

Derry City and Strabane District Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Business and Culture Committee (Open) held in the Strabane on Tuesday 12 June 2018 at 4.00 pm

Present: - Councillor Logue (Chair); Aldermen R Hamilton, Hussey and Warke; Councillors McKnight, Cooper, Fleming, McMahon, J McKeever, O'Reilly and Reilly.

In Attendance:- Mr S Gillespie (Director of Business and Culture), Ms A Mc Carter (Head of Culture) and Mrs J Galloway- Doherty (Administration Assistant); Ms N Meehan (Committee Services Assistant)

BC1/18 Notice and Summons of Meeting

The Director of Business and Culture read the Notice and Summons for the meeting.

BC1/18 Member Attendance and Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M McHugh.

BC1/18 Declarations of Members' Interests

Alderman Ramsey, Councillors Cooper and Cusack declared an interest in agenda item 12 – Visit Derry SLA
Councillor Fleming declared an interest in agenda item 17 – ESF Update
Councillor Reilly declared an interest in agenda item 16 – Peace IV Update.

BC1/18 Deputations: Arts Sector re. Funding Issues

The Committee received Mr Moore, The Nerve Centre, Mr Mason, Millenium Forum and Mr McCaughan, The Playhouse to discuss funding for the Arts and Culture Sector.

Mr Moore and Mr Mason then gave a joint power-point presentation a copy of which had previously been circulated. The presentation concentrated on the following:

DSDC Cultural Venue Funded Organisations

- The Playhouse
- Verbal Arts Centre
- Void Gallery
- Culturlann Ui Chanain
- Waterside Theatre
- Nerve Centre
- CCA
- Echo Echo Dance
- Greater Shantallow Community Arts
- In Your Space Circus
- Millenium Forum

Other – ACNI Funded

- Walled City Music Trust
- Voluntary Arts Network
- Sole Purpose
- Bluebell Arts

Success of Venues and Festivals

- Collective Turnover of £10.6 million
- 16% Arts Council Funding (£1.6 million)
- 7% DSDC Funding (£700k)
- 77% from other sources
- Employing 450 people locally
- £3.8m in Salary Costs
- Central role in economy, education, health, tourism and Arts and Culture
- 1 million Annual Audience and participants
- Combined annual turnover - £10.6 million
- Multiplier effect - £230 million!

DSDC Funding

- DSDC funding is essential to Venues and Festivals
- DSDC funding is approximately £700k
- £443k to Millenium Forum and £247k to Venues/Festival
- DSDC Funding – 7% of income

Venues and Festivals are central to:

- Delivery of the Community Plan and specifically the Cultural Strategy
- Creative Industries growth
- Delivery agents of the new Tourism Strategy
- Arts and Culture is becoming the main economic regenerator for the City
- Derry City and Strabane District's 'current offering is strongest in relation to heritage and culture'
- Derry City and Strabane District, Tourism 2018-2025: A New Level of Ambition
- Groups Seek 3-Year Funding
- 3-Year funding provides security, enabling longer term planning and capacity building
- Seek increase in funding to arts and culture sector
- Remove the 5% cap on organisational costs
- Provide additional resources for delivery of the Cultural Strategy
- Advocacy but also Accountability

Arts Council NI Funding – 2018/19

- Total ACNI Pot £13.1 m
- Belfast – 60 organisations funded
- Belfast – 69% of total ACNI Funding (£9m)
- Belfast – 12 organisations received a 4% increase (£383k increase)
- Belfast - £15 per head of population

Arts Council NI Funding – 2018/19

- DSDC – 13 organisations
- DSDC – 10% of total ACNI Funding (£1.5m)
- DSDC – 6 organisations received a 7% cut (£105k)
- DSDC - £9 per head of population

Arts Council NI Funding – 2018/19

- DSDC -£9 per head of population versus Belfast £15 per head of population
- DSDC losing £900k per annum
- How can we achieve our ambitions with a reduction in ACNI financial support?
- DSDC must address the imbalance!

