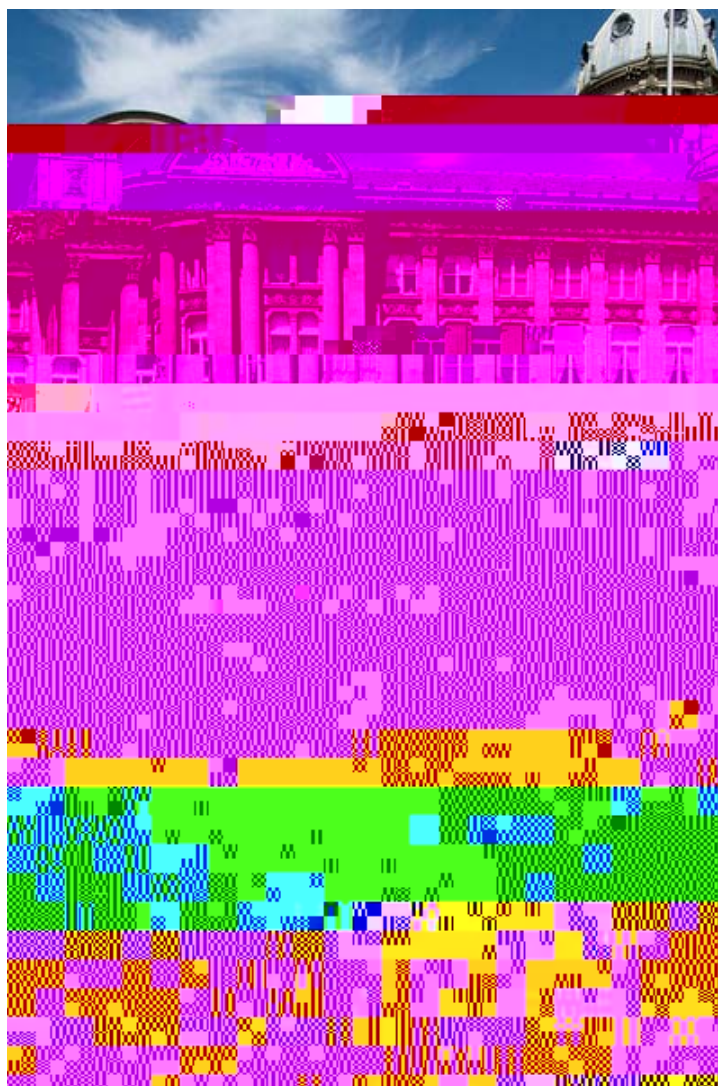


Destination Birmingham

Birmingham, A Music City

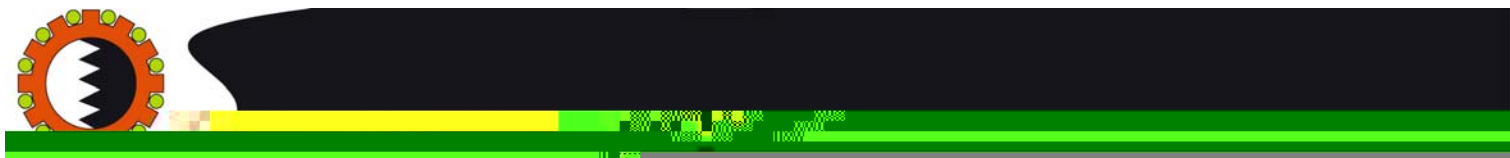


A report from Overview & Scrutiny



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Preface

By Cllr Philip Parkin,



Birmingham, A Music City



Summary

On 13th July 2011, the Leisure, Sport and Culture Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee agreed to undertake a Scrutiny Review exploring:

What role can and does popular music play in improving perceptions of Birmingham, both in attracting visitors to the city and in enhancing the quality of life of residents? How can this role be strengthened in Birmingham?

We chose to focus on popular music as there is interest in Birmingham in making more of this cultural and



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Our findings fall into two main areas: valuing popular music culture and music heritage.


Valuing Popular Music Culture

We found that Birmingham has a varied, vibrant and independent music scene. This is backed up by a good live music scene, with the right mix of venues and a good collection of independent festivals. There is a range of industry professionals at all points of production; however these tend to be small and largely unrecognised. Collectively there is little recognition outside Birmingham of what the city has to offer (both to fans/visitors and promoters/professionals).

We also recognised the value of popular music to Birmingham's residents: particularly as Birmingham is one of the youngest cities in Europe. However the culture that they are most interested in is sometimes seen as undervalued.

We agreed that there is a need to promote an understanding of the role popular music plays in the perceptions of a city and to embed this understanding in the cultural offer of the city, both its cultural value and tourism value.

A clear statement of policy would clarify and strengthen the City Council's objectives, giving reassurance and encouragement to private investment as well and e37--5.7.544(n)0.1i180714ell4elhnion iv2b62icy w15o7(o)1.9-



from national and international attractions and from the Home of Metal exhibition here in Birmingham demonstrate that this is an area that is worth serious investigation.

And whilst it is true Birmingham does not have a Beatles or Elvis equivalent, we should not underestimate the value of Birmingham's musical past – its role in the birth of heavy metal and British reggae and bhangra, the bands such as Black Sabbath and Duran Duran, and the diversity of Birmingham's "melting pot" music scene.

In Birmingham we have individuals committed to Birmingham's music heritage and plenty of ideas about how to celebrate it. The barriers seem to be prominence, strategy and infrastructure. There is no strategy in place, and little of the infrastructure needed to deliver a good visitor experience.

Some put that down to the inertia and indifference of the city's leading institutions; others to the fragmentation of the music sector in Birmingham. There's also no doubt that the diversity of Birmingham's musical heritage is both a strength and drawback.

We believe that Birmingham could and should do more to celebrate its diverse musical heritage. From our discussion, the benefits broadly fall into two interlinked categories:

- Tourism: to provide a focal point for visitors and celebrations and improve external perceptions of Birmingham and what the city has to offer;
- Community education: so Birmingham residents (in particular young people) know what there is to celebrate here and improve internal perceptions and augment civic pride.

There is plenty to celebrate here in Birmingham and plenty of people who not only want to celebrate but would be willing to put in work to do so. One recent example is the Home of Metal exhibition, which garnered national and international attention. We recommend that the City Council should support efforts to find a permanent home for a part of the exhibition, and explore other options for a space to celebrate music heritage.

We also recommend that the City Council work with potential partners to develop a heritage plaque scheme for the city; and set out how this would be backed up with city wide marketing/events.



