



To: Leadership Board

On: December 6, 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Future Paisley Programme - Cultural Funding Review

1. Summary

This report updates Leadership Board on Renfrewshire Council's commitment to growing and strengthening Renfrewshire's cultural and creative sectors, through sector-specific funding. Since 2016, cultural funding grants have been benefitted 221 different organisations or cultural practitioners. Outputs from these awards have taken place across Renfrewshire and have included digital programming, extending accessibility to communities across the Region. This commitment to the sector is recognised locally and beyond Renfrewshire, demonstrated through the relocation of cultural practitioners to Renfrewshire, the emergence of new Collectives and the number of applications to funds coming from those outwith Renfrewshire who are seeking the opportunity to work locally in the region. As the Future Paisley Programme draws to a close in April 2024, the last rounds of planned cultural funding are being awarded through Cultural, Heritage and Events Fund (CHEF) Round 13 and Cultural Organisations Development Fund (CODF) Round 4, culminating in just under £2.7million being invested in Renfrewshire's cultural sector since the first cultural fund was announced. This activity has resulted in 363 projects, activities and events delivered across Renfrewshire for local people. Investment in cultural funding was expected to be temporary, building local capacity and putting the cultural sector on securer footing, able to access external funding more readily in future years.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leadership Board notes the level of investment in cultural funding made by Renfrewshire Council since 2016 its cumulative impact on the cultural sector and the breadth of arts and cultural activity designed for local people. Leadership Board notes that

CHEF Round 13 and CODF Round 4 mark the final grant programmes supported by Future Paisley and notes that more work is required to identify appropriate long-term sector support.

3. Background

- 3.1 One of the core pillars of Future Paisley activity has been the design and delivery of cultural funding grants which are contributing to the sustainable growth of Renfrewshire's cultural sector. This began in 2016 with a commitment by the council of £500,000 to establish the Culture, Events and Heritage Fund (CHEF). Investment has continued at regular intervals since given the continued strong impact of funding which has created a vibrant cultural and events calendar, has increased agency and capacity in communities and is helping to grow the next generation of cultural leadership.
- 3.2 The need to build capacity in Renfrewshire's cultural sector was identified as an important mechanism for social and economic change during the development phase of Paisley's UK City of Culture Bid. The provision of regular funding was deemed essential to address the fragility of the cultural ecology. The cultural funds designed at that time remain the main mechanism that allows equity of opportunity for organisations and individuals to receive funding to operate effectively and to grow, and to develop and deliver a range of activity that supports individuals and communities to thrive through access to arts and culture.
- 3.3 CHEF was launched in 2016 and from 2018, through Future Paisley, a strategy was developed to create more funding opportunities. This resulted in the design of the Cultural Organisations Development Fund (CODF) in recognition that there was no cultural organisation in Renfrewshire in receipt of regular, national funding through Creative Scotland (RFOs). Five years later, Renfrewshire's cultural funding grants remain the most comprehensive way to encourage sector growth and to devolve power to cultural organisations, artists, and collectives who are best placed to deliver cultural policy and cultural experience for the citizens of Renfrewshire. A theme that was widely expressed through the development of Renfrewshire's cultural strategy.
- 3.4 Between 2016 - 2023, £2,652,967 has been awarded in grants to Renfrewshire's cultural sector and creative communities through seven Funding Programmes:
 - CHEF, the Culture, Heritage, and Events Fund
(delivered in partnership between Renfrewshire Council and OneRen)
 - CODF, the Cultural Organisations Development Fund
(delivered in partnership between Renfrewshire Council and OneRen)
 - Projects of Interest
(delivered in partnership between Renfrewshire Council and OneRen)
 - RCRRF, Renfrewshire's Cultural Recovery and Renewal fund, established during the pandemic in 2020, with £200,000 of repurposed CHEF funds.
(delivered in partnership between Renfrewshire Council and OneRen)
 - CAHSC, the Making Arts & Culture Accessible Fund
(delivered by Culture, Arts, Health & Social Care as part of RHSCP)

- CAHSC, the Creative Wellbeing Fund
(delivered by Culture, Arts, Health & Social Care as part of RHSCP)
- VACMA, the Visual Arts and Craft Makers Award.
(co-funded by Renfrewshire Council and Creative Scotland, managed by OneRen)