Members thanked Mr Moore and Mr Mason for their presentation and commended them on its content.

The Chairperson referred to the need to address the current imbalance and anticipated that the required support would be forthcoming. She referred to the positive impact of arts and culture in terms of health and wellbeing and the economy.

Following some discussion Councillor Cooper

Proposed that representatives from the Arts Council Northern Ireland (ACNI) be invited to address Committee and outline to the Committee the strategy going forward regarding the future funding of the arts and culture sector.

Members then raised the following points:

- Referred to the impact of cuts on arts and culture.
- Acknowledged the impact of 2013 City of Culture and how this had affected peoples' perceptions regarding arts and culture.
- Referred to the success of local arts and culture venues and festivals particularly in terms of accessing funding.
- Acknowledged the impact of recent ACNI cuts and the need for this to be addressed as a matter of urgency.
- Pointed out that Council had agreed to increase their subsidy to address the period from 2016/17 onwards when cuts were becoming obvious.
- Expressed concerns at the disparity which existed between Derry and Belfast in terms of ACNI funding and the need for this to be addressed as a matter of urgency.
- Referred to the need to address the requirements of both the urban and rural area in terms of arts and culture through the Cultural Strategy.
- Referred to the need for continued lobbying of ACNI and the Department to address the disparities which exist in terms of arts and culture funding.
- Queried why some organisations had received increased funding from ACNI whilst others had been cut.
- Expressed concern that the presentation made specific reference to the City despite the fact that this was Derry City and Strabane District Council.
- Queried why the presentation had not addressed rural outreach programmes.

- Enquired as to work being carried out throughout the Council district in terms of arts and culture which was reflected throughout the outreach programme to wider rural communities.
- Acknowledged the importance of arts and culture for the City and region.
- Sought Officers' views on a suggested three year funding agreement with Council which had been referred to in the presentation.
- Sought clarification on the '77% funding from other sources' referred to in the presentation.
- Sought clarification in terms of ACNI funding for other Council areas.
- Sought comparisons on funding levels in respect of arts and culture throughout Northern Ireland and other parts of Ireland e.g. Galway.

Mr Moore and Mr Mason responded as follows:

- Whilst acknowledging the unfortunate cuts in the budget from ACNI recognised their considerable investment during the past twenty five years which had allowed organisations to grow and develop.
- Referred to the impact of funding cuts on achieving a new level of ambition which was one of the main aspects of the Cultural Strategy.
- Referred to the desire to continue entertaining and increasing audience numbers and to progress in terms of type and number of events coming to the City.
- Acknowledged that this was the Derry City and Strabane District Council area and recognised the lack of specific reference to the district within the presentation.
- Hoped to progress in terms of outreach programmes for the rural area in line with the Cultural Strategy. However, this was difficult given such limited resources.
- Referred to the need for the disparities which existed between Derry and Belfast in terms of ACNI fund to be addressed in moving forward.
- Referred to a review currently being carried out by the Department for Communities on arm's length bodies which he suggested would benefit from Council's input in terms of managing funding for arts and culture.
- Referred to the fact that ACNI required Council's endorsement to perform its duties.

- Referred to the need to acquire the resources necessary to recognise the ambition and potential achievements set out in the Cultural Strategy.
- Advised that similar disparities were not apparent in other major cities in the UK.
- Suggested that the increase in the disparity in funding was due to the additional funding of £66 million from ACNI to the Ulster Orchestra and MAC.

In response to the aspiration that Council funding programmes would be for three years, the Head of Culture stated that it was the intention of Council to work towards a three year funding programme. She said that over the past number of years Council had replaced Service Level Agreements with competitive funding processes. She referred to the need to ensure there were not any issues within the process initially which was why the funding is on an annual basis initially. However, it was planned to move towards a three year letter of offer in respect of cultural events venues funding and other programmes. There was an awareness of the need to apply caution in order for this to be implemented successfully.

