



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Ulster Orchestra – Request for Funding
Date:	21 November 2014
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Mark McBride, Head of Finance and Performance

1.0	Relevant Background Information
1.1	At the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 17 October 2014, the Committee considered a request by the Ulster Orchestra that the Council should enter into a “cash deficiency agreement” with the Ulster Orchestra in which the Council would agree to indemnify the Ulster Orchestra for any deficit up to £500k that it incurs by 31 March 2015.
1.2	The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the request by the Orchestra until the November meeting of the Committee, to allow more information to be provided in relation to funding requests which had been made by the Orchestra to other organisations, the outcome of discussions between the Orchestra and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, the Orchestra’s proposals on its future operating model, legal vires and further details on the rent agreement between the Council and the Orchestra.
1.3	The Committee was also asked by the Orchestra to consider a rent free period for five years for the Waterfront and Ulster Halls. The Committee agreed that this request should be forwarded to the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

2.0	Key Issues
2.1	Professor Sir George Bain accompanied, by other representatives of the Orchestra will be in attendance at the meeting to outline the Orchestra’s proposals on its future operating model. An update on the discussions with other potential funders will be provided by officers at the meeting. However, at this stage, DCAL are still considering the request.

2.2	The Town Solicitor will also update the Committee on the legal position regarding the ability of the Council to enter into a “cash deficiency agreement”.
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3.0	Resource Implications
3.1	Should the Council decide to support the request for funding, then the agreed amount would have to be met from Council reserves.

4.0	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	There are no equality and good relations implications associated with the report.

5.0	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The request from the Ulster Orchestra for funding.

6.0	Decision Tracking
The Director of Finance and Resources will implement the decision of the Committee.	

7.0	Documents Attached
Appendix 1: Funding Request Committee Report, 17 October 2014	