

Title of Report: European Capital of Culture 2023	Officer Presenting: Author:
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1 Purpose of Report/Recommendations

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the development of a bid for the UK designated city for European Capital of Culture in 2023 (ECoC2023), and to seek consideration and endorsement on a number of key issues to enable the effective Phase I submission by 27 October 2017.
- 1.2 This paper, its contents and recommendations are to be considered in conjunction with a parallel report and presentation on the emerging bid themes and cultural programme at the meeting on September 28th 2017 in restricted business due to the competitive and sensitive nature of these elements of the bid process at this stage.

2 Background

- 2.1 Members will be aware that Belfast City Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council have been progressing a bid for the much coveted award of European Capital of Culture 2023. This is a once in a generation transformational opportunity for both cities and the wider region to promote and showcase the cultural and creative aspects of our place as well as delivering many wider social and economic benefits to all our citizens.

All bids must demonstrate they meet six criteria:

- Contribution to the long term strategies
- European dimension
- Cultural and artistic control
- Capacity to deliver
- Outreach

- Management (inc finance)

It must be stressed that the criteria will be strictly applied in phase 1 of the bidding process. The European dimension is very much a prominent criteria. So the bid needs to look outward to Europe and we must demonstrate how the theme and the programme will assist other European cities and regions address similar issues. 70% of the programming must have a European dimension, competition is very strong with the four other cities in the UK. Therefore our bid must demonstrate that we meet the rules, the criteria, the vision and that we have the capacity to deliver.

2.2 Previous experience shows that participating and/or securing the European Capital of Culture title can act as a catalyst in supporting the social, economic and physical regeneration of successful cities and their wider region. We believe that a successful bid would help deliver the positive outcomes set out in our respective Strategic Growth Plans by contributing to:

- A strong competitive economy;
- A cultural destination of choice;
- A better skilled and educated workforce;
- Connecting people and opportunities through infrastructure
- A shared, equal and safe community;
- Long, healthy and fulfilling lives; and
- Our young people having the best start in life

There are also real and significant social and cultural benefits for people living not just in both cities but across Northern Ireland. A successful bid would help connect people to opportunities; create positive changes in attitudes and perceptions; enhance civic engagement and participation; improve social inclusion and promote the richness and diversity of our cultures.

2.3 Our aim is to develop a programme which will help us realise long lasting economic and social benefits for our citizens especially at a time when we prepare to leave the European Union. In particular, we want to achieve significant social impact in terms of belonging and identity and we recognise that this needs to happen across the two cities and the surrounding

areas if it is going to be significant and transformational with a lasting legacy. The only way to do this at scale is by using the two main cities to drive this change through a cultural transformation. We acknowledge that neither city can achieve this on its own. Our respective cities are the population, economic and cultural centres for all of Northern Ireland but also the places where segregation, deep generational divisions and post conflict tensions are still most evident and hence our cultural programme, through ECOC2023, have the greatest potential for driving transformation across the region generally and within our cities, in particular. European Capital of Culture 2023 will provide us with an opportunity to promote both cities and our surrounding areas as vibrant places, positioned on the edge of the European Union but which display a rich and diverse European cultural heritage. As a post conflict society, we are emerging away from our difficult past towards a shared place with an outward facing vision and hopeful ambitions for our future.

2.4 Timeline & process for Bid submission

Members will be aware that ECOC2023 bid is a two staged process with the initial key milestone being the Phase 1 Bid Book submission to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sports (DCMS) by 27 October 2017. This first phase submission will take account of discussions and input from elected Members and reflects the extensive engagement processes undertaken to date with citizens and stakeholder groups. The submission of Phase 1 will be led by the Civic Dignitaries of both Cities (i.e. Lord Mayor of Belfast City Council and Mayor of Derry and Strabane District Council). It is proposed that a civic event will be held across both cities at a similar time to recognise the significance of the submission being made and showcase the civic energy and support behind the bid.

Following bid submission, a formal presentation by each candidate will take place in late November 2017 and will be scrutinised by a panel of 12 National and European experts.

A decision of which bids are successful to move to Phase 2 is likely to be confirmed in December 2017, with successful cities given a further 7 or 8 months to further develop and refine the bid proposition and emerging cultural programme with a final submission likely to be in June 2018 (date to be confirmed by DCMS).

Active engagement and involvement will continue with Members, citizens and other stakeholder groups, including those who may be hard to reach and/or feel marginalised, to help further refine and shape the Phase 2 bid proposition and emerging programme of activities. Important that we collectively enable and support greater levels of participation, engender a sense of ownership and ensure maximum benefit.