Mr Moore stated that cuts in funding would result in the removal of this major public service for all classes. This was a case of lost opportunity and suggested that ACNI should be challenged over their decision to fund organisations that were evidently not sustainable.

Subsequently the Committee

- Recommended**
- (a) that representatives from the Arts Council Northern Ireland (ACNI) be invited to address Committee and outline their strategy for funding the arts and culture sector going forward; and**
 - (b) that Council write to the Permanent Secretary for the Department for Communities requesting that additional funding be made available to the Arts Council Northern Ireland and that departmental**

officials also be invited to address this Committee.

BC1/18 Chairperson's Business

There was no Chairperson's business.

BC1/18 Confirmation of the Open Minutes of the Business and Culture Committee held on Tuesday 15 May 2018

The Open Minutes of the Business and Culture Committee Meeting held on 15 May 2018 (BC96/18-BC123/18) were submitted.

Alderman Ramsey referred to paragraph 3 of Minute BC103/18 of the previous Minutes and sought clarification on the actual discussion which had taken place. He referred to a number of inaccuracies in the Minutes but was unable to specify the precise nature thereof.

The Chairperson advised Members that amendments could not be made at this stage as these Minutes had been ratified at the May Council Meeting.

Subsequently the Open Minutes of the Business and Culture Committee Meeting held on 15 May 2018 (BC96/18-BC123/18) were confirmed.

Matters Arising

BC1/18 Newtownstewart- Anti Social Behaviour (Ref BC104/18)

In response to a query from Councillor McGuire, the Director of Business and Culture undertook to ascertain the current position in relation to the query and advise the Member accordingly.

In response to a query from Alderman Hussey, the Director of Business and Culture said he was unaware if a meeting had taken place with community representatives in Newtownstewart. However he undertook to investigate the matter and advise the Member accordingly.

BC1/18 Full Fibre Networks Application (BC110/18)

In response to a query from Councillor McGuire, the Director of Business and Culture advised that the Head of Business would present a report to the next Meeting of Committee providing an update on

Rural Broadband following which this matter would be retained on the agenda for consideration at future Meetings of Committee.

BC1/18 Alley Strategy and Options Appraisal

The Head of Culture presented the above report, a copy of which had been previously circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to (i) present to Members' for approval the five year Strategy for the Alley Arts and Conference Centre; and (ii) to present to Members for consideration an options appraisal relation to the Alley Arts and Conference Centre.

Councillor McMahon said he felt the Alley Arts and Conference Centre had many strengths and would reach its greatest potential under Council leadership. He stated that it was a major community facility and a tangible asset for the entire area. He stated that it would prove too much of a risk and create uncertainty if it were removed from Council's ownership. He welcomed the proposed development which he felt would transform the area into a cultural hub.

Alderman Hussey welcomed the recommendation contained in the report. He referred to the special nature of the Alley Centre and the ethos behind this community based project to bring together the whole area and create a cultural hub. He stated that this was a key element for the development of Strabane town.

The Committee

Recommended

(a) that approval be granted to adopt the five year Strategy for the Alley Arts and Conference Centre; and

(b) to accept the recommendation within the options appraisal to retain the Alley Arts and Conference Centre as a direct service within Council.

BC1/18 Halloween 2018

The Head of Culture presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated to Members. She advised that the purpose of the report was to update Members on planning and programme

development for the Halloween Festival 2018 and to seek approval to move forward with procurement processes required.

The Chairperson thanked Officers for the report and welcomed the fact that Council had been acknowledged for this international event.

Councillor Cooper referred to the importance of the Halloween festival to the local economy and citizens and said it was wonderful that Tourism NI had acknowledged the importance of this event for the region. He stated that the higher subvention offered was crucial and would allow Council to extend and expand the festival beyond the City centre and into local communities. He looked forward to the programme being extended and suggested that Council insist that the income from Tourism NI becomes an annual contribution.

