



Subject:	<i>A City Imagining</i> Investment Programme: Cultural multi-annual grants
Date:	20 March 2020
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid, Strategic Director of Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Eimear Henry, Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism

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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Provide additional information in relation to the Equality Impact Assessment carried out on the Cultural Strategy, <i>A City Imagining</i> and the Equality Screening of the cultural Investment Model including cultural multi-annual grants (CMAG).- Consider the referral from Council to Committee of recommendations 4 and 5 in relation to cultural multi-annual funding presented to City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 26 February 2020 as follows:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ agreed that funding totalling £80,000 be allocated to a capacity building programme, with the PUL community to be proactively targeted; and ○ agreed that the aforementioned capacity building programme be extended to include the LGBT and all other recognised Section 75 groups.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the additional information presented in this report and the recommendations for capacity building for section 75 groups as set out in the cultural strategy implementation plans. – Approve specific recommendation of capacity building for PUL communities including allocation of £80,000 budget from 2020-21 departmental budgets. – Note that Covid-19 will obviously have an impact on the events planned in the next number of months. Some may not go ahead and some may be postponed. We are currently working through all of the implications including the need to support core costs relating to jobs etc. Where it is possible to make cost savings this will be done and factored into the overall cashflow procedures
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>Members will be aware that at a Council Meeting held on 2 March 2020 recommendations 4 and 5 in relation to cultural multi-annual grants presented to City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 26 February 2020 were referred back to Committee for further consideration. At a meeting of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 4 March 2020 it was agreed that this item would be considered at the next meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>The new ten year cultural strategy for Belfast, <i>A City Imagining</i> was approved by Members at a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in August 2019. This strategy is the culmination of extensive public engagement and consultation over a 2 year period and is a consolidation of the foundation, commitments and achievements of several preceding strategies and frameworks. <i>A City Imagining</i> sets out a long-term commitment to facilitating a new integrated phase of culture-led progress and development for Belfast. The strategy brings together the culture, events and tourism functions within Council as well as identifying areas of cross departmental working to</p>

	<p>support the Belfast Agenda. This requires a new cross-cutting approach within Council including the design and delivery of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Detailed implementation plans to include a series of new programmes to support 16 priorities set out in the strategy and a number of flagship strategic projects including bidding for major events. – A new investment model including launch of cultural multi-annual grants.
3.3	<p>The strategy was informed by best practice, independent reviews and benchmarking with other cities. In keeping with the ethos of citizen-led design and engagement, Council also committed to an in-depth consultation process for this new strategy. This involved various engagement strands from the traditional online platform, <i>Citizen Space</i>, to opening a consultation hub in the city centre.</p>
3.4	<p>Other methods included citywide exhibitions and one to one meetings led by officers. The results of the overall process have been extensive reaching over 3000 residents and visitors, in one to one engagement through 80 events taking place in Belfast. A further 134 responses were received online or in writing. Additional awareness raising was achieved through the distribution of the full strategy document, a citizen summary and a short film.</p>
3.5	<p>A draft Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) was made available throughout the consultation phase with a series of targeted engagement and consultation activities to ensure equality was considered as a critical element of the overall strategy.</p>
3.6	<p>The EQIA concluded that the Cultural Strategy is likely to have a positive impact on all Section 75 groups, both directly and indirectly, by contributing to economic growth and social cohesion. It is further anticipated that some areas of development may have a specific positive differential impact on a number of Section 75 groups by actively addressing recognised need.</p>
3.7	<p>However through the consultation a number of issues were raised including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The strategy document did not reference specific Section 75 groups such as members of the LGBTQ+ community, minority ethnic groups or disabled people. – The importance of equality of access and equality of opportunity. – Making information readily available on the accessibility of venues.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider accessibility issues when planning and delivering cultural events/activities, including the cost/pricing and infrastructure issues such as transport and parking. - Increasing staff capacity and training around the use of language and assistance around disability - The need for monitoring to be manageable.
3.8	<p>These issues identified in the consultation and reflected in the EQIA have been addressed in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes were made to the final strategy document - The inclusion of specific, targeted initiatives in implementation plans - Informed design of investment model including CMAG - A commitment to further equality screening of individual programmes especially investment programmes
3.9	<p>Implementation Plans</p> <p>Draft implementation plans were presented to City Growth and Regeneration Committee in August 2019 and October 2019. These implementation plans cover an initial 3 year period and will be further supported by annual operational plans. The operational plan for tourism, culture, arts and events for 2020/21 will be presented to City Growth and Regeneration in April 2020.</p>
3.10	<p>These implementation plans set out phase one of delivery against the overall strategy. Included are a number of targeted initiatives including specific programmes for Section 75 groups. These are outlined below and include indicative budgets over the three year period however these are subject to annual budget setting and approvals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a participative forum open to those resident or working in Belfast (£5,000) - Complete a cultural mapping of the city (£50,000) - Deliver eight 3-year (Y)our Home Projects to include projects led by and working with LGBTQ+ groups, new communities, disabled people, older people, schools and multi-lingual communities (£400,000) - Develop schemes to support higher participation and representation at cultural events by disabled people. This could include specific initiatives such as <i>Gig Buddies</i> (£30,000)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Support employability skills and capacity building programmes for disabled artists, LGBTQ+ representatives and those from minority ethnic groups. (£120,000)
3.11	<p>Year one actions will be presented to City Growth and Regeneration Committee in April 2020 as part of annual operational plans and have been accounted for in existing departmental budgets.</p>
3.12	<p>Equality Screening on Investment Model</p> <p>In line with the recommendations of the equality impact assessment, an equality screening was carried out on the emerging investment model with detailed consideration of the proposed cultural multi-annual grant.</p>
3.13	<p>The opportunity to increase engagement in culture by section 75 dimensions most at risk of missing out is embedded in the parent strategy, <i>A City Imagining</i>, and its themes and priorities have been embedded in the Investment Model including the design of cultural multi-annual grants.</p>
3.14	<p>However the equality screening did identify a number of mitigating actions and / or policy changes that will be actioned as part of annual programmes of work and have been accounted for in departmental budgets. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A number of proactive policy decisions were built in to the strategy and investment model. This includes prioritisation of people and communities currently most likely to miss out; and the requirement for applicants to comply with the DDA and set down how their organisation and activities are inclusive of disabled people. – Section 75 monitoring has been included in applications for MAGs and should be included at application and monitoring stage for all grants. Completion rates will be monitored, and the questionnaire will be reviewed and revised accordingly. – Collate and consider data gathered through section 75 monitoring and use it to inform policy and practice at regular intervals. – Work with other key funders and agencies in the city to streamline the collection of monitoring data. This is likely to reduce the administrative burden on both