3.5 The range and variety of work achieved across Renfrewshire through these funding grants is substantive and delivers on all five Future Paisley's Step Changes. It supports growth of the cultural sector, helps to drive delivery of ambitious and innovative projects and programmes across council services and with external partners, creates progression pathways for young people and celebrates Renfrewshire's cultural diversity. Outputs funded by Future Paisley has produced work across all artforms, with the largest number of projects focusing on visual arts (87 unique projects), followed by music (74 projects) and theatre/drama (65 projects). Projects have taken place across Renfrewshire:

- Paisley (251 projects)
- All Renfrewshire (55 projects)
- Johnstone (27 projects)
- Erskine (12 projects)
- Renfrew (11 projects)
- The Villages (11 projects)

Where grant applicants have received more than one grant since 2016, this investment has supported cultural progression at different stages. The investment in local cultural organisations and professional artists is also an investment in local communities.

'Strengthening and building the capacity of our organisation has ensured the strengthening of, and cultural capacity building for our communities for years to come.'
(CODF and CHEF grant recipient)

4. Funding Programmes delivered through Future Paisley

- 4.1 CHEF was introduced to support the development and delivery of cultural and heritage projects and events across Renfrewshire and build sector capacity in advance of the UK City of Culture Bid. The purpose was to raise cultural ambition and stimulate new cultural, heritage and events activity developed the sector for local people and national audiences, aiming to deliver 'culture on the doorstep'. The Fund is open to organisations and individuals based or working in Renfrewshire, including independent artists, designers, makers and producers, artist collectives, cultural organisations and networks, voluntary or community organisations, schools, colleges and universities and businesses including social enterprises and creative industries.
- 4.2 CODF was introduced in 2018 and has been reserved for established or developing organisations based in Renfrewshire that have a cultural and creative purpose. The purpose of the fund is to strengthen and build the capacity of those organisations, putting them on more sustainable footing and is designed to be flexible, enabling organisations to choose the individuals and/or organisations they wish to work with.

Through CODF, organisations have strengthened governance and leadership, developed their workforce and extended their engagement and reach, creating local employment opportunities and producing outputs for local people. Eligible applicants for this fund are registered charities, Community Interest Companies (CIC), social enterprises, voluntary or community organisations and constituted groups. In addition, three *Projects of Interest* were recommended for support following CODF Round 3. Since their introduction, demand for CHEF and CODF has routinely outstripped available funding.

- 4.3 The Visual Artist and Craft Makers Awards (VACMA) is run by Creative Scotland in partnership with local authorities to offer small grants to visual artists and craft makers for their creative development. For Renfrewshire, VACMA awards are supported through funding from the National Lottery/Creative Scotland and Future Paisley. The programme has run since 2019 with nine rounds of funding to date and a further two planned before the end of the Future Paisley Programme. VACMA is open to Scotland-based visual artists and craft makers who live, work, or maintain a studio space within Renfrewshire.
- 4.4 Renfrewshire's Cultural Recovery and Renewal Fund (RCRRF) was developed in September 2020 to offer swift support to Renfrewshire's cultural sector during the Covid19 pandemic. Planned CHEF funding was repurposed to create the emergency fund which provided three grants; Arts Development Grants (ADG) for individual artists, Cultural Organisation Support (COS) for organisations and Town Centre and Neighbourhood Creative Installations (TCNCI) to enable practitioners to develop artworks within the urban environment for local people to engage with during lockdown restrictions. ADG and TCNCI grants supported professional artists to continue their practice and to contribute to the local economy, COS grants were designed for not-for-profit cultural organisations ineligible to apply for Coronavirus Support Funds and who were therefore facing significant threat.
- 4.5 Two funds were launched in 2022 as part of Future Paisley's Culture and Arts in Health and Social Care (CAHSC) programme - Making Arts & Culture Accessible Fund and the Creative Wellbeing Fund, designed to further social prescription by assisting service providers to remove social and physical barriers to arts and culture activities for adults aged 18 and over. The Making Arts & Culture Accessible fund was open to day centres, care homes and sheltered housing, charity and community organisations, cultural organisations, businesses and individual cultural practitioners. Organisations received funding to assist with a variety of costs from small building adaptations to covering the costs of tickets for events and transport to activities. In addition, the Creative Wellbeing Fund supports adults to engage in arts and cultural activity to specifically reduce loneliness and isolation and improve mental health. Grants of up to £2,000 were awarded to create programming and/or improve access to programming for people including care leavers, older people, people experiencing long-term ill health, people with a disability including physical and learning disabilities, and people who are neurodivergent. This recognised the need to ensure that arts and cultural activities are genuinely accessible to people and participation can be enabled in mainstream provision as well as tailored activity.