Summary of Recommendations

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R01	<p>That the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture and the Cabinet Member for Transport, Environment and Regeneration work together to ensure that the cultural and economic value of music heritage and popular music sector to the City is recognised and embedded in cultural and economic policy. This should include:</p> <p>a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the partners in the Cultural Partnership to ensure explicit reference is made in the Cultural Strategy; and <p>b</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better representation from independent music sector on the Cultural Partnership Working with the partners to ensure explicit reference is made in any future Creative Industries Strategy. 	<p>Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Transport, Environment and Regeneration</p>	September 2012
R02	<p>That the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture work with Marketing Birmingham to set up a "Music Birmingham" contact/office for the independent popular music sector within Birmingham and outside. This role would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with stakeholders in the popular music sector to implement a 'Music Charter' to progress actions to support the Cultural and Creative Industries Strategies; Be the face of the City Council for the popular music sector; Work across different areas of the City Council to progress actions. 	<p>Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Transport, Environment and Regeneration</p>	September 2012
R03	<p>That the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture (and partners) support efforts, over the next 6 months, to find a temporary exhibition space for a music heritage exhibition in Birmingham which focuses on the local roots of heavy metal music, following the recent success of the Capsule-curated Home of Metal exhibition at BMAG. Options include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using BMAG's Waterhall in summer 2012, subject to its availability and the exhibition's compatibility with the venue's essential income generating requirements; Working with partners to assist in finding a commercial home. 	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture	September 2012

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R04	<p>Building on the experience in R03, that the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport & Culture explore other options for a space to celebrate music heritage. These include supporting the inclusion of displays about Birmingham's musical heritage in BMAG's plans for post-1945 Modern Birmingham History galleries, which form part of a later phase of its long term masterplan.</p> <p>As part of this, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture should work with partners to celebrate the reunion of Black Sabbath in 2012.</p>	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture	June 2012
R05	The Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture should work with potential partners (e.g. PRS) to develop a heritage plaque scheme for the city; and set out how this would be backed up with city wide marketing/events.	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture	December 2012
R06	The Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture should continue to explore opportunities to develop a music digital archive linked to the Library of Birmingham.	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture	June 2012
R07	That the Cabinet Member for Transport, Environment and Regeneration work with the International Trade Team at Birmingham Chamber of Commerce to provide advice and support to enable Birmingham businesses, who meet the eligibility criteria, to have a presence at MIDEM.	<p>Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Transport, Environment and Regeneration</p>	December 2012

R08

That the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture investigate bringing a high profile music event to the city, such as Heavy Metal Awards,

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Birmingham, A Music City

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R10	<p>That the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture work with the Cultural Partnership and Marketing Birmingham to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce a stocktake of local music industry;• Support re-development of visitbirmingham.com to include more user generated content.	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture	

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Review

1.1.1 On 13th July 2011, the Leisure, Sport and Culture Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee agreed to undertake a Scrutiny Review exploring:

What role can and does popular music play in improving perceptions of Birmingham, both in attracting visitors to the city and in enhancing the quality of life of residents? How can this role be strengthened in Birmingham?

1.1.2 The Committee was keen to examine this question in the context of the development of the city's cultural identity and sense of place. This in turn will help to ensure that "Birmingham is a city where business can thrive and recruit and retain key staff because it is a place where people want to live and work" and enhance "our reputation and influence as a global city, positioning and profiling Birmingham as a vibrant, cosmopolitan, modern and desirable destination with a strong international, community and sports event programme."²

Why Popular Music?

1.1.3 There have been a number of attempts to define "popular music", but our approach in this report



2 Background

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 There were a number of starting points for this Scrutiny Review, but a key catalyst was the publication of UK Music's "Destination Music: The Contribution of Music Festivals and Major Concerts to Tourism in the UK".⁸ The report professes to be "the most comprehensive study ever undertaken on the power of music as a tourist draw, and to give this a value in economic terms."

2.1.2 We also looked to build on research undertaken by Cllr Ernie Hendricks over the last three years. He was asked by the then Cabinet Member for Regeneration to lead consultations with the



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- More than 100,000 people in the UK derive their main source of income from the music industry; 7% of those are based in the West Midlands and around 25% are based in London;⁹
- There are almost 14,000 music-based businesses in the UK and 12% of those have an annual turnover in excess of £1 million.⁹

2.2.3 People's listening habits are changing but, as record sales decline, the live music scene has been growing over the last decade.

2.2.4 The Cultural Impact Study found that city based cultural organisations contributed £271m to the region's economy per year. They calculated a Return on Investment on Birmingham City Council's funding for cultural activities generally and estimated that for every £1 of funding, £29 is generated for the region's economy. Including the Arts Council England's investment, this translated to £11 for every £1 spent.

2.2.5 A report completed in 2007 found that classical music creates a direct value to the region of at least £55 million annually. With the addition of income generated by promoting venues and ensembles (their annual turnover) and work done overseas, the annual impact figure is boosted to more than £67 million. The study found that for every £1 of public sector investment in classical music, it is estimated that £10 is generated.¹²

2.2.6 The indirect value is also important. Throughout our evidence gathering the importance of popular music in the reputations of Manchester and Liverpool were emphasised. The "Madchester" era in Manchester (late 1980s to the early 1990s) is credited with pushing the University of Manchester to being one of the most sought after universities in the country, boosting the city's media and creative industries and, more recently, generating interest in Manchester's musical heritage. As the Financial Times noted in 2010:


The music and nightclub scene that put the city on the global map in the late 1980s bankrupted its creator, the Hacienda club. But it stimulated a creative and cultural renaissance that has brought in billions of pounds of business ... It also has a pull. The universities remain among the most popular in the country. Many students get hooked on the place and stay.¹³

Music Tourism

2.2.7 The figures on music tourism are particularly compelling. We were told by Marketing Birmingham that the visitor economy accounts for 10% of the local economy; supports 60,000 full time equivalent jobs; and has seen a 57% increase over last 6 years.

