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| Subject: | Request for Events and Festivals Funding 2018/19 |
| Date: | 22 September 2017 |
| Reporting Officer: | Donal Durkan, Director of Development |
| Contact Officer: | Lisa Toland, Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development |

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| Restricted Reports | |
| Is this report restricted? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted? | |
| After Committee Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| After Council Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Some time in the future | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Never | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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| Call-in | |
| Is the decision eligible for Call-in? | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |

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| 1.0 | Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues |
| 1.1 | <p>The purpose of this report is to request approval from Members to financially support a range of music events and festivals during the financial year 2018/19, pending the outcome of the current strategic review of Events and Festivals. The events are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Féile an Phobail• Other Voices• Gradam Ceoil. |

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| 2.0 | Recommendations |
| 2.1 | <p>The Committee is asked to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give priority to the named events and festivals when it is considering in-year allocations at the half or year-end periods. |
| 3.0 | Main Report |
| 3.1 | <p>As Members will be aware, Festivals and Events International (FEI) Consultants have been appointed to develop an Events and Festival Strategy. This will be completed by December 2017. The Strategy will set the direction of travel in relation to the future decisions on Council financial support for events and festivals from 2019/20 onwards. The draft strategy will be presented to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for endorsement later in this calendar year. Given that any decisions made will take a while before they can be implemented, 2018/19 will effectively be a transition year for events and festivals support within the Council.</p> |
| 3.2 | <p>Investment in events and festivals can help strengthen the profile of the City as a culturally vibrant destination, thus supporting the Belfast Agenda and also aligning well with the current bid for European Capital of Culture in 2023. They also reinforce the commitment to build the City's cultural profile and showcase its creative talent. It is considered that support for the events and festivals noted in this report will make an overwhelmingly positive contribution towards the promotion of Belfast and its cultural offer and will generate significant economic return by virtue of additional visitor spend. It will also help to create a positive profile of the City as a culturally vibrant location with a rich musical heritage in line with the new city narrative.</p> |
| 3.3 | <p>At the August 2017 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, Members agreed to approve an allocation of £200,000 towards a programme of BBC-led music events including the Folk Awards and a Big Music Weekend. Officers advised of a number of additional culture and music-focused events which were in the pipeline for 2018/19 and which would require Council support to proceed. These are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Féile an Phobail – financial request of £150,000 towards the August 2018 event • Oher Voices – financial request of £40,000 towards the October 2018 event • Gradam Ceoil – financial request of £50,000 towards the February 2019 event. |
| 3.4 | <p>The Committee agreed to refer the funding requirement for these three events to the September meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee with a request to give priority to these events and festivals when it is considering in-year allocations at the half or year-end periods.</p> |

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| 3.5 | <p>Members are reminded that, in addition to the City Events Programme and events supported through its various funding streams, the Council has also committed £180,000 of support towards the UK Pipe Band Championships in Summer 2018.</p> <p><u>Overview of Events Seeking Council Support</u></p> |
| 3.6 | <p>Féile an Phobail</p> <p>2018 marks the 30th Anniversary of Féile An Phobail. It is marketed as Ireland's biggest community arts festival and summer school. The purpose of the festival has always been to celebrate the positive side of the community – its creativity, energy, passion for arts, culture and sport.</p> |
| 3.7 | <p>Féile is recognised for its collaborative community approach and it is intended that its 30th anniversary year festival will bring an inclusive programme of events which will demonstrate good relations in action, attracting more tourism and visitor spend and building increased social and cultural capital.</p> |
| 3.8 | <p>The organisers are presently undertaking a stakeholder engagement strategy and have commenced consultation and planning for 2018 events. Since July 2017, workshops have been held with over 30 arts, cultural and tourism organisations from across the City. One of the key themes that has emerged from these workshops is 'ambition'. Taking this theme and the new event space at the Falls Park, they are aiming to attract some of the biggest artists from across the globe in 2018.</p> |
| 3.9 | <p>For 2018/19, Féile aims to create a year-round programme of inclusive and accessible arts and cultural events, delivered across the City with four specific festivals during the year. This will include 400+ events with an audience reach of up to 100,000 people. The financial request from the Council is for a contribution of £180,000 towards the cost of hosting the 2018 Féile celebration programme.</p> |
| 3.10 | <p>Other Voices</p> <p>At the June 2017 meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, Members approved financial support of £40,000 towards the 'Other Voices' event in Belfast in October 2017. Since this, the organisers have established the Duncairn Centre for Culture and Arts as the hub for the October 2017 event. It is intended that the 2017 event will be a precursor to a larger Belfast event in 2018 and beyond.</p> |
| 3.11 | <p>Other Voices has attracted a range of well-known acts since its inception in 2002. These have included Willie Nelson, Ellie Goulding, Gregory Porter, Amy Winehouse and Mumford</p> |