funders and recipients, improve the quality and frequency of responses, and provide more robust data.

- Work with other key policymakers in the city to monitor key population indicators and programme performance measures, in particular participation and attendance by disabled people.
- Provide additional support and resources to support sector-wide audience development of under-engaged audiences, in particular disabled people and older people; people and groups where there is evidence of additional barriers, such as LGBTQ+ and carers; and people with multiple identities.
- Support for outdoor events promoters will include the promotion and implementation of the council's Inclusive Events Guide.
- Cultural festivals will be included in the accessibility audit.
- Update the Inclusive Events Guide to consider the needs of carers not just as "personal assistance", but as consumers of culture in their own right.
- Ongoing screening of other Investment model investment strands to be carried out at they are designed and implemented.

Cultural multi-annual grants (CMAG)

3.15 Cultural multi-annual grants (CMAG) opened for applications on 7 October 2019 and closed on 22 November 2019. The grants were advertised via websites, existing networks and on social media. Nine information sessions were held across the city, with 204 attendees in total. In addition, 137 one to one advice sessions took place. In total, officers engaged directly with 406 potential applicants in advance of the deadline.

3.16 The results of the CMAG process are summarised as follows:

- 84 applications were received in total amounting to ££4,446,114 requests and 54 grants were recommended to be awarded a total of £2,363,264.
- The standard of applications was very high with thresholds between >73% and >79%
- A Transition programme will support organisations who were existing multi-annual clients, and who were either unsuccessful or ineligible to apply.
- Recipients of CMAG grant or Transition programme will be allocated an officer
- Applications for two year funding will be due to reopen in Autumn 2021, for 2022-24. Applications for four year funding will be due to reopen in Autumn 2023, for 2024-28.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other funding strands, support mechanisms and projects are currently being developed to support <i>A City Imagining</i> cultural strategy 2020-2030 and the Belfast Agenda.
3.17	<p>On reviewing the outcomes of CMAG, it was concluded that there has been under-representation of groups from or representing the PUL community and therefore capacity building has been identified as the recommended mitigating action.</p>
3.18	<p><i>A City Imagining</i> and the Investment Model does not specify particular priority section 75 dimensions. Rather, applicants for funding are required to evidence how and why the people or groups they intend to work with are at risk of missing out. This allows cultural organisations to demonstrate need based on their own considerable experience and expertise working with different groups, allowing for groups with multiple complex identities that can otherwise be overlooked. This is supported by research from Thrive, which recommends a more nuanced “focus on particular demographics in particular areas will be the best way to achieve overall growth in the city’s rates of engagement”; and supported by feedback from the <i>A City Imagining</i> engagement programme which recognised that individuals cannot be categorised into only one section 75 category.</p>
3.19	<p><i>A City Imagining</i> places particular importance on culture as a driver of social capital, and by building the “capacity of our citizens to allow people to express their own cultural identities” is likely to continue to increased understanding and tolerance of the culture and identities of others. Therefore there is considered a good relations implication that indicates that there may be a differential impact on cultural capacity in the long-term because this new process has pointed to a complex set of circumstances (cultural organisations primarily preserving, promoting or developing the protestant culture have lower organisational capacity) and multiple identities.</p>
3.20	<p>The proposed approach is to allocate a budget of £80,000 in 2020/21 to develop a programme based on best practice examples and a review of existing or previously delivered programmes. The programme would initially be delivered as a pilot with evaluation built in and recommendations for any future support presented to Committee. The three main strands would focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health audit to better understanding the differences between limited resources, skills and infrastructure (to be supported by overall cultural mapping of the city).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building programme to look at developing high quality festival programmes, partnership working, strategic planning and governance. - Pilot to work with two organisations to deliver programmes in 2020 including leadership programme and support for skills development. <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>3.21 There are no new financial implications to this report. Proposed programmes including £80,000 for capacity building for PUL communities has been accounted for in departmental budgets for 2020/21 allocated to the implementation of the cultural strategy.</p> <p>Covid-19 will obviously have an impact on the events planned in the next number of months. Some may not go ahead and some may be postponed. We are currently working through all of the implications including the need to support core costs relating to jobs etc. Where it is possible to make cost savings this will be done and factored into the overall cashflow procedures</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>3.22 An Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Needs Assessment was completed for the Cultural Strategy and is included at Appendix 1. An Equality Screening was completed on the emerging investment model with detailed consideration of cultural multi-annual grants.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1: <i>A City Imagining</i> Equality Impact Assessment</p> <p>Appendix 2: <i>A City Imagining</i> Investment Model Equality Screening</p>