

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report To:** Executive - 13<sup>th</sup> January 2010  
**Subject:** Manchester International Festival  
**Report of:** Chief Executive

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**Summary**

The report informs Members of the very positive outcomes of the full evaluation of 2009 Manchester International Festival and seeks approval to funding arrangements for the next Festival in July 2011 based on the production of a strong vision for the next Festival.

**Recommendations**

Members are asked to:

- Note the substantial achievements of the 2009 Festival in achieving its objectives, particularly in relation to the growing international reputation of the Festival. Congratulate the MIF Team for a thorough set of evaluation reports.
- Recognise the importance of maintaining funding commitments at 2009 levels from public sector partners which will be directly related to the Council's investment at the levels of last year.
- Approve revenue support of £2m for Festival 2011 and the underwriting of a further £0.5m, subject to continuing support at 2009 levels from other public sector partners, namely the Arts Council of England and the North West Development Agency.
- Request a further report from the Festival Director outlining a strategic plan for Festival 2011 that builds on the successes of 2009 to further transform the city's cultural, creative and commercial possibilities and establish the Festival as a global brand.

**Wards Affected:**

All Wards

Community Strategy Spine	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	The Manchester International Festival drives economic development by substantially raising the profile of Manchester, draws in tourism and attracts inward investment by positioning the City as an international centre for culture. The 2009 Festival achieved an estimated economic impact value of £35.7m.
Reaching full potential in education and employment	The Festival increasingly works with schools, FE and HE institutions to maximise opportunities around employment creation and the recruitment of volunteers. 331 volunteers took part in the 2009 Festival along with 2,124 education participants.
Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	An objective of the Festival is to play an important role in increasing community cohesion through facilitating community participation.
Neighbourhoods of Choice	New cultural opportunities and a wider cultural choice for Manchester residents, in particular opportunities to experience and participate in such events, improves the quality of life for people who live, work and study in the City.

**Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:**

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

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**Financial Consequences – Revenue**

Current allowance for revenue support to the Festival is £1m per annum for a biennial Festival. A further £0.5m will be provisionally earmarked within the 2011/12 budget as underwriting for Festival 2011, subject to being able to secure funding from other public sector partners at a similar level to investment in the 2009 Festival.

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**Financial Consequences – Capital**

None.

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

Report to Executive 14<sup>th</sup> January 2009 – Manchester International Festival 2009

Report to Executive 10th September 2009 - Manchester International Festival 2009

Manchester International Festival – 2009 Evaluation and appendices:-

-Morris Hargreaves McIntyre: Economic impact and audience survey

-John Knell: An evaluation of current performance and future potential

-Helen Taylor: Sustainability at MIF

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Members received a report of the highly successful 2009 Manchester International Festival (MIF) in September 2009. The report outlined the significant contribution the Festival had made to raising the profile of the city and contributing to its social and economic well being. Data was available to quantify progress against key performance indicators such as increased visitor numbers, economic impact, enhanced local engagement and participation and hugely positive media profile. We now have more qualitative evaluation available on which to base the development of a clear framework for the delivery of MIF 2011. This report summarises the key messages from a range of evaluation reports and seeks approval to the basis of City Council funding going forward. A number of reports are available as background documents.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Members will recall that the aim of the 2009 Festival was to consolidate the achievements of the '07 Festival as the leading festival for original new work, created by a wide range of major international artists. This has included sustaining relationships with some key artists across a number of festivals and working with leading cultural organisations locally, nationally and internationally. Work has also focused on learning lessons from 2007, in particular increasing local engagement and creating an exciting festival atmosphere in the city.

