



Subject:	Culture, Tourism and Events Programme of Work 2020/21
Date:	8 April 2020
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic 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"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the proposed programme of work to be delivered in the 2020/21 financial year to support the implementation of the ten year cultural strategy, <i>A City Imagining</i> , as agreed by Committee in August 2019.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Note the contents of this report and the contribution that the work programme for 2020/21 will make to the delivery of the ten year cultural strategy, <i>A City Imagining</i>.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve the programme of work as set out in this report and the associated budget allocations. This will be subject to ongoing review and will take into account the impact of the current Covid-19 crisis both in terms of current limitations of programme delivery as well as the need for continuing development to ensure long-term recovery.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Members will be aware that at a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in August 2019 the new ten year cultural strategy for Belfast, <i>A City Imagining 2020-30</i> was agreed. This strategy is the culmination of extensive public engagement and consultation over a 2 year period and is a consolidation of the foundation, commitments and achievements of several preceding strategies and frameworks. <i>A City Imagining</i> sets out a long-term commitment to facilitating a new integrated phase of culture-led progress and development for Belfast. The strategy brings together the culture, events and tourism functions within Council as well as identifying areas of cross departmental working to support the Belfast Agenda. This requires a new cross-cutting approach within Council including the design and delivery of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A series of new programmes to support 16 priorities set out in the strategy - Support for a number of flagship strategic projects including bidding for major events. - A new investment model
3.2	<p>Given that the strategy makes a long-term commitment over a ten year period, the approach to take it forward is based on a number of strategic implementation phases. Phase one is for the period 2020-2023 and a detailed implementation plan was presented to Committee in October 2019.</p>
3.3	<p>The implementation plans address seven key areas of work in order to present a comprehensive programme over the initial 3 delivery of the strategy. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actions required to deliver strategic priorities agreed in the strategy - Actions required to support a number of significant strategic projects such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o New approach to Events and Festivals culminating in yearlong international programme of events in 2023. o UNESCO City of Music designation in 2021 - Priority areas and actions for tourism development - Evaluation and research - Communications and marketing

<p>3.4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of a new governance model - The proposed investment model <p>In February 2020 recommendations for cultural multi-annual grants was taken to Committee amounting to over £2.35m in investment through 54 awards. This is only one strand of work. This report details the wider development programme that will be taken forward in an annual work plan 2020/21 that will deliver a series of agreed actions as part of the implementation of the cultural strategy.</p>
<p>3.5</p>	<p>Covid-19</p> <p>Actions in the annual work programme have been identified based on the need for a sequential and cumulative approach towards the delivery of phase one of implementing the cultural strategy. This programme recognises the need for a number of foundation steps in the first year of the strategy as well as progressing a number of initiatives already underway. These areas of work have been reviewed in light of the current Cov-19 crisis and are focussed on key development actions that can be taken forward to ensure that the city is best placed to respond to the current situation as well as supporting recovery within key sectors to build resilience and restore longer term growth potential. Individual projects will have key checkpoints built in to ensure that at all times the impact of Covid-19 is considered. Quarter 1 actions (April to June) will be focussed on development work and supporting the cultural and tourism sector. A further update will be taken to Committee in August to set out progress against targets and next steps.</p>
<p>3.6</p>	<p>Five key areas of work have been identified:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delivery against strategic priorities 2. Events and Festivals 3. Commencement of 2023 programme development 4. City of Music 5. Tourism Development
<p>3.7</p>	<p>Work Strand 1: Strategic Priorities</p> <p>Detailed below are the 16 priorities of the cultural strategy and the actions to be taken forward under each priority in 2020/21. Initial progress can be made on the design and development of these programmes. Progression into the next stage of project delivery will be subject to scenario planning in relation to Covid-19.</p>

3.8	<p>Priority One: Developing a people focussed approach to cultural development by facilitating citizen and sector participation in setting priorities, decision-making and in the evaluation of cultural policies.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a participative forum open to those resident or working in Belfast - Commission report into cultural democracy and implement recommended initiatives
3.9	<p>Priority Two: Building the creative capacity of our citizens and cultural sector to allow people to express their own cultural identities and respect and learn about other cultures.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design and deliver 'Telling the Belfast Story' public engagement programme to deliver a co-created and co-designed heritage programme to tell the story of people and places. - Develop a co-design and civic participation approach to the delivery of City Events (cross reference with events and festival work programme). - Complete a cultural mapping of Belfast.
3.10	<p>Priority Three: Protecting, promoting and using cultural heritage in all its dimensions, both tangible and intangible, including the plurality of the city's cultural narratives.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a heritage plan for the city with cross-cutting actions.
3.11	<p>Priority Four: Enabling a sense of belonging and sense of place through cultural engagement to help encourage a strong civic identity that people can share and celebrate.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support a minimum of 5 artist-in-residence programmes across Belfast. - Further develop a 'City as a Gallery' or 'Art in the Public Realm' initiative including scoping, international collaboration.
3.12	<p>Priority Five: Embedding cultural impact in city development and local place-making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Actions: Develop and implement design guidelines for city lighting and dressing through civic engagement and co-design approaches. - Deliver a playful city initiative to improve the quality, accessibility and openness of public spaces.

