

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT SERVICE COMMITTEE

22 May 2008

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Report on Youth Music

Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Summary

This report sets out the background and current status of Youth Music opportunities in Highland. These include Youth Music Initiative (YMI); The Highland Council's Instrumental Tuition Service and Regional Music Groups. The report recommends acceptance of funding from Scottish Arts Council for year six of the Youth Music Initiative.

1. Background

- 1.1 Highland Council has a very strong tradition of supporting young people to participate in music, and to develop their skills. Youth music provision helps deliver a number of the **Programme for Administration** commitments, in particular encouraging the growth of festivals, developing the cultural industries, and building on the Highland Promise.
- 1.2 The Youth Music Initiative began in 2003 when the Scottish Arts Council, Youth Music UK and the Musicians Union jointly commissioned an audit of youth music in Scotland - the *What's Going On?* report. Subsequently funding was made available to Council's under a scheme called the Youth Music Initiative. Through the Scottish Arts Council, the Scottish Government has offered funding for year six of the scheme.
- 1.3 The Youth Music Initiative scheme aims to **'ensure that every primary school pupil should have access to at least one year's free music tuition by the time they reach Primary 6'**. It further identifies a number of priorities and 'gap areas' in provision which Councils have to take into account, for example composition, primary school tuition and music technology.

2. Youth Music Initiative Projects in Highland

- 2.1 Four projects have been initiated and supported with YMI funding in Highland primary schools. The detail of these projects is included in Appendix 1.

3. Funding for Year Six of the Youth Music Initiative

- 3.1 The Highland Council has been offered an allocation of **£543,024**, which has been determined by the Scottish Government's formula for distributing YMI funds. This funding has been allocated on the understanding that The Highland Council will work within the following specific purposes of the fund:

- consolidate and sustain the targets for Primary Six Pupils
- promote equal opportunity of access for all pupils to learn to play a musical instrument or sing
- encourage integration of YMI activities over time with the local authority's delivery of the music curriculum and instrumental and vocal instruction programmes
- encourage alternative methodologies of delivery and the diversification of styles and genres
- develop partnerships with organisations and individuals outwith the formal education sector
- encourage schools and instrumental services to provide YMI music activities in the classroom as much as possible
- take into account the choices of young people when planning YMI funded music activities
- provide musical activities for young people with special educational needs
- develop and sustain a Continuous Professional Development programme for both music specialists and classroom teachers

4. Additional Musical Activities Run by the Council

4.1 In common with most other local authorities The Highland Council offers its pupils access to lessons on a variety of musical instruments. There are currently c. 2500 pupils receiving lessons and The Highland Council currently employs 41 Instrumental Instructors (some part-time) offering tuition on:

- chanter / bagpipes (12 Instructors)
- strings (15 Instructors)
- woodwind (6 Instructors)
- brass (6 Instructors)
- guitar (1 Instructor)
- percussion (1 Instructor)

4.2 In Lochaber, many pupils are able to attend the activities of Lochaber Music School either as sole provider of their tuition or as an extension to the opportunities available within the Council's Tuition Service

5. Area and Regional Music Groups

5.1 As an extension to the work of Instrumental Instructors, many school and Area Instrumental groups have been formed (see Appendix 2 for current list) These groups provide an important opportunity for pupils receiving lessons (mainly through the Council's Instrumental Tuition service, but sometimes privately) to gain the additional musical and social skills from the experience of playing in a group. Such groups allow interaction between pupils from a number of schools. This is especially important where numbers receiving lessons in any one school may be small.

5.2 Occasional 'specialist' events (e.g. cello & bass day; Primary strings Day; horn workshops) are organised to ensure that pupils are given access to the highest quality tuition and have the opportunity to meet pupils from other parts of Highland. These kinds of events are especially beneficial to pupils from more remote areas.

