

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Council
DATE: 24th June 2015
DIRECTOR: Gayle Gorman
TITLE OF REPORT: Big Noise Torry progress report
REPORT NUMBER: ECS/15/034
CHECKLIST COMPLETED: Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update on the work currently being by Sistema Scotland to implement and embed the *Big Noise Torry* initiative locally. It also includes details of the current membership of the *Big Noise Torry* Strategy Group within section 5.2, Governance, and makes a recommendation below.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

Council is recommended to:

- a) Note the progress of *Big Noise Torry*;
- b) Note the current membership of the *Big Noise Torry* Strategy Group and Operational Group,
- c) Agree to future progress reports being included in the Council Bulletin.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council's contribution - *Big Noise Torry* Funding 2015/16 is in line with the funding already included within the budget.

Funding has been secured specifically towards the work of Big Noise Torry from:

Aberdeen Harbour Board	£15,000 per year for 5 years
Andrew Salvesen Family Trust	£25,000*
Total E&P UK Ltd	£10,000
Nexen Petroleum	£ 1,000
CMS Cameron McKenna	£ 250

*this contribution is towards Big Noise Torry and associated core costs of Sistema Scotland.

In addition, another, anonymous contribution of £1,000 has been received. Walkers Shortbread are making an in-kind contribution for the Torry Launch concert and Capital Solutions has provided a photocopier/printer at a special rate.

The above commitment from Aberdeen Harbour Board is in addition to the £7,500 previously given to establish the team's office. They have furthermore offered assistance in setting-up for the Launch and also provide a van and a driver to move instruments and other equipment between Torry Academy and Tullos Primary School.

Sistema Scotland has been progressing discussions with other prospective supporters. It will advise as and when other tangible support can be announced, specifically for *Big Noise Torry*. As part of its wider fundraising activity, Sistema Scotland has obtained other, "unrestricted" funding, which can and has been allocated to support *Big Noise Torry*.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

All of Sistema Scotland's policies and procedures have been reviewed by officers, to ensure that they are aligned to the Council's requirements. A positive approach has been taken by both parties in fine-tuning to ensure that they are appropriate.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Staffing

Sistema Scotland has now appointed all **six musicians** to deliver the initial programme in Torry. They come from Cyprus, Holland, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand and Scotland. Their induction programme is well in-hand, including learning more about the wider Sistema Scotland operations, as well as the community and Torry area.



The musicians, team leader and the Convener of Education and Children's Services Committee at Torry Academy

Sadly, the **Operations Manager** has decided to pursue other interests however, fortunately, Sistema Scotland has been able to appoint a replacement who was interviewed previously, with community involvement. She commenced work on 2nd June.

Two **Part time Support Workers** posts have been advertised to fulfil supportive roles within the *Big Noise Torry* after school and holiday school programmes. Successful candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate experience in a supportive role with education and/or experience of working with children and families.

A call for **Volunteers** has also been made; seeking those who have the "passion and belief in the potential of children to amaze us and to achieve incredible things," supporting children getting to and in music lessons, as examples. Volunteer selection interviews took place on 5th June, with the expectation that a team will be in place by the launch concert, and ready to start supporting the Summer School.

5.2 Governance and Support

The **Board of Sistema Scotland** held its first meeting in Torry Academy on Friday, 20th March, meeting members of the local community, elected members and visiting both primary schools.

The **Big Noise Torry Strategy Group** was set up as part of the report to Council on 14th May 2014, to provide strategic leadership and direction for the partnership and the initiative, and to monitor and review its success.

Council on 20th August 2014 determined appointments to sub-committees, working groups and boards, and confirmed that the remit and membership of the "Sistema Partnership Board" be brought to Council. The membership agreed as part of the partnership with Sistema Scotland is: the Chief Executive of Sistema Scotland, an appointed Board member of Sistema Scotland, Finance Manager Sistema Scotland, Chief Executive of Aberdeen City Council, Director Education, Culture and Sport, now Director of Education and Children's Services, Council's lead officer. Other (officer) members are drawn from Sistema Scotland and Aberdeen City Council as required.

