

**REPORT OF THE GROUP MANAGER, LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND
INFORMATION****REVIEW OF THE SOUTHWELL LIBRARY POETRY FESTIVAL 2012****Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform the Committee of the outcomes of the Southwell Library Poetry Festival 2012 and to gain approval for planning to commence for the Poetry Festival in 2013.

Information and Advice**Background**

2. Southwell Library Poetry Festival took place from 5-8 July 2012.
3. The festival aims to provide our customers with high quality poetry, whilst also supporting local writers, celebrating poetry across all ages and providing a creative strand through a poetry competition and workshops.

2012 Festival Evaluation

4. 818 people attended 24 events over the course of the festival. Highlights included Ian McMillan performing 'Talking Myself Home', and afternoon tea with the nation's favourite, Wendy Cope.
5. The festival was promoted by the Library Service and the Communications and Marketing Service through various channels including the County Council website and intranet, Facebook, Twitter, a targeted mail out, Lowdham Book Festival, through Tourist Information, various poetry websites and through brochures left at local cultural venues.
6. The festival worked with local and cultural partners including Folio Magazine, the Olde Mill Pottery in Caythorpe, Southwell Minster, The Southwell Theatre Club and Nottingham's Stanza Group. These community and cultural links are very important in cross-promoting the festival and in rooting the festival in the heart of the local cultural landscape.

Audience Feedback

7. Each event was evaluated through a feedback form which is analysed and used for future programme creation and event organisation. A focus group was used to gather more detailed feedback.

8. Below is a sample of comments made:

"I thought it was really enriching...what it's also done is plug me more into the community"

"Life would be poorer without it"

"Lovely! Well thought out and organised – good to see the library being used for community events"

"Wonderful evening. Laughter in troubled times just the job!"

"Thanks for keeping going during this recession...We so look forward to this festival, thank you for making this 'Summer' bearable".

9. 150 local school children attended a workshop with Ian McMillan. This received excellent feedback, with teachers reporting that the children had since written 'some brilliant poems'. The Library Service worked with individual schools to promote the Library Service and poetry. In addition, a new initiative for the festival took place in the form of a children's poetry competition.

Impact

10. Media coverage of the festival was very positive and included

- two articles in the Mansfield Chad
- two articles in the Nottingham Post
- coverage in the Bramley community newspaper
- an article in the Newark Advertiser and on its website
- two articles in the Southwell Advertiser
- one article in Nottinghamshire today
- an article on 'This is Nottingham' website
- interviews with Wendy Cope and Ian McMillan on Radio Nottingham
- listings on Mansfield 103.2 FM and Radio Nottingham.

11. The festival contributed to the economic development of Southwell, with participants travelling from across the region to come to events. 29% of those who filled in evaluation forms identified Southwell as their home town, with 40% travelling between 2 and 10 miles to attend, and 31% travelling further than 10 miles. This also begins to show the potential impact of the festival upon the local economy: not counting the school children's attendance, if this breakdown is replicated throughout the other attendees, then there were approximately 474 visits to the town from those who live outside it, including approximately 207 from those living further than 10 miles away.

12. Reviewing visitor numbers against STEAM data about the value and impact of tourism in Nottinghamshire¹ indicates that those attending events who came from 10 miles away or more may have spent around £6,200 in Southwell as a result of the festival.

¹ STEAM data from <http://www.experiencenottinghamshire.com/dbimqs/Volume-value-letterhead.pdf> (accessed 11/09/12)

13. It is therefore proposed that the festival takes place again in 2013, and that the Library Service works with the Communications and Marketing Service to investigate further opportunities for funding, partnership and sponsorship opportunities.

Other Options Considered

14. That the festival does not take place.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

15. To maintain the reputation of the County Council in delivering a high quality cultural event.

Statutory and Policy Implications

16. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

17. Customer satisfaction with the poetry festival is very high, with 97% of respondents to an evaluation survey rating the event attended as very good or good.

Financial Implications

18. The gross cost of the festival was approximately £6,300, with income of approximately £3,500, giving a total net cost of approximately £2,800. This was funded from the Library Service Development budget.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That:

- 1) the outcomes of the Southwell Library Poetry Festival 2012 are noted
- 2) planning commence to undertake a Southwell Library Poetry Festival in July 2013
- 3) funding, partnership and sponsorship opportunities continue to be developed, working with the Communications and Marketing Service.

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Constitutional Comments (SLB 20/09/2012)

19. Culture Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report. It is responsible for libraries and archives, strategic development of the arts, cultural activities and the promotion and development of tourism in the County.

Financial Comments (NDR 20/09/12)

20. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 18 of the report.

Background Papers

STEAM data: <http://www.experiencenottinghamshire.com/dbimsgs/Volume-value-letterhead.pdf>

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0082