- 5.3 As pupils become more experienced and competent musicians, their Instructor may encourage them to audition for a place in one of the Regional Music Groups
- 5.4 The Highland Regional Youth Orchestra was formed some 20 years ago. Recently the number of groups has increased to five:
- Highland Regional Youth Orchestra
 - Highland Schools Wind Band (until becoming an 'official' Regional Group 4 years ago this was an occasional ad hoc group)
 - Highland Youth Big Band (formed 3 years ago)
 - Highland Youth String Orchestra (formed 3 years ago)
 - 'snas (Ceilidh band) (formed 3 years ago)
- 5.5 Membership for all the groups is by audition / invitation after an Audition Day (31 May 2008). Players of around Grade 4/5 AB/Trinity standard and above in all instrumental disciplines populate most of the Groups and are drawn from all areas of Highland. Many members of Highland Regional Instrumental Groups are also members of national instrumental & vocal ensembles.
- 5.6 The groups meet for intensive rehearsal weekends. There are normally two rehearsal weekends before December each year then a third which involves a performance. This pattern is repeated between January and April. Performances are given in a variety of Highland venues.
- 5.7 Over the years, Regional Music Groups have given performances in other parts of the UK and abroad. There have also been a number of collaborations with professional groups (eg. BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra), musicians composers and conductors.

6. Future Developments

- 6.1 As session 2008/09 is the 20th anniversary of the formation of Regional Music Groups in Highland, it is intended to celebrate this with a number of special events.
- 6.2 A Scottish Arts Council funding application is pending for a special project which would involve collaboration between Regional Music Groups; local choral groups (female voices) and auditioned female singers from Highland schools. Should this funding application be granted it is hoped that the Highland school singers involved would then form the core of a new Highland Regional Youth Choir in session 09/10.
- 6.3 With the support of The Highland Council, September 2008 will see the formation of The National Youth Choir of Scotland (NYCoS) Inverness Area Choir. Initial membership of this new group will be P4 pupils in line with NYCoS Area Choir tuition.
- 6.4 The 2nd Highland Young Musician of the Year competition will be held on June 16th, with the support of The Drumossie Hotel.
- 6.5 One of the Council's Regional Groups has been invited to perform at the SAME (Scottish Association of Music Educators) Conference in September 2008. An invitation has also been extended for one of the groups to perform

at the Trinity College of Music Scottish Showcase in Perth Concert Hall
(Feb/March 2009)

7. Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that Members:

- a) agree the acceptance of Youth Music Initiative funding of **£543,024** for year six of the scheme
- b) note the successes and commitment of the young people of Highland to music in all its genres

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Author: Norman Bolton, Youth Music Initiative Manager

Date: 9 May 2008

APPENDIX 1: Youth Music Initiative Projects

Kodály Vocal Skills

Responsibility: The Highland Council

Delivery: To all schools (P3/4, or composites groups where size of school dictates this) with the training and support of NYCoS materials. Tutors (employed by Highland Council) deliver core aural & theory skill to pupils through singing games/rhymes and practical visual techniques (e.g. floor stave / hand signs etc.)

Timeline: blocks of 4 weekly visits are timetabled throughout the school year. Each school receives a total of 12 visits

Resources: The tutors and schools have been supplied with a number of resources. Tutors will receive custom made floor stave mats and books/CD's as appropriate materials are identified for continued development of their delivery skills

Outputs: Schools are now using much of the materials covered so far in school concerts and performances. A number of schools have allowed the Tutors to develop parents sessions where pupils can demonstrate some of their skills to families. This is to be encouraged and has proved very successful

Evaluation: written & verbal feedback from Tutors, schools and pupils. Session visits made by Music Development Officer

Gigajam Guitar & Drumkit Skills

Responsibility: The Highland Council

Delivery: To nominated schools as before (P7, or composite P6/7 groups where size of school dictates this) through the use of the computer & music hardware leased/bought for the project and software purchased from Gigajam. Tutors (employed by Highland Council) deliver core guitar & drumkit skills to pupils through the use of the Gigajam interactive programmes.

Timeline: blocks of 4 weekly visits are timetabled throughout the school year. Each school will receive a total of 12 visits

Resources: The tutors and schools have been given all required resources.

Outputs: it is hoped to follow the model of the parents sessions introduced by the Kodály tutors.

Evaluation: written & verbal feedback from Tutors, schools and pupils. Session visits made by Music Development Officer

Traditional Music Project

Responsibility: Fèisean nan Gàidheal

Delivery: To all schools as before (P6, or composite P5/6 groups where size of school dictates this) through the use of the 'core' materials developed for the project and additional materials of the Tutors' choosing. Tutors (employed by local Fèisean under contract to FnG) deliver an introduction to aspects of tin whistle; traditional song; Gaelic song & groupwork (chosen by individual schools).