Councillor Reilly acknowledged the success of the Halloween festival and welcomed the Tourism NI's recognition of the benefits of this festival to the wider Northern Ireland market. He said it was encouraging that both TG4 and BBC2 wanted to profile the event which would extend its coverage. He welcomed the fact that the festival programme would be extended and expanded throughout the wider district which would have a positive impact across the City and district.

Alderman Hussey welcomed the geographical breadth of the Halloween programme and anticipated that it would continue to grow. He appreciated the fact that Strabane town would be included in the overall Halloween celebrations.

The Committee

Recommended that Members approve programming, financial and procurement arrangements as set out above and note the contents of the report.

BC1/18 Jazz Festival Evaluation 2018

The Head of Culture presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to update Members on the outcome of the 17th City of Derry Jazz and Big Band Festival and also to seek approval from Members to

progress the programming and promotion of the 18th City of Derry Jazz and Big Band Festival in 2019.

The Chairperson thanked Officers for the report and sought clarification in regards to Council's subvention in respect of Acts participating in the Festival.

The Head of Culture referred to the current tier two fund in which the majority of participants were involved. She stated that initially this was established at 50:50. She stated that interested venues could register for funding and Council would work with them in terms of the size, scale and type of act they hoped to attract. She stated that Officers would match acts with the most appropriate venues. The venue will subsequently pay 80% of the cost involved in securing the act with Council paying the remaining 20%. Council would carry out the marketing and publish the programme in respect of the event. She stated that one Officer effectively worked full time on matching venues and acts. The percentage fee was based on the cost of the individual act. She said it was possible to arrange for Officers to meet with the venue owner, if required.

In response to a query from the Chairperson, the Head of Culture advised the Council were in contact with the majority of participating venues. She stated that there was a mailing list of participants and advertisements were placed on social media and in Council venues. She referred to an information event which was held for those interested in participating. However, for those who were unable to attend the information session it would be possible to have discussions with Council Officers at any time.

In response to a query from Alderman Hussey, the Head of Culture explained that proposals submitted from any venue throughout the Council district would be considered. However the original concept of the Jazz Festival was to have a City based festival where participants could walk between venues keeping people together as they moved around the various venues. She advised that an engagement activity in the run up to the event was also held in the Alley Theatre. She encouraged any venues who had not previously participated but were interested to come forward.

Councillor McKnight thanked the Head of Culture for the update. She said it was encouraging to see the growing success of the festival and welcomed the fact that Council were adopting a more co-ordinated and promotional role in terms of the event. She also encouraged any

interested venues to become involved and anticipated that the festival would continue to grow from strength to strength.

Councillor Reilly queried the notable increase in bed numbers on the Thursday evening of the event between 2017 and 2018 and referred to the need to encourage overnight stays throughout the entire festival.

The Head of Culture explained that increasingly over the past few years Council had promoted more package deals which might account for the increase in the number of bed nights between 2017 and 2018.

The Committee

Recommended

that Members noted the content of the report and approve the financial contribution and processes required to begin planning and promotion of the festival and to fully support the City of Derry Jazz and Big Band Festival development.

BC1/18 Confirmation of External and Internal Bodies to Committees 2018/19

The Director of Business and Culture presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to confirm membership of Elected Members on External and Internal Bodies for the year ending June 2019 or for the period specified.

Members accepted the recommendations of the report with the following changes:

Councillor Reilly advised that his Party would make their nomination to the Northern Ireland Museums Council at the June Council Meeting.

