



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure Inquiry Into the Creative Industries
<b>Date:</b>	13 December 2011
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John McGrillen, Director of Development ext 3470
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<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	The Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure recently announced an inquiry on the creative industries with a submission deadline of 20 December 2011.
1.2	The aim of the Inquiry is to investigate the policies, strategies and frameworks which oversee the development and growth of the creative industries in Northern Ireland, by examining whether these are fit for purpose and have effective support delivery mechanisms in order to maximise and harness the economic benefits of the creative industries.
1.3	Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has been playing a key role in the development and support of the creative industries over the past six years and as such would welcome the opportunity to participate in the inquiry and its response.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	It is estimated that the creative industries in Northern Ireland employs around 31,000 people. Maximising the potential of these industries and how they could be better supported is the subject of the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure's first Inquiry.
2.2	The Committee is interested in collecting the views on what challenges the sector faces; what funding, training and other support is needed; and what opportunities exist to grow the creative industries?
2.3	This inquiry aims to:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the potential of the creative industries in Northern Ireland, with particular emphasis on the economic benefits;</li> <li>- Identify the key challenges currently facing the sector;</li> <li>- Investigate whether particular gaps exist in current policies, strategies and delivery mechanisms, in areas such as: financial and business support; tax credits; education, training and skills development; leverage into international markets; the protection of intellectual property; and legislative developments;</li> <li>- Analyse and compare policies, strategies and delivery mechanisms in Northern Ireland with other UK regions and countries, in terms of their effectiveness in supporting the creative industries;</li> <li>- Examine the extent and effectiveness of the collaboration and co-ordination between industry, government departments and academia, in maximising and harnessing the full potential of the creative industries in Northern Ireland;</li> <li>- Consider the creative industries at sub-sector level in respect of any funding and support available; and assess the validity of prioritising particular industries within the sector for this support; and</li> <li>- Report to the Assembly with full findings, conclusions and recommendations for improvements in: policies and delivery mechanisms; and collaboration among all key stakeholders, to further develop and enhance the potential of the creative industries in Northern Ireland.</li> </ul>
2.4	The Council is currently in the process of updating our creative industries strategy and action plan and as such have responded to the aforementioned inquiry based on existing research, knowledge and informal consultations with Belfast based creative companies.
2.5	Members will recall the recent visit to Belfast by the Irish Technology Leadership Group (ITLG). The delegation was impressed by the innovation of local businesses working in the creative technologies field and identified the potential for the further development of the sector, pointing to the Silicon Valley model as an example of the economic potential of an area focused on digital technology.

<b>3</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
3.1	There are no specific Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

<b>4</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
4.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Note the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure inquiry into the creative industries</li> <li>- Note the draft Belfast City Council response to the inquiry and agree that this be presented as the Council's draft response (subject to any amendments suggested), subject to ratification by Council.</li> </ul>

<b>5</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
No decision tracking attached to this report.	

<b>6</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
ITLG - Irish Technology Leadership Group (ITLG)	

<b>7</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
Appendix 1 - Draft Belfast City Council response to Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure inquiry into the creative industries	