The Festival Board adopted the following four key aims for the 2009 Festival:

- To consolidate Manchester International Festival's position as the leading festival of original, new work, created by a wide range of major international artists.
  - To help secure Manchester's reputation as a leading cultural city and showcase its ability to deliver major large-scale events.
  - To help build the creative potential of Manchester's different communities and artists through a series of innovative, high quality community-based commissions and creative development programmes.
  - To ensure that the Festival is a sustainable event - financially and environmentally.
- 2.2 The extent to which the Aims had been delivered in Festival '09 was analysed via a range of evaluation reports, the results of which are summarised in this report. In addition to the adopted Aims and Objectives it was further agreed, following feedback from the 2007 Festival, that planning for 2009 would focus on addressing two areas in particular:-
- Achieving more 'buy-in' and engagement from local residents and communities via three separate but linked initiatives:
    - i) The establishment of MIF Creative – a new community engagement and creative learning programme which would look to engage more local people in the work of the Festival. Its activities would range from large-

scale artistic commissions led by leading international artists and developed with everyone from local schoolchildren to shop assistants, to programmes to help emerging Manchester-based producers get ahead on the professional ladder.

- ii) Increasing the number of free events during the Festival to ensure that everyone, whatever their means, would be able to participate. Approximately one third of the Festival's events in 2009 were free.
- iii) Moving the Festival's Pavilion to the centre of the city in Albert Square and increasing the number of events on the site in order to improve the visibility of the Festival to 'passers by'.
- Creating a tighter focus to the programme by concentrating resources on fewer commissions and ensuring that, where non-commissioned events were presented, they were genuinely distinctive:
  - i) Reducing the target number of commissions in 2009 to 20 (as against the 31 delivered in 2007) in order to increase the resources and quality of each commission. In the end 21 commissions were delivered in 2009 and it was generally accepted that there had been no public perception that the Festival had been any 'thinner' than in 2007.
  - ii) Where special events, such as concerts, were presented a deliberate attempt was made to ensure that they had a 'one-off' feel. So, for instance, the Festival was launched with a concert by Kraftwerk, which took place in the iconic Manchester Velodrome and featured special appearances by the British cycling team and was accompanied by a new commission from Steve Reich.

### **3. Assessment of Delivery of Aims and Objectives for 2009**

- 3.1 Evaluation of Festival 2009 began with a revised set of performance indicators, agreed and extended from those used to measure the 2007 Festival. A summary table is attached below and much of this quantitative data was included in the September Committee report.

	2007 Target	2007 Actual	2009 Target	2009 Actual
1. No. of new commissions	10	31	20	21
2. No. of performances (i)	50	105	100	172
3. No. of national/international co-commissioning/producing partners	3	3	3	15
4. No. of local co-producing partners	n/a	2	3	12
5. No. of Attenders (ii)	160,000	200,930	210,000	231,455
6. % of tickets sold (iii)	n/a	78%	75%	89%
7. % of tickets from outside North West (iv)	10%	25%	25%	24%
8. No. of international attenders (v)	n/a	860	1200	1289
9. % of tickets from SOA areas (vi)	5%	3%	3%	4%
10. No. of education sessions	n/a	n/a	500	696
11. No. of education participants	n/a	n/a	1200	2683
12. Value of press coverage (vii)	£5.7m	£12m	£10m	£19.9m
13. Local TV & radio (total hours)	n/a	n/a	n/a	54
14. National TV & radio (total hours)	8	12	10	10
15. Value of sponsorship (incl value in kind) (viii)	n/a	£3.3m	£3.2m	£2.9m

No. of jobs created/maintained:				
16. Permanent (ix)	n/a	n/a	14	15
17. Temporary (x)	n/a	n/a	25	38
18. Total	29	38	39	53
19. No. of volunteers (xi)	200	294	300	331
20. Value of volunteers time (xii)	n/a	£200,000	£225,000	£227,000
21. Economic Impact (xiii)	£19.1m	£28.8m	£25m	£35.9m

As can be seen from this, MIF hit 19 of its 21 indicators, with marginal shortfalls on 2 of the indicators:

(7) % of tickets from outside the North West. Target 25%. Achieved 24%.

This is most likely explained by the considerable additional investment made by MIF this year in local marketing and city dressing, which is likely to have driven up local interest in the Festival. It also needs to be set against the fact that 29% of actual ticket buyers came from outside the North West – in other words local buyers were tending to purchase more tickets per head than visitors to the city.

(15) Value of sponsorship (incl VIK). Target £3.2m. Achieved £2.9m.

