

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education Operational Delivery Committee
DATE	8 September 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Update on the Music Service
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/22/165
DIRECTOR	Rob Polkinghorne
CHIEF OFFICER	Eleanor Sheppard
REPORT AUTHOR	Shona Milne
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At the Education Operational Delivery Committee on 23rd September 2021 officers were instructed to report progress with the establishment of a digital anytime offer for our learners and to report on the effectiveness of the Music Service in light of national policy changes. This report responds to those instructions and also highlights how the service is building collaboration with the wider music community to support children and young people across city schools.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee :-

- 2.1 notes the evaluation of the first year of free Instrumental Instruction;
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Education Officer to continue to develop plans to establish opportunities for ensembles; and
- 2.3 instructs the Chief Education Officer to evaluate the quality and provision of music across the city and report the findings to Committee within one calendar year.

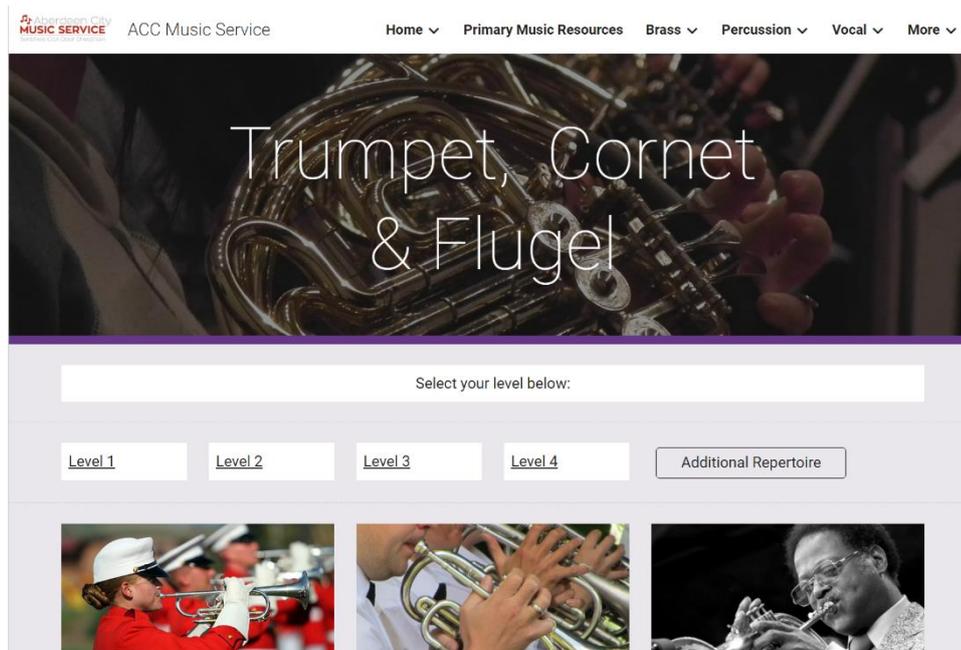
3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1.1 In August 2021 national policy changed and a free offer of instrumental tuition became available to all children and young people. This triggered a re-distribution of resources to enable an equitable offer across the city.
- 3.1.2 This policy change came at a time when music instructors were just returning to face to face input following a period of 18 months of digital delivery due to the Public Health restrictions in place at the time. Elected Members requested that an evaluation of the first year of implementation be brought back to committee in September 2022.