2.5 Engagement

Two focused and interactive workshop sessions have been held with elected Members (i.e. 19 June 2017 and 12 September 2017) which provided a forum to help inform and shape the emerging concept, themes and initial proposals around the cultural programme as well as the approach to communications and engagement.

To date the bid has engaged with over 10,000 people across both cities. This has been achieved through organized sessions at events throughout the summer alongside a programme of tailored workshops. Extensive engagement has also taken place through Council's existing schemes. An online platform has also been established.

The engagement during stage one has largely focussed on four strands:

- (i) One to one engagement with local citizens
- (ii) Facilitated workshops with interest groups
- (iii) Sessions with representative and voluntary organisations
- (iv) Deep dive engagement activity with targeted groups including Section 75 groups.

The responses and output from this engagement has directly shaped the overall theme and brand emerging for the bid. This theme needs to be authentic to the cities as well as having strong relevance for Europe. The bid is on target to have engaged with 10,000 citizens by the submission date of 27 October 2017.

Should the bid be shortlisted to stage 2 this engagement will continue with opportunities for direct participation through a series of pathfinder projects which will help further develop and refine our concept, themes and emerging cultural programme of activities.

A Project Steering Group comprising of central government departments, statutory agencies and key city stakeholders has been established who are supportive and helping progress the submission of a bid.

We are also engaging with the business sector across both cities who recognise the significance and potential benefits of a European Capital of Culture designation. Two further business engagement events is to take place on

- Belfast - Friday 29 September @ 8.15-9.45am in Duncairn Centre for Arts & Culture
- Derry~Londonderry – Tues 3rd Oct @ 8.15am-9.45am in Playhouse Theatre and Arts Centre

Further awareness of the bid has also been achieved through marketing and communications activities including establishment of an online platform (<http://weare2023.eu/>) and interactive social and online media activity. This activity will continue to increase and intensify over the coming months to help build momentum in the run up to the submission deadline.

2.6 Emerging Concept and Themes

Our engagement so far has taken place with over 10,000 citizens across both our cities and started out by focusing on 2 simple questions – what makes you happy and what keeps you awake at night. A trend began to emerge, as for the majority of people, the source of happiness and anxiety had the same roots in family and a sense of 'home'. In order to develop and test this emerging theme, we decided to ask a third question: what does home mean to you? We discovered that home means many different things – it involves deep connections to other people, feeling respected and respecting others, it's a source of comfort

and security and for many it's an emotional connection. The energy from our engagement placed people and a sense of belonging firmly at the centre of what it means to be @home in Northern Ireland. We can say with assurance that the theme for our bid has been authentically sourced from what the citizens of both our cities told us.

We will continue to test, refine and develop this theme further with our citizens and through cultural location based projects discover new declarations of what being @home means within a local, regional, European and global context, particularly in a post conflict setting on the periphery of Europe and our programme will provide us with the space and places to explore this concept of @Home further.

2.7 Cultural Programme

As well as the civic engagement outlined above the bid team has also delivered a series of events targeting the wider cultural and creative sector to help garner support and facilitate input into the emerging cultural programme. This has included:

- Information sessions
- 6 thematic workshops
- 4 Big Ideas sessions

These sessions have engaged with over 300 people working across the arts, heritage, sport, science and the creative industries.

A creative reference group has been established to include 4 local representatives from both cities. These members were selected following a nomination and application process. This group also includes three international programmers who have previous experience of either developing a bid or delivering a successful European Capital of Culture.

At stage one a number of indicative projects will be presented as part of the bid. In order to select these projects three strands of programme development are in place. This includes:

- (i) Open Call: opportunity for anyone to submit projects ideas

- (ii) Commission: the identification of a number of flagship project ideas based on the themes emerging from the engagement process. A formal commissioning process would take place at subsequent stages.
- (iii) Curate: the group will identify specific gaps in the programme and make connections with smaller projects from the open call.

Each strand of the cultural programme will have a physical, psychological and social dimension which relates to common European themes. All strands include disruptive and transformative elements which re-vision what it means to be 'at home' in 2023.

The open call closed on 6 September 2017 with over 125 project proposals received. All ideas will be retained for stage 2, however, an initial selection will be presented at stage one with further development and refinement of cultural programme proposals during stage 2.

The Creative Reference Group has been extremely impressed by the standard, creativity and relevance of the submissions received to date in terms of synergies with the emerging concept & themes and connection to citizens, artists, cultural organisations and European dimension.