The Strategic Group met on 4th June and continues to provide guidance, support and "signposting" to ensure the successful implementation of *Big Noise Torry*.

At Council on the 14th May 2014, it was also agreed to set-up a *Big Noise Torry Programme Team* to ensure the successful local communication and implementation of the initiative. The membership agreed was: The *Big Noise Torry* Team Leader and delegated representatives from Big Noise and City Council/Torry representatives, to include the Head Teachers of Tullos and Walker Road Primary Schools, potentially two local elected members and others as agreed.

The Programme Team has become known as the **Operational Group** and it has been supporting the work of *Big Noise Torry*, including supporting the musicians' induction, advising on how best to communicate with the community and designing the community engagement programme. Current members include the Head Teachers at both primary schools, Torry Community Council, Old Torry and Balnagask Community Centres, Capacity Building Officer (ACC), Health Improvement Officer and Community Health Workers (NHS), Team Manager, Social Care and Wellbeing, Police, Parent Council and community representatives, ACVO, Station House Media Unit and the University of Aberdeen's School of Music.

5.3 Public Engagement

As a precursor to the public engagement launch, the Libertadores String Quartet from Venezuela returned to the city on 4th March. They gave special performances to pupils at Tullos and Walker Road Primary Schools. The following day, they played a free lunchtime concert at Aberdeen Citadel, Castle Street, the first of the Lunchbreak Concerts which have been relocated while Aberdeen Art Gallery is closed for redevelopment.



The Libertadores String Quartet in Torry

The Public Engagement programme commenced on 20th April in schools and in the community. Big Noise Raploch children from Stirling joined the *Big Noise Torry* musicians in playing in the two primary schools.

The musicians are working in the schools with Primary 1 and 2 children. The children will perform in the launch concert.

Sistema Scotland and Station House Media Unit have joined in partnership, which includes documenting the programme with both film and audio; the team from SHMU have captured the community engagement launch concert, the children's first day with instruments, several community performances by the musicians and will record the launch concert on the 29th June.

The musicians have also appeared on the local SHMU radio station and there are plans for on-going broadcasting, making a film of the first year of delivery, and also participating in the evaluation framework.



Walker Road Primary School – launch of public engagement



Musicians “busking” in Victoria Road



On 20th May, Sistema Scotland hosted 31 parents/carers and their children to big Noise Raploch. The children had a session on their own, a parent and child session, a concert from Big Noise musicians, a “sit in” with the purple orchestra and a performance from the Raploch Symphony Orchestra! The parents observed much of the above and had a presentation from Nicola Killean, Sistema Scotland Chief Executive, about Big Noise, and a tour of the different parts of the after-school programme



Torry parents and families, with Raploch representatives



Torry youngsters taking part in a musical activity at Raploch



Torry youngsters getting to know the instruments of the strings section

5.4 Preparations for the Launch concert

Work is now well underway to host the **Launch Concert** at Tullos Playing Fields on Monday 29th June. The Events Plan has been agreed by the City Events Team and support and guidance been given by Community Safety, City Wardens, Police and others. Aberdeen Harbour Board has offered volunteers from their workforce to help put up the Herras fencing perimeter.

The Big Noise Raploch Symphony Orchestra will be in the city in the run-up to the concert, playing in the local schools, as well as playing a concert at the Citadel on the evening of the preceding Saturday (27th) evening. This is a public concert and all are welcome to attend.

5.5 Next steps

From July 6th to July 30th there will be a **Summer School** at Torry Academy for all this session's Primary Two children. The School will run from Monday to Thursday and is free, with snacks and meals provided. From August 2015, the core *Big Noise Torry* programme will open and the team will begin to work with:

- All nursery children in the community once a week
- All primary one children twice a week
- All primary two children twice a week
- After-school orchestra open to all primary three children – three times a week

The **Royal Scottish National Orchestra** and Sistema Scotland have entered into a partnership during the first year of operation, supported by Total and includes a number of occasions when RSNO musicians will contribute to the programme in a variety of interesting ways.

