



Subject:	Tourism, Culture and Arts Delivery Plan 2019-20
Date:	3 April 2019
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 activities set out in the delivery plan for 2019-2020 to support: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– commitments in the existing Cultural Framework for Belfast Action Plan 2016-2020 and the Integrated Tourism Strategy 2015-2020 including approval to enter into relevant legal agreements and Service Level Agreements with named delivery partners.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ongoing work on the development of a new Cultural Strategy 2020-2030 and associated implementation plans.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes the contents of this report • Agrees the work programme (2019/20) including the associated budget requirements, as set out in Appendix 1.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that, in March 2019, the City Growth and Regeneration Committee approved the draft Cultural Strategy 2020-2030 to go out for a 12-week public consultation. To support the ongoing development of this strategy, Committee also agreed with the proposed timeline to bring back a series of draft implementation plans and a financing strategy in September 2019. The Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 1 integrates this work with ongoing programmes already in place to support the delivery of the final year of both the existing Cultural Framework for Belfast 2016-2020 and the Integrated Tourism Strategy 2015-2020.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p><i>New Cultural Strategy 2020-2030</i></p> <p>The purpose of the strategy document that was approved for public consultation subject to Council ratification is to present the overall approach and commitments over a ten-year period. The next phase of work will give detailed consideration to how this will be delivered in line with the agreed timeframe that requires new programmes to be operational from April 2020. Therefore the delivery plan for 2019/20 includes the development of initial three year implementation plans that as well as being cross-cutting will specifically address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Arts and Heritage – Events and Festivals – Tourism product development including neighbourhood tourism – Major strategic initiatives.

3.3	<p>These will be supported by a proposed investment model, communications strategy and evaluation framework. In addition, there is a need to continue with existing commitments to support the final year of implantation of the current Cultural Framework and Tourism Strategy.</p>
3.4	<p><i>Cultural Framework</i></p> <p>The plan has taken into consideration the range of actions to be delivered over the four-year period of the Cultural Framework Action Plan (2016-2020) and has identified a number of priorities to be delivered in the final year 2019/20. As in previous years, partnership working is essential to the development and delivery of actions within the Cultural Framework and Action Plan. Across each of the 4 themes of the existing Cultural Framework, some of the proposed actions for 2019/20 will include:</p>
3.5	<p><i>Distinctly Belfast</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Deliver a City of Music programme to support plans to apply for UNESCO designation as well as animating the city centre and celebrating the city’s music heritage – Deliver a “Bringing Heritage to Life” programme and establishing a Heritage Forum – Deliver a partnership project with National Museums and Ulster University to increase access to existing collections.
3.6	<p><i>Inspiring Communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Deliver an Artist in Residence programme in a number of key locations across the City, funded through the Peace IV programme – Deliver an ongoing civic engagement programme that will also support the development of the strategy and the plans for 2020-2030.
3.7	<p><i>Attracting Audiences</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop and deliver a tailored programme of support on audience development and growing cultural audiences in partnership with the cultural sector and statutory partners.
3.8	<p><i>Strengthening the Sector</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Work in partnership with ACNI to deliver year three of the Resilience Programme, focusing on 14 key cultural organisations in Belfast – Engage with Arts and Business NI to continue to deliver a tailored programme

of support that helps build the sustainability of small to medium sized cultural organisations.

3.9 *Tourism Strategy*

Since the publication of the Strategy, the tourism economy has continued to grow in the City and in Northern Ireland as a whole. Statistics published by NISRA in July 2018 show that, in 2017, there were almost 1.5million overnight trips to Belfast generating around £328million to the local economy. This is around a third of the total expenditure on tourism across the region. The sector also employs more than 18,000 people in the city. The profile of visitors to Belfast differs from that to other parts of NI; there are more business tourists, more cruise tourists and slightly fewer tourists visiting friends and relatives than other parts of NI.

3.10 In terms of Belfast's performance in 2018, the room percentages decreased a little – falling to 76.7% from 81.6% in 2017. The overall numbers of visitors using the hotels were up on the previous years. While this is reflective of the increased hotel stock in the city it also highlights the ongoing need to continue to support tourism growth. This includes the requirement for the Council and partners to enhance efforts to support high quality tourism product development in order to complement private sector investment in the hotels and wider hospitality sector in Belfast.

3.11 Appendix 1 sets out specific actions to support tourism growth in 2019-20 including the areas outlined below.

3.12 *Supporting Product Development, including Local Tourism*

Members will be aware that, in September 2018, a report was presented to Committee outlining the findings and recommendations for a Local Tourism Framework. The proposed approach has also been taken into consideration as part of the draft Cultural Strategy 2020-2030. The next stage of this work will be to develop a 3-4 year neighbourhood tourism implementation plan and funding model to be operational from April 2020. This will be presented to Committee as part of a larger programme of work in September 2019. There is however a need to build on the work that has taken place in recent years and agree an approach for 2019-20. In line with 2018-19 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

	<p>visitor needs and in keeping with the tourism narrative. It is proposed that the focus of activity for 2019-20 will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Use of local conduits where possible to increase engagement and promote the benefits of participation (e.g Fáilte Feirste Thiar, Eastside Tourism) – Testing out of potential new products – support for initial feasibility to help bring forward ideas emerging from the local consultations and engagement activity and working with new capital schemes coming forward from Council – 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.
3.13	<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 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 2019/20 in line with levels of investment in recent years. This allocation will be matched by investment from Tourism NI. In addition to the Conference Support Scheme, the Council will continue to provide access to City Hall for key functions such as conference receptions as this is a critical element of added value and a unique selling point for the City.</p>
3.14	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Activities identified in Appendix 1 will be resourced from the agreed departmental budget allocations for the current financial year. These have already been approved as part of the estimates process. Up to a further £100,000 has been allocated from resources set aside for the stage 2 bid for European Capital of Culture for the ongoing development of the new Cultural Strategy 2020-2030.</p>
3.15	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>Existing strategies have been equality screened. The draft Cultural Strategy 2020-2030 will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Needs Assessment.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
4.1	Appendix 1: Culture and Tourism Delivery Plan 2019-2020

