

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 18 May 2021

Sistema Scotland: Big Noise Orchestra Programme

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
- 1.1.1 note the contents of this report;
 - 1.1.2 agree to officers providing in-kind support within existing budgets, to support the delivery of Big Noise in Wester Hailes, planned to begin in August 2021;
 - 1.1.3 note that Sistema Scotland has committed to meeting the full project costs five years
 - 1.1.4 note that Big Noise is a long term commitment to a community and that Sistema Scotland has agreed to establish a fundraising committee to support the programme's sustainability beyond the initial five year period;
 - 1.1.5 agree that during the initial five years, officers and Sistema Scotland will work in partnership, and that partnership will be re-negotiated after five years for year 6 and beyond;
 - 1.1.6 note that no financial commitment to support the programme beyond the initial five years can be made by the Council, but that any funding requests would have to be considered by a future Council;
 - 1.1.7 note that Sistema Scotland has begun consultation and engagement with the local schools and community;
 - 1.1.8 agree that officers should work to ensure complementarity between the Big Noise programme and existing programmes such as the Council's own Instrumental Music Service, Discover and other local programmes and;
 - 1.1.9 Agree to receive further reports updating Members on progress including attainment data from Glasgow

Lorna French

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Sistema Scotland: Big Noise Orchestra Programme

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 **Sistema Scotland** is a national charity established in 2007. It aims to transform lives through music in some of Scotland's most disadvantaged communities. **Big Noise** is the orchestra programme run by Sistema Scotland. It uses the symphony orchestra as a community through which children develop skills and experiences.
- 2.3 Sistema Scotland's first Big Noise programme began in Raploch (Stirling), with Big Noise programmes now also in Govanhill (Glasgow), Torry (Aberdeen) and Douglas (Dundee), Sistema Scotland has a long standing aspiration to run a Big Noise in Edinburgh and has secured funding to cover the first five years at no cost to the Council.
- 2.4 This report gives an overview of how Big Noise in Edinburgh (Wester Hailes) would be supported over the first five years and considerations for its future sustainability
- 2.5 The report outlines partnership working between the council and Sistema Scotland in the initial five years. It also outlines that a future strategic partnership would be developed to support the programme's sustainability from year 6 and beyond, should a future council agree to doing so.
- 2.6 Sistema Scotland, elected members and officers will form a Steering Group which will provide governance and oversight of the first five years and will support programme evaluation
- 2.7 Sistema Scotland has provided information which sets out their approach, aspirations and timeline. This is contained in Appendix 1 and should be read in tandem with and supplementary to the contents of this report.
- 2.8 Appendix 1 also outlines the likely delivery model of a Big Noise programme in Wester Hailes

3. Background

- 3.1 Inspired by and based on the Venezuelan El Sistema children's orchestra movement, Sistema Scotland was established as a charity in 2007. Its mission is to change lives through a classical music orchestra programme (called Big Noise) in Scottish communities facing the greatest disadvantage.

- 3.2 Sistema Scotland describes Big Noise as *‘a community based, social transformation programme that uses intensive, immersive orchestral music making to foster confidence, teamwork, pride and aspiration in the children taking part – and across the wider community’*
- 3.3 Sistema Scotland initiated discussions with Edinburgh around 8 years ago with a view to bringing a Big Noise programme to a community in the city. Over this period, Sistema has met with a number of senior officials and Elected Members.
- 3.4 In 2018 Sistema Scotland staff organised a visit to Raploch (Stirling), attended by the Convener and Vice Convener of Education, Children and Families and Lifelong Learning Strategic Manager. Edinburgh’s Council Leader joined for part of the visit. The group observed a nursery and p1 Big Noise lesson and was introduced to some representatives from the community, young people and elected members.
- 3.5 Following this visit and subsequent discussions, Sistema Scotland has undertaken research into several Edinburgh Communities. The organisation now recommends Wester Hailes as a potential host community for a long term Big Noise orchestra programme.
- 3.6 Sistema Scotland staff are currently engaging and consulting with Wester Hailes Head Teachers, parents/carers and the community to inform, share information and gain local support.
- 3.7 Sistema Scotland would like to work in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council. The organisation has provided information at Appendix 1 showing, among other things, what a Big Noise programme could look like in Wester Hailes.
- 3.8 Sistema Scotland can deliver Big Noise in Wester Hailes at no cost to the Council for five years, and has committed to establishing a fund-raising committee to support the long term sustainability of the programme
- 3.9 A partnership between Sistema Scotland and the Council is to be scoped. It will include evaluation at key milestones which would inform plans following the initial five year period.
- 3.10 No council financial commitment for the period following the first five years can be made at this time, and this will be for a future council to agree.
- 3.11 Since Sistema Scotland first initiated discussions with the council, there have been important developments which should be considered as part of the overall context:
- The impact of Covid -19 and Edinburgh’s recovery plans
 - The Council Business Plan
 - Edinburgh Poverty Commission’s recommendations and Delivery Plan
 - Edinburgh Learns for Life and the developing work of its various Boards

