

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 20 OCTOBER 2010

YOUTH MUSIC INITIATIVE

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek approval for a further year of Youth Music Initiative activity in session 2010/11 based on the recent successful funding application to the Scottish Arts Council and to update Cabinet on a range of associated music opportunities and national awards.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Music developments in East Ayrshire are firmly set within the Department of Educational and Social Services' Creative Minds Strategy. Linking music, heritage, drama, dance, creative arts, enterprise, healthy living and creativity with the development of qualities such as self-esteem, self-confidence motivation and achievement and supporting the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence.
- 2.2 Particular value is placed on the wider personal and educational aspects of music-making. The enhancement of self-esteem and self-confidence, along with the development of team-building and respect for others, all contribute greatly to ensuring that young people have the very best opportunity to realise their maximum potential and achieve their goals.

3. YOUTH MUSIC INITIATIVE

- 3.1 The Youth Music Initiative (YMI) has been operating in East Ayrshire for 7 years. Funding is available to support year 8 activity and following a successful application to the Scottish Arts Council £189,888 has been awarded to support a range of innovative and creative music experiences.
- 3.2 The YMI Programme in East Ayrshire is varied in terms of focus and delivery. In session 2009/10 over 6,500 pupils participated in Youth Music Initiative programmes and activities such as *Sounds of Singing*, Samba Percussion Sessions, *ABC Creative Music*, *ABC Global Citizenship Through Music*, Enhanced Instrumental Staffing (cello, double bass, percussion, guitar), Primary Choral Development and the Saturday Morning Scottish Traditional Music Centre in partnership with the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.
- 3.3 Two of these programmes, Sounds of Singing and ABC Creative Music contribute significantly to the Council meeting the Scottish Government's

Youth Music Primary 6 Target: school children should have had access to one years' free music experience by the time they reach primary 6.

- 3.4 The *YMI Platform Concert* takes place annually in June and features young musicians who are learning a range of instruments such as guitar, 'cello, double bass, percussion and traditional Scottish instruments through the YMI. The 2010 concert in Cumnock featured over 120 pupils and was enjoyed by an appreciative and enthusiastic audience of over 350.

4. YMI EXAMPLE PROJECTS

4.1 **Sounds of Singing Programme**

While the target group is still Primary 5, a number of schools have extended use of the resource to include Primary 4 and/or Primary 6. This approach is producing significant development in the skills of vocal teaching by non-specialist staff across the authority and is evidencing a clear improvement in the quality of singing.

- 4.1.1 This vocal experience represents considerable enhancement to the curricular delivery of classroom singing. The YMI Support Tutor provides regular in-school support to class teachers and has also devised and organized several twilight courses providing resources for Vocal Warm-ups.

4.2 **Greenmill Figurenotes Project**

This project is designed to investigate the use of the *Figurenotes* notation system of teaching within the setting of whole-class string teaching. The RSAMD *Musicworks* department, in consultation with Drake Music and East Ayrshire Council work in partnership to deliver the project.

- 4.2.1 The programme operates within the school day and the pupils are taught as a string orchestra. The project is being extensively evaluated with a range of quantitative and qualitative data being collected through a variety of research methods.
- 4.2.2 The project has also been imbedded in the school's Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) literacy and numeracy strands and has been noted as good CfE practice by Heads of Instrumental Teachers Scotland (HITS). The pupils have been asked to perform at two national conferences next year.

4.3 **ABC Creative Music for Special Educational Needs(SEN)/Additional Support Needs (ASN)**

During school session 2009/2010, ABC Creative Music further developed specialised resource packs supporting pupils with Additional Support Needs. The pack contains advice and guidance notes for tailoring a programme to an individual child's needs. Resources include lesson plans, audio CDs, and extra large icons and visual aids.

4.3.1 Staff were introduced to the material at twilight CPD course and were further supported by follow-up visits from the ABC trainer. The material has been well received by the classroom staff who are gaining in confidence in using the resources. Park School is the first school in Scotland to use these materials.

4.4 **Samba Band Development**

4.4.1 Over the last six years, thousands of people have experienced the joy of Brazilian Drumming with Beats of Brazil Drumming Workshops. Pupils from Loudoun Academy have been working with Beats of Brazil this past session. The Music Department focussed on pupils with an interest in music, who had not previously had the opportunity to learn an instrument.

4.4.2 The session culminated in a performance by the Loudoun Academy Samba Band at this year's Spring Spectacular Concert. A highlight of the performance was the link with the *YDance* Project supported by Sportscotland, when 20 pupils in vibrant costume joined in the performance. Beats of Brazil have also been leading interactive workshop session in a range of Primary Schools from across the authority involving 233 pupils as well as supporting the Learning Disability Showcase performances in New Cumnock and Stewarton.

5. **NATIONAL RECOGNITION**

5.1 On 9 April 2010 the Stewarton Academy Senior Concert Band once again enjoyed success at the British Association of Symphonic Brass and Wind Ensembles Final in Birmingham where the band gained a Gold Award. Members will recall that in November 2009 the Cumnock Academy Brass Band won their Section at the Scottish Brass Band Championships in Perth and went on to represent Scotland at the National Finals in Manchester on 17 April 2010. They performed exceptionally well at the Finals, but on this occasion did not receive an award.

5.2 Founded in 1953, the National Music Council sits at the centre of a network of national music organisations. Membership is drawn from all areas of the music business. Through the annual awarding of a Trophy and a number of Diplomas, the Council seeks to provide recognition for those Local Education Authorities (LEA) that have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to music education provision in a particular year. The NMC LEA Music Awards Scheme is co-ordinated with the assistance of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and the Federation of Music Services.

5.2.1 For a record fifth consecutive year, East Ayrshire has been recognised by the National Music Council (NMC) of Great Britain and was awarded the prestigious Diploma of Merit at the Annual Local Education Authority Music Awards Ceremony. Other Diplomas of Merit went to Blackpool, Bolton, Devon, East Lothian, Oxfordshire, Redbridge and Southwark.

5.2.2 Particular comment was made of the wide range of performance opportunities for young people, the excellent CPD activities supporting curricular

development and the extensive range of partnerships with national companies. The report concluded: "As always, there is much to admire and enthuse about music in East Ayrshire".

- 5.2.3 The award this year continues to recognise the tremendous commitment, enthusiasm and dedication of each and every member of the music staff across the authority.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 £189,888 from Creative Scotland through the Youth Music Initiative is available to support the programme of activity to 31 March 2011.

7. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 NIL

8. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The above programmes support the increasing participation of young people in learning and active citizenship via the themes of Promoting Community Learning and Improving Opportunities.

9. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Current funding for the Youth Music Initiative is time-limited to 31 March 2011. Many of the initiatives are resource dependent and this has been highlighted through the Strategic Review of the Revenue Budget 2 process. Confirmation is pending that the funding will be issued to the Council in 2011/12 through the block grant.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 It is recommended that Members:
- (i) approve the programmes of musical activities outlined in the Year 8 Youth Music application;
 - (ii) note the external funding available to support this initiative;
 - (iii) ask the Executive Director of Educational & Social Services to provide a further update report and plan of action once future external funding is known;
 - (iv) be kept informed of future developments; and
 - (v) otherwise note the contents of this report.

Graham R Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

JW/AS
29 September 2010

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Youth Music Initiative Report – October 2009
2. Youth Music Initiative Report – May 2008

Arts Focus 2010/2011 is available through the Council's Intranet.

Members requiring further information should contact Graham Short, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services, Tel: (01563) 576017 or Andrew Sutherland, Head of Service: Schools Tel: (01563) 576126.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER

John Wilson, Links Officer in the Arts and Education