¹² *Making a Noise, The Economic Impact of Classical Music in the West Midlands*, Arts Council England, 2007, p3

¹³ FT.com *Manchester: The 1980s generation was not so mad after all – it is running the place now* by Andrew Bounds, 25 May 2010



2.2.8 Nationally, music ranks highly as a reason for visitors to come to the UK: a National Brand Index survey, based on interviews with 20,000 individuals worldwide, ranked the UK fourth in the world for being an “interesting and exciting place for contemporary culture such as music, films, art and literature”. Another study conducted in 2008 estimated that destination-driven trips account for 75% of all music tourism and approximately 55 million annual visits worldwide (including domestic and international travel).¹⁴

2.2.9 There are a number of facets to music tourism, including live music events and heritage:

[Music tourism] relies on evidence of cultural activities, incidents from the past, and tangible artefacts that can be photographed.¹⁵

2.2.10 UK Music¹⁶ defined two types of music tourist for the purposes of their research:

- Domestic music tourist: someone who booked a ticket to a live music event in advance, and who travelled outside their home region (or home nation in the case of Scotland, Wales and



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2.2.14 The major concerts and music festivals that took place across the UK attracted more than 7.7 million visits from those defined as a music tourist, overseas and domestic combined. They spent £1.4 billion in total during the course of their trip. While overseas visitors accounted for 5% of music tourists in terms of numbers, they accounted for 18% of spending. UK Music calculated that, on average, music tourists made up 41% of the audience at large concerts and 48% of people at music festivals.

This great music migration is boosting the UK's economy to the tune of at least £864 million and sustaining the equivalent of at least 19,700 full time jobs.

2.2.15 Music tourists in the West Midlands spent at least £138 million¹⁸ a year, benefiting the West Midlands economy by £48 million a year in terms of GVA (Gross value added) and sustaining the equivalent of 1,202 full time jobs.

2.2.16 However, there were some warnings:

- No one organisation has strategic oversight for music-driven tourism - music tourism is not

- 48% agreed that the city's cultural provision is an extra reason for friends and relations to come and visit them;
- 73% said the cultural provision makes the city vibrant and exciting;
- 49% believed that the arts makes the region unique and different;
- 64% were proud of the skills, imagination and creativity in the city;
- 76% agreed that the cultural provision reflects the city's diversity and different cultures and 54% believed it celebrates the city's rich heritage;
- 76% believe the arts provide opportunities for people to come together and share experiences.

2.3 Birmingham's Independent Music Sector

2.3.1 Work undertaken by Cllr Hendricks aimed to assess how Birmingham City Council and its partners in the public and private sectors can best support the independent music sector. The report made recommendations for stakeholder interventions for the independent music sector in Birmingham based on the views of local music personnel, business and employers, initiatives from national agencies, priorities from local and regional agencies, market and sector trends and opportunities. The research was informed and driven by a small stakeholder group chaired by Cllr Hendricks.

2.3.2 This group looked at the music sector in Birmingham across all points of production (studios, producers, musicians, labels, promoters, venues, media, freelance activists, publicist), noting that:

Too often ... this vast grass roots focus on making music, and for many that means original content, is perhaps not reflected at a local level through a co-ordinated effort of agencies to smooth the path to progress, growth and development as if this sector more than other is something elusive or hard to hold on to.

2.3.3 The work was also prompted by the fact that initiatives in this area were spread across a number of subject areas and disciplines. Within the City Council, support had traditionally come from three different portfolios – Leisure, Regeneration and Corporate Communications. At the time, a mirror-image pattern was discernable across key stakeholders at the time such as Advantage West Midlands (AWM), Arts Council England and the Chamber of Commerce who were responsible for funding a number of support packages and projects with different criteria.

2.3.4 Whilst there were some successes, there was no coherent plan, with each working independently from the other, which resulted in duplication of effort and limited value gained for the money spent. In addition, those who needed support or guidance did not know where to go.

The sector in Birmingham is diverse and is as likely to network nationally or even internationally as it is locally.



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2.3.5 The report, *Punching Below Our Weight*, listed six key recommendations:

- The independent music sector must be recognized as a major cultural asset and an economic opportunity for the city;
- A clear five-year plan is required, articulating sector ambitions;
- The city should create a credible Independent Music Action Group drawn from the sector;
- The action group must work at a strategic level with stakeholders continually monitoring, updating and implementing;
- The city must collaborate more closely with business, cultural and educational sectors to enable and support start-ups, SMEs artists, entrepreneurs and innovators;
- A long-term approach to the branding and profile of Birmingham in an independent music context must be established and maintained.

2.3.6 Other reports have come to similar conclusions. The 2008 *Vision for the Music Industry in the West Midlands* made four recommendations, focusing on:

- Creating all activities with a longer term goal in mind;
- Information flow and dissemination;
- Networks, Mentoring and Learning;
- Raising the Profile of the West Midlands and its Music.

2.4 Summary

2.4.1 A 2007 economic study provided evidence that classical music creates a direct value to the region. No comparable study has been completed with regards to the many other types of music enjoyed by residents of, and visitors to, Birmingham. However, there is a growing evidence base of indicative data that suggests that the popular music sector can and does have a significant economic impact and is valued by residents of the city.

2.4.2 Most recently UK Music's report, which quantified spend by overseas and domestic music tourists, laid down a challenge to public bodies, noting that "there is a role for policy-makers and tourism bodies to realise the potential of this considerable economic asset". We know from our discussions with UK Music that other cities are responding to this challenge.

2.4.3 The benefits for Birmingham lie not only in the direct spend identified but as means of enhancing civic pride and supporting further economic growth by augmenting the marketing and financial value associated with the city.

2.4.4 The previous studies that have looked at Birmingham's independent music sector remind us that the issue is not a new one. In our evidence gathering, we explored some of the themes to emerge from this work, and asked how best we could take this forward.

3 Birmingham's Music Heritage

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 One of UK Music's recommendations in "Destination Music" is:

Tourism authorities and local economic partnerships should capitalise on the unique musical strength and heritage of each region and nation with specific campaigns and packages including transportation and accommodation.

3.1.2 This prompted us to ask: how do we, in Birmingham, celebrate our musical past? How does this compare to other local authorities? What role could musical heritage play in improving perceptions of Birmingham?

3.1.3 There is plenty of evidence that heritage is a significant component of the tourism industry: according to UNESCO, cultural and natural heritage tourism is "the most rapidly growing international sector of the tourism industry".¹⁹ The most famous examples of music destinations attract millions of visitors each year: for example Nashville 'Music City', (epicentre of the country music industry) has 11 million visits each year; and Memphis (rock and roll, Elvis Presley, Blues and 1960s Soul heritage) has 11 million visitors annually, with Graceland (Elvis' home in Memphis) receiving 520,000 visitors annually (second only in attendance volume to the White House).

3.1.4 Closer to home, around 225,000 people visited the Beatles Story Museum in Liverpool in 2010 (an increase of 14% on the previous year) and 35,000 took the Magical Mystery Tour, a bus trip around the main Liverpool Beatles sites. 40% of all tourism to Liverpool is Beatles based.


