

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 21 OCTOBER 2009

YOUTH MUSIC INITIATIVE AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC SERVICE

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 based on the recent successful funding application to the Scottish Arts Council and to update Cabinet on the range of music opportunities offered through the Instrumental Music Service.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Arts in Education contribute to the intellectual and personal development of young people. They are influential in developing the whole person, and can promote and enhance self-esteem, self-confidence and increase motivation. Along with the development of team building and respect for others, arts and cultural experiences contribute greatly to ensuring that young people have the very best opportunity to realise their learning potential.

The integration of arts and cultural activities supports the learning of all pupils, and particularly those whose learning styles respond well to creative, visual and active opportunities. Involvement in the Arts equips young people with a range of life skills and attitudes that will serve them in a changing society, in which the value of creativity and enterprise is recognised. Evidence suggests that participation in, and exposure to, quality arts activity increases young peoples' self-esteem and motivation and fosters a positive attitude to learning.

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.

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 6 years. Funding is available to support year 7 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 2008/09 over 6,500 pupils participated in Youth Music Initiative programmes and activities such as *Sounds of Singing*, *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, which is that all school children should have had access to one years' free music experience by the time they reach primary six.
- 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 2008 concert in Cumnock featured 112 pupils representing 30 schools and was enjoyed by an appreciative and enthusiastic audience of over 350.

4. MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- 4.1 Instruction is available in Brass, Woodwind Percussion, Highland Bagpipe, Voice, Piano/Keyboard, Strings and Guitar. In 2008/09 1,432 pupils received instrumental instruction representing 14% of the P6 – S6 pupil cohort. These figures increase to 2,271 and 22% respectively when opportunities through the Youth Music Initiative are included.
- 4.2 While the Instrumental Music Service is a key and valuable element in supporting young people in their learning through preparing them, in partnership with secondary music departments, for success in their Standard Grade and National Intermediate, Higher and Advanced Higher practical examinations, it is the extra-curricular activities offered by the Instrumental Music Service which have the greatest impact on developing a young person's life-long enjoyment of music-making.
 - 4.2.1 Every week during lunchtimes, before the school day and after school hours over 20 music groups are run by instructors with over 600 pupils regularly taking part. All secondary schools have either Brass/Jazz/Pipe/Wind Bands and/or choirs, orchestras or ensembles. Many of these groups embark on biennial foreign concert tours and participate in National Competitions. Upwards of 150 young people from a range of schools and a variety of ensembles travel to perform in Europe during the summer break. Primary schools also enjoy a variety of extra-curricular activities including recorder groups, percussion ensembles, handbell ringing groups, Samba groups and choirs.

- 4.2.2** These school-based groups have opportunities to perform at school concerts and functions, special authority functions e.g. the council's Excellence Awards Ceremony, New School Openings and also at community and charity events such as Rotary and Chamber of Commerce functions and by performing in shopping centres etc for fund-raising. School-based groups also participate in the annual Instrumental Music Service Gala Concert and the YMI Platform Concert.
- 4.2.3** Pipers are often invited to welcome delegates at conferences both local and national as well as performing at special council events. This year has especially been busy with pipers playing at the Provost's Charity Ball and an Evening Dinner Reception for Overseas Visitors, East Ayrshire Excellence Awards, 10 School Burns Suppers, Mauchline Holy Fair, 2 school openings and the Tapestry Partnership *Learning and Teaching and All that Jazz* Conference which took place in the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall in May 2008.
- 4.2.4** Pupils often cite these extra-curricular music activities as one the highlights of their commitment, enthusiasm and care demonstrated by their Instrumental Tutors during these activities.
- 4.2.5** Further enhancing these extra-curricular opportunities is a network of community pathways through ensembles such as Kilmarnock Concert Brass, Dalmellington Silver Band, the Ayrshire Symphony Orchestra, Kilmarnock Amateur Operatic Society, Loudoun Musical Society, Cumnock Amateur Musical Production Society, Kilmarnock Choral Union, Cumnock & District Pipe Band, Dunaskin Doon Band, Muirkirk & District Pipe Band, Newmilns & Galston Brass Band, Centrestage and links with the council's Arts Development Service.
- 4.3** During the past session over 3,500 pupils have had the opportunity to participate in authority-wide initiatives including ten authority bands, choirs and ensembles, performance events such as *Instrumental Music Service Gala Concert, East Ayrshire Schools at Christmas, Spring Spectacular, XtrAvaganza, Showcase, YMI Platform Concert* and *ScotFest* and curricular partnership experiences including Scottish Chamber Orchestra *Masterworks*, *ABC Kidsamonium*, Philharmonia Orchestra *MusicQuest*, Scottish Ensemble *Musical Hats*, Scottish Opera Secondary Vocal Masterclasses, Scottish Opera Primary projects *1719* and *Auntie Janet Saves the Planet*, and Drake Music Scotland projects in Special Schools and units.
- 4.3.1** The *Instrumental Music Service Gala Concert* held in October 2008 featured almost 400 young musicians from all of the secondary schools. The programme included a wide range of styles and instruments such as Brass Bands, Pipes & Drums, Wind Bands and Ensembles, a Guitar Solo, a String Orchestra, and Vocal Ensembles. This concert is always a highlight in the annual events calendar as the programme caters for many musical tastes and the young people perform to a very high standard.

