

**NOTICES OF MOTION: HIGHLAND COUNCIL: 14 MAY 2026**

**Motion 1**

**Basic Income for Artists**

This Council notes:

- The importance of the Creative and Cultural sectors in the Highlands and Islands, in the context of an estimated overall Scottish Gross Value Added to the economy of £5,711m per annum. The Scottish Government's *A Culture Strategy for Scotland* emphasises that "Our creative industries make a unique and vital contribution to society and the economy."
- Following this Strategy document, a Culture Fair Work Taskforce was established. This Taskforce agreed that exploration of a Pilot Basic Income for Artists Scheme should be a next step for Scotland.
- Even in a big and respected sector, many artists have to juggle their creative work with various sources of income to make ends meet. Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation showed creatives' incomes to be well below what is needed to survive in the UK.
- A basic income can enable artists and creative arts workers to focus on their creative work, without having to enter into employment in other sectors to sustain themselves.
- Ireland's pilot *Basic Income for Artists* scheme, for three years from 2021, proved very successful: for every €1 invested, €1.39 was contributed to the wider economy through administrative and welfare savings, social impacts, and tax generated. And artists were able to devote more time to creative activity. Over €100 million was generated in social and economic benefits, according to the Irish Government's Department for Culture, Communications & Sport.

Accordingly, the Council agrees:

- To ask the new Scottish Government to liaise with Highland Council, sectoral stakeholders and across Government Departments to facilitate a Pilot *Basic Income for Artists* Scheme in Highland. This will serve to identify viability, resource, cost, and consequences, with potential national rollout in mind.
- This would make a clear statement of support for our creative and cultural sector, especially in light of Inverness-Highland being one of 9 locations longlisted to be UK City of Culture in 2029. This ambition reflects our pride in our city and region's cultural heritage and creativity.

**Signed:** Dr M Gregson      Mr C Ballance

**Section 95 Officer assessment of financial implications:**

This motion is not anticipated to have a financial implication to the Council. This presumes that any pilot scheme being facilitated by Scottish Government would also be funded by Scottish Government.

**Integrated Impact Assessment:**

<b>Area for Assessment</b>	<b>Assessment Summary</b>
<b>Equality</b>	No impact
<b>Poverty</b>	No impact
<b>Human Rights</b>	No impact
<b>Children's Rights</b>	No impact
<b>Data Rights</b>	No impact
<b>Rural/Island</b>	No impact
<b>Climate Change</b>	No impact

**Summary of Assessment:**

A summary of the integrated screening is outlined above. The motion requests Scottish Government to consider piloting a basic income for artists' scheme. There is not therefore anticipated to be any direct impact as a result of the motion, although should such a scheme be progressed, understanding impact would be an important part of any pilot.