It is unsurprising that in the middle of one of the most challenging economic climates the country has faced for over 70 years, that MIF struggled to reach its sponsorship target. The scale of this challenge was recognised in the report to the Executive – 14<sup>th</sup> January 2009, when provision of a contingency of £0.5m was made enabling the Festival team to advance the proposed programme whilst continuing to seek additional sponsorship. It is testament to the value placed on the Festival by the business community that MIF still achieved £2.9m in sponsorship not requiring therefore to draw upon the full contingency provision. The Festival team also did remarkably well on commission revenues. A more detailed evaluation of the financial performance of the Festival follows in para 3.6 below.

3.2 These KPIs were accompanied by four discreet studies commissioned by four independent consultants to look at:

- The economic impact, including an online audience survey of a sample of ticket buyers and attenders.
- A team of ‘improvement partners’ was jointly commissioned with the Arts Council to review the artistic success of the Festival and to make recommendations about how the Festival can strengthen its performance going forward.
- A study to establish where MIF now sits nationally and internationally, to identify what stands out about the Festival and to flesh out the criteria for its future success.
- A review of MIF’s sustainability programme and to assess progress towards achieving British Standard 8901 (Sustainable Event Management).

The reports were produced by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, national and international artistic peers, John Knell of the Intelligence Agency and Helen Taylor, secondee from the City Council’s Regeneration Team respectively. The overriding lessons of all these evaluations are laid out in this report and all the reports are available on request.

*(Note: Where evaluation reports contain commercially sensitive information or data relating to individuals, certain sections may not be made available)*

The content of these reports was used to compile the following evaluation based on the Aims set out in para 2.1.

### 3.3 **Objective 1**

**Consolidating Manchester International Festival’s position as the leading festival of original, new work, created by a wide range of major international artists.**

- **Presenting world premieres and special events by internationally acclaimed artists.**

- **Sustaining relationships with key artists across a number of festivals.**
- **Building strong working relationships with leading cultural organisations locally, nationally and internationally.**
- The 2009 Festival has enabled MIF to take a step further in consolidating its international, national and local reputation. John Knell's evaluation of current performance and future potential cites the clarity of MIF's unique commissioning model as the key driver of MIF's impact and future success. Once again the Festival was able to attract artists of recognised international standing to create new work for Manchester
- The profile and standing of MIF is further evidenced by the fact that it was able to pull together 15 international, national and local co-commissioners for the 2009 Festival (compared to 3 in 2007). This level of co-commissioning support represents a tangible and public endorsement of the artistic quality of the projects that MIF is setting out to deliver. Most of these partners will go on to present the works that premiered in Manchester, further raising the profile of the artistic product, the Festival and the city. In addition, their cash support for MIF's productions, represents significant inward investment into the region. In 2009 this amounted to some £750,000, which is used to employ artists, technicians, makers etc working in the region.
- The increase in volume of co-commissioning support was accompanied by a strengthening of MIF's working relations arts organisations in Manchester. This in turn is helping to build support for MIF as an instigator of change in the city's cultural ecology.

*"The Whitworth Art Gallery, which had cleared the whole of its collection, invested a substantial sum and took a co-producing role on Marina Abramovic Presents, was extremely positive about the festival and saw huge benefit in working closely with MIF. Similarly BBC Philharmonic, The Hallé, Cornerhouse all felt very positive about the festival and its role as a catalyst for encouraging innovation, extending ambition and introducing internationally renowned artists to Manchester." From the Improvement Partners report*

### 3.4 Objective 2

**Helping secure Manchester's reputation as a leading cultural city and showcase its ability to deliver major large-scale events.**

- **Creating an ambitious risk-taking festival that animates the city centre.**
- **Attracting a conspicuously broad audience, regionally, nationally and internationally.**
- **Gaining significant media coverage, locally, nationally and internationally.**
- The 2009 Festival saw a growth in attendance of 15% on 2007 – from 200,930 to 231,564. Attendance at the 2009 Festival divided between 63,225 ticket buyers and 168,339 who attended free events and the Festival

Pavilion. Once attendance at all the pre-Festival commissions is removed so that we compare attendance just during the 18 days of the Festival – then the growth in attendance from 2007 to 2009 is an impressive 52%.