3.1.5 There is further evidence that music heritage trips are "more frequently undertaken by middle-aged and older consumers" with "strong representation among more affluent socio-economic groups".²⁰

3.1.6 We held one evidence gathering session specifically on heritage, speaking to witnesses who were involved in music heritage projects in Birmingham. The value of music heritage also came up in subsequent sessions: witnesses emphasising Birmingham's diverse and unique musical heritage.

3.1.7



Birmingham, A Music City



3.2.7 Creating a sense of civic pride was important to the curators, so the exhibition was located in the Gas Hall in Birmingham. Around 16,000 people visited the exhibition, and generated £1.6m for the local economy. The press coverage was unprecedented – it was one of the big events in Birmingham this year that made it into the national media and consequently reached international audiences. The diverse media coverage included national newspapers, the BBC and a 30 minute documentary on Sky. Some of the comments generated included:

Full Metal Racket: Birmingham has been slow to celebrate its heavy mob. A new



Birmingham Popular Music Archive (BPMA)

3.2.13 The Birmingham Popular Music Archive is a digital hub and has been created to recognise and celebrate Birmingham's rich musical heritage. The Archive was set up in 2008 and people can send content – stories, pictures, ticket stubs, videos – to be uploaded (which is done in the creator's own time) or comment on stories with their own experiences:

Our rather big ambition is to capture the entire history of popular music in and from the city.²³

3.2.14 The site has over 360 user-generated pages of content, adding to knowledge about Birmingham and its music, with an active community approaching 500 individual users. Funding received by the project totalled £5,000.

3.2.15 The BPMA is also developing with the Civic Society a new scheme to identify places of musical historical importance (similar to Blue Plaques) and hopefully this will lead onto the development of tourist trail incorporating such sites.

3.2.16 The BPMA has also been involved with two BBC broadcast radio productions about local music; Phil Lynott of Thin Lizzy (born in Selly Oak) and UB40.

Made In Birmingham: Reggae Punk Bhangra (2010)

3.2.17 The film *Made In Birmingham – Reggae Punk Bhangra* (a sister project of the BPMA) explores the social, political and cultural issues that gave rise to music emanating from the city using rare archive footage and interviews to shed new insight into the city and its music.

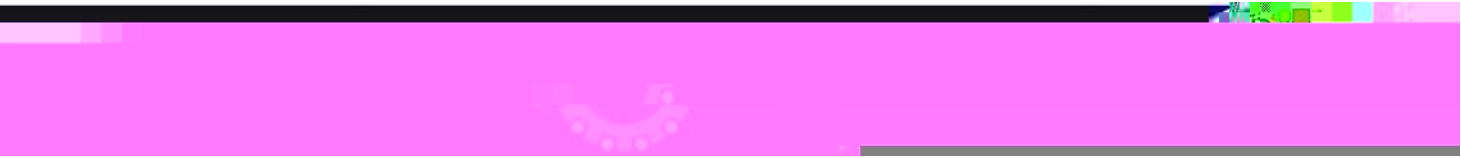
3.2.18 The film has been shown around the world, including being played to over 70,000 people at the 'plug in' exhibition and at selected cinemas across the country. It has also been chosen to screen at International Film Festivals with the latest one at NXNE in Toronto, Canada and is currently being shown at the London Underground Film Festival and as part of The Public's Art of Noise exhibition.

3.2.19 However, although shown at Artsfest, there will be many residents in Birmingham who have yet to see the film.

3.3 Birmingham's Diverse Heritage

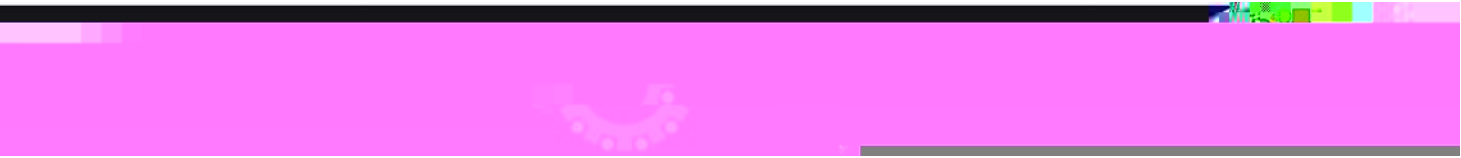
3.3.1 Much of the focus on Birmingham's musical heritage in recent months has been on heavy metal, because of the success of the Home of Metal Exhibition. However, one of the things that stood out during our evidence gathering sessions was the diversity of music that has originated in Birmingham. Witnesses told us that Birmingham is the birthplace of British reggae and bhangra.


²³ birminghammusicarchive.com/?page_id=177





Birmingham, A Music City



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- 3.6.4 David Leaver and Lawrence Green along with the Director of Tourism in Liverpool, developed the “Liverpool matrix”, which provides a checklist for the development of the supply side of the tourism offer. It suggests that “all [these] elements need to be in harmony to provide the best visitor contextual experience” (see Table 1).

3.7 How Should we Celebrate Music Heritage in Birmingham?

- 3.7.1 Our evidence gathering sessions generated a number



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- Rochdale has a plaque on the Kenion St Music Building where bands from Manchester,



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- 3.7.10 We have already seen that the Birmingham Music Heritage Foundation is developing a tourist trail, with video and audio quotes from celebrated artists for use with smart phone applications.
- 3.7.11 Birmingham does currently have a company, Birmingham Tours, running bus and walking tours around the city. However, none focus specifically on music or artist related venues. Part of the difficulty here is that a number of buildings associated with music or artists are no longer in existence or have different uses. A trail/tour would support the need for something physical – such as a plaque – to connect people to the location.
- 3.7.12 However there are different and imaginative ways of connecting fans to music. For example a road in Melbourne was renamed ACDC Lane due to the band AC/DC's ties to Melbourne. A local broadcaster said:
- ... renaming this lane associates Melbourne with AC/DC, and fans, from interstate and internationally, will go there and have an AC/DC experience.³³
- 3.7.13 The lane is in the city's bar and rock district. Melbourne did not just pick any road, nor one with a purely historical connection, but one in the rock district with a bar for fans to visit. Grounding any heritage attraction with what is currently going on in the city was seen as crucial.

Digital Technologies

- 3.7.14 The pros and cons of digital archives/maps/trails was also considered. We have already mentioned that some of the physical proposals (plaques and trails) are to be linked to digital media. These

- 3.7.15 Witnesses were generally however in favour of using such technologies alongside physical assets, not as a replacement for them. The option of downloading a mobile phone application or 'app' was suggested as one way in which music tourists could digest further information of interest and make connections to an area or venue of interest ahead and during their visit to the city.

