

CLASSICAL MUSIC GRANT

SOUTHERN PRO MUSICA

18 JANUARY 2021 (VERSION 5)

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Introduction – Classical Music Grant

Following the closure of the Council's internally managed Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra, Southern Pro Musica (SPM) was appointed as our 'principal provider of classical music' in May 2013. This followed a competitive selection process with seven applicants. Originally Hampshire and West Sussex based, SPM is a professional chamber orchestra now operating across the south of England.

The initial funding agreement was for £60,000 per annum for a four year period and covered the provision of a broad range of orchestral concerts and educational outreach work in Guildford. The funding agreement was extended for a further four year period in May 2017 with funding of £60,000 being maintained. Guildford is the only council that funds SPM to provide a programme of classical music.

The current agreement ends in June 2021 and a decision is required on future support for classical music provision in the borough. This mandate sets out the options in the context of the challenging financial position facing the Council, its corporate priorities and the emerging outcomes of the consultation with residents on future spending priorities.

CLASSICAL MUSIC GRANT - STRATEGY

1. Why should a programme/project be started now?

The current agreement with Southern Pro Musica for classical music provision in the borough ends in May 2021. A decision is required on future financial support for classical music as part of the 2021/22 budget-setting process.

2. What is the good idea or problem to be solved?

In the context of the challenging financial position facing the Council, its corporate priorities and the outcomes of the consultation with residents on future spending priorities, to determine whether financial support for classical music in the borough should continue and, if so, the appropriate level of funding and the options for delivery.

3. What is the purpose of the project and what outputs and outcomes will it deliver?

Depending on the preferred option, the decision will deliver financial savings to the Council and/or a programme of classical music provision in the borough.

4. What priority, corporate objective or strategy is fulfilled by this project?

A reduction or cessation of classical music funding would contribute to savings required as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and 2021/22 budget. The classical music programme does not contribute strongly to the Council's corporate priorities and has been identified by residents in the budget consultation as a low priority in terms of future Council spending.

CLASSICAL MUSIC GRANT - OPTIONS

5. What are the strategic options available to GBC to deliver a solution?

a) Do Nothing

Allow the existing agreement with Southern Pro Musica to end in June 2021 and cease funding classical music provision in the borough to deliver a financial saving of £60,000 per annum.

b) Do Minimum

Due to Covid related disruption to the programme, Southern Pro Musica has agreed that £30,000 of its 2020/21 funding will be rolled forward into the next financial year. With expected continued Covid disruption, invite Southern Pro Musica to provide a reduced programme in 2021/22 at a cost of £30,000 pending a review of future classical music provision.

c) Do More

- Enter a new funding agreement with Southern Pro Musica to deliver a reduced future programme at a lower annual cost to the Council. (Initial indications from Southern Pro Musica are that it would be unable to deliver a meaningful programme at an annual cost of less than £60,000.)
- Invite expressions of interest from classical music providers to provide a programme of classical music at a lower annual cost to the Council.

d) Do Most

- Extend the existing funding agreement with Southern Pro Musica on the existing terms.
- Invite expressions of interest from classical music providers to provide a programme of classical music on similar terms to existing.

CMT considered the mandate at its meeting on 12 January 2021 and recommended that option (a) be pursued.

At its meeting on 27 January 2021, the Executive Liaison Group recommended that the £30,000 underspent grant from 2020/21 be rolled forward into 2021/22 to enable Southern Pro Musica to deliver a reduced programme and that the grant be discontinued in future years.

CLASSICAL MUSIC GRANT- CONSIDERATIONS

- 6. Who are the lead Director and Service Manager who will lead and direct the project and use/maintain the projects products once they are handed over?**

Dawn Hudd, Strategic Services Director

Steve Benbough, Strategy and Communications Manager

- 7. What are the impacts on other Operational Service Leaders or projects?**

Legal and Procurement advice will be required on any possible extension of the existing agreement with Southern Pro Musica or alternative options for the delivery of a classical music programme. Expert advice will be required from the Leisure Services Manager.

- 8. What general approach will the project take to deliver?**

Any decision will be implemented and managed by the Strategy and Communications Manager in liaison with the Leisure Services Manager.

- 9. When and why must the project start and finish?**

A decision is required in January 2021 to be included in the 2021/22 budget.

The aim would be to have in place an agreement for any continued classical music programme by 1 July 2021.

CLASSICAL MUSIC GRANT - RESOURCES

10. Which stakeholders are or, will need to be, involved in the project?

Corporate Management Team
Lead Councillor/Executive
Southern Pro Musica
Alternative classical music providers (subject to the preferred option)

11. What specialist resources (internal and external) are needed to consider this mandate and develop a strategic outline business case?

a) External

None

a) Internal

Legal, Procurement, Finance, Leisure Services Manager

12. What Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) are the likely Whole Life Costs (WLC) of the project and live service?

Depending on the preferred option, the cost would be up to £240,000 over a four year term.

CLASSICAL MUSIC GRANT – RISKS, ASSUMPTIONS & ISSUES

13. What are the strategic Risks, Assumptions, Issues, Dependencies, Constraints & Opportunities?

Risks

Criticism from strong supporters of the arts (including local media) about any cessation or reduction of classical music funding. Failure to reduce funding in an area of low corporate priority and with lower support from residents (as expressed through the budget consultation) will undermine other challenging decisions in higher priority areas.

Assumptions

The Council will wish to review priorities for funding in light of current financial constraints.
Existing community/amateur groups will continue to provide an alternative classical music programme.

Issues

A decision is needed on the level of future financial support for classical music provision in the borough.
Compliance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council's procurement procedure rules is required any new arrangement is a contract rather than a grant.
Benefits of ascertaining interest from the market prior to taking any decision to extend the current provision
To determine whether an equality impact assessment is required.

CLASSICAL MUSIC GRANT – DEPENDENCIES, CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Dependencies

Willingness/ability of Southern Pro Musica and/or other classical music providers to provide a programme with reduced future funding (if this is the preferred option).

Constraints

Decisions required in January 2021 to be included in 2021/22 budget.

Existing classical music agreement expires in May 2021.

Long-term financial pressures

Opportunities

To deliver financial savings required as part of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan and 2021/22 budget.

Internal GBC Stakeholders (Contributors to this Issue/Mandate)

Involved or sighted so far

Steve Benbough, Strategy and Communications Manager (author)

Sam Adam, PMO Officer

Faye Gould, Procurement Manager

Dawn Hudd, Strategic Services Director

Jo James, Senior Policy Officer (Strategy)

Louise Odell, Interim Project Officer

Dianne Owens, Lead Specialist Legal

Jonathan Sewell, Leisure Services Manager

Vicky Worsfold, Lead Specialist Finance

Corporate Management Team

Councillor Joss Bigmore, Leader of the Council

Councillor James Steel, Lead Councillor

To be consulted at the next step

Executive Liaison Group