
MUSIC STRATEGY AND CARDIFF MUSIC CITY FESTIVAL: UPDATE

Confidential Slides in Appendix A are not for publication as they contain exempt information of the description contained in paragraphs 14 and 16 of Part 4 and paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It is viewed that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides Members with a brief overview of the Cardiff Music Strategy and the forthcoming Cardiff Music City Festival and provides links to previous reports, which Members may wish to read ahead of this scrutiny. Members will receive a presentation at this meeting providing an update on the next steps regarding implementing the Music Strategy, including council funding and decision-making processes.

Background

2. In 2017, the Save Womanby Street Campaign successfully halted proposed re-development on Womanby Street that could have curtailed live music events taking place in long-established venues. This campaign highlighted the role of music as one of Cardiff's strongest creative industries and focused attention on the need for the Council and partners to work together to protect and enhance the infrastructure required to enable music to flourish in Cardiff.
3. In December 2017, the Leader, Councillor Huw Thomas, officially announced the development of a music strategy, at a special launch event at City Hall. He committed the Council to working with Sound Diplomacy, global leaders of the Music Cities movement with experience of assisting other local authorities in developing music strategies. This would commence with an audit of the music ecosystem in Cardiff. A copy of the Leader's speech is available at:

<https://www.creativecardiff.org.uk/creative-cardiff-news/creativity-at-heart-our-economic-strategy-councillor-huw-thomas-launches-music>

4. Following the above, the Council's Corporate Plans have contained commitments to establish Cardiff as a Music City and to develop a signature event.
5. In April 2019, Cabinet noted the report by Sound Diplomacy, which analysed Cardiff's music ecosystem and provided strategic recommendations, and resolved a further report by brought to Cabinet to set out a response to this report and to establish a Music Board. The report to Cabinet, including the Sound Diplomacy report, is available [here](#) ¹.
6. In October 2019, Cabinet approved their response to the Sound Diplomacy recommendations, the establishment of Cardiff Music Board and the development of a new signature event for Cardiff in the form of an internationally relevant music festival. The report to Cabinet, including the Music Board's terms of reference, is available [here](#) .²
7. In November 2021, an update presentation to this committee highlighted the following:
 - a. Music Board had met 8 times and taken an active role in responding to planning issues, responding to Senedd scrutiny committee, informing work on pandemic response, establishing a Live Music Safety Board and engaging in development of RLDP
 - b. The Council had provided the Castle for city's grassroots venues, with all income going to the artists and venues
 - c. The Council had worked with partners to ensure venues such as the Old Library and Norwegian Church will support the Music Strategy following asset transfer
 - d. The Indoor Arena contributes to the Music Strategy and operators were working with the Music Board to embed into the city's music ecosystem and support grassroots music.
 - e. The Council had worked with venues in Womanby Street, reviewing layouts and supporting redevelopment of Clwb Ifor Bach.
8. In December 2021, Cabinet received an update on the development of the music ecosystem for Cardiff and agreed that the proposed trial for the voluntary

¹ [Agenda for Cabinet on Thursday, 18th April, 2019, 2.00 pm : Cardiff Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

² [Agenda for Cabinet on Thursday, 10th October, 2019, 2.00 pm : Cardiff Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

guidelines for buskers in the city centre be noted. The report to Cabinet, including the voluntary guidelines for buskers, is available [here](#).³

9. Since then, work has been underway to implement the Music Strategy and develop a music event. Press releases for the Cardiff Music City Festival were released in April 2024, including:
 - Sound of the City commission⁴
 - Leftfield and Orbital to open Festival⁵
10. The Cardiff Music City Festival will run from 27 September 2024 – 20th October 2024 and aims to attract 20,000 visitors in its first year. The festival encompasses renowned new music festival Sŵn and the Wales Millennium Centre's international arts weekend, Llais, and is supported by Welsh Government and Cardiff Council. Further information is available at its website: <https://cardiffmusiccityfestival.wales/>

Previous Scrutiny

11. This Committee undertook policy development scrutiny of work to develop a Music Strategy at their meeting on 9 April 2019. In the resultant Chair's letter,⁶ Members highlighted:
 - *'Members share the view that a Music Strategy for Cardiff will lead to a number of creative and economic benefits for residents, visitors, businesses and those working in Cardiff, as well as across the region.'*
 - *Members are pleased that the proposed scope of strategy is broad, not limited to live music or a particular genre but encompassing all genres and the music ecosystem across the city. A particular concern of committee members is to ensure that music is accessible and inclusive for all young people, not only in terms of being musicians but also in terms of developing pupils' awareness and skills sets so they can benefit from the range of skilled roles that exist across the music economy.'*

³ [Agenda for Cabinet on Thursday, 16th December, 2021, 2.00 pm : Cardiff Council \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)

⁴ [Cardiff-based musicians commissioned to create new 'Sound of the City' \(cardiffnewsroom.co.uk\)](#)

⁵ [Leftfield and Orbital to play Cardiff Music City Festival \(cardiffnewsroom.co.uk\)](#)

⁶ Letter from Councillor Howells, Chair of ECSC, to Councillor Bradbury, Cabinet Member Culture & Leisure, dated 11 April 2019

- *The membership of the partnership Music Board will be critical to the success of work in this area and Members were pleased to hear that you intend membership to be broad and inclusive, with a number of sub-groups to provide focus on particular aspects. At the meeting, we asked about the resources available to support the Music Board and note the response that existing resources will be sufficient to provide secretariat support.'*

12. Following pre-decision scrutiny at their committee meeting in October 2019, the resultant Chair's letter⁷ stated Members were:

- Pleased to see progress shaped by partnership working
- Pleased that the call for Music Board members took place in an open and transparent manner
- Pleased to hear the offer to bring the Music Board route map and plan of action to Committee and committed to making time in their work programme to enable this
- Supportive of the need for collective creative thinking to maximise impact from available resources and in-kind contributions
- Aware that the report has been shared with Regulatory Services who will be looking at licencing and approaches to noise nuisance
- Complimentary of the excellent work of officers and partners in developing the Music Strategy, which will bring benefits to Cardiff and the region, both economic and in terms of increasing well-being.

