

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT SERVICE COMMITTEE
17 September 2009

Agenda Item	5.
Report No	ECS/36/09

**Body Currents Community Dance Project –
Presentation by Director of Eden Court Theatre**

Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service

Summary

The May 2009 ECS Committee requested that a presentation on “Body Currents” be made to a future Committee. This report introduces that presentation, by the Director of Eden Court Theatre. The Committee agreed that the Council would partner Eden Court Theatre and Plan B dance company to deliver “Body Currents”, a community dance project. This Scottish Arts Council funded project will see a number of significant community dance events take place across the Highlands.

This relates directly to the commitment in **Strengthening the Highlands** to provide opportunities to enjoy the arts and the single outcome agreement outcome “we live longer, healthier lives”.

1. Background

- 1.1 Eden Court Theatre secured £ 475k from Scottish Arts Council’s “Inspire” fund to deliver a large scale community dance project, of 18 months duration, based in four areas throughout the Highlands.
- 1.2 In May 2009, Committee considered and agreed to Eden Court’s request that the Council enter a partnership with them and Plan B dance company to deliver the project. The Committee agreed, requesting that a presentation on the project be made to a future Committee, as plans developed.

2. The project

- 2.1 “Body Currents” will consist of four dance residencies, each of 9 months duration, centred on the locations of Dornie, Aviemore, Lybster and Fort William and involving other communities, towns and villages in the surrounding area; these locations were chosen because of their waterside locations and in consultation with local communities. The project plans to involve as wide as possible a range of local people in dance classes and activities. Each residency will culminate in spectacular, outdoor community performances and events. As dance provision has been identified as weak in terms of arts provision and opportunity in the Highlands, this project would offer valuable new access. It also aligns well with the Service’s Youth and Sports strategies and the Highland 2007 legacy.

2.2 Overall, Eden Court has now secured £ 590k funding for this community based dance project, £ 475k from Scottish Arts Council, £ 39k from Highland Leader, £ 36k from Cairngorm Leader, £ 15k from Robertson Trust and £25k from the Council (£20k from the Highland Cultural Programme and £5k from Area Arts Budgets), thus securing significant new resources for the Highlands.

2.3 The partnership involves the Council –

- Taking an active role in the “Body Currents” project and financial management groups.
- Staff involvement in encouraging community engagement, including through our leisure centres, libraries, arts education programme and Active Schools Coordinators.
- Working with Plan B, Eden Court and possibly others to develop a legacy from the project, for example developing a strategy for dance development in Highland.
- Where possible, providing temporary office accommodation for project staff in the four locations.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Members are invited to

- i. note the previous agreement of the Committee to be a partner in delivering “Body Currents”.
- ii. comment on the presentation and on the expected outcomes of the project.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date: 31 August 2009

Author: Judi Menabney, Principal Arts Education & Cultural Officer

Background Papers: ECS-23-09, 21st May 2009