

## EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 7 NOVEMBER 2007

### “ULSTER-SCOTS PARTNERSHIP PROJECT - *THE JOLLY BEGGARS*”

#### Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update members on the success of the recent Cultural Partnership Project with the Ulster-Scots Agency and supported by the Scottish Arts Council Youth Music Initiative and seek approval for the plans to support and develop the link.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 This project builds on the previous excellent work in partnership with Dr Fred Freeman and aligns with the National Priorities for Education and Curriculum for Excellence.
- 2.1.2 The project offered opportunities for our young people to enhance their creative thinking skills and interpersonal abilities, develop team working and communication skills, as well as sharing their own cultural heritage with pupils from an other country and appreciating the culture of Northern Ireland. The project also supports the national *Youth Music Initiative's* specific focus on Traditional Music Making.

## 3. THE PROJECT

- 3.1.1 Earlier this year, pupils from Mullavilly Primary School, Northern Ireland, experienced the particular culture of Ayrshire focussing on the life and works of our National Bard, Robert Burns. The culmination of this visit was an excellent performance of Burns' *The Jolly Beggars* in the Palace Theatre, Kilmarnock as part of the Community Plan Launch Showcase.
- 3.1.2 During June pupils from the East Ayrshire Primary Schools' Choir thoroughly enjoyed a return visit to Northern Ireland. Their itinerary was interesting and varied and included visits to the Giants' Causeway and Belfast City Hall which included a formal presentation by the Lord Mayor. The visit culminated in a joint performance of *The Jolly Beggars* in the Market Place Theatre, Armagh. In this way the young people gained from:
- The experience of a public performance in a new location with the confidence that this brings
  - Learning from travel to a different part of the United Kingdom
  - The teamwork involved in a production like this

In addition, they acted as ambassadors for East Ayrshire.

3.3 Future plans include the development of an enterprise link with Ballydown Primary School and new links between East Ayrshire Schools' Scottish Traditional Saturday Morning Centre and the Ulster-Scots Traditional Music Programme.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The above project and associated activities are fully supported by the Scottish Arts Council Youth Music Initiative and the Ulster-Scots Agency.

#### **4. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 NIL

#### **5. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This partnership project particularly supports the increasing participation of young people in learning and active citizenship via the themes of Promoting Community Learning and Improving Opportunities.

#### **6. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 All activities are risk assessed as per the council's revised Risk Assessment Guidelines and Procedures.

#### **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 It is recommended that Members:

- (i) agree to further similar initiatives and developments, based on a partnership with the Ulster-Scots Agency; and
- (ii) otherwise, note the contents of this report.

Graham R Short  
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

GS/JP  
20 September 2007

#### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NIL

Members requiring further information should contact Graham Short, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services, tel: (01563) 576017 or John Wilson, Links Officer in the Arts and Education, tel: (01563) 555634.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER**

John Wilson, Links Officer in the Arts and Education