

<b>Report on</b>	Draft response to Arts Council of Northern Ireland Public Consultation on Strategic Framework 2019-2024
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thurs 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2019
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Tony McCance
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Tony McCance

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>  If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To seek approval from Council to issue the attached response (Appendix 1) to the Draft 5 year Strategic Framework on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council and to submit the approved response to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland by the closing date of 4pm on Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2019
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has developed a draft Strategic Framework for the Arts 2019-2024 in consultation with the sector and key stakeholders. The draft strategy establishes the key priorities and actions that the Arts Council will pursue over the next five-year period.
2.2	The draft Strategic Framework is now out to full public consultation. The draft strategic Framework document is attached as appendix 2.
2.3	Public consultation closes at 4pm on Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2019, with the publication of the completed strategy scheduled for April 2019.
2.4	The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has provided a number of ways in which individuals and organisations can respond to the public Consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete an online survey accessed from the Arts Council website</li> <li>• Submit views via email to: <a href="mailto:strategy@artscouncil-ni.org">strategy@artscouncil-ni.org</a></li> <li>• Write to the Arts Council, referencing: Five-year Strategy Response, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, to: 1 The Sidings, Antrim Road, Lisburn BT28 3AJ</li> <li>• Attend one of three public consultation workshops taking place in February. (Mon 11th February, Belfast, Wed 13th February, Derry/Londonderry, Thurs 14th Feb, Armagh)</li> </ul> Or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By joining the online debate (facebook discussion) – <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups240313556558939/">https://www.facebook.com/groups240313556558939/</a></li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>

3.1	<p>The framework provides an overview of the strategic direction the Arts Council is proposing to take over the next five year period (2019-2024). An accompanying Business plan will be produced each year, setting out the actions to be taken in order to deliver upon the strategic objectives. The annual Business Plans will be linked to the Programme for Government and its associated outcomes.</p>
3.2	<p>The Arts Council acknowledge that the five year strategy needs to address some difficult issues (such as funding, Brexit implications and the absence of a sitting Assembly and Executive). However it also acknowledges that the strategy needs to be realistic as well as being ambitious in meeting the creative expectations of the Arts sector, key stakeholders (including Local Authorities) and the wider public.</p>
3.3	<p>In developing the draft strategy, the Arts Council carried out extensive consultation with a range of key stakeholders. As part of this consultation process there is acknowledgement of the role that Local Authorities play in Local arts provision and that the Arts Council will work more strategically with Councils.</p>
3.4	<p>The draft response (see appendix 1) emphasises the need for the Arts Council to work more strategically with Mid Ulster District Council and all Local Authorities and also reinforces the need to have stand-alone funding programmes to support such strategic alliances and funding programmes specifically designed to support specific challenges encountered by arts organisations based in rural areas of Northern Ireland.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<p><b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b></p> <p>Financial: N/A</p> <p>Human: N/A</p> <p>Risk Management:</p> <p>The purpose of the draft strategy is to identify the priorities for the Arts Council of Northern Ireland from 2019 to 2024. In order to minimise the risks to the development of the Arts sector and arts infrastructure, it is imperative that the Arts Council collaborate and develop the strategic framework in full consultation, with the full support of and in partnership with all 11 Local Authorities as key strategic delivery partners of the arts within Northern Ireland.</p>

	Funding reductions to the Arts Council will have a negative impact on the Arts sector as a whole. This will also put additional pressures on already stretched local authority funding support structures for the sector within Mid Ulster.
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	<p>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications:  The Arts Council state that it is committed to equality of opportunity and good relations in all of their work. The Arts Council has stated that it wants to make a clear commitment to addressing key inequalities, particularly those experienced by Section 75 groups, through this strategy and its associated performance measurement framework.</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications:  The Arts Council of Northern Ireland draft Strategic framework must clearly demonstrate that rural needs and equality in access to arts funding is being addressed. It is therefore incumbent upon all individuals/organisations submitting a response to the draft strategy that the inequalities in arts support between urban and rural areas are highlighted and addressed through this consultation process.</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	It is recommended that the draft response to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland 5 year Strategic Framework is approved and, the response is submitted to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland by the closing date of 4pm on Friday 22nd March 2019
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	Appendix 1 - Draft response to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland 5 year Strategic Framework
6.2	Appendix 2 - Arts Council of Northern Ireland draft five year strategic framework for developing the arts 2019-2024