3.13	<p>Priority Six: Investing in connected, resilient and sustainable infrastructure of quality cultural spaces across the city.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete feasibility study into ticketing platform for the city including options for civic and visitor passes. - Commission an audit of cultural infrastructure including a gap analysis in order to inform future investment.
3.14	<p>Priority Seven: Supporting high quality cultural events and activities that are accessible, diverse and inclusive.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design and deliver a new investment programme including multi-annual (CMAG) and project grants. With CMAG process completed priority areas will be reviewing project funding and developing proposals to support maker spaces (e.g. artist studios). - Develop and review direct delivery of Council events in line with the priorities of the Strategy including but not limited to Maritime Festival, St Patrick's Day, Halloween and Christmas. Ensure a creative programming approach to City Events that reflects and promotes cultural diversity (cross reference with events and festival work programme). - Develop schemes to support higher participation and representation at cultural events by disabled people including piloting Gig Buddies in partnership with the Black Box.
3.15	<p>Priority Eight: Transforming underused public spaces into vibrant and diverse cultural destinations</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission proof of concept for a brokering service to transform empty or vacant spaces into cultural and civic use through one pilot in the city centre and one pilot in a neighbourhood. Implement recommendations as appropriate.
3.16	<p>Priority Nine: Increasing the autonomy of the creative sector to explore and shape the city's evolving, rich and multiple cultural narratives.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design and deliver wraparound support programme aligned to investment model to support established organisations to adapt to change and to support new

	<p>organisations and practitioners to take longer term risks in programming or creative development.</p>
3.17	<p>Priority 10: Supporting cultural excellence, cultural planning and cultural entrepreneurialism by providing support for artistic innovation and improved networking.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure new investment model has dedicated strands to support long term development and innovation and supports opportunities for research and development and longer term experimental projects to be activated through 2023 programme.
3.18	<p>Priority Eleven: Investing in a stronger and more sustainable cultural sector by supporting established and new creative practitioners to work beyond boundaries. This will create the environment where risks can be taken across a broader range of activities, sectors and disciplines.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting employability skills and capacity building programmes including programmes for LGBTQ+ and disabled artists and those from minority ethnic groups.
3.19	<p>Priority Twelve: Empowering the innovative capacity of the creative economy to connect technology and society.</p> <p>Action: This priority will be reviewed during the year as current actions require foundation work captured under other priority areas.</p>
3.20	<p>Priority Thirteen: Strengthening our city, regional and international cultural networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support participation in relevant cultural networks including but not limited to IETM, Eurocities, Culture 21.
3.21	<p>Priority Fourteen: Growing our sustainable cultural tourism product through a creative approach that respects the city's heritage and communities.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop cultural tourism through building capacity and opportunity for citizen and culture led approaches to tourism development and infrastructure (e.g local tourism programme).

3.22	<p>Priority Fifteen: Encouraging environmental responsibility and resilience by understanding and adapting cultural behaviours.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a Green Policy for festivals in Belfast.
3.23	<p>Priority Sixteen: Increasing the contribution of both public and private cultural sectors to inclusive economic growth.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitating business engagement to embed creativity and innovation meeting business objectives across sectors initially through 2023 programme development.
3.24	<p>Workstrand 2: Events and Festivals</p> <p>On an annual basis, the Council's City Events Unit delivers a series of large-scale public events, which are free to access by both citizens and visitors to the city, on behalf of Belfast City Council. In 2019/2020, it is estimated that these events generated over £5.23 million of additional economic activity, with 257,356 visitors attending the events programme. This figure is lower than previous years due to the cancellation of St Patrick's Day programme of events.</p>
3.25	<p>The direct delivery of these events by Council complements the wider events calendar of the city much of which is supported by Council through funding schemes including multi-annual grants and community festival funding.</p>
3.26	<p>The Council continues to play an important role in the delivery of events of scale in the city. However in keeping with the priorities contained within the cultural strategy for Belfast increased emphasis is now placed on effective partnership working, capacity building and leverage of additional investment. Throughout 2020/21 in parallel with the delivery of the events programme, officers will be undertaking a review of these events with a view to presenting to Committee recommendations for an updated strategic approach for 2021 onwards.</p>
3.27	<p>Further to an update provided to Committee in October 2019 on the Titanic Maritime Festival it is recommended that this event takes place in 2021 establishing a biennial model that helps grow the turnover of the Festival to over £1m increasing the scale, ambition and impact of the event.</p>

