



## Belfast City Council

**Report to:** Development Committee

**Subject:** Integrated Cultural Strategy Steering Panel

**Date:** Wednesday 15 October 2008

**Reporting Officer:** Marie-Thérèse McGivern, Director of Development, ext 3470

**Contact Officer:** Tim Husbands, Managing Director of Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Halls ext 1400  
Deirdre Robb, Arts Development Officer ext 3586

### Relevant Background Information

Following a strategic review, and from recommendations arising from the Belfast City Council Culture and Arts Plan 2003 -2006. Belfast City Council undertook an extensive consultative process for the development of an Integrated Cultural Strategy.

In the development of the Strategy a variety of consultation meetings took place with Belfast City Council Members, key public bodies, stakeholders within the cultural sector, community groups, and organisations identified within the Council's Equality Policy. The public consultation period on the draft Integrated Cultural Strategy took place between 2 March and 27 April 2007.

At the Development Committee in April 2007, Members gave approval for the implementation of the Integrated Cultural Strategy. The final document, which included supporting statements from the Minister with responsibility for Department Culture Arts and Leisure and the Chair of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland [ACNI], was publicly launched on 21 June 2007 at Youth Action's new performance space in the city centre. The event was well-attended by over 100 people from within the arts and heritage sector, with contributions from the Chairman of the former Development (Arts) Sub-Committee, and DCAL. The Strategy, which has a print run of 2,000, has been widely distributed and has also been made available on the Belfast City Council website (an Executive Summary of the strategy is included in **Appendix A**).

### Key Issues

As stated within the Integrated Cultural Strategy, it was agreed that the identification of an evaluative framework should form the basis for the system of monitoring and evaluation and that this should take place as part of an annual review process. The review process is an important aspect of integrating leadership and creating high

quality planning for cultural development in Belfast. It is the intention that the outcomes of the Annual Review would be made available via the web and on request.

Over the last few months, the Culture and Arts Unit has carried out an internal review to determine how the Council has met the aims and objectives outlined in the Strategy. This involved measuring the work of the Culture and Arts Unit, including Heritage activities, whilst also recognising the contributions of relevant initiatives that have taken place within Cultural Tourism, the Creative Industries and the Evening Economy. (see **Appendix B**)

Within the Strategy it was also agreed that an Integrated Cultural Strategy Steering Panel should be established after a period of one year which would assist Belfast City Council in coordinating the implementation of the objectives of the Strategy. It was decided that the Group would meet regularly to review progress of already established processes as well as to develop and instigate processes for delivery of the shared areas of work.

To this end a meeting has been provisionally planned for Monday 17 November at 2.30pm, where key representatives from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Department of Culture Arts and Leisure will attend, together with representatives from the arts and heritage sector. A list of recommended representative organisations for Members' consideration is provided as **Appendix C**.

#### **Resource Implications**

##### Financial

None.

##### Human Resources

Staffing resources are included in the work programme of the Unit.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report, including the review of the Integrated Cultural Strategy, and approve the establishment of a Steering Panel and associated membership to develop the action plan for the Integrated Cultural Strategy for 2009/2010 financial year.

#### **Key to Abbreviations**

DCAL – Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure.

#### **Documents Attached**

Appendix A - Executive Summary of the Integrated Cultural Strategy  
Appendix B - Review of Integrated Cultural Strategy  
Appendix C - Steering Panel list.