- The geographic breakdown of ticket bookers in 2009 was broadly similar to 2007. 55% came from Greater Manchester (the same as 2007). 16% came from the rest of the North West region (compared to 19% in 2007) and 29% came from the rest of the UK and abroad (compared to 26% in 2007). The Visitor Information Centre in Manchester, on the opening weekend of the Festival, reported its highest daily enquiry levels since the 2002 Commonwealth Games.
- 74% either agreed or strongly agreed that the Festival appealed to local people. 82% thought the Festival represented either 'excellent' or 'reasonably good' value for money (compared to 75% in 2007). That sense of growing support for the Festival is also reflected in the fact that 96% of those asked thought that they were either 'very likely' or 'quite likely' to attend the Festival in future, and to recommend it to others. 91% described the ease of getting information about the Festival as either 'Excellent' or 'Reasonably Good' – compared to 88% in 2007.
- 88% of those surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the Festival helps to make Manchester a world class cultural city – compared to 80% in 2007. 80% of those surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the Festival helps to make Manchester a better place to live work or study – compared to 74% in 2007.
- There was a significant increase in media coverage for the Festival, from £1m (advertising equivalent value) in 2007 to £19.9m in 2009, an increase of approximately 65%. The Festival saw a 300% increase in the value of its international media coverage. As in 2007, the press coverage of the Festival was overwhelmingly positive.

*"I left the Manchester International Festival in England last Sunday impressed by the vitality and diversity of the events and the cooperative spirit the festival generated throughout arts institutions and citizens of the city." Anthony Tommasini, New York Times, July 2009.*

### 3.5 Objective 3

**Helping build the creative potential of Manchester's different communities and artists through a series of innovative, high quality community-based commissions and creative development programmes.**

- **Building a long-term and innovative community engagement programme delivered to the same ambitions and values as the rest of the Festival.**
- **Ensuring that there are opportunities for all Manchester residents to attend events in the Festival – through a programme of free events, discount tickets and audience access programmes.**

- One of the key strategic improvements that MIF looked to put in place as a result of evaluating the 2007 Festival, was a strengthening of its community engagement and creative learning activities. This led to the establishment of MIF Creative, which was launched in 2008.
- MIF Creative shares MIF's principles of innovation, originality, internationalism and of developing high quality and inspiring cultural work. Its aim is to leave a legacy for the Festival by encouraging leading international artists and cultural practitioners to work with Mancunians of all ages and backgrounds to unlock their talent. In total 2,683 people took part in 696 sessions as part of the MIF Creative programme.
- There were 4 major MIF Creative projects commissioned for the 2009 Festival:-
  - i) Procession  
A major new commission from MIF and Cornerhouse for Turner prize winner, Jeremy Deller, which would take in a live event, exhibition, web project and publication. The commission was developed over an 18 month period and involved some 1700 people drawn from 86 different community groups from across all 10 Greater Manchester authorities. Some 25,000 people turned out to watch the live event which formed a major part of the festival's opening weekend. A further 10,000 people attended the exhibition and the web project attracted some 6000 visits from 65 different countries. The publication will appear early in 2010
  - ii) Something in the Air  
A ground-breaking partnership between three local schools for children with profound and multiple learning difficulties, MIF and Oily Cart and Ockhams Razor theatre companies. It led to a three week residency and a new commission for Contact Theatre as part of *The Great Indoors*,
  - iii) Amadou & Mariam & The Beating Wing Orchestra  
This six month collaboration between the Malian superstars, an international group of musicians drawn from refugee and migrant communities across Manchester, MIF and Community Arts Northwest led to two sold out performances at the Festival Pavilion
  - iv) The Difference Engine  
A new commission for Walk The Plank and Thingumajig Theatre which was created in collaboration with MIF, Centre for Urban Education and the Museum of Science and Industry. The project was developed in partnership with a group of local primary teachers interested in enhancing the teaching of science, technology, engineering and maths in their schools. The show premiered at *The Great Indoors* and had further performances in November 2009 at the Museum of Science & Industry