- 4.3.2** The *Schools at Christmas Concert in 2008* involved a secondary school band and a massed primary schools' choir with audience participation in familiar traditional Christmas carols.
- 4.3.3** The annual *Spring Spectacular* was held at the beginning of March 2009 and featured over 200 secondary school musicians performing in groups such as the Senior String Orchestra, Brass Band, Intermediate and Senior Choirs, Big Band, Pipes & Drums and the amazing sight and sound of a Double Bass Choir comprising 20 Double Basses! This concert featured the first of two specially commissioned works reflecting *Homecoming Scotland 2009*.
- 4.3.4** The *XtrAvaganza* held at the end of March 09 featured almost 270 mainly primary school children performing in the Primary Schools' Choir (which included 30 guest pupils from Northern Ireland and Norway), Primary Schools' String Orchestra and Samba Band. The secondary Concert Band and a Piper also participated. This concert featured the second of two specially commissioned works reflecting The Homecoming. Again, a key element to the success of this event is the continued support and musical direction from the Department's Expressive Arts Development Officer.
- 4.3.5** This year's Music Summer School Programme offered opportunities in vocal, wind band, strings, piping and primary creativity with ICT. Courses are led by instrumental tutors and visiting musicians. This year over 175 young people participated in the Music Summer Programme.

5. NATIONAL RECOGNITION

- 5.1** Music developments in East Ayrshire were featured in the Summer 2009 issue of the Scottish Arts Council Youth Music Initiative Magazine. The work also appeared on SAC and EAC websites. Colleagues have been invited to present at the forthcoming Scottish Association of Music Educators National Conference in Stirling University in September.
- 5.2** This year the Stewarton Academy Concert Band once again enjoyed success at the British Association of Symphonic Brass and Wind Ensembles final at the Royal Welsh College of Music, Cardiff where the band gained a Gold Award.
- 5.3** For a record fourth consecutive year, East Ayrshire was recognised by the National Music Council of Great Britain and was awarded the prestigious Diploma of Merit at the Annual Local Education Authority Music Awards Ceremony which took place at the British Phonographic Industry in London on Thursday 20 November 2008.
- 5.3.1** This award recognises the range and quality of music opportunities offered to young people. Ivor Widdison, Chair of the Awards Panel, said: "*The splendid submissions we had before us this time are, of course, representative of best practice*", while Robin Osterley, Chairman, NMC, said "*This has been yet another good year for the NMC Awards scheme, which is one of the most prestigious awards that Local Authorities can obtain for their arts activity.*"

Particular comment was made of the wide range of opportunities for young people to participate in authority bands, choirs and ensembles, the excellent activities supporting curricular development and the extensive range of partnerships with national companies.

The Awards Panel reported: *“East Ayrshire, a particularly small Authority, throughout and nowhere more so than through a near plethora of partnerships and collaborations which enabled the skills and talents of professional musicians to be drawn upon in abundance. Singing was well established with good opportunities for choral development...Amidst all that industry, time and space was found for gifted and talented young composition students with a series of workshops delivered by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, which also performed works by the young composers.”*

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

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 £189,888 is available to support the projects outlined in 3.2 from the Scottish Arts Council through the Youth Music Initiative to 31 March 2010.

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 All activities will be risk assessed as per the Council’s revised Risk Assessment Guidelines and Procedures.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 It is recommended that Members:
- (i) approve the programmes of musical activities outlined in the Year 7 Youth Music application;
 - (ii) note the external funding available to support this initiative;
 - (iii) be kept informed of future developments; and
 - (iv) otherwise note the contents of this report.

Graham R Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1 September 2009

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Youth Music Initiative – May 2006
2. Youth Music Initiative – May 2008

Copies of Arts Focus Music have previously been distributed to Members.

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