Permanent Exhibition Space

- 3.7.16 The success of the Home of Metal exhibition raised the issue of whether Birmingham needs a permanent exhibition/museum space dedicated to music. To some of our witnesses, the case was clear: properly curated and credible exhibitions can generate enormous interest, bring visitors to the city and act as a focal point for events, conferences etc.
- 3.7.17 For others, the jury is still out. The experience of Sheffield's National Centre for Popular Music acts as a salutary warning for anyone considering such an idea. The issues are sustainability and credibility. The viability of such a space would be questionable without rotating exhibitions; the size and nature of the venue all important. Authenticity and credibility with the industry and with fans is crucial – pop music is and always has been "bottom up".
- 3.7.18 There are successful ventures: in 1987, a number of interested individuals discussed the need for the establishment of some form of archive for jazz. The result was the National Jazz Foundation Archive and, eventually, the National Jazz Archive in Loughton Library, Essex. Essex County Council supported the archive and offered the accommodation.
- 3.7.19 This experience recognises two things: firstly that without a focal point, a nationally recognised archive, "there was some concern that collections in the hands of private individuals might ultimately be lost if no arrangements could be made to safeguard them". Secondly, the Archive is supported by a programme of events, concerts and conferences. Keeping interest alive is key.
- 3.7.20 There was some support for a "proper Birmingham Music Archive within the new library". As one witness put it:
- ... offering access to recordings and memorabilia of the Birmingham scene with a timeline, would help provide an informed perspective on the contributions made to the national and international music scene by Birmingham musicians, but also it should honour artists who have been local heroes without necessarily reaching a national consciousness.

3.8 Summary

- 3.8.1 There is strong evidence that heritage attractions are a significant component of a tourism "offer" to visitors, and that this is equally true with regard to music heritage. Whilst there is not the evidence available for a clear business case, the visitor and economic impact figures from national and international attractions and from the Home of Metal exhibition here in Birmingham demonstrate that this is an area that is worth serious investigation.



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3.8.2 And whilst it is true Birmingham does not have a Beatles or Elvis equivalent, we should not

4 Birmingham Today: A Music City?

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The second focus of our evidence gathering was Birmingham's independent music sector – to what extent is Birmingham a city of music today? In particular we asked what are Birmingham's strengths and weaknesses?

4.1.2 This chapter will set out the findings from those witnesses involved in the music industry in Birmingham. We spoke to as wide a range of people involved in the independent sector as we could in the time available, including an unsigned band, record label owners, promoters, venue

- 4.2.9 Sound It Out run successful volunteering and mentoring programmes for young people which have enabled young people to engage with the music industry and learn about career opportunities while gaining practical experience. Many have then gone onto formal higher education qualifications in music, work placements or employment, the majority of which have been local.
- 4.2.10 A linked issue is that of rehearsal rooms, although not raised in this Scrutiny Review very often it has been recognised as an issue nationally. UK Music, working with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and others, has helped fund a pilot scheme of 14 music rehearsal spaces for young people (Government put up an initial £500,000; local authorities and other sources such as Youth Music have provided the rest). These are all based in areas of multiple deprivation and are all free, or nearly free, to access. There are three in the Birmingham area: the Mason Youth Centre, the Pump House and also one recently opened in Coventry.

Working Together

- 4.2.11 The small size of the sector might appear to lend itself to close working and collaboration across the sector but, as were told repeatedly, Birmingham has always been a “strange scene”, a melting pot with no one single stand-out genre.
- 4.2.12 This perhaps more than anything else has contributed to the lack of progress in bringing the independent music sector together to provide a coherent voice.
- 4.2.13 There have been attempts to bring the sector together in the past, and a number of witnesses commented that they had been invited to meetings over the last ten years to discuss the same issues as those covered in our evidence gathering sessions. Yet there is no discernable voice advocating for the independent music sector in Birmingham. Views are mixed on why that is the case: mistakes made, high expectations, wrong timing, to name a few.
- 4.2.14 There are some groups working today:
- Music West Midlands (MWM): launched 2004, MWM is dedicated to the development, production and marketing of the region's music. Music West Midlands aimed to become the lead agency for the Business of Music across all plat



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- Reggae Baby Lounge presents an opportunity for promoters to see new and established Birmingham Based reggae performers, songwriter and bands;
- Birmingham Music Network is a voluntary social enterprise organisation that was set up in the year 2000 to allow those keen to get into the music industry to informally meet and share information, gain knowledge and receive advice from those that are already in the local industry. Meetings are held on a monthly basis and the agenda is set by attendees.

4.2.15 Nevertheless many were of the view that there are “individual pockets” of activity but “without a platform for sharing ideas and mutual co-operation”.

The will and energy is there but there needs to be better coordination and contact between groups and interested individuals to take a holistic approach to promoting Birmingham music, both as an active force and as an archive.

4.2.16 We explored with our witnesses what groups or partnerships are in existence within sector, and whether there is a role for such a group. Cllr Hendricks concluded very strongly that there was a role for a “strategic music forum”, made up of sector representatives, drawn from all areas of the sector. This forum would work with stakeholders to influence planning and strategy; monitor





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4.3.10 Smaller venues range from the newly opened Birmingham Ballroom to one of the many pub live music venues in the city. The **Birmingham Ballroom** re-opened in September 2011 and provides three live music and club night venues: the Ballroom (3,000 capacity), The Other Room (600 capacity), and The End (200 ca

Festivals

4.3.17 There are a wide variety of music festivals held within Birmingham, including this year:

- Mostly Jazz, July 2011;
- Birmingham International Jazz Festival, July 2011;
- BE Festival, July 2011;
- Espirito Brum, September 2011;
-



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- PR and Marketing: regional media (dwindling print outlets for arts coverage / patchy provision online) and visibility (the challenge of making an impact in the city-centre and outer areas);
- Finance and administration: staffing (shortage of skilled event producers in the region and leadership development); financial planning (Bir



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Live music promotion is mostly done through flyers and through venue/promoter websites, though these are not always updated or lack information. A comprehensive website of live music/venue/artist information would be useful.

4.4.6 They felt that we compared poorly to other major cities, and there was a feeling that local media, both print and tv/radio did not cover local music as well as it could:

Encouragement to local radi

- Using international events such as MIDEM or South by South West to promote the city.

4.4.13 The idea of a **large annual event** has been tried before, with Gigbeth, a music festival showcasing local bands from a range of musical genres. Witnesses recognised that this had drawn attention to the city and had a real push for Birmingham based bands. Other cities host events such as Liverpool Sound 2uch]d Inhe ci5.5(o)ch] (Mc-5(e)sTJ22.754918 TD0.0002 Tc0.025039w[(surna)



4.5 Summary

- 4.5.1 From our discussions, it was clear that the independent music sector is represented in Birmingham but not presenting a coherent voice. Co-ordination and the ability to articulate the sector's needs is needed to help support new bands and retain talent in the city.
- 4.5.2 The owners and managers of venues that we spoke to were keen on working together to ensure

Manchester – In the City was founded in 1992 by Factory Records boss Tony Wilson with partner Yvette Livesey as a platform for unsigned acts to prove their worth to the music industry.

