



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
2 SEPTEMBER 2025

LEICESTERSHIRE MUSIC OVERVIEW REPORT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about the work of Leicestershire Music (LM). The report will share data about latest achievements and impact as well as explain the funding and governance arrangements for Leicestershire Music as the Lead organisation for the Leicestershire Music Hub (LMH).

Previous Decisions and Policy Framework

2. On 7 June 2022, the Committee received a presentation on Leicestershire Music which provided an overview of the work delivered by the Service and its focus moving forward.

Background

3. Leicestershire Music is thought to be the oldest music service of its kind in England and celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2023.
4. In 2024, LM was established as the Lead Organisation for the Leicester and Leicestershire Music Hub, implementing the National Plan for Music Education (NPME) through a Local Plan for Music Education (LPME).
5. Through a central workforce and a variety of partnerships, including schools, LM enables children and young people from all backgrounds in Leicester and Leicestershire to enrich and connect their world through life changing experiences.
6. LM is a service within the Council's Children and Family Services Department and LMH's leadership is strengthened and supported by a Hub Board.

Funding

7. The LMH receives two ring-fenced grants allocated by the DfE:
 - Core funding through the revenue grant to co-ordinate and support the delivery of music education provision through a Hub partnership in line with the vision, aims and strategic functions for Hubs as set out in the NPME.

- A capital grant to increase the volume, range, relevance and accessibility of musical instruments, equipment and technology in the Hub area.
- The revenue grant of £1.47 million has not increased for the 2025-26 academic year and has only increased by 4.61% since 2015-16. Had the grant kept pace with inflation, the 2023-24 allocation would have been £0.5m higher. The Local Government pay award offer for 2025/26 is forecast to add £120k to employment costs. Income generation via instrument hire and small group and one-to-one lessons has helped minimise overspend and a new Business Development Manager is leading a Fundraising Strategy to help drive sponsorship and generate additional funding.

Delivery

8. LMH's vision for the musical future of children and young people in Leicester and Leicestershire fully embraces the objectives and recommendations of the NPME.
9. In particular, LMH is committed to:
 - Providing an inclusive, diverse, and engaging music education and recognising that music education plays a vital role in developing creativity, cognitive skills, social connections, and overall wellbeing.
 - Delivering high-quality music education programmes, achieved by investing in the continuous professional development of music educators; fostering partnerships with local schools and cultural organisations; regularly evaluating the impact and effectiveness of work delivered.

Alignment with Children and Families Priorities

10. LM works extensively with children across Leicester and Leicestershire supporting departmental priorities such as:
 - a) Inclusion and SEND: LM delivers bespoke SEND projects and supports schools and settings, leading on the award winning 'Uprising' programme, training specialist teachers in SEND Music delivery;
 - b) Wellbeing and Personal Development: LM supports children to participate in music fostering mental health and generating social benefit and can be part of an early help offer for children;
 - c) Partnership and Outreach: LM works with schools across Leicester and Leicestershire, community groups, and LMH partners to broaden access.
11. LM's school team fosters relationships with all state-funded schools in Leicester and Leicestershire and supports them to deliver high-quality music education, including curriculum support, staff development, specialist tuition, supply of instruments and group playing activities. Children participate in performances at a range of venues in the city and county.

Partnerships

12. LM has strong partnerships with schools, local and national organisations and community groups to enable equitable access to broad and diverse music education. Partners include Pedestrian, Soft Touch Arts, Cosmopolitan Arts, Bullfrog Arts, The Philharmonia, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, National Youth Jazz Orchestra and Orchestras Live. Partners use Hub grant money to leverage further funding, through agreements which are reviewed annually. Case studies are published at <https://leicestershiremusicshub.org/hub-partnership-case-studies>

Progression and Musical Development

13. LM focusses on individualised progression pathways for young musicians, enabling them to develop their skills and pursue music education at all levels. This will involve collaborations with a range of diverse partners, professional musicians, and industry experts to provide guidance, mentorship and performance opportunities.

Inclusion

14. LM is committed to delivering an inclusive and welcoming environment for music education, performances, training, and developing opportunities for all, where anyone can positively explore their musical talents and passion safely.

What is Working Well

15. Performance data 2024-25 shows that:
- 95 % of all schools in Leicester and Leicestershire have been supported in their music education – via Continuing Professional Development (CPD), school music development plans, performance opportunities and music teaching;
 - 79% of schools took part in a singing opportunity such as staff development, massed choirs and choir competitions;
 - 21.6% of all pupils taking part in LM activity are eligible for Pupil Premium or have Special Educational Needs;
 - LM worked with over 18,000 students in schools;
 - Pupils performed at The Royal Albert Hall as part of the Youth Proms, went on tour to Belgium, performed at De Montfort and The Venue, De Montfort University and for the first time had a stage at Leicester's Riverside Festival;
 - Media coverage included interviews on BBC Radio Leicester and an editorial in Niche Magazine;
 - Performing Rights Society/Phonographic Performance Limited (PRS PPL) sponsored the June 2025 'Leics Make Music' festival.

Key Challenges

16. The Service had identified four key challenges:
- The Local Government Pay Award is unfunded and will add £120k to LM salaries;
 - Continuing real terms funding reductions;
 - A local authority music service is more restricted in fundraising opportunities (such as grant applications, gifts and donations) than a charity;
 - Schools and families are purchasing fewer traded goods as a result of competing educational priorities and limited available funding.

Future Plans and Development

17. It is planned for the service to move to the Haymarket Theatre as the venue for school bands and orchestra work. This will give LM a more visual presence and the ability to grow and work with more young people.
18. The 'Musician in Residence' programme will be offered to key schools where music is a priority. Music Leaders will spend more time in one school fostering relationships, enabling progression for young musicians and creating a musical culture within a school. This will support deeper long-term progression for young musicians and reduce travel for music leaders.
19. The Leicester Music Board, which was established to bridge the gap between music education and the music industry, is planning a 2026 Young Person's Music Careers Conference as well as several collaborative funding bids.
20. Performance opportunities for young people in 2025-26 include Haymarket Theatre, De Montfort Hall, The Venue and the National Music Mark conference in November 2025.
21. Ashmount Special School is LM's Lead SEND School for Music and will be assisting other special schools to develop their SEND music ensemble provision in 2025-26 as well as showcasing their ensemble at the national Music Mark conference in November 2025.

Background papers

22. Leicestershire Music Service, Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 7 June 2022:
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1043&MID=6883>
23. National Plan for Music Education:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62bc1242d3bf7f292040d364/The_Power_of_Music_to_Change_Lives.pdf
24. Leicestershire Music Local Plan for Music Education and associated policies:
<https://leicestershiremusichub.org/lpme>
25. Leicestershire Music Hub Inclusion Policy:
<https://leicestershiremusichub.org/uploads/inclusion-policy-april-2025.pdf?v=1748876530>
26. National Music Hub Data Dashboard:
<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrljoiMmY0MDg5ZGMtMGYwNi00Zjk3LTk3NTQtOWZmNmRkYzZIOTNiliwidCI6ImM3YTZmYzMyLTc1MzgtNGlwZS1hOTZhLTA1Zjg1NTAwN2MxMSJ9>

Equality Implications

27. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

Human Rights Implications

28. There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

Officers to Contact

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