4. Main report

- 4.1 Sistema Scotland has provided officers and elected members with information which sets out their approach and aspirations. This can be found at Appendix 1 which was authored by Sistema Scotland and outlines the following:
- Principles and methodology for community scoping

- Current and planned community consultation and engagement
- The (likely) Big Noise delivery programme
- Evidencing outcomes
- Partnership working
- Financial implications
- Key milestones (Sistema's preferred Scenario)

4.2 Information provided by Sistema Scotland is contained within the body of this report. Appendix 1 should be read in tandem with and supplementary to the contents of this report.

4.3 Sistema Scotland has also provided information on:

- its values and ambitions which include a commitment to the host community over the long term (from birth to adulthood for every child entering the Big Noise programme)
- its findings from research into a number of Edinburgh communities and the rationale for recommending Wester Hailes as a host community
- its ethos; that it is essential to engage early with the recommended community; to inform them of the programme and seek their agreement and endorsement to build the work, for their input into programme delivery and the design of an awareness raising programme
- its strategic evaluation partnership with Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH)

4.4 Officers have liaised with Sistema Scotland but not with other local authorities where a Big Noise programme is established. To do so as the programme in Edinburgh develops will provide helpful insight as follows;

- to consider evaluation methodologies alongside the information provided by Sistema Scotland and Glasgow Centre for Population Health
- to learn how other local authorities have ensured complementarity between their Instrumental Music Service, Youth Music Initiative, other local projects and Big Noise
- to learn how partnership working has been developed in other areas facing similar levels of disadvantage to Wester Hailes

4.5 Prior to the Covid pandemic, nationally around 2,800 children and young people were engaged with Big Noise programmes. It is acknowledged that Covid has impacted on many council and third sector/partner services, with arts and music being particularly hard hit.

Financial information

4.6 Sistema Scotland is committed to working with private and other funders to secure funding for the introduction of a Big Noise programme in Edinburgh. Sistema Scotland is committed to meeting full delivery costs for the first five years of Big Noise Wester Hailes

- 4.7 Based on the size of the community and experience with comparable Big Noise programmes, Sistema Scotland anticipates the cost of delivering Big Noise Wester Hailes for the first five years will be around £2.6m. Within the first five years, it is estimated that this investment will benefit around 500 children and young people.
- 4.8 To date Sistema Scotland has secured funding commitments equivalent to approximately 60% of estimated expenditure over the first five years.
- 4.9 Sistema Scotland is committed to working with City of Edinburgh Council elected members to identify fundraising opportunities to secure the long-term continuation of the programme from year 6 thereafter
- 4.10 The details below are provided for information and are based on Sistema Scotland's most recent financial year 2019/20 and show the councils' contributions as a percentage of the annual total Big Noise expenditure. The participation levels stated are prior to the Covid-19 pandemic:

Council	Big Noise established	Initial cost to council	Council financial contribution 2019/20	No of children / young people
Stirling (Raploch)	2008	No cost to council for first 5 years	(58%)	Around 500
Glasgow (Govanhill)	2013	Council contribution from the outset	(15/5%)	Around 1,250
Aberdeen (Torry)	2015	Council funded up to 75% from outset	(75%)	Around 500
Dundee (Douglas)	2017	No cost to Council for first 4 years	discussions are ongoing to secure the long-term continuation of Big Noise	Over 500

- 4.11 In addition to the financial contribution, each council makes in-kind contributions. They also support the Big Noise programme with officer time including at senior level (Chief Executive/Corporate Director). In-kind contributions are as follows:

