



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Delegated Authority Funding 2009–10
Date:	14 April 2010
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

Relevant Background Information

The Development Committee agreed to delegate the authority to approve funding decisions under the Rolling Programme and Community Festivals Fund to the Director of Development. This report provides an update of projects receiving funding under delegated authority in 2009/10.

Rolling Programme

At the Development Committee of Wednesday 9 April 2008 Members agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Development to award grants under the Rolling Programme to support innovation in arts and heritage. An amount of £28,840 was included in the 2009–10 budget for this scheme. Grants awarded range from £250 to £3,000.

The purpose of the Rolling Programme is to assist arts or heritage organisations to avail of opportunities that arise during the year, including those that present themselves after the closing date of Annual or Multi-annual Funding applications.

The Rolling Programme opened on Wednesday 1 April 2009.

The following areas are prioritised for funding under the Rolling Programme:

- one-off opportunities to bring outstanding cultural product to Belfast.
- one-off opportunities to mark or celebrate, through arts or heritage projects, culturally significant events.
- assisting organisations to develop national and international partnerships, and to profile Belfast's cultural product nationally and internationally.
- bursaries to enable arts and heritage organisations to develop their organisation and/or staff.
- small-scale explorative or feasibility studies to assist in the development of innovative and creative arts or heritage-based projects.

A copy of the guidance notes and application form for Rolling Programme is included at appendix 1.

Community Festivals Fund

Belfast City Council accepted the commission from the Department of Culture, Arts and

Leisure (DCAL) to administer the Community Festivals Fund in the Belfast area. At the Development Committee in August 2008, Members agreed to delegate the authority to award grants under this fund to the Director of Development. In October 2008 Members agreed that the Fund be delivered on a quarterly basis.

Community Festivals Fund supports festivals that celebrate cultural identity and strengthen community relations through festivals. This is achieved by providing financial support to festivals and by supporting organisers to improve the capacity of community festival organisations and to make them less reliant on public funding.

In February 2009 DCAL announced that the amount to be awarded to BCC was £77,300, which was standstill funding on the previous year's award. On the 11 March 2009, Members agreed to match fund this award. On 7 October 2009 DCAL offered the Council an additional £8,213 towards Community Festivals Fund, which the Council agreed to match fund. The total amount of money available in this fund is therefore £171,036. Ten per cent was ring-fenced for administration costs, with the remainder, £153,932, allocated to festivals.

Members agreed to engage an external consultant as lead assessor to manage the Community Festivals Fund assessment and evaluation process. A tender process was set in place to recruit the external consultant and the successful applicant was Julianne McCormick Associates.

The maximum level of funding available under Community Festivals Fund is £10,000, and the minimum £2,500. A copy of the application form and guidance notes is provided at appendix 2.

Principles of the Reporting Process

Organisations submitted an application and supporting documentation, such as financial statements and policy documents. Officers undertook a lengthy assessment of all applications, scoring them against the set criteria.

The Rolling Programme criteria reflect the themes of the *Integrated Cultural Strategy*.

The Community Festivals Fund criteria reflect the themes of the *Integrated Cultural Strategy* and the funding framework as set out by DCAL.

Officer assessments were then collated and sent to the Director of Development to approve funding recommendations. These assessments highlighted the main strengths and weaknesses in the application and ensured the transparency of the decision-making process.

Rationale for funding decisions

Officers considered the project budgets and the rationale for awarding funding is based on the following factors:

- Strength of the proposed programme as assessed against agreed funding criteria.
- Value for money. A reduction in the amount recommended has been suggested where costs are considered high or inflated.
- Viability of the proposed programme within the funding offered.

Key Issues

Rolling Programme

Twenty-five applications to the Rolling Programme 2009–10 were received, requesting a total of £68,238.50. This is approximately 2.4 times the amount of funding available. Of these applications, 13 were awarded funding totalling £28,840. There are no monies left over in this fund. The amount awarded represents on average 4.6 per cent of the total project costs.

Total audience and participation figures for the funded projects is 265,812.

A full breakdown of the funding decisions is provided at appendix 3.

Community Festivals Fund

We received 73 applications, requesting a total of £454,951, which is approximately 3 times the amount available. Of these, 30 applications were awarded funding to the value of £151,794. This leaves an under-spend of £2,138. The amount awarded represents 16.5 per cent of the total festival costs.

New festivals made up 41 per cent of the total award. Twenty-seven per cent of festivals took place in North Belfast; 20 per cent in South Belfast, 5 in East Belfast, 13 in West Belfast, 10 in Shankill and 25 in City Centre.

Total audience and participation figures for funded festivals is 605,556.

A full breakdown of the funding decisions is provided at appendix 3.

Resource Implications

Financial

Funding for Rolling Programme and Community Festivals Fund was allocated in the 2009–2010 Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit budget.

Human Resources

This was covered within the work programme of the Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit and the external Community Festivals Fund consultant.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this report.

Decision Tracking

None Required.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 - Application Form and Guidance Notes for Rolling Programme
Appendix 2 - Application Form and Guidance Notes for Community Festivals Fund
Appendix 3 - Rolling Programme Breakdown of Awards
Appendix 4 - Community Festivals Fund Breakdown of Awards