4.6 Following the award of CHEF Round 13 and CODF Round 4 in December, no further funding programmes are planned. Grants confirmed will fund activity to be delivered within 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years. This will be monitored by the council's events team. Please see **Appendix A** for breakdown of all cultural funding awards.

5. Fund balances

5.1 The cultural regeneration team continue to manage eleven grants where activity has yet to be fully completed, supported by the Grants Officer at OneRen. Delays to delivery are mainly due to the impact of the pandemic. From 135 projects awarded through CHEF Rounds 1 to 11, there are five projects under review:

- Two projects have concluded with only final paperwork required to be submitted to release the last instalment of funding.
- One project is on track to complete in early 2024.
- One project is pending a decision as to whether the full project can be completed.
- One project did not progress, with funds to be returned.

5.2 Within the CODF programme there is one grant from Round 2 which has been delayed. The award covers a three-year project that was reshaped in response to the COVID pandemic. This will conclude by March 2024.

5.3 The RCRRF fund incorporated three grant programmes - Artists Development Grant (ADG), Town Centre and Neighbourhood Creative Installations (TCNCI) and Cultural Organisation Support (COS):

- Four Artists Development Grants (from a total of 23 grant awards) require final paperwork to be submitted to enable the release of the final grant payment. All four projects have concluded.
- Ten Town Centre and Neighbourhood Creative Installation Grants were awarded and all have concluded. Final paperwork from one grant is required to release the final payment.
- There are no outstanding grants with Cultural Organisations Support.

5.4 Any default in respect of submission of paperwork post the agreed completion dates (shown in **Table 1** below) will be considered fall-ins to supplement sector support in future.

5.5 CHEF Round 12 made awards to 23 organisations and individuals for activity from November 2022 to March 2024. Of the 23 organisations, 8 have completed their projects, with remaining projects on track to complete by the end of the financial year.

Table 1 – grant management

Grant	Full Amount	Funding Spent	Funding Remaining	Outstanding Information	Completion Date
CHEF R5	14,802.00	11,842.00	2,960.00	On track for March 24.	31 March 2024

CHEF R9	20,000.00	16,000.00	4,000.00	Project concluded. Final payment paperwork required.	31 March 2024
CHEF R9	16,900.00	13,520.00	3,380.00	Decision required to conclude as is or continue. Remaining funds will fall-in.	30 November 2023 for decision to be reached.
CHEF R11	8,740.00	6,992.00	1,748.00	Project will not deliver. Grant return.	31 January 2024.
CHEF R11	3,000.00	2,400.00	600.00	Project concluded. Final payment paperwork required.	31 January 2024
CODF R2	57,425.00	36,369.35	21,055.65	Three-year project reshaped due to pandemic. Activity has been delivered and monitoring ongoing.	31 March 2024
ADG (a)	2,050.00	1,845.00	205.00	Project delivered. Final payment paperwork required.	31 January 2024
ADG (b)	3,000.00	2,700.00	300.00	Project delivered. Final payment paperwork required.	31 January 2024
ADG (c)	2,380.00	2,142.00	238.00	Project delivered. Final payment paperwork required.	31 January 2024
ADG (d)	3,000.00	2,700.00	300.00	Project delivered. Final payment paperwork required.	31 January 2024
TCNCI	4,200.00	3,490.40	709.60	Project delivered. Final payment paperwork required.	31 January 2024.