13. At their committee meeting 3 December 2020, Members scrutinised the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the music sector in Cardiff and the recovery process from this. In the resultant Chair's letter⁸, Members:

- Noted it is essential conversations be held with Welsh Government to agree a roadmap for the restart of live music events in Wales and urged the Leader to lobby for speedy dialogue on this
- Noted Cardiff Music Board could assist by undertaking a health check of venues and freelancers to ascertain support required to remain

⁷ Letter from Councillor Howells, Chair of ECSC, to Councillor Bradbury, Cabinet Member Culture & Leisure, dated 4 October 2019

⁸ Letter from Councillor Howells, Chair of ECSC, to Councillor Thomas, Leader, dated 8 December 2020

viable, putting in place a 6-month plan on how to move forward, and consider Sound Diplomacy's 9-point plan for music city resilience

- Noted a Music Officer would be appointed in early 2021
- Agreed it is important Cardiff markets itself as safely welcoming events
- Noted the sector would welcome a UK Government-backed insurance scheme, to moderate the risk in organising events
- Stated they shared the belief that music is central to Cardiff, providing vital economic, social, and cultural benefits and being an art in its own right.

14. The Leader responded to the above, in a letter dated 8 February 2021, with the following points:

- He had written to the Minister to request a strategy is established with the sector that recognises both the public health challenges but also the need for a plan that venues can work towards. He also raised the need to lobby UK Government for a UK Government-backed insurance scheme
- The Cardiff Music Board and the wider Recovery Strategy for the city would address the specific points raised regarding the health check, the six-month plan, and the consideration of Sound Diplomacy's 9-point plan
- The Senedd's Culture, Welsh Language and Communications committee had recently published a '*Live Music in Wales*' report that makes recommendations on how the Government can support the sector going forward.

15. At their committee meeting 16 November 2021, Members received an update on progress with implementing the Music Strategy and the resultant Chair's letter⁹ made the following points:

- Members note the Music Board is kept informed re planning applications and is involved in discussions to inform the Replacement Local Development Plan and future Supplementary Planning Guidance.

⁹ Letter from Councillor Howells, Chair of ECSC, to Councillor Bradbury, Cabinet Member Culture & Leisure, dated 18 November 2021

- Members were pleased to hear about the Live and Unlocked events at Cardiff Castle, the talent development programmes in Splott, Riverside and Canton, that Butetown Pavilion has been fitted with recording equipment, and that the proposals for the Old Library, Norwegian Church and Indoor Arena will help support delivery of the Music Strategy.
- Members note that support offered during the pandemic, to venues and freelancers, was cross-city. Members are pleased that the aim is to have a city-wide approach going forward and hope that the proposed Signature Event will demonstrate this.
- Members note a Live Music Safety Forum has been established to deal with issues regarding being inclusive of all genres of music and that they discuss potential issues on a case-by-case basis and work in partnership to avoid negatively profiling whole genres of music.
- Members raised the real issue for musicians and performers of finding adequate parking close to venues to enable safe loading/ unloading of equipment. Members are pleased to hear officers across the Council are working with venues to find solutions to this issue. Members urge that this approach be applied city-wide, so that venues outside the city centre, such as church or community halls, that host music events have a point of contact with whom to discuss parking and access issues.

Issues

16. The presentation, attached at **Appendix A** – marked '*to follow*' - will:
 - a. Provide an update on the level of council funding allocated to support music events throughout the year
 - b. Provide an update on the decision-making process regarding which music events the Council supports
 - c. Set out the next steps regarding implementing the Music Strategy.

Scope and Structure of Scrutiny

17. This update enables the Committee to be made aware of progress in implementing the Music Strategy and the Cardiff Music City Festival and

provides Members with the opportunity to input their views into the way forward.

18. The presentation, attached at **Appendix A**, contains confidential information, which will require the meeting to go into a closed session, where members of the public will be excluded, where Members can ask questions that pertain to the confidential information. Members are requested to keep this information confidential, in line with their responsibilities as set out in the Members Code of Conduct.

Way Forward

19. At the meeting Councillor Jennifer Burke (Cabinet Member – Culture, Parks, Events and Venues), Kathryn Richards (Head of Culture, Venues, Tourism and Events) Jon Day (Operational Manager – Tourism and Investment) and Ruth Cayford (Operational Manager – Creative Industries and Cultural Development) will be in attendance to make a presentation and answer any questions Members may wish to ask.
20. Members may wish to review the information presented at the meeting and determine whether there are any comments, observations, or recommendations which they would like to pass on to the Cabinet Member and senior officers.

Legal Implications

21. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review, and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be

undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g., Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

22. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review, and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to review the information provided at the meeting and provide any comments, observations, or recommendations to the Cabinet Member and senior officers.

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08 May 2024