



Subject:	Update on Music Strategy
Date:	14 th June 2023
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
1.1	At a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in December 2022, members agreed the music strategy, "Music Matters: A Roadmap for Belfast" including its corresponding priorities. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on progress to date and seek approval to the allocation of funding to a number of important strands of the music strategy.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Note the contents of this report and the progress made against areas of the music strategy, "Music Matters: A Roadmap for Belfast"- Approve the allocation of £5,000 towards the costs of an international exchange with London, Ontario Canada- Allocate £20,000 to the creation of a pilot micro grants scheme for artists.
3.0	Main report

3.1	<p>At a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in December 2022, members agreed the final “Music Matters: A Roadmap for Belfast”. Mirroring A City Imagining cultural strategy the music strategy has 4 strategic themes, each having 4 strategic priorities. There are a number of actions and recommendations given for each priority catering to many areas of need across the music sector.</p> <p>Theme 1: Place artists at the heart - Recognising the value of creators</p> <p>Theme 2: Nurture the sector - Strengthening the structures to support those who guide and invest in creators</p> <p>Theme 3: Ignite the live experience - Liberating the live music sector as a major catalyst for cultural and economic growth</p> <p>Theme 4: Unlock the unifying power of UNESCO - Sharing the gift of music with the people of Belfast</p>
3.2	<p>Update on Music Board</p> <p>The Music Strategy sets out governance recommendations for Belfast Music, including the formation of a Belfast Region Music Board, comprising between 15 and 20 members, to bring to life the UNESCO City of Music designation.</p> <p>The board will help to embed music in all communities across the city to make music a sustainable career option for creators and people who support them. Following agreement of the full Music Strategy in December 2022, an open call was launched for applications to join the Belfast Region Music Board with applications closing in February 2023.</p> <p>Members received an update on the recruitment process and selection of the board in April 2023. Since this meeting, the final selection of board members is confirmed and details of board members are available in Appendix 1.</p>
3.3	<p>As noted by members in the April 2023 Committee, there was a lack of applications from the marching bands community. Officials have engaged with members of this sector and the music board has agreed to co-opt a representative from this sector to the board from June 2023.</p> <p>The board is meeting monthly, with two meetings held to date, to map further initiatives to roll out in this financial year and beyond. A Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed at the July meeting.</p>
3.4	<p>Update on current initiatives</p> <p>In April 2023, Members received an update and agreed financial allocations for a range of ongoing initiatives. At this meeting, members agreed to allocate £20,000 to work in conjunction with the Music Venue Trust (MVT) to run a programme specifically targeted at</p>

	<p>venues in Belfast. Officials have been engaging with MVT to launch the scheme and this will be announced in mid-June 2023.</p>
3.5	<p>On 1st and 2nd June, the Output Conference was delivered as a key event within the City of Music programme, featuring a full programme of panels, workshops and conferences, followed by an evening showcase of live music for free to the public. Activity included music and creative digital showcasing and networking events, business development panels and workshops and meetings and networking with key international creative digital companies. The second day of output featured a community engagement and networking event at 2 Royal Avenue, followed by a Music Industry Session where delegates heard from delegates from Hannover, Germany regarding their journey as a UNESCO City of Music.</p>
3.6	<p>Priority 2.2 within Theme 1 of the Music Matters strategy relates to sourcing performance opportunities for Belfast music creators to perform internationally. In April 2023, Members received an update on an international exchange with UCoM City London, Canada, that will begin in July 2023. This opportunity will allow for two folk-music artists, namely Ciara O'Neill and Niall McDowell, to be provided with attendance at a song-writing camp, two pre-festival performances, one main-stage performance at Home County Music and Art Festival, as well as music industry 1-1 meetings across Ontario with agents, bookers and other personnel that will benefit the Belfast artists. In October 2023, two artists and talent agents from Ontario will arrive in Belfast to appear at the Belfast International Arts Festival and take part in a wraparound programme of similar activity. It is proposed to allocate £5000 towards the costs of this exchange, matching the contribution from UCoM City London, Canada.</p>
3.7	<p>Ongoing development</p> <p>UNESCO Music delivery is funded from existing recurring and non-recurring departmental funds. At the meeting of the Special Policy and Resources Committee in April 2021, members agreed an allocation of resources to the delivery of the music strategy. As contained in the Belfast 2024 paper, £900k has been allocated towards City of Music and the Music Strategy for delivery on key developmental activities across 2023/24 and 2024/25 respectively.</p>
3.8	<p>There are a range of pre-existing commitments for the remaining financial year, including Gradam Ceoil bursaries, the creation of a music support service, delivery of the Output Conference, the delivery of a Music Industry Mentoring Programme, international exchanges and the Pipeline Investment Fund for music venues.</p>
3.9	<p>With the remaining budget for the 2023/24 financial year, Council is collaborating and consulting with the Belfast Music Region Board on the priorities most necessary to fulfil during this period. The budget will be split between the four themes of the strategy and each</p>

theme will have priorities that will be completed. It is anticipated that the profile of spend against themes will be:

Theme	Areas covered within initiatives	Budget profile
One – Placing Artists at the Heart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing funding programmes for music creatives – e.g micro-grant scheme for artists Professional development opportunities to educate and equip music creators Opportunities for music creatives to connect and collaborate with their peers locally, nationally and internationally. Series of initiatives to ensure that music is inclusive, accessible and open to everyone in our city. 	£90,000
Two - Nurture the Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial assistance available to freelancers, organisations and businesses whose primary role is to enable, support and develop creators. Professional development opportunities to educate and equip music organisations and businesses Funded opportunities to engage and support the future generation of creative freelancers, cultural leaders and music business entrepreneurs 	£70,000
Three – Ignite the Live Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a thriving, sustainable and strong live music sector including a review existing licensing frameworks Enhance Belfast’s night-time economy, culture and governance Implementing initiatives to ensure the health and safety, both physically and in terms of mental well-being, of performers and attendees at live music events. Supporting greening the live music sector 	£40,000
Four - Unlock the unifying power of UNESCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced strategic communications to make it easier for locals and visitors to find out about the music events and activities taking place across Belfast. Ensuring citizens and visiting audiences have access to incredible and unique music experiences Partner with tourism bodies, Sister Cities and the UNESCO Creative Cities Network to promote Belfast as a world class music destination 	£40,000

3.10	A detailed and profiled delivery plan, containing initiatives to address these areas, will reviewed and discussed at the Music Board in June and July 223. A further paper outlining the initiatives and their detailed corresponding budgets will be presented to members in August 2023.
3.11	<p><u>Micro-Grant scheme</u></p> <p>Theme 1 of the Music Strategy has a focus on artist development, with priority 9.5 including a commitment to fund initiatives to alleviate the costs incurred by music creators in Belfast. It is proposed to allocate £20,000 to develop a micro-grant programme, available to individual musicians, to assist with costs incurred within their artform. The structure and criteria for this scheme will be developed in collaboration and consultation with the Belfast Music Region Board and will be launched in Autumn 2023.</p>
3.12	<p>Financial and Resource Implications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate £5,000 towards the costs of this exchange, matching the contribution from UCoM City London, Canada • Allocate £20,000 to the creation of a pilot micro grants scheme for artists. <p>These costs are to be met from existing departmental budgets allocated to music development.</p>
3.13	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications</p> <p>This music strategy is part of the overarching cultural strategy for Belfast that has been subject to EQIA. An equality screening has been completed and mitigating actions will be considered as part of any initiatives.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Membership of music programme board