*"I have now seen a level of independence and creativity in the children that I would not have seen without this project" Lead teacher, Bishop Bilborrow school (involved in 'The Difference Engine')*

These commissions were accompanied by two MIF Creative training initiatives:-

- International Talent Campus  
Organised jointly by MIF and the British Council, this project brought together 20 emerging producers and creative entrepreneurs from the North West and India, China, Brazil, South Africa, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia.
- Trainee Producer Scheme  
Five early career producers from Manchester were given the opportunity to take paid 6 month internships working alongside established producers within the MIF team. 3 of the team have gone on to full time employment
- A strategic development from 2007 was to shift the balance in the programme away from paid performances towards free events, in order to ensure that there were as many opportunities as possible for local people to engage with the festival, whatever their means. Approximately one third of the Festival's programme was free, with the programme organised to include a major free event every weekend – 79,333 attended these free events.

*“All the people from Manchester I talked to loved the festival. And I was surprised how many people from the areas were taking part. To me the festival has become much more a part of how people perceive their own city”*

*Alexander Menden, Arts Correspondent, Suddeutsche Zeitung*

- A pilot community box office initiative was tested for the first time in 2009. This scheme worked in partnership with a number of different community organisations across the city to distribute 650 tickets at £3 each for a range of Festival shows. The aim of the scheme was to try to encourage participation in the Festival by parts of the local community that have traditionally been culturally disenfranchised. In addition a further 1500 tickets were available at concession price (an average 54% reduction off top price) to the unwaged – students, unemployed, pensioners etc, and a further 3200 tickets were available at £5 or less.
- The Festival also increased participation through its volunteer programme. 331 volunteers joined the scheme and delivered the equivalent of 17,000 hours of labour (worth £227,000). PZ Cussons sponsored MIF's volunteer programme and ran a competition to provide volunteers with an opportunity for a placement with the company. One of these candidates has now accepted a 12 month placement with the company. Other examples of the legacy of the MIF volunteers programme include:-
- Marina Abramovic offered her PA volunteer a work placement at her base in New York.

- A Technical Assistant volunteer was offered paid work with Tube UK, through volunteering with MIF.
- A Project volunteer was offered a job at the Royal Exchange, through the Front-of-House Manager with whom he worked at *The Great Indoors*.
- A volunteer Photographer is now working his first professional photography job as an assistant photographer, thanks to the photos he took of the Festival.
- An Artist Liaison volunteer with Amadou & Mariam has been offered work by the band on their upcoming French tour.

*“What you get from the Festival is this tremendous sense of loyalty to the city. There’s a great undertone of pride...I don’t know of any other festivals that have the ability to do that”*

*Marina Casdan, Modern Painters/Interview Magazine*

### 3.6 Objective 4

**Ensuring that the Festival is a sustainable event – financially and environmentally.**

- **Building a mixed funding base for the Festival, combining public and private sector support with an entrepreneurial approach to fundraising and a rigorous approach to cost control.**
- **Working towards making the Festival a model of sustainability – ie creating an enduring and balanced approach to economic activity, environmental responsibility and social progress throughout the Festival’s activities.**

Income and expenditure for the 2007 and 2009 Festival broke down as follows:-

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>%</b>
Manchester City Council	£2.3m	26%	£2.2m	23%
Other public funding	£1.4m	16%	£1.6m	17%
Sponsorship	£3.3m	37%	£2.9m	30%
Other funding	£0.5m	6%	£1.3m	14%
Ticket sales	£1.3m	15%	£1.5m	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£8.8m</b>		<b>£9.5m</b>	

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Artistic programme	£5.5m	61%	£6.2m	67%
Marketing & press	£1.1m	13%	£1.2m	13%
Festival operations	£2.4m	27%	£1.9m	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9.0m</b>		<b>£9.3m</b>	

<b>BALANCE **</b>	<b>(£0.2m)</b>		<b>£0.2m</b>	
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\*\* There were subsequent adjustments to the 2007 income that were covered in the 2009 Festival accounts. Overall the City Council funding via contingency ensured an overall balance across the two Festivals.