3.2 DELIVERY OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

- 3.2.1 In August 2021 face to face music instruction resumed although restrictions continued to limit the number of schools an instructor could visit in a day. In order to address this, Instructors prioritised the enlisting of new pupils to build interest in the Music Service from those who may not have been able to consider enlisting previously in order to ensure equity of access to the Service.
- 3.2.2 As a precursor to face to face engagement with a Music Instructor, many schools made use of The Music Service digital anytime offer. Big Noise videos are available to all schools through the Site. The videos provide 5 minute introductions to different beats and rhythms and are designed to be used as a whole class teaching resource. Evaluations of the resource are positive and the videos are being used alongside input from instructors (funded by the Youth Music Initiative (YMI)) to support musicality skills development in the Primary School. It is recognised that the development of these initial musicality skills makes it easier for young people to get to grips with a new instrument and help generate a steady demand for the Music Service. Looking forward, we hope to build on this early development by making use of Charanga (see 3.2.7).
- 3.2.3 On returning to face to face delivery instructors identified that pupils had a degree of digital fatigue and although pupils were still able to access the digital content created during lockdown they much preferred the relationships built up during face to face instruction. This guided the Instructors to focus on face to face delivery but use digital content to support practice between lessons. As a result of this approach 1821 children are currently accessing the service (compared to 509 in August 2021).
- 3.2.4 There has been a significant increase in the number of children who want to learn a musical instrument due to the removal of fees and the more equitable offer across the city. 1480 children and young people are on the waiting list for instruments taught in their school. This waiting list increases to 2774 when children and young people are asked to identify instruments they are keen to play which are not currently taught in their school.
- 3.2.5 22% of the 1821 children and young people currently engaging with the service receive 1-1 tutoring and 78% receive group tuition. Although most new pupils start with great enthusiasm there is a pattern emerging in drop-out rates in areas of the city where tuition has not been available for many years. This is thought to be as a result of children and young people not fully understanding and appreciating the level of practice required between lessons and also due to a lack of opportunities to come together with fellow peers to play as an ensemble. Instructors will clarify expectations and start to establish school bands in pilot schools to address this.
- 3.2.6 The digital anytime classroom continues to provide pupils with a reference point when practising. All instructors make use of google classroom to set assignments and the digital space is helping ensure the best use of Music Instructor time. Instructors have engaged with Google Classroom over 11,500 times this year, making sure students are updated weekly with tasks and reminders. The Google Site gives students extra resources and flexibility to

their learning as they are able to continue to explore at home using the videos. This site will be adapted and added to as new resources are created by instructors and a section on further opportunities is planned. This additional section will allow learners and their families to see and sign up to other experiences in the city. These opportunities will come from not just the Music Service, but external and partnership organisations like Grampian Youth Orchestra, Big Noise, Sound Festival, Aberdeen University, Aberdeen Jazz Festival, National Youth/Children's Orchestra of Scotland, National Youth Choir of Scotland, Aberdeen Music Festival, Aberdeen City Orchestra, North East of Scotland Music School et al.



- 3.2.7 Developing basic musicality skills is important and next academic session, we hope to build on our training and resources through the use of Charanga, which we hope to provide for all schools and instructors in Aberdeen. The resource will support explorative learning at home, including focused topics to tie in with the curriculum at all levels from nursery to a school leaver, and materials to support or enhance individual and group learning for instrumental instruction or class delivery. Of note are the lessons and materials designed to be used in an Additional Support Needs (ASN) setting or with students who have ASN.
- 3.2.8 Building on the success of whole school singing during lockdown, the service is now planning to establish band projects in a number of pilot schools in an attempt to improve resilience and stickability for pupils beginning to learn new instruments by bringing them together to experience playing in an ensemble. Taking this approach will also help children and young people be better placed to take advantage of other musical opportunities across the city including those provided by Scottish Culture and Tradition, Sound Festival and Aberdeen Jazz Festival.
- 3.2.9 The Music Service sought feedback from young people in April 2022 to inform next steps and 153 young people responded. Young people continue to be positive about the service - where some have expressed aspirations to continue music after school, some to become professional players, others are

setting goals to progress through the exam system, to learn to play popular music or explore their own or surrounding culture. Many individuals expressed the positive working relationship they had with their teacher, and enjoyed the focussed time they have in a small group or individual learning space.

'I wish to carry on with music/lesson as far as I can go at Academy then after maybe college'

'... I love music, learning a new skill and connecting to my culture'

3.2.10 When asked about musical experiences outside lessons, there were mixed responses.

'[I attend] pipe band practice every Monday night. It's good fun and makes me learn faster and meet new friends'

'I practise at home. I don't know who else to play an instrument with.'

'No, because of limited household finances'

3.2.11 With the relaxation of Public Health guidance, pupils will now be able to join bands and groups set up in their localities. This is to ensure accessibility for learners who are unable to travel. Reduced travel times will also give students (and their families) the opportunity to fit music ensembles into their schedules. These ensembles will perform in concerts and showcases over the school year.

3.2.12 Parents and carers (312) responded to a similar survey in April 2022. Feedback was passionate and mostly complimentary.

'Piano lessons at school.. Has done wonders for my son's mental health'

'the [music instructor] has been so supportive and even through lockdown has kept our son interested. School music lessons are such a vital part of children's education and the opportunity to extend activity into a team activity such as band is fantastic'

3.9.13 Young people and parents/carers are passionate about music education in Aberdeen City. They see the value of it, and how it supports the development of a young person's character. Ensemble playing has been sorely missed in the wider community over the past couple of years, but evidence shows that families are waiting for these opportunities to return. Concerts and opportunities will motivate and encourage young people to continue learning along with inspiring the next students to come through the service.