It is anticipated that the cultural programme will comprise of 5 flagship projects and a programme of 30 smaller scale proposals. Each strand of the cultural programme will have a physical, psychological and social dimension which relates to common European themes. All strands include disruptive and transformative elements which re-vision what it means to be 'at home' in 2023.

Due to the competitive nature of the competition, a detailed update and presentation on the early stage proposals emerging from this process will be presented and discussed with Members at the parallel meeting on 28 September.

2.8 Capacity To Deliver

As part of the bidding process we have assessed our capacity to deliver a European Capital of Culture programme and also examined our accommodation capacity and our transport links. We will build on our existing cultural infrastructure and develop the capacity of our cultural partners to deliver our year long cultural programme. With plans to grow our accommodation sector we will have sufficient accommodation to meet the additional demand that this year will create.

2.9 Outreach

Formal preparation for our bid began through the intensive process of community planning which was rolled out across Northern Ireland in 2015. Through this process, citizens sent a strong message culture, arts and heritage were at the heart of citizens' lives and the cornerstone of thriving cities.

Currently more than 10,000 citizens have told us what home means to them and we have exceeded our original target of 10,000 engagements by the submission of the Stage 1 bid book. Engagement has been through a variety of means but mainly in places where there are people – train and bus stations, community centres, summer schemes, at festivals and key events, parks and in shopping centres. In recent weeks we have been concentrating on engagement with young people and individuals from 'harder to reach groups'.

2.10 Cultural Strategy

The requirement to have a cultural strategy in place within both cities is a key consideration within the bid book. Both cities are progressing their respective cultural strategies as well as looking at the potential of a joint cultural strategy which will ensure that the cultural activities are sustained beyond the European Capital of Culture year and demonstrates that ECOC is an action within a longer term strategy for each city. A key aspect of this will be the monitoring and evaluation of the year long programme. Work is ongoing with a number of partners to put in place a robust framework that will ensure that social, economic and cultural impacts can be monitored and evaluated in the lead up to, during and after 2023.

2.11 European Dimension

Given that this is a bid for European Capital of Culture over 70% of the cultural programme must have a "European Dimension". Projects and programmes within the ECOC2023 programme must promote the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural and greater mutual understanding between European citizens; feature European artists, cooperation with operators or cities, heritage and history, as well as European integration and current European themes; and include a strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public.

3 Key Issues

3.1 Candidate City and Partnership Principles

While bids which work with neighbouring cities or regions are now common practice and indeed welcome, the title can be awarded to one city only. Under the rules, which are non-negotiable, one city must take the lead and if successful the lead city will hold the title of European Capital of Culture. The proposed programme and its benefits may however be dispersed across the much wider area.

In the partnership between Belfast and Derry/Londonderry it is the considered opinion of the European external advisors that the strongest proposition is one where Belfast assumes the lead city role primarily due to the relative scale of its cultural and tourism infrastructure, facilities and national and international connectivity.

In this context, Belfast would go forward in the bid and thereafter as lead/candidate city “in partnership with Derry and the surrounding area”. On this basis it is viewed that the bid will be highly competitive with the other candidate cities and Belfast and Derry will work together to maximize the opportunity to bring home the prize.

In such a relationship, the following partnership principles are however proposed to reflect the joint working between both cities and their cultural partners:-

- Development of a joint cultural programme reflective of the two cities and surrounding areas;
- This joint cultural programme to include key flagship projects broadly balanced across the two cities in terms of scale and audience, European and international appeal and significance, cost, benefits and legacy potential;
- Other key projects across the cultural programme to be curated, developed and delivered in either city or across the two cities through an agreed and integrated approach promoting collaborations between artists, cultural organisations and venues across the cities, surrounding areas and Europe;
- Representation of both cities in all aspects of marketing, promotion and communications including development and use of joint branding as agreed by both councils;
- Allocation of financial resources from both councils for the core projects to be broadly equal but can be added to by either city when developing the cultural programmes (ref section 4). This will sit alongside all other sources of funding, sponsorship, prizes etc. secured, which will be allocated to an overall revenue budget to support the development and delivery of the cultural programme in accordance with the above principles;

- All management and governance arrangements in relation to the bid and delivery of the project if successful to be jointly agreed and developed through a process of co-design and co-location.
- All of the above partnership principles to be further developed under a joint memorandum of understanding between both councils to be agreed in due course.

