



<b>Subject:</b>	Cultural Framework for Belfast – Progress Report
<b>Date:</b>	12 August 2015
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Lisa Toland, Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development
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<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to give an update on progress on the Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012 to 2015 and seek permission to develop a new Action Plan for implementation from 2016 to 2020. Approval is also being requested to open the core multi-annual funding programme for arts and heritage organisations.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Note the contents of this report and agree to the development of a new action plan for 2016 to 2020 to support the Cultural Framework for Belfast</li><li>– Agree to open Core multi-annual funding for arts and heritage organisations 2016 to 2020 in September 2015.</li></ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Key issues</b>
3.1	<u>Cultural Framework for Belfast</u> At the September 2012 meeting of the Development Committee, the Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012-2015 was agreed. A significant programme of public engagement and consultation was carried out in the development of the framework. While the activities agreed covered a three year work programme, the framework established a longer-term vision to 2020 that was:

	<p>“Everyone in Belfast experiences and is inspired by our city’s diverse and distinctive culture and arts. Arts and heritage are valued for enriching quality of life and creating wealth, and the city’s culture and creativity is renowned throughout the world”.</p>
3.2	<p>The vision was supported by four strategic themes, namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distinctly Belfast</li> <li>2. Inspiring communities</li> <li>3. Attracting Audiences</li> <li>4. Strengthening the sector.</li> </ol>
3.3	<p>The Framework recognised that culture and arts make a vital contribution to the city, helping to improve quality of life, driving the economy and making Belfast a shared and welcoming city.</p>
3.4	<p>Since the introduction of the framework, the council has invested significant resources in a range of arts and heritage organisations through its various funding mechanisms. Funding schemes total an annual investment of £1.83million in the sector. This represents an increase of 25% on the budget available in the year before the introduction of the new framework. Council budgets have remained constant during this period while other funding partners have reduced their budgets significantly over the period.</p>
3.5	<p>The breakdown of the direct investment package for the Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012 to 2015 has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– £4.1m in 52 arts and heritage organisations through core multi annual funding</li> <li>– £176,000 through PEACE III in 11 community arts Creative Legacies projects</li> <li>– £180,000 invested in 12 large festivals through the PEACE III City of Festivals Programme</li> <li>– £480,000 in over 100 arts and heritage projects</li> <li>– Supporting nearly 100 community festivals in partnership with Department of Culture Arts and Leisure, with funding of over £400,000</li> <li>– Developing a new fund, Creative and Cultural Belfast, worth £900,000 in partnership with Arts Council of Northern Ireland. This has resulted in 7 large scale Creative Belfast projects.</li> </ul>
3.6	<p>Other Cultural Framework achievements to date include:</p>

- Developing an Outcomes Framework called “Art Affects”, to identify, measure and evaluate the impact arts has on the city. Over 125 people from 80 organisations were involved in the development of this framework and will link into the implementation to help develop better measurements around the impact of cultural investment
- Developing our European links and hosting the Eurocities Culture Forum in 2014, with 72 delegates attending, from 54 European cities
- Supporting the visual arts, festivals and heritage sectors through forums and action plans
- Creating the business support and development programme, ‘Strengthening the Sector’ which helps to develop the cultural sector and includes mentoring and training
- New partnerships with Audiences NI, Community Arts Partnership and Voluntary Arts Ireland were developed to provide support across the sector
- Supporting the music sector through Belfast Music Week; Output, a music industry conference; and Inside Out, outdoor music performances
- Developing international reputation with events such as the From Belfast to Bolshoi exhibition
- Supporting the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of Belfast being given a town charter.

3.7

A full evaluation of the current, three year action plan will be completed at the end of this year. In anticipation of this work, and building on the achievements and lessons learned from activities undertaken to date, Members are asked to approve the development of a new action plan for the period 2016 to 2020 in line with the long term vision of the framework and the four strategic themes identified.