It took place annually during October (last held in 2010) at various venues around Manchester's Piccadilly and Northern Quarter. It was considered Europe's largest city based music festival³⁹ and was a ticketed event.

In the City acted as a music trade show during the day with various panel discussions focused on the business side of things from issues of the day to helping those that are new to the industry. It was also a networking opportunity enabling new business relationships to flourish.

Brighton's Great Escape Festival was founded in 2006 and takes place in Brighton over three days in May. The festival is composed of pre-publicised performances and impromptu street gigs; a Convention and the Alternative Escape.

Performances include over 300 bands playing in 30 venues, plus impromptu street gigs, numerous club nights, label parties, industry showcases, unique collaborations and outdoor gigs.

The Convention consists of panels and debates for music industry delegates, key note interviews, short Q&A sessions, case studies and educational workshops. This is attended by over 3000 delegates annually and takes place in The Brighton Dome. The programme runs daily between 10am and 5pm. The Alternative Escape runs alongside the festival for labels, promoters and organisers to showcase their latest signings.

³⁹ musicians.about.com/od/musictradeshows/p/inthecity.htm



5 The Role of Birmingham City Council

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 As noted in Section 4.1, one of the themes to emerge from our discussions was about the sector's relationships with the City Council. This corresponded with our third line of enquiry: what can the City Council do practically to help? How can it most effectively deploy its resources, expertise and position?

5.1.2 Views on how involved the City Council should be in this area (and to what extent it should simply get out of the way) were varied. Whilst some criticised an apparent lack of interest in music in the city from the City Council; others were wary of the City Council taking too great a role and stifling creativity.

5.1.3 In this chapter, we look at some of the areas our witnesses suggested could be improved:

- Setting strategy and priorities;
- Contacts and networks;
- Promotion and marketing.

5.2 Strategy and Priorities

5.2.1 The need for a strategy and clear priorities came up in our discussions in a number of guises. Firstly, a clear strategy for the city would guide public investment – of which there has been some in recent years, but this has been ad hoc, uncoordinated and not targeted. This in turn led to few obvious long term outcomes which served to increase disaffection in the sector.


5.2.2 A public statement of support for the sector would also give confidence to private investment and help to reverse the perceived lack of incentive to stay in the city.

5.2.3 Secondly, it would facilitate the influencing of related policy and service delivery, for example licensing and public transport, and ensure that policies were not contradictory in this area, which was the perception of our witnesses.

Current City Council Policy

5.2.4 Cultural policy for the City Council is primarily contained within the Cultural Strategy. It was developed by the Birmingham Cultural Partnership (BCP) who are responsible for overseeing its delivery. Whilst popular music is rarely explicitly referred to, there are four strategic themes which include key actions relating to activity we have mentioned in this report, albeit generically:

- Culture on your doorstep: including promoting unique heritage sites located in local neighbourhoods (e.g. Community Museums) and develop their use as venues for a wide range




of cultural activities; and supporting events which bring local residents together to share cultural experiences;

- Next generation: ensuring young people's voices are central to cultural planning and delivery in Birmingham through increased representation of young people on boards of cultural and sporting organisations and encouragement of youth panels;
- Stronger cultural and creative industries, including the need for a new creative industries joint investment strategy and draw up action plans to progress the development of key growth sectors (including music);
- A great international city of the future: including establishing a new eight week Autumn Festival and supporting the development of significant smaller "niche" events; creating new



The Local Enterprise Partnership – Creative City

- 5.2.9 Another significant arm of local policy is the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) – the business and local authority led body tasked with driving economic growth and job creation in economic areas. The Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP⁴² (GBSLEP) have approved a framework for an economic strategy with three key components: Business, People and Place. The latter strand includes transport, planning and other infrastructure needs. Most recently, the Creative City was announced on 25 October 2011.
- 5.2.10 This initiative will bring together public and private sector investment in a new fund for Birmingham and the LEP area, to support activities and projects linked to the economic strategy, so that culture and creativity are harnessed as a force to drive recovery. At its core is a proposal for a museum quarter in around Curzon Street, including a new contemporary arts museum and



5.2.16 The Licensing Act 2003 states that persons and / or premises that wish to provide entertainment (including dance performances, live music performances or the playing of recorded music) must obtain a license from the City Council. The City Council must act in accordance with the legislation, including promoting the four objectives underlying the licensing law:

- Prevention of Crime and Disorder;
- Prevention of Public Nuisance;
- Protection of Children from Harm;
- Public Safety.

5.2.17 There are a number of national issues stemming from the 2003 Act. UK Music, in Destination Music, recommend that:

Central Government should encourage live music at c-0.00c atg o.2(e)4(ag)6.2(h)s s7ih



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- 
- Taxis and Private Hire vehicles became a more attractive way of travelling home from a night



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I've personally found communication a little difficult. I deposited a large number of cassette recordings of local band demos and unreleased material with the library two to three years ago for an archive after talking to the music

Film Birmingham

Film Birmingham was established by Birmingham City Council in February 2006 to attract filming to Birmingham and so increase the impact of this sector on the local economy. It offers a one-stop shop for location searches and by liaising with Council departments and external bodies to facilitate related issues such as road closure, recruitment of extras and access to funding.

Birmingham established a Film Charter when Film Birmingham was initiated. The Film Charter sets out how the Council, across all its services, will deal with filming requests in order to increase the quantity and quality of filming (features, documentary and television) in the City in order to generate economic impact for Birmingham.

The Film Office was initially staffed by a Director and a Liaison Officer, funded by the lottery through the Arts Service's Urban Fusion Programme. When this funded ended, the Leader of the Council committed to fund the ongoing running of Film Birmingham and provided a budget to March 2013 to support one full-time manager and the film office running costs.

Recent achievements

- Improved levels of filming in the City with over 1,200 requests in year ending March 2011, which is a 50% increase on requests for 2010;
- Attracted and continuing to support feature film making: last year saw 'Toast' (starring Freddie Highmore and Helena Bonham-Carter) and 'Tezz' a Bollywood production (starring Anil Kapoor) filmed in the City;
- Attracted and continuing to support television drama making in the city: the BBC's Hustle will be filmed in Birmingham for the third year; a new 5-part BBC drama series, 'Line of Duty', will be filmed in Birmingham later this year. Ruby Films who produced 'Toast', will be returning to make a new 5-part BBC series 'Dancing on The Edge', which is being directed by the world renown Stephen Poliakoff.
- The website has been redesigned and re-launched to enable on-line film requests, showcase the success of previous filming in the City and allow greater interaction/feedback from the public.