It should be noted that the Council's funding has reduced, proportionate with funding secured from other sources, which is consistent with the initial expectation and represents a significant achievement in the current financial climate. Festival overheads continue to be kept at a reasonable level allowing priority to be given to artistic programming.

#### 4. Future Planning : Looking Forward to 2011

- 4.1 The evidence suggests that the Manchester International Festival has made considerable strides in building on the successes of the inaugural festival in 2007 – building on the strengths and learning lessons to create a stronger local and community dimension – to deliver an even more successful second edition of the Festival in 2009. In particular, MIF has pulled off one of the toughest challenges facing a festival of MIF's scale – of simultaneously punching its weight on the international stage, while building a distinctively local character. All the data, both quantitative and qualitative, indicates that MIF achieved the aims that it set for itself in 2009.

- 4.2 John Knell's research cites a number of criteria for MIF's pre-eminence and the continued development of a world class product; most importantly that 'the success of the Festival in terms of edge, personality and international impact has been driven by the Festival's unique commissioning model – which must be preserved and invested in.'
- 4.3 The MIF executive, in reviewing the 2009 Festival has made a series of strategic recommendations for the delivery of the next Festival in 2011, which will run from 30 June until 17 July 2011. These recommendations will be considered by the Festival Board including representatives of the City Council, at its Board meeting in June 2010 as part of a comprehensive Business Plan covering the next 3 Festivals.
- 4.4 The mixed economy funding model which has supported MIF thus far – public sector grants and investment, private sector sponsorship and investment and MIF earned income (box office returns, co-commissioning investment etc) is key to the Festival's future success. Within the public sector, both the North West Development Agency and Arts Council of England are likely to seek funding reductions for 2011 given the pressures on expenditure. Our ability to ask them to maintain existing levels of funding will be related to demonstrating our ability to invest at least to 2009 levels in order to maintain a world class product.
- 4.5 In order to continue the development of the 2011 Festival it is crucial that the balance of public funding is at least maintained. The public sector will secure the best outcomes from investment in culture in this way. The current revenue support from the City Council of £1m per annum should be approved along with the underwriting of a further £0.5m in the 2011/12 budget, subject to continuing financial support from other public sector partners, namely the Arts Council of England and the North West Development Agency. The level of funding committed will be related to the content of a detailed business plan which the Festival Director is asked to bring forward for the Festival in 2011 showing the outcomes which will be delivered, building on the city's cultural and commercial opportunities, establishing the Manchester International Festival as a global brand.
- 4.6 Recommendations appear at the front of this report.

## **5. Contributing to the Community Strategy**

### **(a) Performance of the economy of the region and sub region**

The Manchester International Festival drives economic development by substantially raising the profile of Manchester, draws in tourism and attracts inward investment by positioning the City as an international centre for culture. The 2009 Festival achieved an economic impact value of £35.7m.

### **(b) Reaching full potential in education and employment**

The Festival increasingly works with schools, FE and HE institutions to maximise opportunities around employment creation and the recruitment of volunteers.

**(c) Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect**

An objective of the Festival is to play an important role in increasing community cohesion through facilitating community participation.

**(d) Neighbourhoods of Choice**

New cultural opportunities and a wider cultural choice for Manchester residents, in particular opportunities to experience and participate in such events, improves the quality of life for people who live, work and study in the City.

**Key Policies and Considerations**

**(a) Equal Opportunities**

The Festival aims to provide a range of opportunities for participation by local people such as MIF Creative and large scale family focused spectacular events, for example Procession. Free and discounted ticketing and audience access programmes provide opportunities for people across the City who have limited access to arts events.

**(b) Risk Management**

A full range of performance indicators are in place in against which risks are managed. A Finance/Audit Committee meets regularly and includes in its membership the City Treasurer.

**(c) Legal Considerations**

No legal issues at the current time.

The Festival is managed by an independent charitable company and the City Council is represented on the Board. A grant agreement is in place between the City Council and MIF.