

Arts Cuts

“Belfast City Council:

- i. is alarmed at the proposed 5% cut in funding to arts organisations funded by the Department for Communities through the Arts Council NI;
- ii. commends Equity NI, the arts community, its supporters, and the community at large for resisting these proposed cuts, including over 12,500 individuals signing Equity’s petition which asked for more investment in the arts, not less;
- iii. notes that Arts Council NI funding has decreased, in real terms, by 30% over the last decade, despite evidence that investment in the arts has a real terms economic benefit for the City and the North as a whole;
- iv. further notes that the Department for Communities has indicated that it may implement further cuts in arts funding in the financial year 2024/25;
- v. recognises that Stormont Permanent Secretaries are being forced to take, without mandate, difficult decisions that should be taken by locally elected Ministers and a devolved Executive and Assembly;
- vi. further recognises that, too often, the Council is forced to step in and financially support arts and cultural organisations which have lost funding from Stormont Departments, putting pressure on our ability to deliver existing arts and cultural schemes;
- vii. calls for a reversal in cuts to the arts and agrees to join as a signatory to Equity NI’s latest open letter to the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Communities; and
- viii. further calls for the restoration of a reformed Executive and Assembly to take decisions which can future-proof the arts sector and protect funding in the future.”

Proposer: Councillor de Faoite

Seconder: Councillor Lyons