Evaluation

A local Evaluation Advisory Group has been set up, consisting of representative of the following: Community Safety, University of Aberdeen School of Education and Health Economics Unit, Station House Media Unit, Educational Psychologist. Performance Improvement colleagues in Education and Children's Services, and a Public Health Researcher at NHS Grampian. Currently, the group are considering the draft evaluation framework, which is intended to collect the information necessary to enable assessment of the benefits to individual youngsters, their families and the wider Torry community.

The evaluation is intended to complement and contribute to a wider long-term evaluation being carried out by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH) of Sistema Scotland's Big Noise orchestras in Stirling's Raploch and Glasgow's Govanhill. The initial findings from that study show "convincing evidence of positive change to children's lives",

concluding that “the programme represents a good investment for society”.

The findings include evidence that Big Noise improves confidence, pride and self-esteem; has the potential to support participants to lead fuller and healthier lives; has the potential to quickly generate greater social benefits than the costs of delivery; participants have higher school attendance, and offers respite and protection to the most vulnerable”.

Professor Carol Tannahill, Director of the Glasgow Centre for Population Health said, “This evaluation strongly endorses Sistema Scotland’s approaches to delivery: the short and medium-term impacts of the programme evidenced at this stage of the evaluation are very encouraging. What is also certain is that Sistema Scotland’s Big Noise programme has the potential to significantly enhance participants’ lives, prospects, health and wellbeing through a variety of identified pathways in the long-term. Any endorsement of Sistema Scotland is also an endorsement of a range of local partners who contribute to the delivery of Big Noise, and of the commitment shown by the schools in both Raploch and Govanhill.”

“It is worth emphasising that while Big Noise can appear to the casual observer to be like many other arts or music programmes, we encountered a number of factors which, when taken together, potentially make it unique – including its ambition, longevity, intensity and inclusivity. We also recognise the quality of relationship between Big Noise musician and participant as being vital to the reported impacts, both observed presently and theorised as we look to the future.”

An economic assessment of Big Noise Govanhill concludes the programme is a worthwhile investment, and may be producing outcomes of higher value than costs by the sixth year. Professor Cam Donaldson, Yunus Chair in Social Business and Health at Glasgow Caledonian University said, “projections underline that Big Noise Govanhill represents a worthwhile investment, and that the short-term benefits of the programme observed and reported by the GCPH and Education Scotland, based on this economic modelling, have the potential to translate favourably in economic terms as early as year six of programme delivery.”

6. IMPACT

There is likely to be public interest in the report to Council, as it will explain the next key steps to have the initiative implemented; previous reports and reports elsewhere on Sistema have engendered support and discussion.

An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) was prepared for the report to Council in December 2013.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

This report is set within the context of the governance arrangements at 5.2 above. Risk is assessed on an ongoing basis.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Council, 14th May 2014, Big Noise Torry Business Plan and Partnership Agreement, OCE/14/027.

Report to Council, 18th December 2013, Sistema Scotland and Aberdeen, OCE/12/043.

Report to the Education, Culture and Sport Committee, 28th March 2013, Sistema Scotland and Aberdeen, ECS/13/012.

Report to the Education, Culture and Sport Committee, 2nd June 2011, "Big Noise": Sistema Scotland, ECS/11/034.

Report to the Education, Culture and Sport Committee, 8th October, 2009, Strategic Music Partnership and potential links with Sistema Scotland, ECS/09/31.

Aberdeen City Council, Early Years Framework Implementation Plan, June 2010.

The Scottish Government, The evaluation of the process and outcomes achieved to date by Big Noise Children's Orchestra in the Raploch Estate in Stirling, 2011.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Neil M Bruce, Service Manager – Culture

Email: neilbr@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Tel: 523144