3.2 Branding

Members will be aware that a specific approach and style of branding based around the concept "WeAre2023 - European Capital of Culture Candidate" " has been used to date to raise awareness, profile and support engagement related activity in relation to the Phase 1 bid development process. McCadden Design has been exploring more specific brand options, taking account of the emerging concept and themes and which will be included on the bid submission and will be rolled out as part of Phase 2 bidding process. Members will be presented with the emerging brand concept at the meeting on 28 September. This brand will have a dual function; initially as a visual identity it will be incorporated into the Stage 1 book and after further developmental work to be approval by Members it will drive our bidding campaign should we be successful at Stage 1 and progress to Stage 2. The brand and brand toolkit will be developed in line with the relevant partnership principles as set out in the section above.

3.3 Governance and Management Arrangements

Work is currently underway to develop options in relation to the potential special purpose vehicle and governance arrangements for the delivery of the European Capital Programme. This work is drawing upon best practice models adopted by previous ECOCs as well as lessons learnt from local approaches including UK Capital of Culture 2013 and Tall Ships, etc. Emerging principles are likely to include that it is a separate stand alone company, preferably jointly owned and with relationship NI Government, the cultural sector and citizens.

Any emerging Governance proposals will be further tested and further developed as part of the Phase 2 bidding process and will align to the key partnership principles set out in the section above.

4 Financial, Equality, Legal, HR, Improvement and other Implications

4.1 At stage one of the bidding process it is important to demonstrate the viability of the bid and the capacity of the region to deliver a programme of the required scale including an indicative commitment towards an overall funding model. Further and specific commitment to financial support will be necessary at stage 2 and will be supported by a detailed business case and funding strategy. It is important to recognise that no project of this scale could ever be delivered without the support of government and other key partners.

Being designated European Capital of Culture provides a unique opportunity to promote and showcase the cultural and creative aspects of our cities and surrounding areas and will act as a catalyst to support the social, economic and physical regeneration for the region, supporting investment and job creation, raising the international profile of Northern Ireland and boosting tourism.

Appendix 1 attached provides an outline summary of the significant economic, social and physical benefits experienced by other European Capital of Culture Cities. This includes Liverpool 2008 which experienced, and continues benefit from, £745m direct spend in Liverpool and wider region, £4Bn leverage in infrastructural investment, 34% growth in visitors since 2007, and repositioning Liverpool at an international scale as a preferred destination to visit, invest, work and live. Galway has projected that its successful 2020 designation will create €500m of investment and 5,000 new jobs in the next five years, increasing visitor numbers by 40% in 2020 and increasing business start-ups by 15% up until 2025.

A provisional operating budget of £55m (including a £6.5m commitment from both councils - amounting to 21%) is being proposed for the submission at stage 1. This has been benchmarked against spend by other cities who have bid for the designation and takes account of the standard practice adopted whereby around £110 per head of capita is allocated. As the following table shows it is suggested that this be made up of a variety of funding streams with the profiling of spend over a 6-year period (2019–2024).

A project of this scale has the requirement for multiple partners to help finance the overall commitment. The Irish cities for the 2020 competition had the comfort of knowing the winning city would receive 15m euro from the Irish Government. Galway has developed very impressive financial interventions with the private sector including 1% business rate increase and a specially commission beer by Diageo.

The current position in relation to emerging proposals and discussions around key funding streams is set out below.

- (i) Council contribution – it is proposed that both councils commit in principle to a £6.5m contribution towards an overall £55m financial strategy to deliver a European Capital of Culture 2023 programme of scale with spend profiled over a 5-year period. This will be subject to a detailed due diligence and business case being brought forward, with affordability secured through a small rate supported element and the prioritisation of a proportion of in-year budget reallocations into a specified fund for European Capital of Culture 2023.

- (ii)** Government – work is underway to secure a joint letter of support from the main NI Executive Party Group Leaders for the Bid including a commitment to work with the councils to progress a detailed business case to underpin the formal request for funding from NI Executive as part of Phase 2. Work is already underway with the Department of Communities and other stakeholders to develop what is required and timescales around such a business case. Work is also underway with the competing UK candidate cities, including Leeds, Dundee, to make a joint request to DCMS to confirm that funding will be allocated to the successful city to support delivery of European Capital of Culture 2023.
- (iii)** Private Sector – a fundraising strategy is currently being developed and will be brought back to a future meetings of the Committee as part of the phase 2 process. This will include, but not limited to direct sponsorship from private sector as well as considering, in liaison with relevant partners, new innovative mechanisms to develop and embed a longer-term funding legacy to support cultural related activity across both cities. Whilst no firm recommendations are being made at this stage, the type of opportunities under consideration to support both the delivery of the programme as well as creating a long-term legacy include, for example, exploring the potential option and appetite for introducing 2023 cultural hotel bed night tax etc. To help further develop our thinking and support around emerging options, a business leadership forum is being established.