Timeline: blocks of 4 weekly visits are timetabled throughout the school year. Each school will receive a total of 12 visits

Resources: The tutors and schools have been given all required resources.

Outputs: Schools are now using much of the materials covered so far in school concerts and performances.

Evaluation: written & verbal feedback from Tutors, schools and pupils. Session visits made by Music Development Officer

SoundStart

Responsibility: The Highland Council

Delivery: To P6 in Grantown Primary. Tutors (employed by Highland Council) deliver core woodwind, brass & theory skill to pupils through the published Soundstart materials and the additional use of Kodály techniques gained by the attendance of tutors at training events.

Timeline: 1 hour per week throughout the session

Resources: The project has been given all required resources

Outputs: The school has already used some of the materials covered so far in school concerts and performances. The school has allowed the Tutors to develop parents sessions where pupils can demonstrate some of their skills to families. This is to be encouraged and has proved very successful

Evaluation: written & verbal feedback from Tutors, schools and pupils. Session visits made by Music Development Officer

APPENDIX 2: Area and Regional Music groups

AREA MUSIC GROUPS (groups led by Highland Council Instrumental Instructors. These groups rehearse outwith normal school times and may represent more than one school)

Caithness Schools Wind Band
String Thing (Caithness schools strings group)
Little String Thing (Caithness schools strings group)
Caithness Junior Pipe Band
Thurso High School Orchestra
Thurso High School Traditional Music group
Thurso High School String Quartets
Thurso High School Country Band
Thurso High School Theory Club
Farr High School Strings Group
Wick High School String Quartet

Sutherland Schools Orchestra
Golspie High School Fiddle Group
Golspie High School Pipes
Sutherland Senior Pipe Band
Sutherland Junior Pipe Band
Dichioll (Dornoch Academy)

Kyle & Sutherland Pipe Band (Dornoch)
Ardgay & Bonar Pipe Band

Lochaber Schools Pipe Band
Lochaber Schools Junior Wind Band
Lochaber Schools Wind Band
Lochaber High School Dance Band
Lochaber High School Woodwind Group (junior & senior)
Lochaber High School Brass Ensemble
Lochaber High School String Group
Lochaber Fiddle Orchestra

Inverness Schools Senior String Orchestra
Inverness Schools Junior String Orchestra
Inverness Wind Band

Charleston & Nairn Pipes & Drums
Charleston Pipes
Charleston Academy String Group
Charleston Academy Ceilidh bands (junior & senior)
Charleston Academy Wind Ensemble

Culloden Academy Wind Band
Culloden Academy Percussion Group
Culloden Academy Brass Ensemble
Culloden Strings

IRA Brass Ensemble
Inshes Primary School Orchestra

Millburn Academy String Group
Millburn Academy String Group
Millburn Academy Wind Band
Millburn Brass

Inverness High School String Group

Grantown Grammar String Group
Grantown Flute Group

Grantown Grammar Pipes
Kingussie High School Pipes
Badenoch & Strathspey Schools Pipe Band

Nairn Academy String Group
Nairn Wind

Glenurquhart High School Orchestra
Glenurquhart Primary School String Quartet
Kilchuimen Academy Ceilidh Band

East Ross Pipes & Drums School
Ross-shire Concert Band
Ross-shire Strings Orchestra
Gizzen Briggs & Junior Strings

Ullapool Folk Group
Gairloch & Ullapool Pipes
Ullapool & Gairloch Strings
Gairloch Pipes
Gairloch Folk Group

Portree High School Pipe Band
Lochalsh Pipe Band

Dingwall Academy Orchestra
Dingwall Academy String Group
Dingwall Academy Wind Band
Dingwall Academy Senior Wind
Dingwall Academy Pipes
Dingwall Area String Club
Dingwall Academy Brass Group

Tain Royal Academy Orchestra
Tain Royal Academy Strings
Tain Royal Academy Wind Band
Tain Royal Academy Jazz Band
Tain Royal Academy Senior Wind Group

Shortbread (Invergordon Academy)

Fortrose Academy Orchestra
Fortrose Academy Senior Strings
Fortrose Academy Ceilidh Band
Fortrose Academy Brass
Fortrose Academy Cello Group
Fortrose Academy Pipes
Black Isle Primary Strings
Tore Primary Brass
Avoch Primary Strings