3.28	<p>Due to the Covid-19 outbreak the 2020/21 programme of events will begin with the annual Hallowe'en event, then the Christmas Lights Switch-On in November and finishing with the city's St Patrick's Day celebrations in 2021. However this will be under ongoing review.</p>
3.29	<p>A development programme was already planned for 2020/21. This will be revised to deal with the impact of Covid-19 and Council will work with other public and private partners to ensure a joined up approach. Actions in 2020/21 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Belfast Strategic Events partnership group and support the existing Festivals Forum including sector engagement and planning in relation to Covid-19. - Provide ongoing support through project funding including Support for Sport and Community Festivals Fund in line with revised events calendar and funding allocations. - Develop commercial strategies and maximise other fundraising opportunities to support the city's portfolio of events. This is a long-term priority with initial progress due to take place in 2020/21. - Support event and festival producers in finding appropriate locations, production partners, liaison with the Council and other government agencies responsible for permits, transportation etc including supporting and co-ordinating city's annual events calendar and the impact of Covid-19. - Produce a guide to organising events in Belfast which incorporates guidance on accessibility, inclusivity and diversity for events and festivals in the city (incorporating Council's Inclusive Events Guide). - Produce a public-facing annual festival and event report, based on data collected from evaluation, which is used to advocate and raise support, ensuring that events and festivals are properly acknowledged for their input. This will include capturing data that helps to quantify the impact of Covid-19. - Produce and promote the annual Belfast Festival Calendar as both a planning tool for producers and as a public facing 'what's on' guide subject to timelines in relation to Covid-19 recovery.
3.30	<p>Workstrand 3: 2023</p> <p>2023 had been identified as a major strategic initiative to support long-term resilience, growth and transformation in the city. Given the likely impact of Covid-19 it is anticipated that this will become of even greater importance to support recovery. Development work is required in 2020/21. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop an engagement and communications approach and campaign.

- Establish a new artistic and curatorial development programme through a competitive and open call.
- Develop creative programme including completing feasibility study on major sustainability project (Urban Forest) in partnership with the Eden Project.
- Preparation and development work to support bids for major events subject to further Committee approvals and financing strategy.

3.31 **Workstrand 4: City of Music**

While a definitive timescale has not yet been set, based on trends to date it is expected that the next applications to become a Unesco Creative City (Music) will open in 2021. In order to prepare for this bid a steering group has now been established following an open call for expressions of interest. In 2020/21 the following actions will be taken forward:

3.32 **Strand 1: Governance and Delivery structures – this development work can proceed as planned and is not impacted by Covid-19.**

- Provide support to the Belfast City of Music Steering group with representation from a variety of stakeholders including Tourism NI, Visit Belfast and Arts Council of Northern Ireland as well as cultural organisations, musicians, business owners, emerging artists and producers.
- Build relationships and connections with UNESCO Creative Network Cities such as Glasgow, Liverpool, Galway and Dundee.

3.33 **Strand 2: Sustainable action planning, capacity building and resourcing – this strand will now take into consideration the impact of Covid-19 on the music sector and will support the co-design of sector support and recovery programme.**

- Support the City of Music steering group in the co-design of a music development action plan 2020 – 2024
- Support the City of Music steering group to consider longer term strategic priorities for music in Belfast 2020 – 2030
- Explore fundraising and investment opportunities to support strategic development in music. Leverage investment from other partners to support City of Music plan
- Co-design mentorship and career development schemes for emerging artists/producers
- Co-design a civic engagement and participation strategy for music including audience development