6. Evaluation and future resourcing

- 6.1 Evaluation of the impact of funding programmes includes support from the Centre of Culture, Events and Sport (CCSE), evaluation carried out by Vis-à-Vis to assess the impact of the grant programmes within Renfrewshire's Cultural Recovery and Renewal Fund and more recently, qualitative evaluation by the council's cultural regeneration

team. However, an approach to evaluation was not fully developed during early rounds of CHEF and CODF pre-pandemic. Accurate data collection, in relation to CHEF, has presented several challenges. Changing evaluation practices throughout the programme as well as the variety in types of projects delivered by diverse groups, individuals and organisations, makes it difficult to achieve consistency and the same data categorisation across so many projects.

6.2 Overwhelmingly evaluation conducted since 2021 has shown the funding programmes have had a strong cumulative impact and have played a crucial role in the development of Renfrewshire's cultural ecology, have protected the livelihoods of freelance arts practitioners and supported cultural organisations during a precarious financial climate. Funded projects have contributed to enhancements in health and wellbeing, promoted cultural diversity and strengthened social cohesion. All funds have helped grow or sustain creative businesses in Renfrewshire.

6.3 Cultural organisations and freelance artists have reported they would be in a weaker and more vulnerable position, had funding investment not been made by the Council over the past 7 years. Prior to the pandemic, considerable gains were made by CHEF and CODF in building a critical mass of cultural and creative activity in Renfrewshire and this ensured the sector was stronger entering the pandemic that it would have been without investment in previous years.

'We now have a more solid board, a team with more capacity, better systems in place, a smarter approach to some areas of work, and a decent plan going forward with a clear area of focus,'

'Our organisation was in a much stronger position due to the CODF support. We had invested in fundraising primarily as well as strengthening our governance. This allowed us to be sustained and grow during a challenging time.'

The flexibility shown in allowing us to repurpose some of this funding during COVID was crucial, along with the COS fund, in ensuring the organisation's long-term survival.'

6.4 Due to the diversity of funded projects and the emergence of new groups and collectives, we can evidence greater cultural diversity. Projects delivered as a direct result of the council's investment and have been particularly beneficial for marginalised groups, enabling and encouraging co-design and delivering targeted activity where previously there had been gaps in provision. Projects have improved communities' health and wellbeing, and enhanced quality of life for residents by providing more people with access to cultural experiences within their own community. Cultural funding programmes, particularly CHEF and CODF, have significantly increased opportunities for children and young people to develop their creative ambition.

'We're passionate about working towards a bigger vision with partners across Renfrewshire and beyond. Funding has allowed us to secure our core and expand our operations, allowing us to attract more funding, invest in local,

national and international partnerships and increase our work with local freelance artists. Ultimately, this allows us to serve more children and young people, many who face disadvantage and unequal access to creativity. Without Future Paisley funding this would not have been possible.'

'We've been incredibly grateful for the flexibility shown during Covid. This allowed us to repurpose the grant, invest in new team members (Fundraising Manager) and external fundraising support and built capacity to become more responsive to young people and their needs and grow our cultural programme. As a result, we not only survived in a challenging environment but thrived.'

6.5 Funded projects have helped put Paisley on the map and have built confidence in Renfrewshire, within and beyond the area. This is demonstrated by the relocation of artists to the area, external investment in the cultural sector and interest from peers across Scotland to meet with the cultural regeneration team to learn more about Renfrewshire's approach.

6.6 Due to the nature of the funding programmes and how they are managed, officers have developed and strengthened relationships with Renfrewshire's cultural and creative communities. This has enabled officers to develop greater understanding of the cultural sector and to distribute power and provide equality, so recipients devise and lead delivery of their own projects on their own terms based on their own needs. This is also enabling a better understanding of how the cultural sector can play a role in future service delivery. A legacy of CODF has been the creation of new network of nine cultural organisations called Arts Connection, working together and with Renfrewshire Council to build a sustainable cultural environment in Renfrewshire through partnership working, joining the Future Paisley Partnership Board and contributing to embedding cultural policy in service delivery.

'Arts Connection is a group of organisations working to advance a thriving and sustainable cultural environment for Renfrewshire through partnership working, sharing good practice, joint funding applications, research and planning, expansion of creative programmes, and generally just helping each other out. Together we share the same ambition, to help regenerate Renfrewshire by bringing the community and culture together.'

