Subject: Long-Term Cultural Strategy for Belfast

Date: 5th December 2018

Reporting Officer: Eimear Henry, Cultural Regeneration Manager, ext. 3582

Contact Officer: Eimear Henry, Cultural Regeneration Manager, ext. 3582

### Restricted Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this report restricted?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

- After Committee Decision
- After Council Decision
- Some time in the future
- Never

### Call-in

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<th>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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### Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the development of a long-term cultural strategy for Belfast.

### Recommendations

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- note the contents of this report and agree to proceed with the development of a ten-year strategy, as set out in the presentation to Committee; and

- agree the timeline as set out in paragraph 3.8
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<th>3.0</th>
<th>Main Report</th>
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| 3.1 | **Background**  
Members will be aware that, at a meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in June 2018, it was agreed that officers would develop options for an approach to long-term cultural development in the city. At this stage, it was proposed that this would be a five-year initiative. |
| 3.2 | The timing of this work was in response to a number of important developments and milestones including:  
- End of participation in the European Capital of Culture bidding process.  
- Initial recommendations from a draft Festival and Events strategy.  
- Current Cultural Framework due to end in March 2020.  
- Current Tourism Strategy due to end in March 2020.  
- Core multi-annual funding programme for arts and heritage organisations in the city due to end in March 2020.  
- Tourism as a key strand in the Belfast Region City Deal including proposals for a new visitor attraction, the Destination Hub. |
| 3.3 | All of these strategies and developments are in the context of the Belfast Agenda clearly setting out a vision for Belfast to be a ‘culturally vibrant’ city. |
| 3.4 | Furthermore, it has now emerged that the Arts Council of Northern Ireland is working on a new five-year framework as well as work by Tourism NI to further develop the regional events offer. |
| 3.5 | **Proposed approach**  
Following a review of previous approaches and an assessment of models from elsewhere it is now proposed that a minimum of a ten-year strategy should be developed. As well as supporting the Belfast Agenda it will also respond to and help define the role of culture across other priority areas including:  
- Local Development Plan  
- City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy  
- Good Relations Strategy |
| 3.6 | The Strategic Framework will better integrate a number of existing standalone strands within the Place and Economy Department including culture, arts, heritage, events, |
festivals and tourism. It will also set out a template for effective cross-departmental and citywide collaboration. The result will be a clear set of strategic priorities and a proposed investment model that will be cognisant of the cultural ecosystem and interdependencies within the city. This will in turn be supported by detailed implementation plans.

The proposed approach follows 6 key steps:

Step one: Articulating a cultural statement for the city. This will be based on extensive engagement and consultation with citizens, the cultural sector and other stakeholders. The purpose of the statement will be to present a vision for transformation recognising the value of culture in the city.

Step two: Establishing an outward facing narrative. This will present a coherent and authentic story that will resonate both locally and internationally. As part of this process, a number of key thematic areas will be tested in the local and key visitor markets. This will then help to give greater focus to the city’s tourism and events offer.

Step three: Creating a Framework establishing crosscutting strategic priorities. These priorities will focus on the contribution of culture to place-making and will set out an approach to long-term measurement of progress against agreed indicators.

Step four: Designing an investment programme to support delivery of strategic priorities. This will include leveraging non-Council sources of funding including contributions from the private sector. This will include the implementation of key recommendations from the Core Cities Cultural Enquiry due to be published later this month.

Step five: Developing detailed implementation plans. Key strands will include cultural development; events and festivals; and tourism development as well as a cross-departmental and city partnership model for delivery.

Step six: Producing a bespoke programme of activity centred around 2023. A yearlong programme of activity is considered as a key milestone in the ten-year strategy. A dedicated year is considered as the critical catalyst for change and transformation. This is to coincide with a precursor to the opening of the Belfast Story.
### Next Steps

3.8 The proposed timeline associated with next steps is set out below:

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<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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| Dec 2018 – March 2019 | Ongoing engagement  
Development of cultural statement, narrative, strategic framework and investment programme |
| March 2019          | Approval for draft strategy to go out to public consultation                         |
| April 2019 – June 2019 | Public Consultation                                                              |
| August 2019         | Approval of final strategy                                                         |
| Sept 2019 – Feb 2020 | Development of implementation plans                                               |
| October 2020        | Opening of new funding programme                                                   |
| March 2020          | Approval of funding recommendations and implementation plans                      |

### Financial and Resource Implications

3.8 There are no specific financial or resource implications at this stage. All costs associated with developing the long-term strategy are included in existing 2018/19 budgets.

### Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

3.9 Full consideration will be given to Equality and Good Relations implications as part of the development of the strategy.

### Documents Attached

4.0 None