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| | <p>and Sons. In addition, it has attracted many indigenous acts and has provided a platform to highlight up-and-coming talent. The event is currently broadcast on RTE's television and digital platforms with more than 16 million views and more than 7,000 followers on YouTube. It also involves a wide range of outreach and engagement activity with local residents and those involved in the culture and arts sector.</p> |
| 3.12 | <p>The Other Voices team is currently exploring potential funding partners as well as building the local networks at community level to create a solid foundation for future activities. Experience from previous events suggests that it can have a significant economic, social and cultural impact on the local area.</p> |
| 3.13 | <p>The 2017 Other Voices event will attract a number of high profile and local musicians. It will be broadcast extensively on television and on social media platforms and this will present an opportunity to showcase not only the event but also the city of Belfast. Organisers have identified the potential to tap into the huge creative talent in the city. Plans for the 2018 programme are advanced and it is proposed that it will link with one of the city's premier digital events. It will include an extensive outreach and engagement programme, particularly with young people. Organisers will target young people from disadvantaged areas and schools that do not have experience of getting involved in these events. The financial request from the Council is for a contribution of £40,000 towards a total programme cost in excess of £200,000.</p> |
| | <p>Gradam Ceoil</p> |
| 3.14 | <p>Gradam Ceoil is an annual awards ceremony which celebrates the best of traditional Irish music and song. It comprises a gala event as well as an extensive outreach and engagement programme before the event to maximise impact and economic benefit.</p> |
| 3.15 | <p>The City Growth and Regeneration Committee has already agree to support the Gradam Ceoil event in Belfast in February 2018. Organisers generally work with host cities on a multi-annual basis in order to build momentum in the event and develop deep cultural and visitor engagement opportunities.</p> |
| 3.16 | <p>Based on the experience of the city of Cork, it is estimated that Gradam Ceoil will have a direct economic impact in the region of £350,000 over the weekend, in terms of visitor spend. Furthermore, the live coverage on TG4 and the potential engagement of BBC (particularly BBC radio and online) and BBC Alba (Scottish channel), as well as PBS in USA (broadcast as recorded coverage), will all provide meaningful opportunities to showcase Belfast as a city of music, arts and culture.</p> |

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| 3.17 | <p>There will be excellent opportunities to advertise and promote the city over the weekend. Gradam Ceoil will help attract new visitors to Belfast and make more people aware of the city's cultural offer. The fact that it takes place at a traditionally quiet time in the cultural and visitor calendar offers an opportunity to extend the tourism realm and support the local industry at this time.</p> |
| 3.18 | <p>Following the Committee agreement to support the 2018 event, planning is underway to programme a series of unique musical pieces and presentations, to reflect the cultural heritage and traditions in the City. This work will provide a foundation for the 2019 event subject to funding availability. In keeping with the other commitments under the 'Year of Music' banner, the 2019 Gradam Ceoil event will present an opportunity to showcase the breadth of unique musical talent in the city. The event will require a match-funding commitment of £50,000 from the Council towards an overall budget of around £230,000.</p> |
| 3.19 | <p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>These events and festivals will all be equality proofed and there will be a significant complementary suite of outreach and engagement programmes open to all communities.</p> |
| 3.20 | <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The financial support required from Belfast City Council for each initiative is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Féile an Phobail 2018/19: £180,000 • Other Voices 2018/19: £40,000 • Gradam Ceoil 2018/19: £50,000 |
| 3.21 | <p>In total £270,000 additional funding is required to support these events. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is requested to give priority to the funding of these events and festivals when it is considering in-year allocations at the half year or year-end.</p> |
| 4.0 | Appendices – Documents Attached |
| | None. |