.

By pooling the funding for the Oswestry cluster into a single pot, the element of strategic thinking which has potentially been lost by dividing the funding is re-enabled, so that organisations with a wider geographical remit (e.g. Arts Alive) may more easily seek funding to continue their work in the area.

Applications made to ODAA would be subject to peer review by people who have an understanding of arts provision and development in this area, which will ensure that applications are of a high quality and add value to the area's art offer.

With the reduction in the number of LJC meetings each year, the number of times funding decisions are made also reduces. ODAA will be able to make funding decisions more regularly increasing the flexibility for organisations who may require a prompt response.

<b>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)</b> Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2011/12 – 2013/14, Appendix 5. Report to Cabinet 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2011. Locality Working Local Joint Committees. Report to Council 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2010. LJC application forms for the projects listed
<b>Human Rights Act Appraisal</b> The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998.
<b>Environmental Appraisal</b> None.
<b>Risk Management Appraisal</b> In determining these recommendations the Council has considered reputational risk and the course of action minimises this risk.
<b>Community / Consultations Appraisal</b> Consideration has been given to the public opinion expressed at previous Local Joint Committee meetings.
<b>Local Member</b> Shropshire Councillors –
<b>Appendices</b> A – Grants made by the Oswestry and District Arts Association 2005 - 2010.