3.8

The process for developing this new Action Plan 2016 to 2020 will include:

- Review of current Action Plan (2012 to 2015)
- Focused consultations with key partners and interested organisations on the following areas of work:
  - Funding: reviewing current funding
  - Place and heritage: place making and engagement with Belfast’s heritage
  - People: developing, supporting and retaining talent
  - Communities: building capacity among local communities
  - Global connections: role of culture in international branding of Belfast
  - Audiences: increasing engagement of audiences with culture, arts and

	<p>heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Events: supporting the delivery of events and festivals.</li> </ul>
3.9	<p>A draft action plan will be presented to this committee in November 2015 and, subject to endorsement, the plan will be issued for a full public consultation. On completion of the consultation phase, a revised draft of the Action Plan will then be presented to the committee for final approval, by March 2016.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Core multi annual funding programme</u></p> <p>One of the targets of the Cultural Framework was to streamline and simplify our funding processes by December 2012. In April 2013, core multi-annual funding (CMAF) replaced the previous Annual Funding and Multi-annual Funding programmes.</p>
3.11	<p>The purpose of the new core multi-annual funding was to support core costs and associated programme costs, offering longer term sustainability for Belfast-based arts or heritage organisations that have full time staff and ongoing annual costs, and that produce work which substantially benefits the city.</p>
3.12	<p>Organisations were invited to show how their planned programme for 2013 to 2016 was aligned to the themes of the Cultural Framework, of which the theme of ‘Distinctly Belfast’ was central.</p>
3.13	<p>Assessments were made only on the basis of information supplied by the applicant within their submission. This included the application form, programme of activities and supporting documentation such as business plans and strategies. Assessors considered the strategic fit of the proposed programme against the framework. Sixty five applications were assessed with 52 organisations receiving core funding totalling £1,372,830. The total request for funding was £2,345,231 which was substantially more than the budget available. A list of organisations receiving funding in the period 2013-16 is included in Appendix 1.</p>
3.14	<p>In the period to date, core funded organisations have provided an extensive programme of activities in Belfast with many exceeding their projected targets. These include an annual average of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 4,735,867 audience numbers</li> <li>– 204,352 participants</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 18,863 individual artist contracts</li> <li>– 86,203 volunteer hours.</li> </ul> <p>A full summary of programme outputs is included in Appendix 2.</p>
3.15	<p>In light of the positive evaluation statistics emerging from the first two years of CMAF, it is proposed that a new core funding programme is opened for the period 2016-2020. This longer funding period will align with the end of the new Cultural Action Plan, the overall Cultural Framework and the timescale for the Integrated Tourism Framework. Funding will be subject to budget being available annually.</p>
3.16	<p>As the vision of the framework and the four key themes were to remain intact until 2020, it is proposed that the assessment criteria for core multi-annual funding should remain largely unchanged. The criteria for the period 2013-16 are included in Appendix 3.</p>
3.17	<p>In recognition of the fact that the council boundary for Belfast changed in April 2015 and that this core funding programme is an open and competitive process, there will be an extensive programme of engagement and promotion in order to ensure that all eligible organisations have an equal opportunity to apply. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Public advertisements via newspapers and websites</li> <li>– Email notifications</li> <li>– General Information Sessions</li> <li>– An offer of one to one advice session to any potential applicant with a Tourism, Culture, Arts &amp; Heritage officer.</li> </ul>
3.18	<p>It is hoped that the council will be able to maintain and potentially increase the level of funding available through this programme. In the period to date, organisations have successfully generated 45% of their income from non-grant sources making a vital contribution to Belfast's economy. On average the core grant received from Belfast City Council amounted to 4% of an organisation's turnover. This means that it is critical that the Council works with other funding partners to identify the optimal support mechanisms and approaches for the sector in order to maintain the positive benefits that can be accrued from investment in the arts.</p>
3.19	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no direct financial resource implications at this time. The recommendations for</p>

3.20	<p>funding will be presented to Committee for approval in January 2016 and will be subject to agreed budgets for subsequent years.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>The current Cultural Framework and Action Plan have been subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment. A further Equality Screening will be carried out on the new Action Plan.</p>
4.0	<p><b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b></p>
4.1	<p><b>Appendix 1</b> – Cultural Framework - List of Core Funded Organisations 2013-2016</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> - Cultural Framework - Outputs from Core multi-annual funding programme</p> <p><b>Appendix 3</b> - Cultural Framework - Core multi annual funding programme criteria.</p>