<p>3.34</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commission asset mapping of the music industry in Belfast to include venues, artists, producers, engineers, studios etc. This should also strengthen the city’s regional role in driving the creative industries - Ensure strategic development of music in the city contributes to sustainable urban development, building on culture and creativity as a lever to achieve development goals in the city as a whole <p>Strand 3: Exchanges, co-operation and partnership working – this strand will be subject to ongoing review in Quarter 3 & Quarter 4 and further consideration depending on the longer-term outlook relating to Covid-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scope out and develop international opportunities and partnerships across the UNESCO Creative City Network - UK, Ireland, Europe and further afield - Facilitate networking opportunities for music stakeholders such as annual Music Forum, enabling both local and international collaborations and partnerships to develop - Design and develop new investment initiatives that enable commercial and not-for-profit music organisations/ producers to work in partnership on projects and development schemes
<p>3.35</p>	<p>Strand 4: Marketing and Communications – this strand will be subject to ongoing review in Quarter 3 & Quarter 4 and further consideration depending on the longer-term outlook relating to Covid-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce and promote the annual Belfast Music calendar as both a planning tool for producers and as a public facing ‘what’s on’ guide - Offer other collaborative marketing opportunities and liaise with city, regional and national tourism marketing agencies to ensure that music is effectively positioned as part of the tourism offer - Work with partners to develop and promote the Belfast Music/City of Music brand. - Develop a city level marketing and communications strategy for music
<p>3.36</p>	<p>Strand 5: Evaluation & Long Term Commitment – this strand will now take into consideration the impact of Covid-19 on the music sector and will support the co-design of sector support and recovery programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Measure contribution of music to the outcomes of the Belfast Agenda - Set evaluation criteria and key performance indicators for achieving UNESCO City of Music Designation in 2021 and no later than 2023

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that effective governance and delivery structures continue to operate beyond the City of Music Designation and delivers on the longer-term commitments
3.37	<p>Workstrand 5: Tourism Development</p> <p>The Covid-19 has had a serious impact of the tourism sector. The four priority areas for tourism development identified in the cultural strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancing and enriching the tourism experience. - Supporting tourism development across the city's neighbourhoods. - Focusing the tourism marketing and communications. - Supporting skills development to enhance tourism growth and development.
3.38	<p>Development work that commenced in 2019/20 will be progressed however Covid-19 will now be included as a major strategic consideration. Each of these areas will be given further consideration in relation to the impact of Covid-19 and how Council can work with partners to support the tourism sector. A detailed report will be taken back to Committee in June 2020.</p>
3.39	<p><i>Supporting Neighbourhood Tourism</i></p> <p>Work to develop local tourism continues as a priority and is critical to supporting inclusive growth. In line with 2019-20 it is therefore proposed that the Council develops and manages a significant programme of capacity building and information sharing to improve the quality of existing products, bring forward new products and help develop coherent packages and experiences that are aligned to visitor needs.</p>
3.40	<p>It is proposed that the focus of activity for 2020-21 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of local conduits where possible to increase engagement and promote the benefits of participation as well as identifying new and emerging partners. - Capacity building and development work on cluster approach, in conjunction with Tourism NI - involvement of industry experts and practitioners who have first-hand experience of this activity. - Supporting and commissioning robust evidence base to increase understanding of the market.
3.41	<p><i>Supporting Business Tourism Investment</i></p> <p>Members will be aware that the Council and Tourism NI have, for a number of years, co-invested in a Conference Support Scheme for the City. This has been a key element of the</p>

business tourism support activity over recent years and will be critical if the growth ambitions are to be achieved in the coming years. It is proposed that the Council makes an investment of £200,000 in this scheme for 2020/21 in line with levels of investment in recent years. This allocation will be matched by investment from Tourism NI and will be subject to review depending on the longer term impact of Cov-19.

3.42

Financial & Resource Implications

The cost of the activities outlined in this report were agreed as part of the rate setting process and therefore will be resourced from the agreed 2020/21 budget for the Culture and Tourism section of the Economic Development division of the Place and Economy Departmental budget.

3.43

All programmes will be subject to ongoing review with cost savings identified where projects cannot proceed due to Covid-19. The breakdown is detailed below with further detail provided at appendix 1.

<i>Tourism Development</i>	
Research	£30,000
Local tourism development	£197,000
Industry support	£15,000
Sustainable tourism development	£25,000
Conference subvention (subject to Covid-19)	£200,000
<i>Cultural Development</i>	
Arts and Heritage project funding	£160,000
Community Festivals Fund (match funded by DfC)	£77,000
Strategy implementation programmes including Events and Festivals	£350,000
2023 Development/ City of Music	£435,000
<i>Events</i>	
Hallowe'en	£116,000
Christmas	£94,864
St Patrick's Day	£200,000
Small grants: Support for Sport	£70,000
Belfast Marathon (subject to rescheduling)	£20,000
TOTAL:	£1,989,864

3.44	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The cultural strategy, <i>A City Imagining</i> has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and a Rural Needs Assessment (RNA). Any further investment or significant programmes will include equality screening as appropriate.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: 2020/21 Tourism, Culture and Events