



Subject:	Progression of the Cultural Programme - Festival and Events Update
Date:	13th February 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"/>
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	At the SP&R meeting in December 2018, the Committee agreed to allocate one-off funding of £320,000 as additional support to events and festivals in financial year 2019/20 pending agreement on the 10-year Cultural Programme which will be presented to Committee later this year. This was on the understanding that the City Growth and Regeneration Committee would decide on the exact allocations. At the January 2019 meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee, Members agreed to defer consideration of a report setting out recommendations for an interim position for Events and Festivals in 2019/20. It was agreed that the report would be taken back to Committee in February following Party briefings. These have now taken place.

1.2	The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members on the implementation of recommendations for the development of Events and Festivals in the context of developing a long-term cultural programme (with some additional information provided) and to agree an interim position for 2019/20.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – consider whether it wishes to allocate £225,000 of this funding as outlined in 3.16. – consider whether £95,000 of this funding is allocated for growth festivals, as outlined in 3.20, and that Council officers will develop and deliver a programme to support growth festivals in 19/20 subject to Committee approving the breakdown of funding allocations.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>At a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in December 2018, it was agreed that further consideration should be given to an interim position for events and festivals. This interim position would be for one year only until a new cultural strategy would be agreed and implemented from April 2020 onwards that would include new funding processes. Members should note that events, festivals, culture and arts are funded in a number of ways as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annual Events Programme – this is funded from the annual events budget and includes Council-organised events and a number of contracted events and funding contributions. A separate report is being presented on the 2019/20 programme. – Core Multi-Annual Funding – a 4-year programme for supporting a wide range of culture and art organisations. The current programme runs from 2017-2020. – Community Festivals Fund – a small-scale competitive programme which runs annually. – Small Grants Programme for heritage and arts. <p>In addition there are some requests which are made on an annual basis such as Friendship Four and basketball. These are brought to Committee separately.</p>

3.2	<p>It was agreed that a report would be taken to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to consider allocating one-off funding to events and festivals in financial year 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 to be allocated from the specified reserve for the development of a long-term cultural programme.</p>
3.3	<p>The background to the proposed approach is a series of key recommendations from the Events and Festivals strategy commissioned by the 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.
3.4	<p>The initial recommendations cover four main areas:</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 – Governance and delivery: Need to improve internal co-ordination; greater partnership with other funders; consider a commissioning model for certain types of events.
3.5	<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.

Gap Analysis

3.6 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 therefore be subject to wider stakeholder engagement, public consultation and an Equality Impact Assessment.

Future funding

3.7 The development of a new competitive funding programme for events and festivals will also need to be developed alongside other core funding programmes for arts and heritage. This work will align to the new Cultural Strategy and will be subject to Committee approval.

3.8 In this context further consideration will be given to:

- 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.

Key Issues

3.9 The timeline presented to the Committee for the implementation of a new ten-year strategy integrating events and festivals with cultural and tourism development is April 2020. This will ensure the effective alignment of funding through a new comprehensive competitive investment programme where funding will be clearly linked to strategic priorities. Whilst existing funding programmes in areas such as arts and heritage and

	community festivals are due to run until March 2020, there is an ongoing gap for events and festivals as this has been allocated by Council on a year to year basis.
3.10	As Members will be aware, in recent years Events and Festivals have been supported through recurring departmental budgets and non-recurrent one-off allocations. Full details on the proposed allocation of departmental budgets to City Events for 2019/20 is included in the <i>Draft City Events Programme 2019/20</i> report to this Committee. The recommendations set out below therefore relate to the allocation of one-off non-recurrent funding as approved by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.
3.11	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 in advance of the introduction of new funding programmes.
3.12	City and Growth Committee of March 2018 agreed to protect funding for Neighbourhood Festivals and that major events would only happen every few years, with the understanding that these would be financed through building up a special reserve.
3.13	Therefore of the potential categories identified by FEI: Major, Signature, Growth and Neighbourhood, the additional funding in 2019/20 will focus on two key categories. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Signature – Growth.
3.14	The rationale for this is that Neighbourhood Festivals will be eligible to apply for Council's Community Festivals Fund whilst Major Events are subject to a long-term development and bidding processes.
3.15	Included at Appendix 1 is the industry categorisation of events supplied by FEI and presented to Committee in March 2018.
	<i>Signature</i>
3.16	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. For future funding assessments, these categorisations will be subject to robust scrutiny. However, on the initial assessment of FEI, potential signature events in the city based on current status include both events 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:

- 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. Festival organisers would be required to work with Council officers to implement recommendations set out in the FEI report.
- 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.

3.17 Please note that the Maritime Festival is set to be receive £240,000 of funding allocated from existing departmental budgets. This is an increase of £22,000 from the amount invested in 18/19. This will enhance the programme to test Signature status as set out in FEI report.

3.18 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.

3.19 From April 2020, the required levels of funding to deliver a strategic programme of festivals and events will be considered where appropriate as a part of a new competitive cultural investment programme **aligned to a new cultural strategy**, and for those commissioned events all organisations will have to meet the criteria set out for any of the proposed categorisations.

Growth

3.20 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. It should be noted that this is additional funding to that provided through the annual budget for some of these events as listed in the annual events report.

3.21 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

	<p>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>
3.22	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>SP&R allocated a budget of £320,000 for an interim programme of additional festivals events for 2019/20. This is from the specified reserve for the long-term Cultural Programme. The Maritime Festival will be funded through the annual budget as in previous years.</p>
3.23	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>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.</p>
3.24	<p>The long-term cultural strategy and recommended funding schemes will be equality screened.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	Industry Categorisation of Events