**To the Children’s Laureate Committee regarding the proposal to bring the 10th Children’s Laureate announcement to the Children’s Literature Festival in Hull 2017 UK City of Culture.**

**Literature in Hull**

* Hull has some of the worst literacy levels and some of the highest levels of deprivation in the United Kingdom. 28% of local adults don’t have a reading age of an 11 year old and it’s as high as 43% in some wards.
* People in local communities can be excluded from many activities due to health, access and resource barriers – and that cultural activities are not important or relevant to them.
* Despite such challenges - and against the odds - in 2013, Hull secured the prestigious status of UK City of Culture. Now all eyes are on what transformation will take place in the city and in making sure children can foster their love of reading.
* Hull’s Library Service, with funding support from the James Reckitt Library Trust, runs regular campaigns to effectively raise standards of literacy in the city, for examples:
* The James Reckitt Hull Children’s Book Awards (KS 2 & 3) – voted for by the children who participate,
* Summer Reading Challenge,
* Under 5s language & literacy development programme e.g. Toddler Time, Rhyme time, Song and Dance, Storytime
* Participation in the Bookstart programme
* Chatterbooks groups in libraries and in schools,
* Fun and exciting literacy and learning based out of school activity programme,
* Events for World Book Day, Children’s Book Week, National Poetry day, National Bookstart Week etc both in school and in libraries.
* From spoken word and hip hop, to noir literature, to plays and to poetry, the writer is a respected and highly regarded figure in Hull. Hull celebrates a modern literary history with Philip Larkin, Stevie Smith, Sean O’Brien, Alan Plater, Francis Durbridge and Richard Bean and has numerous contemporary events dedicated to spoken word and literature such as the monthly Head in a Book and the well-respected Humber Mouth Festival.

**Hull 2017 UK City of Culture - Programming**

* Hull is hosting UK City of Culture in 2017 and will be the stage for many of the country’s major cultural events, such as The Turner Prize. The year will consist of 365 days of high profile, transformative culture that will appeal to the whole nation.
* There is massive commitment for literature-based activity next year, with Hull 2017 ring-fencing a proportion of a recent HLF award for libraries, museums and galleries.
* Literature is crucial within the 2017 programme with several significant literary projects are being developed including;
* The BBC in partnership with Hull 2017 is presenting a major new four day spoken word biennial festival – the working title is ‘Contains Strong Language’ and will be performed live from numerous venues in Hull, across radio including stations Radio 1 to 6 and BBC2 and/or BBC4.

This festival will run from 28th September to 1st October 2017 - and in co-operation with the Forward Foundation, National Poetry Day will coincide with the new festival.

* The BBC will also be bringing their Writer’s Room to develop writers across the city from 2016.
* Hull’s first Children’s Literature Festival, organised by Hull Library Service. A week or so in duration taking place in late June/early July and hosted in one of Hull’s most attractive parks, East Park.
* Word on the Street, spoken word initiative presented by Firm of Poets with Freedom Festival.
* Humber Mouth Festival produced by local publishers Wrecking Ball Press and City Arts – also running Head in a Book throughout the year.
* The Shelf Life project new for 2017, commissioned by Freedom Festival.
* Writers Squad, young writer’s project.
* Untold Stories & Networked Narratives, coordinated by Hull Library Service.
* First Story will be working in Hull, bringing five authors into five schools in deprived areas.
* Reading Rooms, encouraging reading aloud and presented by The Verbal.
* The University of Hull will present a series of literary focused events each quarter, inspired by a classic text; produce ‘Hull Rising’ a project investigating creative writing and inspired by bread-making, ‘The Garden’ inspired by the work of Hull poet Andrew Marvell and exploring mans relationship with nature, and a major Philip Larkin exhibition in collaboration with Hull’s History Centre and the Philip Larkin Society.
* The Forward Foundation has agreed to move the National Poetry Day to better coincide with the BBC’s Contains Strong Language, launched next year.

**Hull 2017 UK City of Culture – Marketing & Communications**

* As a national event – the UK City of Culture has major and comprehensive marketing and communications campaigns, on and offline, digital and across all media with local, regional, national and international impact.
* The Director-General of the BBC, Tony Hall said: “The BBC is going to be unashamedly ‘Hull-centric’ in 2017. We are really looking forward to working with the city to create something very special for audiences across the UK and around the world.”
* Hull 2017 is working in partnership with Hull City Council, Arts Council of England, Spirit of 2012, British Council, Heritage Lottery Fund, Big Lottery, University of Hull and East Riding Council as well as partners from drawn from national corporate and local organisations.
* Creative Partnerships include projects with Hull based arts organisations including Hull Truck Theatre, Freedom Festival, Ferens Arts Gallery, Maritime Museum, Hull Libraries working in collaboration with the British Museum, National Portrait Gallery, the RSC, the Craft Council, Tate Britain, RIBA and PRS Foundation.
* Martin Green, Chief Executive of Hull 2017, offers the unequivocal support of the Hull 2017 team to ensure the smooth change of venue to Hull - both logistically and in terms of media and promotion – to guarantee the move is advantageous to the Children’s Laureate Committee and to raise the profile of the announcement.
* The 2017 Children’s Laureate announcement event at the UK City of Culture will send a clear message on the important role children’s literature plays in the nation’s cultural heritage and in inspiring young talent, reading & writing.
* It has been proposed that if the 10th Children’s Laureate was announced in Hull then the city could celebrate with all of the past Children’s Laureates invited to attend; Quentin Blake, Anne Fine, Michael Morpurgo, Jacqueline Wilson, Michael Rosen, Anthony Browne, Julia Donaldson, Malorie Blackman and Chris Riddell.

***NB the following is confidential and is not confirmed!*  
  
Dolly Parton & Imagination Library**

The Hull 2017 team are in discussion with Dolly Parton’s management regarding presenting her stadium concert in Hull’s 25,000 capacity KC Stadium. As part of her concert tour, Hull 2017 is working in partnership to explore bringing the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to Hull as part of UK City of Culture’s literary programme.

* Through her Dollywood Foundation, the Imagination Library provides pre-school aged children with a free hardcover book every month from birth to the age of five. Over 675,000 children under the age of five receive books from the Imagination Library each month.
* Over 70 million books have been donated to children since the program began in 1996. Currently, the Imagination Library has programs in over 1,700 communities across Australia, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom – with advocates found locally in Manchester, Bradford and North Lincolnshire including Grimsby.
* A committee of individuals with backgrounds in education, child development, academia, and early childhood literacy select age and culturally-appropriate books for distribution through the program.
* Partners of the Imagination Library include Penguin Group (UK) and Rotary International.
* Dolly Parton has also written celebrated children’s books including Coat of Many Colors and I Am a Rainbow.
* For her work in literacy, Parton has received various awards including [Association of American Publishers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Association_of_American_Publishers) Honors Award (2000) and the Parents as Teachers National Center Child and Family Advocacy Award (2003).
* A proposal is that Dolly Parton read from her children’s books at Hull’s Children’s Literature Festival and could be asked to announce the 2017 Children’s Laureate. **[THIS IS NOT CONFIRMED OR EVEN EXPLORED]**

**HRH The Princess Anne**

The Sailors’ Children’s Society (based in Hull) has invited Hull 2017 to make a proposal regarding their Royal patron attending the city in 2017 and we are keen to make the link with children’s literature in 2017.

* A proposal is that Princess Anne attends the Hull Children’s Literature Festival and could be asked to make the announcement for the 2017 Children’s Laureate. **[THIS IS NOT CONFIRMED OR EVEN EXPLORED]**

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