

Report on	Arts Council of Northern Ireland Public Consultation on Draft five year Strategic Framework 2019-2024
Date of Meeting	Thurs 14 th February 2019
Reporting Officer	Tony McCance
Contact Officer	Tony McCance

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

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To inform members of the current public consultation exercise being undertaken by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland with regard to the Draft 5 year Strategic Framework for Developing the Arts 2019-2024
1.2	To seek approval from Council to prepare a draft response to the Draft 5 year Strategic Framework on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council and to seek Council's approval to issue a response to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland by the closing date of 4pm on Friday 22 nd March 2019
2.0	Background
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 1.
2.3	Public consultation closes at 4pm on Friday 22 nd 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"> • Complete an online survey accessed from the Arts Council website • Submit views via email to: strategy@artscouncil-ni.org • Write to the Arts Council, referencing: Five-year Strategy Response, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, to: 1 The Sidings, Antrim Road, Lisburn BT28 3AJ • Attend one of three public consultation workshops taking place in February. (Mon 11th February, Belfast, Wed 13th February, Derry/Londonderry, Thurs 14th Feb, Armagh) Or

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By joining the online debate (facebook discussion) – (https://www.facebook.com/groups240313556558939/).
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has stated from the outset that this is a framework and not a plan. The framework will provide 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.
3.2	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.
3.3	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.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: N/a
	Human: N/a
	Risk Management: 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. 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.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & 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>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>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>It is recommended that a response to the Draft 5 year Strategic Framework is prepared on behalf of Mid Ulster District Council (to be submitted for consideration by the Development Committee at its meeting of Thursday 14th March 2019) and subject to approval, issue a response to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland by the closing date of 4pm on Friday 22nd March 2019</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	<p>Appendix 1 – Arts Council of Northern Ireland draft five year strategic framework for developing the arts 2019-2024</p>