6.7 Commitment to the provision of cultural funding through Future Paisley was originally intended to be temporary to enable the sector to develop greater capacity, to provide an environment where practice could be tested and refined, and to build experience within the sector of applying for funding. Beyond the Future Paisley Programme and by restructuring resource, there may be some ability to continue support for cultural organisations and a report on the performance and impact of CODF and alternative sector support will be brought to a future Leadership Board for consideration by Elected Members. Any future commitment to cultural funding agreed by the Council, will be required to be considered in the context of the end of the Future Paisley Programme. This extends beyond the practical funding of future grant programmes to the resourcing of effective grant management (people and systems), and the commitment to long-term relationship building and partnership working with the cultural sector. Any future

investment in cultural funding, agreed by the Council, will be required to be integrated within a council-wider approach to grant management and as part of a programme of enhanced business support for the sector.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – none
 2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
 3. **Community/Council Planning** – Council Plan PLACE (Demonstrating that Renfrewshire is a great place to live, work and visit) - delivering Future Paisley, our far-reaching cultural regeneration programme, harnessing the power of the arts, heritage and culture for social and economic change.
 4. **Legal** – none
 5. **Property/Assets** – none
 6. **Information Technology** – none
 7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.
 8. **Health & Safety** – none
 9. **Procurement** – none
 10. **Risk** – none
 11. **Privacy Impact** – none
 12. **Cosla Policy Position** –not applicable
-

Author: **Louisa Mahon, Head of Marketing and Communications,**
T: 0141 618 7546 E: louisa.mahon@renfrewshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX A - CULTURAL FUNDING GRANTS 2016 - 2023					
	Culture, Heritage & Events Fund (CHEF)	Amounts Awarded	Totals	No.of Awards	Totals
CHEF Round 1 - 13	Round 1 - March 2016	105,776		17	
	Round 2 - August 2016	125,306		18	
	Round 3 - December 2016	152,679		17	
	Round 4 - May 2017	78,180		13	
	Round 5 - September 2017	171,199		15	
	Round 6 - February 2018	81,906		8	
	Round 7 - May 2018	100,240		12	
	Round 8 - October 2018	70,658		7	
	Round 9 - December 2018	109,223		9	
	Round 10 - March 2019	50,101		5	
	Round 11 - September 2019	94,732		14	
	Round 12 - October 2022	226,233		23	
	Round 13 - December 2023	264,007		22	
	TOTAL		1,630,240		180
CODF Round 1 - 4	Cultural Organisations Development Fund (CODF)				
	Round 1	302,318		5	
	Round 2	66,425		2	
	Round 3 - November 2022	200,000		10	
	Round 4 - December 2023	94,359		6	
	TOTAL		663,102		23
	Renfrewshire Council Recovery Fund (RCRRF)				
	Artists Development Grant (ADG)	60,566		23	
	Town Centre and Neighbourhood Creative Installations Grant (TCNCI)**	47,198		10	
	Cultural Organisations Support	92,236		10	
	CODF R2 underspend reprofiled to top up COS **	11,257			
			211,257		43
Projects of Interest	Projects of Interest (PoI)				
	Soundplay Projects	5,000		1	
	Bungalow Enterprises	19,936		1	
	Loud & Proud	19,136		1	
RCRRF			44,072		3
	Culture, Arts, Health & Social Care (CAHSC)				
	Making Arts & Culture Accessible (Round 1)	5,000		5	
	Making Arts & Culture Accessible (Round 2)	10,762.83		13	
	Creative Wellbeing Fund (Round 1)	22,324		12	
	Creative Wellbeing Fund (Round 2)	41,960.36		23	
	TOTAL		80,047.19		53
	Visual Arts and Craft Makers Awards (VACMA)				
	Round 1 - June 2019	999		2	
	Round 2 - October 2019	850		2	
	Round 3 - March 2020	3,150		7	
	Round 4 - November 2020	2,250		7	
	Round 5 - February 2021	1,875		6	
	Round 6 - December 2021	1,875		6	
	Round 7 - March 2022	3,375		11	
	Round 8 - November 2022	1,500		4	
	Round 9 - March 2023	3,625		10	
	Round 10 - December 2023	4,750		6	
	Round 11 - April 2024				
			24,248.50		61
	FULL TOTALS		2652967.41		363
** 4x COS awards were topped up with the additional funding and those organisations were: right2dance, Erskine Arts, Create Paisley and Feis Phaislig					