



Subject:	Progression of the Cultural Programme - Festival and Events Update
Date:	9 th January, 2019
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy
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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"/>
Sometime 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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the implementation of recommendations for the development of Events and Festivals in Belfast and to agree an interim position for 2019/20.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	It is recommended that the Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• note the contents of this report and agree to allocate funding as outlined in 3.16; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – agree that Council officers develop and deliver a programme to support growth festivals in 2019/20, subject to Committee approving the breakdown of funding allocations.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	<p>At the meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 5th December, it was agreed that further consideration should be given to an interim position for events and festivals in advance of the implementation of a new cultural strategy from April 2020 onwards. It was agreed that a report would be taken to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to consider allocating additional funding to support Signature and Growth Events and Festivals in 2019/20. Subsequently, at the December meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, Members agreed to allocate a budget of £320,000 for this purpose. This was allocated from the specified reserve for the development of a long term cultural programme.</p>
3.2	<p>The background to the proposed approach is a series of key recommendations from the Events and Festivals strategy commissioned by Council from consultants Festival and Events International (FEI).</p> <p>The brief for this work included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A review of current portfolio – Consultation with stakeholders including funders and existing events/festivals – Benchmarking how events and festivals are funded and delivered in other cities – Consideration of pre and post event impact modelling – Consideration of future structures for delivery – Making recommendations for the identification, securing, funding and delivery of events and festivals in Belfast.
3.3	<p>The recommendations cover 4 main areas, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Funding: Need to adopt the standard classification of Events and Festivals as Major, Signature, Growth, Local and Neighbourhood. – Capacity building: Portfolio approach; programme of support; multi-annual investment where appropriate. – Evaluation and measurement: Adopt the proposed investment/evaluation criteria and simplify evaluation based on demonstrating value against the Belfast Agenda, ensuring that the level of evaluation is commensurate with the scale of the event.

3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governance and delivery: Need to improve internal co-ordination; greater partnership with other funders; consider a commissioning model for certain types of events. <p>These recommendations present a strong operational model for the future delivery of events and festivals in the city and the FEI report forms a strong foundation to build on. In particular, the report highlighted the need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better co-operation with other city stakeholders e.g. Tourism NI - Effective internal structures e.g. relationship between units within Place and Economy and across Council - Clear categorisation of the city's events and festivals offer
3.5	<p><i>Gap Analysis</i></p> <p>However, the scope of the work was such that the focus was on existing infrastructure and products including some assessment of capacity and support for growth. Further consideration needs to be given to the wider strategic context and in particular the role of events and festivals as part of long-term cultural and tourism development in the city. Therefore, rather than taking forward a standalone festivals and events plan and to ensure greater strategic value, it has been agreed that this work will be embedded into the proposed ten year cultural strategy. This will be subject to wider stakeholder engagement and public consultation.</p>
3.6	<p>In this context further consideration will be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The thematic areas of strength that could be built upon to develop signature events and form part of a more coherent tourism narrative for the city. - The longevity, impact and sustainability of the current predominantly festivals based model. - How the product in Belfast can become sufficiently distinctive from that on offer in the rest of UK and Ireland. - A review of other challenges that impact on the growth of festivals and events in the city.
3.7	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p><i>Interim year</i></p> <p>The timeline presented to Committee for the implementation of a new ten-year strategy integrating events and festivals with cultural and tourism development is April 2020. This</p>

will ensure the effective alignment of funding through a new comprehensive competitive investment programme where funding will be clearly linked to strategic priorities.

3.8 However, there is therefore a need to agree an approach to 2019/20. If possible, this should maintain existing levels of support for Festivals and Events until April 2020 when the recommendations set out in the FEI report will be integrated into the long-term approach. A table outlining the allocation of the events budget is attached (largely based on standard events).

3.9 There is also an opportunity to use 2019/20 to test the categorisation and evaluation measures set out in the FEI report as well as the proposed levels of funding. Of the four categories identified by FEI: Major, Signature, Growth and Neighbourhood, the additional funding in 2019/20 will focus on two key categories:

- Signature
- Growth

Signature

3.10 The FEI report identified the potential of existing events in the city to develop into key Belfast Signature Events representing a significant economic and social return on investment. This included events currently delivered directly by the Council such as the Maritime Festival as well as longstanding city festivals such as Féile an Phobail. The report also recognised the need for a transition period. It is therefore proposed that in 19/20 in order to sustain adequate levels of funding that the additional budget as agreed at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is allocated as follows:

- 3.11
- Maritime Festival - £240,000. This is an additional £22,000 from the amount invested in 18/19 (This will be funded in its entirety from the annual departmental budget). This will enhance the programme to test Signature status, as set out in FEI report.
 - Féile an Phobail - £239,000. This would be made up £39,000 from Core Multi-annual Funding (in annual budget) and £200,000 from the specified reserve.
 - Belfast International Arts Festival - £64,000. This would be made up of £39,000 from Core Multi-Annual Funding (in annual budget) and £25,000 from the specified reserve. This should be used to develop an international enhancement plan.

3.12	Funding contracts will include evaluation measures set out by FEI and a requirement to carry out market research in line with the emerging themes and narrative of the long-term strategy.
3.13	From April 2020, the required levels of funding to deliver a strategic programme of festivals and events will be considered as a part of a new competitive cultural investment programme aligned to a new cultural strategy.
3.14	<p><i>Growth</i></p> <p>It is proposed that the remaining budget of £95,000 is allocated to support growth festivals and events in the city. Given the number of festivals and events that could be categorised as growth, an interim programme of support in 19/20 will be developed in line with FEI recommendations in order to pilot key recommendations. Funding allocations will then be subject to Committee approval.</p>
3.15	<p>For major events, development work is ongoing to identify a longer-term pipeline and strategic approach. This will be reported on as part of the long term cultural strategy programme of work. In 2019/20 neighbourhood festivals and events will continue to be supported through Council's existing funding and support programmes such as the Community Festivals Fund. However, as part of the new cultural strategy and in line with FEI's recommendations, specific consideration will be given to capacity building and development.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.16	<p>A budget of £225,000 will be allocated as outlined in 3.11 with £200,000 awarded to Féile an Phobail and £25,000 to Belfast International Arts Festival. Specific allocation of the remaining £95,000 from a total of £320,000 approved by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee will be subject to further Committee approval.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.17	Specific good relations and equality clauses will be included in terms and conditions of funding contracts and reported against as part of the evaluation process.
3.18	The long-term cultural strategy and recommended funding schemes will be equality screened.
4.0	Document Attached
	Appendix - Events Funding 2019/20