Board of Directors – Visit Derry

Councillor Cusack to replace Councillor Boyle

CoDA	Councillor Reilly to replace Councillor Boyle
NW Peace and Reconciliation Partnership – Peace IV	Councillor Gardiner to replace Councillor Boyle
	Councillor D Kelly to replace Councillor Councillor Carlin
Strabane Town Forum	Councillor Reilly to replace Councillor McKeever
Board of the Walled City Partnership	Councillor Reilly to replace Councillor Boyle
Board of City Centre Initiative Councillor Boyle	Councillor Tierney to replace
Festivals and Events Steering Group	Councillor McKeever to replace Councillor Boyle

In response to a query from Alderman Hussey, Councillor Reilly confirmed that it was his Party's intention, under D'Hondt to maintain their position on the Mournderg Action Plan Committee.

Subsequently the Committee

Recommended **(a) that Membership on the External Bodies for the year ending June 2019 be confirmed incorporating the changes to Membership noted; and**
(b) that the nomination for Museum's Council was referred to full Council.

BC1/18 Visit Derry SLA

The Head of Culture presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to update Members on the annual Service Level Agreement arrangement to be adopted with Visit Derry.

In response to a query from Alderman Hussey, the Head of Culture explained that Tourism Ireland tended to carry out all of the international promotion of the island. She stated that whilst Tourism NI carried out campaigns on the island they were collaborative in nature rather than on a shared cost basis. Council worked closely with Visit Derry to also take advantage of these opportunities.

In response to a further query from Alderman Hussey, the Head of Culture explained that it was hoped that the increased investment referred to in referred 3.4 of the report would be achieved through the 2019/2020 rates estimates process.

Councillor Cooper suggested that Council agree, in principle, to additional support being granted to Visit Derry to increase current visitor numbers in order to achieve greater value for money.

Alderman Warke expressed concern at incorrect information being given to tourists by Tour Guides in the City and queried if, and how, their performance could be regulated.

As a Tour Guide trainer, Councillor Cooper stated that different Tour Guides would have their own individual approach. He stated that trained Tour Guides was equipped with all of the available information and it was a matter for each Guide to decide how this was portrayed.

Alderman Ramsey referred to the current increase in the number of tourists visiting the City and the simultaneous rise in Tourist Guides and the need to develop this market in the future. He suggested that Tour Guide trainers instruct trainee Guides on how to portray information correctly.

The Chairperson acknowledged the increase in the number of Tour Guides throughout the City who appeared interesting and engaging to their tourist group. She suggested that this could be monitored by assessing quotes in relation to individual Guides.

The Head of culture stated that Visit Derry were very supportive and where possible they would be willing to address any issues which arose in relation to Tour Guides. She stated that one of the recommendations of the Tourism Strategy was that a specific piece of work was carried out to develop accredited Tour Guides specifically for the City Walls which were a singular major aspect of the City and District.

Councillor Cusack referred to the importance of portraying an accurate account of the City and its past as to present otherwise would not reflect well on the City and District.

The Committee

Recommended **that Members adopt the proposed SLA arrangement between Council and Visit Derry.**

BC1/18 **Millennium Forum**

The Head of Culture presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to formally adopt the revised Service Level Agreement arrangement with the Millenium Forum.

The committee

Recommended **that Members adopt the proposed SLA arrangement between Council and the Millenium Forum.**

BC1/18 **Update on Natural Connections: Peace Tourism Project**

The Head of Culture presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. She advised that the purpose of the report was to formally adopt the revised Service Level Agreement arrangement with the Millenium Forum.

The committee

Recommended **that Members adopt the proposed SLA arrangement between Council and the Millenium Forum.**

BC1/18 **Business Boost**

The Director of Business and Culture presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to provide Members with a progress update on Business Boost.

Members noted the content of the report.

BC1/18 Peace IV

The Director of Business and Culture presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to update Members on the implementation of Council's Peace IV Programme.

Members noted the content of the report.

BC1/18 ESF Update

The Director of Business and Culture presented the above report, a copy of which had previously been circulated. He advised that the purpose of the report was to inform Members of a change to the recent allocation of match funding to ESF projects.

Members noted the content of the report.

The meeting ended at 5.45 pm

The Meeting went into Confidential Business