3.2.14 During the Easter holidays, as part of the 'Easter of Play' run by the Council, the Music Service delivered a half day workshop in two priority areas where instrumental music lesson uptake has previously not been very high. All children enrolled were given the opportunity to experience learning violin and ukulele before coming together to sing some well-known songs.

3.2.15 As part of 'Summer in the City', The Music Service ran a week of music making for 40 children - 'Music at Muirfield'. This was aimed at 7-14 year olds to learn and explore music making through a variety of instruments and

activities. On offer through the week included: violin, ukulele, pphones, recorder, singing, composition, musicianship, yoga and a music quiz.

3.2.16 Some Ukrainian refugees identified as having had music tuition before leaving Ukraine will be supported into music lessons when they start school after the summer holiday period.

3.3 WHAT DOES THE DATA TELL US ABOUT OUR DELIVERY?

3.3.1 In August 2021 only 509 pupils were engaging with the service. In June 2022 this had increased to 1821 with instruction being available in all schools across the city. This increase is not as high as was hoped (the Music Service anticipated 2490) due to the Public health restrictions on the number of schools that could be visited remaining in place until April 2022. Waiting lists show that there is a high demand for the service in all areas and the service is looking at how this can be best met through the addition of class and band projects pilots in primary schools to increase reach.

3.3.2 When families request that instrumental tuition ceases they have the option to provide a reason for stopping. A comparison with data sets from previous years shows a high level of consistency in the reasons given for stopping and shows how face to face instruction has been better received. 404 children and young people stopped this year (22.2%) compared to 159 last year (29%).

Reason for stopping	June 2021		June 2022	
	Number of pupils	% of pupils ceasing tuition	Number of pupils	% of pupils ceasing tuition
Pupil felt that they were missing classroom learning in order to attend their instrumental music lesson	43	27%	23	5.7%
Pupil didn't enjoy online learning	34	21%	N/A	N/A
Pupil did not have enough time to learn an instrument	26	16%	30	7.4%
Pupil lost interest in learning an instrument	19	12%	18	4.5%
Pupil left school	16	10%	45	11.1%
The standard of service was not good enough	6	4%	8	2%
The pupil will be changing to private lessons	3	2%	1	0.2%

3.3.3 Most children who dropped out continued to be in the final years of primary schools. This has been a consistent pattern over many years. Some children, having had an opportunity to learn an instrument at primary school decide to cease instruction before heading to secondary school. As ensembles are starting up again or being created, there will be flexibility for mixed school groups where higher primary and lower secondary years will

play together, hopefully decreasing the percentage of cessations that we are currently seeing.

	2021	2022
Year Group	% of total number of pupils who stopped lessons	% of total number of pupils who stopped lessons
P3	4%	<1%
P4	7%	4.7%
P5	14%	14.3%
P6	18%	18.8%
P7	17%	25.5%
S1	8%	15%
S2	8%	5.9%
S3	8%	9.6%
S4	4%	4.2%
S5	6%	4.7%
S6	6%	4%

3.4 EQUITY OF OFFER

3.4.1 Analysis of data shows that there is greater equity across the city with pupils from all schools now able to access the Service compared with access in 2020. The table below shows far better alignment between the total proportion of children and young people on the school roll across an Associated Schools Group and the percentage of children and young people accessing the Music Service.

ASG	FTE allocated to ASG by April 2022	Number of pupils in 2020	April 2022	% of total Music Service pupil nos in 2020	April 2022	School roll as % of city roll in 2020	April 2022	% of ASG roll receiving tuition in 2020	April 2022
Grammar	3.2fte	136	235	25%	14.3%	12%	13%	4%	8.1%
Harlaw	2.1fte	63	122	11%	6.9%	10%	9.8%	3%	5.2%
Lochside	1.9fte	17	100	3%	5.6%	12%	11.2%	1%	3.7%*
Cults	3fte	151	214	28%	12.1%	9%	9.8%	7%	8%
Dyce	1.1fte	4	70	1%	3.9%	4%	4.1%	0%	7.1%
Bucksburn	2.5fte	34	175	6%	9.9%	8%	7.5%	2%	9.7%
Bridge of Don	1.4fte	24	64	4%	3.6%	4%	4.7%	2%	5.6%

