



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Creative Industries – South by Southwest 2011
Date:	6 December 2010
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that at the Development Committee of 12 May 2010, Members agreed to support Council participation at the South by Southwest (SXSW) Media Conference and Festival for 2011.
1.2	<p>SXSW is the premier global event focusing on the creative side of the music and entertainment business which takes place in Austin Texas from the 14–19 March 2011. The aim of attending SXSW was to further enhance Belfast City Council's support for the creative industries by promoting Belfast musicians and music related businesses to an international audience and showcasing the investment and purchasing opportunities offered by Belfast's music industry. Participation aimed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– To provide networking opportunities for those working in Belfast's music sector and potential buyers and distributors in the world music industry– To attract up to 5 Belfast based musicians to participate– To recruit 15 creative businesses to participate– To identify new sales opportunities– To promote Belfast as a city for tourism, business development and inward investment– To identify new investment and partnership opportunities– To increase the profile of Belfast's creative sector in the international marketplace– To increase the number of Belfast companies doing business internationally.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Belfast City Council plays a key role in the strategic development of the creative sector through a number of initiatives and actions, in conjunction with other

	partners.
2.2	The creative industries sector is one of major significance for Belfast as it is one of the most rapidly growing sectors in the city, even in the current climate. Participation at events such as South by Southwest is key to further developing the City's creative sector and promoting Belfast as a city for investment to an international audience. Currently there are over 1000 creative enterprises in the Belfast area employing over 17,000 staff. 67% of these enterprises are micro businesses and employ less than 10 employees.
2.3	The Council currently delivers a Creative Industries Plan which has focused on the key areas of business development, capability development and space and South by Southwest is a key initiative in supporting the priority sectors of Film, Television, Digital Media, Music and Design.
2.4	2011 will be the 25 th Year of South by Southwest and Belfast City Council has been working with Invest Northern Ireland, Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, Arts Council NI, Digital Circle and Fast Forward NI (FFWDNI), to ensure local creative businesses are well represented for 2011.
2.5	To date, we have secured additional funding from DCAL to enable up to 15 music businesses to attend and Invest NI will be providing financial support for up to 15 interactive/digital companies to attend the event.
2.6	At present, over 20 bands/musicians have applied to showcase at SXSW 2011 and decisions on the successful acts will be made by representatives from the international music industry before the end of January 2011.
2.7	Following a call for applications for attendance from music businesses, over 30 applications from music businesses have been received. These applications are currently being assessed.
2.8	At the 2011 event, Belfast City Council will have a presence on the UK Trade and Investment exhibition stand. We will also support one Belfast Showcase – profiling the best of Belfast's music industry – and will organise one international networking event.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial</u> A budget of £40,000 was approved at Development Committee of 12 May 2010. In addition, £15,000 has been secured from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL).
3.2	Invest Northern Ireland and FFWDNI are providing up to an additional £25,000 towards the total cost of the project.
3.3	<u>Human Resources</u> It is proposed that the Chair and Deputy Chair of Committee, along with one officer, participate in the event.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	N/A

5	Recommendations
5.1	To approve attendance of Chair and Deputy Chair and one officer at South by Southwest 2011.

6	Decision Tracking
	Feedback on the event will be presented to the June 2011 meeting of the Development Committee.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	DCAL – Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure SXSW – South by Southwest FFWDNI – Fast Forward Northern Ireland