Current activity

Currently, Film Birmingham is working to support a range of prospective and scheduled filming including; Hustle, Line of Duty, Dancing on the Edge, Doctors, Gadget Show, X Factor, Monster Munchies, Live From the Clinic, Fifth Gear, Xtra Factor, Peter Andre – Here to help.

Economic Impact

From April 2010 to present end of March 2011, there were 1,296 requests to film with a total economic impact of £5,894,000.



- 5.3.4 Advice and guidance is offered by the City Council's Culture Commissioning team. This includes the facilitating sector groups (e.g. small arts organisations group) and events promotion (if linked to the City Council).
- 5.3.5 Business support was also mentioned. We were told that the Birmingham business hub aimed at improving access and take up of business support across the City and GBSLEP has been set up. The hub based at Baskerville House, includes representatives from key business support organisations such as Marketing Birmingham, GBSLEP, the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, Finance Birmingham, ART and Birmingham Forward. The City Council is supportive of the concept and will also have a small team based in the hub

5.4 Promotion and Marketing

- 5.4.1 We have already discussed the various issues relating to perceptions of Birmingham and how events and gigs are marketed in the city (see Chapter 4). We considered the role the City Council could play in this.
- 5.4.2 Broadly, witnesses wanted to see perceptions of Birmingham, nationally and internationally, improved. Cllr Hendricks also found this in his research:
- Birmingham music businesses see a strong profile for Birmingham as intrinsic to their success
- 5.4.3 There were also issues around promoting smaller venues and festivals within the city – these tend not to have large budgets and so marketing costs can often be prohibitive (see Chapter 4). This was therefore another area where there was real support for City Council assistance. The advantages for the city would be in helping those smaller, independent festivals and events which give the city vibrancy and make it attractive to visitors. Good marketing creates conversations about what Birmingham has to offer, both within and outside Birmingham.
- 5.4.4 Our witnesses were not asking for large amounts of money, but better access to marketing routes. They also wanted more public recognition for the work done in bringing people to the city – as one said: “it would be nice, when somebody does something good, Birmingham City Council notices”.
- 5.4.5 This section therefore considers three areas where the City Council have a direct impact:
- Marketing Birmingham;
 - Council owned/managed advertising opportunities;
 - Distribution of printed material.

Marketing Birmingham

- 5.4.6 Leading on promoting Birmingham as a visitor destination and a focus for inward investment within Birmingham is Marketing Birmingham – the city's strategic marketing partnership. Marketing





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5.4.12 Marketing Birmingham told us that Visitbirmingham.com is in the process of being re-developed, including greater use of user generated content on the website. This development will benefit Birmingham's music sector, in particular the smaller events, venues and gigs. However:

... it should be noted that there has been a move in recent years for contemporary performers to communicate with their niche audiences directly rather than through intermediaries. Therefore, it should be recognised that websites such as visitbirmingham.com will remain more attractive to the mass market and associated tourism activity.

5.4.13 Marketing Birmingham successfully applied for ERDF funds to "increase the volume and value of tourism to the programme area". £2.5m has been allocated to the promotion of leisure tourism, including:

- £300,000 allocated to support independent festivals develop their international markets. Grants will be given to those which demonstrate relevance to the programme and an ability to deliver the overarching objectives of jobs creation and the growth of the visitor economy;
- £300,000 allocated to market the project area as a cultural destination. Packages will be created to link cultural venues to other visitor economy businesses, such as hotels and transport providers, and create an attractive proposition for national and international visitors.

5.4.14 The budgets are fairly specific, as set out in the original bid document however the wider project will also reference music in its promotional activity.

5.4.15 Marketing Birmingham are also working with Visit England, who are in the early stages of a project to combine the UK's entire musical heritage into one offer and to package it as a powerful and compelling story. The concept involves prominent cities, such as Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool etc, looking at joint ways to use the theme of music to boost visitor volume and value. An independent working group has been established to consider this approach and take forward and maximise all marketing opportunities.

Advertising

Even in the internet age, access to space for posters and flyers in such quarters has its impact.

5.4.16 We have already mentioned in Chapter 4 the issues smaller venue owner/managers and festival organisers have: the lack of opportunity for displaying posters and the rethestco2tion for22.0ci(rtisil)-onac

5.4.17 Whilst these views came predominantly from the smaller venue/festival end of the sector, these concerns were shared by some of the larger venues – partly because they are often involved in promoting lesser-known acts, but also because of the benefits to them of being part of a looser network of independent venues and events.

5.4.18 Recently, the City Council has created a small business and commercial development team to deliver a more strategic and commercial approach to the use of its advertising assets. There are four elements to this:

- Managing the JC Decaux contract for the Council Information Posters Network, which includes two poster network sites with 88 poster sites each (these can be booked in two week slots at a cost of £1,250.00 per network). This contract expires in 2014 and the renegotiation process will take place in early 2012;
- Implementation and management of a new contract for the management of City-owned sites not currently occupied and/or let for advertising purposes;
- A review of the City Dressing Portfolio (banners, scrolls, planter boards etc), which offers the opportunity to promote events and campaigns;
- Maximising sponsorship/partnerships to support City's activities and events: a procurement exercise is planned to consider the benefits of appointing partner who will help the City to maximise funding and partnership opportunities across its portfolio of activities and events (sports, leisure, arts and cultural activities).

Distribution of Printed Material

5.4.19 In 2006 a consent scheme to control the distribution of free printed matter in the city centre was brought into effect, using legal powers under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. A report to Local Services and Community Safety O&S Committee in 2008 set out the reasons for the introduction of this scheme:

The purpose of the legislation is to help control the litter problem created by the distribution of free printed matter, which is often quickly discarded by persons to whom it is given or indeed left in piles by those distributing it. Some parts of the City, especially in the City's main retail centre and entertainment areas, can become carpeted with discarded flyers and present a considerable cleaning task for the City Council as well as a slip hazard for pedestrians.

5.4.20 The current annual fee is set by the Public Protection Committee and is £260 per distributor. The areas covered are the city centre (comprising the main retail areas) including the Hurst Street and Digbeth.