Oldmachar	2.1fte	40	177	7%	10%	8%	8.2%	2%	8.9%
Northfield*	2.8fte	7	187	1%	10.5%	10%	9.7%	0%	8%
St Machar	1.9fte	13	138	2%	7.8%	13%	12.6%	0%	4.5%
Hazlehead	3.2fte	60	274	11%	15.4%	9%	9.5%	2%	11.9%

*Actual music making happening in Lochside is higher as these numbers do not include tuition delivered by Big Noise in Tullos, Walker Road and Lochside Academy

3.4.2 The average number of pupils per instructor in Aberdeen over session 20/21 sat at 17. As of June 2022, it sits at 63. This has been realised by limiting the travelling time for each instructor by basing them within a locality.

3.5 ARRANGEMENTS FOR SESSION 2022/23

3.5.1 The music service consists of 35 instructors in total offering lessons across all disciplines. This represents a total workforce of 30.3 FTE which has increased slightly as some instructors are coming back from a career break or maternity leave.

Discipline	Number of instructors
Brass	5
Guitar	4
Piano	4
Strings	7
Woodwind	6
Singing	3
Piping	1
Percussion	5

3.5.2 Core and flexible allocations have been made based through an Associated Schools Group and Locality model taking account of demand for particular instruments from across the Associated Schools Group where staffing allows.

3.5.3 In addition, the Youth Music Initiative (YMI) project moves between schools throughout the year. Each school receives an equal amount of YMI time under this scheme which is funded by Creative Scotland. The YMI provides learners with musicality tuition which supports learners as they take on an instrument .

3.5.4 The Service will continue to work with or share information from external organisations that are providing opportunities for young people; be represented at a national level for training and information that directly effects music services, instructors and music education; and keep a dialogue with internal services and music educators regarding developing opportunities for young people and the logistics associated. These groups and organisations include, but are not limited to: Music Education Partnership Group, Heads of Instrumental Teaching Scotland, Aberdeen Youth Music Forum, National Orchestras and Choirs of Scotland and Great Britain, Music Festivals (Aberdeen Jazz Festival, Aberdeen and North East of Scotland Music

Festival, Sound Festival), Scottish Culture and Tradition (SC&T), Grampian Youth Orchestra, North East of Scotland Music School, Aberdeen City Music School, Big Noise, Music Network, University of Aberdeen, exam centres like Associated Board of Royal Schools Music, Trinity and Music Teachers Board, Scottish Diocese, Charanga and Drake Music.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Local Authority has many legal duties including those of:

- The Education (Scotland) Act 1980
- The Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

5.2 The approach being taken to offer music instruction outlined in this Report will assist the Council, as Education Authority, to fulfil these duties more effectively, and secure necessary and appropriate music instruction for pupils across the city.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Instructors working in localities has reduced the need for travel across the city and therefore reduced carbon emissions.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk that an equitable offer will not be made available to all communities across the city	Implementation of the staffing allocation as outlined in this report	L	Yes
Compliance	Failure to comply with SNCT conditions of service.	Implementation of Digital resources to enhance Face to Face rather than replace to ensure we are not in	L	Yes

	Failure to offer free access to free Instrumental Instruction as per national policy	breach of SNCT conditions. Implementing tracking arrangements as outlined in this report. Increasing access to digital resources and group lessons to help manage demand.		
Operational	Failure to meet demand for a service	Implementing tracking arrangements as outlined in this report. Increasing access to digital resources and group lessons to help manage demand.	M	Yes
Financial	Loss of income and continued staffing costs resulting in financial pressure	Continue to with COSLA to help support longer term financial planning around the provision of Music Instruction	M	Yes
Reputational	Failure to meet demand for a service	Monitoring uptake and promoting agility in the service.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified' against the category			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following policy statements:-</p> <p>We will actively work with partners to increase citywide delivery of music education, promoting excellence and enabling group performance.</p>

	We will investigate options to expand the instrumental music service and measure the impact of this.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcome	The proposals within this report support the stretch outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of nearly all Children and Young people stretch outcomes in the LOIP. The paper seeks to inform how the service will provide an equitable offer of music instruction across the city. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026. 90% of Children and young people will report that their experiences of mental health and wellbeing have been listened to by 2026. As corporate parents we will ensure 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026. 95% of children living in our priority localities will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026. Child friendly city where all decisions which impact on children and young people are informed by them by 2026.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Following an assessment no DPIA required
Other	None.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

None.

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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