



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Integrated Cultural Strategy
Date:	12 May 2010
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
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Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that the Development (Arts) Sub-Committee at its meeting on 3 August 2005, approved the creation of a three year Integrated Cultural Strategy for Belfast with partners, including the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI). The strategy set out a framework for 2007-2010 to help create a joined-up approach to the development of Belfast's cultural sectors.

The strategy focused on:

- strengthening cultural leadership
- profiling Belfast's unique cultural assets
- providing stronger advocacy in support of culture
- encouraging a greater emphasis on social inclusion through audience development
- promoting an investment model of support for the sector to increase income generation and stability.

The strategy is now due for review and there is a need to establish a strong vision, leadership and co-ordination for the forthcoming years. Providing a joined-up approach to the arts will be of paramount importance, given that the Review of Public Administration will change the landscape and culture of public services in Northern Ireland. A key aspect of this process will be to assess Belfast City Council's funding support for the Culture and Arts Sector and to review the current Multi Annual and Annual Funding programmes.

Multi Annual and Annual Funding for Culture and Arts

At the Development Committee meeting of 14 November 2007, Members agreed the selection of 14 Multi-Annual Funding clients. In 2008 two more Multi-Annual Funding clients were selected for a two year funding agreement. Multi-Annual Funding incorporates a three year funding term, and an anticipated minimum annual funding level of £30,000. It was established to introduce a degree of longer term sustainability to some of the city's flagship arts organisations.

Key Issues

Approval is sought from Committee to review the current strategy and to create a new Integrated Cultural Strategy for 2011–2014. The objectives are to:

- Gain active commitment from key stakeholders to work towards a shared vision for the development of the cultural offer in the city and identify how a shared vision can be best achieved within the available structures and resources
- Gain active participation from the sector to deliver Belfast City Council objectives of Leadership, Economy and Quality of Life.
- Establish a collaborative and integrated approach for the development of culture and arts in Belfast
- Determine future priorities and identify opportunities for arts development in Belfast
- Establish and implement a detailed operational plan for the evolution of the culture and arts sector, 2011-2014

The Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit will complete baseline research, coordinate consultation with key stakeholders, agency partners, culture, arts and heritage sectors and community based organisations and facilitate meetings with sectoral groupings. A consultation schedule will allow a co-ordinated approach to gathering input and will seek views on the content of the future plans for culture and arts in Belfast. The Arts Council are carrying out an interim review of their five-year strategy and this can aid analysis of the current cultural offer and impact.

Baseline research and an outline draft strategy with core aim, principles, themes, objectives and key performance indicators will be brought to Committee for consideration in September 2010, as a basis for formal consultation.

Multi Annual and Annual Funding for Culture and Arts

Approval is sought to undertake an external review and evaluation of existing Multi-Annual and Annual Funding clients against agreed funding criteria, the impact of their activity, return on investment and the delivery of the Council's own objectives. The review will include an assessment of each of the Culture and Arts funding streams. It will also:

- Ensure that culture and arts eligibility criteria, approved by Members at the Development (Arts) Sub-Committee of 20 September 2004, reflects the current priorities of Belfast City Council and objectives which will be identified in the 2011-2014 Integrated Cultural Strategy.
- Ensure priorities identified in the Integrated Cultural Strategy for 2011–2014 informs the process and eligibility criteria used to select and assess all culture and arts clients
- Outline the process and inform future consideration of which organisations should continue to receive Multi-Annual Funding, 2011-2014.

The review and draft criteria will be brought to Committee for approval in September 2010 to enable new funding schemes to reopen in October 2010. Recommendations on Multi-Annual Funding clients for 2011-2014, based on organisational capacity and detailed analysis of the organisations strategic direction, will be brought to Committee for consideration in Feb 2011.

Resource Implications

To support the evaluation, consultation, workshops and research required, a budget of £35,000 has been allocated from within the existing Tourism, Culture and Arts Budget in 2010/2011.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee approves the development of a new Integrated Cultural Strategy for Belfast 2011–2014 and a review and assessment of Multi-Annual and Annual Funding. This has been included and approved within the Departmental budget 2010/2011.

Decision Tracking

Further to ratification payment of no more than £35,000 is made towards the development of an Integrated Cultural Strategy 2011–2014 and Review of the Multi-Annual and Annually Funded Clients 2011-2014.

Timeframe: June 2010

Reporting Officer: Kerrie Sweeney

Key to Abbreviations

DCAL – Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

ACNI – Arts Council of Northern Ireland