5.4.21 A number of witnesses mentioned this: the cost of the licence is prohibitive for smaller venues and festivals (£260 per licence). They pointed to systems operating elsewhere that were not as



prohibitive. For example, Leeds City Council has a flyer consent scheme in the city centre and Headingley. Annual charges can be bought on an increasing scale: for example five badges applied for would cost £75+£100+£150+£175+£175 = £675, as opposed to £1,300 in Birmingham.

5.5 Summary

5.5.1 Other Councils have gone much further in supporting music development in their localities, such as Newcastle and Middlesbrough City Council's support for Generator (see box below). However, our witnesses' requests were less ambitious, and from our discussions we have identified three main areas where they believe that Birmingham City Council could do more to support the independent music sector and so help improve perceptions of the city:

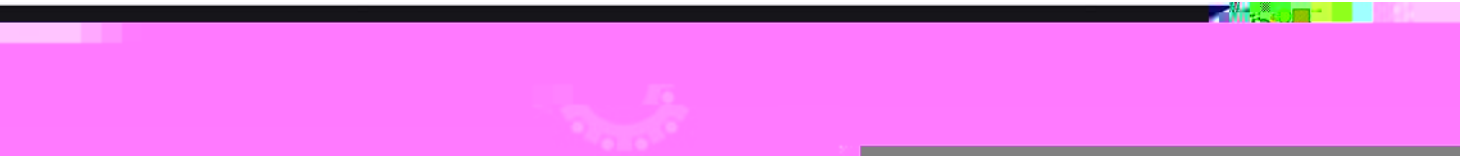
- In setting a clear strategy and priorities;
- Providing a portal for contacts and networking;
- Promotion and marketing.

5.5.2 Many were cautious about the City Council taking too great a role, referencing pop music's long independent history. However, others did see a role, partly in recognising and celebrating what does go on, but also in playing a brokering role between the public sector and the industry.

5.5.3 It was recognised, by our witnesses and in Cllr Hendricks' report, that there have been interventions from the public sector but the long-term impact of this cannot be ascertained. Currently, the view is that Birmingham City Council does not have a clear policy on popular music, and that therefore a scatter gun approach to public funding has resulted. It can also discourage private investment if investors feel their work is not appreciated. As another witness noted:

The council should be playing a pivotal role in supporting the music sector. For many years (in my experience) BCC have played a role of funder, and trying to shape funded orgs around BCC priorities. I believe this needs to change, and BCC should be responsive to the sector around their priorities rather than the other way round. BCC has enormous resources, networks, contacts and clout, and these could and should be utilised to support where applicable.

5.5.4 A clear 59 0 TD2(e)-3be egyo8t7. iny years igtity C6(ts an)-si6p8814 -C3I3ii1 Ti6p8814,oeanessesny



some elements means others lose out. However, there is an argument that we are currently “too



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Generator – A Case Study⁴⁴





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they do".⁴⁷



Connecting

- 6.2.7 Having a strategy is only a first step, there then needs to be a mechanism to deliver the outcomes of that strategy.
- 6.2.8 A second key barrier identified in our evidence gathering was the lack of a cohesive “voice” from the independent music sector. We have spoken to a range of people involved in or connected to music in the city during this Review, and there were strong views that these conversations should

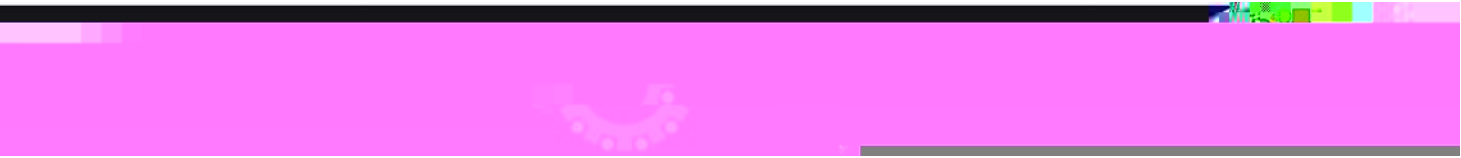


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- Support funding applications (including Arts Council applications for 'music development fund')
- Recognise and celebrate all the things already going on;
- Facilitate quarterly meetings of venues and work with festivals;
- Better links and co-ordination with the media to improve coverage of local events.

6.2.13 This should focus on popular music rather than classical as there are structures in place for the latter both in terms of organisations and finance.

6.2.14 It would of course require some funding: but this is an important industry – culturally and economically – and it receives very little attention/funding at the moment. The benefits are economic, social and in increasing positive PR for the city. It would help prevent the city losing out





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will be lost along with the reason for visitors to come here. The Home of Metal programme would not have got the coverage it did without that exhibition.

- 6.3.6 We therefore propose that the City Council should support efforts to find a permanent home for a part of the exhibition (some items have had to be returned to their owners) as a good first step in testing out the benefits of such a project.
- 6.3.7 The argument for initially focusing on the Home of Metal idea is firstly that it builds on an already successful and authentic event. The brand "Home of Metal" has been extremely good for the city –





6.4 Music Sector Today and the Role of the City Council

6.4.1 Following on from our overarching recommendations in section 5.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R09	That the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture (and partners) explore opportunities to support smaller venues, festivals and promoters to market and promote live music in the city. This could include options for controlled advertising display areas.	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture	September 2012
R10	That the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture work with the Cultural Partnership and Marketing Birmingham to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a stocktake of local music industry; • Support re-development of visitbirmingham.com to include more user generated content. 	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture	December 2012

6.5 Progress with Implementation

6.5.1 To keep the Leisure, Sport and Culture O&S Committee informed of progress in implementing the recommendations within this report, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture is recommended to report back on progress periodically. This will be carried out through the established tracking process.

	Recommendation	Responsibility	Completion Date
R11	Progress towards achievement of these recommendations should be reported to the Leisure, Sport and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2012. Subsequent progress reports will be scheduled by the Committee thereafter, until all recommendations are implemented.	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture	September 2012



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Appendix 2: UK Music Recommendations

1. Clearly, we must do more to attract greater numbers of overseas music tourists – they spend a quarter more in the UK than the ‘average’ overseas visitor, and constitute 18% of music tourism spending even though they only account for 5% of the music tourist population.
2. The Government’s new tourism policy allows for the creation of ‘thematic’ tourism bodies based around a particular type of holiday (caravanning, boating or walking). This should pave the way for the creation of the first ever “live music tourism body” to promote music tourism within the UK.
3. Tourism authorities and local economic partnerships should capitalise on the unique musical strength and heritage of each region and nation with specific campaigns and packages including transportation and accommodation.
4. A comprehensive ‘music tourism map app’ should be designed which can help potential tourists design their own musical tour to cater for every musical taste, incorporating iconic places, histories, and -7.5(,