5 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- (i)** Approve the concept, themes and emerging cultural programme etc. as set out in this paper and parallel paper and presentation in closed business as a basis for the submission of the final bid documents by the deadline of October 27th .
- (ii)** Endorse the proposal that Belfast assumes the role of Lead City/Candidate City ‘in partnership with Derry and the surrounding area’ to develop and deliver this major transformational opportunity for this place and that this strong, innovative and collaborative approach is underpinned by the key partnership principles set out in Section 4.1 of this report in relation to programming, marketing and communications, finance and resources and management and governance.

- (iii) Budget Commitment – Commit in principle to a £6.5m contribution towards an overall £55m financial strategy to deliver a European Capital of Culture 2023 programme of scale with spend profiled over a 5-year period. This will be subject to a detailed due diligence and business case being brought forward, with affordability likely to be supported through a small rate supported element and the prioritisation of a proportion of in-year budget reallocations into a specified fund for European Capital of Culture.
- (iv) Agree that the officer team continue to finalise the final detailed and technical content of the Phase I framework (bid book) submission, subject to discussion and input from Members at meeting on 28 September, for submission to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sports (DCMS) by 27 October 2017 deadline as the part of the two staged bid process.

Background Papers

Appendix 1

Summary table of the Core Result Indicators for the Objective: *Support the Social and Economic Development of the City through Culture* of the European Capitals of Culture from 2011 to 2015

City	Result Indicator - € value of investment in cultural infrastructure, sites and facilities	Result Indicator - % increase in tourists
Turku, Finland 2011	n/a	7% increase in overnight stays; 17% increase when day tourism taken into account
Tallinn, Estonia 2011	€195M of associated investments by the Ministry of Culture in the years 2008-10	17% increase in foreign tourist visits to Tallinn in 2011 compared to 2010
Guimarães, Portugal 2012	€41.7m investment in cultural infrastructure, sites and facilities:	<p>107% increase in tourist visits</p> <p>60% increase in international visitors to tourist information centres</p> <p>27% increase in average room occupancy rates</p>
Maribor, Slovenia 2012	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 163% increase in daily visitors • 20% increase in the number of overnight stays • €40m additional spend <p>Estimate of €42m - €51m of added value and a return on investment of around 4:1 for each Euro of additional public investment in ECoC (University of Ljubljana)</p>
Marseille-Provence, France 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total investment in infrastructure of €665m including new venues, renovation and a museum extension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11% increase in the number of tourist visits to Bouches-du-Rhône • 17% increase in international tourist visits • 9% increase in hotel nights • 22% increase in cruise passengers arriving at the Port of Marseille • 25% increase in tourism tax receipts collected by the City of Marseille. • New visitors accounted for 36% of visitors, twice the rate in 2011
Kosice, Slovakia 2013	€78m (€59m from European Regional Development Fund)	<u>From 2012 to 2013</u>

	on 20 cultural & public capital investment projects (including new facilities for ECoC, renovations and extensions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17% increase in “staying” visitors (31% increase on 2009) • 19.5% increase in foreign visitors • 10.4% increase in overnight stays (30% increase on 2009) • 37.8% increase spend on accommodation
Riga, Latvia 2014	Responsibility for infrastructure projects remained with the State & municipal authorities including renovation and new build. No figures available.	Despite a weak international marketing campaign, findings from the Central Statistics Bureau show that the number of foreign tourists visiting Latvia increased by 18.9% in the first half of 2014.
Umea, Sweden 2014	Umeå has invested € 393m on infrastructure over the period 2009-2014, of which € 138m has specifically been spent on cultural infrastructure.	From 2013-2014: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21% increase in hotel nights • 24% increase in all tourist accommodation (including hostels) • 10% increase in hotel occupancy at weekends
Mons, Belgium 2015	€143.5M associated investments including park, museum, design house, congress hall and other projects (some involving upgrading, some new build).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 fold increase in visits to the tourist office during 2015, reaching 250,000 • At least €75m in additional expenditure by all tourists
Pilsen, Czech Republic 2015	€48.6M associated investments including a new theatre, leisure centre, greenway, improvements to arts and cultural buildings and the reconstruction of a creative zone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.4M visitors attended ECoC events in 2015 a 28% increase on the 2 years prior to 2015.

Source: ECORYS Ex Post Evaluations of European Capitals of Culture published by the European Commission DG Education and Culture