



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Inquiry into inclusion in the arts for working class communities
Date:	18 February 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure (CAL) is undertaking an inquiry into inclusion in the arts of working class communities.
1.2	A research paper commissioned by the CAL Committee examined the degree of social inclusion in the arts in Northern Ireland, including engagement in areas of high deprivation. A copy of this report is included at appendix 1. The research found that evidence is mixed regarding attendance at the arts of people coming from disadvantaged communities. The Committee believes that this issue requires further examination and has agreed to carry out an inquiry looking specifically at inclusion in the arts of working class communities.
1.3	<p>The terms of reference of the inquiry are as follows.</p> <p>The inquiry will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Investigate the accessibility of the arts in Northern Ireland to working class communities and to ascertain the key challenges and barriers to the involvement of those communities in the arts;- Examine the outreach activity of our arts venues and bodies with respect to how they make a meaningful contribution to social inclusion within working class communities; including the degree to which they can help tackle particular social issues;- Identify any examples of good practice in accessibility and outreach work – either within Northern Ireland or elsewhere – which could usefully be

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - replicated by arts venues and bodies here; and - Make recommendations for improvements in policies, delivery mechanisms and collaboration among key stakeholders which will maximise the potential of our arts venues and bodies to address social inclusion issues in both urban and rural working class communities and across communities in Northern Ireland.
--	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

2	Key Issues
2.1	The Development Department was made aware of the consultation on 21 January and responses are required by 14 March 2014. A number of Council-funded arts clients have indicated that they also intend to respond to the inquiry.
2.2	Respondents may give an indication of any wish to be invited to give oral evidence to the CAL Committee. Copies of written responses will usually be made available to the press and public at the hearing.
2.3	Members are asked to approve the draft Council response which is included at appendix 2.

3	Resource Implications
3.1	There are no resource implications attached to this report.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no equality and good relations implications attached to this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to note the contents of this report and approve the draft response included at appendix 2.

6	Decision Tracking
There is no Decision Tracking attached to this report.	

7	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 - Research and information service research paper: Examining social inclusion in the arts in Northern Ireland Appendix 2 - Draft Response to CAL Committee's inquiry into inclusion in the arts of working class communities	