



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

**LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES  
INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER MEETING  
4 April 2006**

**ITEM 7**

Report by Cabinet Member for Leisure and Cultural Services

## **Format Photography Festival**

### **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Last year an intense collaboration between Q Arts, the University of Derby and the City Council's Arts and Events Team resulted in a highly successful Photography Festival called Format 05
- 1.2 The evaluation on the event reported on the extraordinary success of this collaborative effort and on its potential to become an event of regional, national or international significance.
- 1.3 Since that time funding has been obtained from Arts Council England East Midlands to enable comparator research of similar European festivals to influence Format's future development and activity. .
- 1.4 Early indications are that partners and funders see scope in developing the Format Photography Festival over the next three or four years into a fixture in Derby's cultural calendar, allowing the city to play to its strengths..

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 21 The City Council's Arts and Events Team continues to collaborate intensively with partners in order to build the programme and the reputation of the Format Photography Festival over the next three years.
- 2.2 That all opportunities for sponsorship and external funding should be explored in order to give the Festival the best possible financial basis, including consideration of giving Format access to Council Arts Grants funding.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Derby retains a reputation as a centre for Photographic excellence, the development of the Format Photography Festival responds to and reinforces this historical strength and gives it a new platform for promotion and development at a time when the city is investing heavily in the Creative Industries.
- 3.2 The City Council's partners are enthusiastic. The Festival dovetails well with the construction of QUAD, Derby's Visual Arts and Media Centre and with the launch of the City Growth strategy.



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

**LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES INDIVIDUAL CABINET  
MEMBER MEETING  
4 April 2006**

Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration & Community

## **Format Photography Festival**

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1.1 The evaluation on Format 05 Festival showed a desire from audiences and practitioners for similar activity in the region. Format05 had the theme of Documentary Memory Place, audiences of over 100,000 engaged with the festival on some level; it gave opportunities to 89 artists and enabled over 1,000 people to participate in related workshop and educational activities. In total 20 venues across the city participated in the season providing a total of 926 exhibition days. Exhibitions ranged from work by photographers with international reputations in both the artistic and documentary fields to regional practitioners and recent graduates from Derby University.
- 1.2 Derby has not only a history in the field of photographic innovation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but also the opportunity to capitalise on new technologies being developed at the University of Derby and within QUAD.
- 1.3 The accessibility of photography as an artform offers enormous scope for crossovers between artistic work and commercial applications. It is also a powerful tool which can be used by Derby's new communities to express aspects of their lives and cultures.
- 1.4 The festival has shown the potential to:
  - encourage graduate retention in the city
  - make the city an attractive destination for practitioners to establish businesses outside of London
  - encourage cultural tourism from both day visitors and over night stays
  - provide a high profile event within the portfolio of Creative Industries activity happening in the city
  - channel additional resources into educational activity with schools and participatory activity with the city's varied communities
  - encourage wider understanding and appreciation of the role of the artist
- 1.5 At present the UK has a relatively small Photographic infrastructure compared to other European countries. The feedback from Arts Council England indicates that Derby could quite quickly secure itself a regional and national pre-eminence in the fields of photography and new media by pursuing the Format Festival concept.

## OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2. The Arts and Events Team has considered its work programme for the next 12 months in the context of its forthcoming Business Plan and concluded that investment of time in the Format Photography Festival is extraordinarily fruitful in terms of immediate returns, but also in terms of long term strategic rewards.

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Pete Meakin Tel: 01332 715515 e-mail: <a href="mailto:peter.meakin@derby.gov.uk">peter.meakin@derby.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers:</b>	None
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – Implications

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
---------------------

**Financial**

1. The involvement of the Arts and Events Team in the Format Photography Festival has been achieved within existing budgets, relying heavily on grants from external organisations. We anticipate that the City Council's contribution to the Format Festival in 2006/7 will remain at comparable levels and take the form of assistance in kind. Given the strategic importance of Format's contribution to the cultural and economic well-being of the city, it would be appropriate for consideration to be given to Format becoming one of the Council's Regularly-Funded Arts Organisations in future budget discussions.

**Legal**

2. None.

**Personnel**

3. The work on Format Festivals is being carried out by Mike Brown, Arts Projects Officer, who has particular expertise in photography. His commitment to the Festival runs at an average of two days per week. We anticipate that this will remain so during the most intensive part of the development phase – the next 12 months. After that, the Festival will need less strategic development support and Mike's input will diminish accordingly.

**Equalities impact**

4. None.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 5.1 The development of the Format Festivals programme responds to the Council's objective to:
  - improve the quality of life in Derby's neighbourhoods
  - encourage lifelong learning and achievement as a catalyst for economic growth
- 5.2 The project responds to these City Council priorities:
  - reinvigorate the city centre and river areas
  - raise skill levels to improve the chances of securing employment