4.11.1 Stirling, Aberdeen and Dundee Councils provide:

- free access to spaces in the schools for delivery (during and after school)
- rent free storage space
- office accommodation

4.11.2 Glasgow City Council provides rent free storage space for instruments and materials

- 4.12 Sistema Scotland's proposal for its recommended community of Wester Hailes is:

- **first five years - no cost** with an investment offer of c.£2.6m to support children, young people and families
(NB this is not a cash offer to the Council but is to Sistema Scotland to support the first five years of Big Noise development in Edinburgh)

- projected to engage regularly with around 500 children and young people within the first five years
 - projected programme expenditure after five years: c.£800k per year
- 4.13 When Sistema Scotland develops a Big Noise programme it commits to the community for the long term. As such, councils working in partnership with Sistema Scotland, have done so in the knowledge that the council will make an annual financial contribution to the programme expenditure. This is reflected within the strategic partnerships, which vary from council to council.
- 4.14 Sistema Scotland is committed to working with City of Edinburgh Council to identify fundraising opportunities to secure the long-term continuation of the programme after year 5. Sistema Scotland has committed to establishing a fund-raising committee for this purpose and will work with elected members on fund raising opportunities.
- 4.15 Fundraising for Big Noise assumes due diligence will be carried out on all donors - Sistema Scotland and City of Edinburgh Council should be satisfied that donated funds are not of an illegal source (CEC anti-money laundering and sponsorship/advertising policies) and that funding sources are transparent and not in ethical conflict with the council's priorities and policies
- 4.16 That Sistema Scotland has committed to covering the cost of Big Noise for five years, provides an opportunity for officers and Sistema Scotland staff to:
- work together to develop effective partnership approaches
 - ensure existing programmes and services and Big Noise are complementary to each other
 - jointly evaluate the impact over 5 years
 - develop a proposed strategic partnership agreement that could be taken forward from year 6 and beyond by a future council
 - collate information that would enable a future Council to consider funding requests for programme sustainability from year 6 and beyond
- 4.17 Sistema Scotland would like to explore with the Council, opportunities for in-kind contributions, for example, office space in the community, free delivery space in schools and storage space for instruments and resources. These will be considered and supported where possible within existing budgets.
- 4.18 There is complementary investment in Wester Hailes such as the council's Instrumental Music Service, Youth Music Initiative, Discover, Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) as well as existing and planned third sector initiatives.
- 4.19 While not comparable in terms of intensive and immersive engagement, Edinburgh currently spends c. £2.6m on its Instrumental Music Service (IMS) of which £48982 is spent in the Wester Hailes area.
- 4.20 Also not comparable in terms of intensive and immersive engagement, Edinburgh's Youth Music Initiative (YMI) free programmes (funded by Creative Scotland) spends around £4,320 in Wester Hailes for all p1 – 5 classes. This will rise to £5,820 in 2021/22 to cover all P6 and 7 classes as well. YMI provides some targeted programmes for children facing disadvantage, and a new animation programme may include Wester Hailes schools (tbc) which could take the spend up to c.£11,000. YMI music tutors also contribute to the **Discover!** (holiday hunger) every holiday, paid from YMI with amounts varying from holiday to holiday.
- 4.21 Edinburgh's **Discover!** programme costs £250k per year, targets children and families citywide living in poverty. The number of families attending the Wester

Hailes Discover Hub was consistently higher than any of the other Hubs. Now on-line, Wester Hailes families continue to engage with Discover.

4.22 PEF spending in Wester Hailes is £422679

Partnership Working

4.23 Sistema Scotland would like to work in partnership with the Council to:

- develop a Big noise programme in Wester Hailes
- explore the long term investment in Big Noise in Wester Hailes through its fundraising committee

4.24 Discussions have taken place over a number of years which have focussed on the approach, values and benefits of Big Noise. Publicly available evaluation by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health and also been shared with the council. The current phase of community consultation being carried out by Sistema Scotland is to ensure its recommended community is informed about the programme and gives its endorsement to building the work.

4.25 Sistema Scotland is clear that Wester Hailes is its recommended community; and agreement to develop a Big Noise programme in the area is subject to further consultation with the community.

4.26 Successful partnerships are built upon strong relationships, clarity on roles and responsibilities, trust and understanding - with mutual benefits, agreed outcomes and shared values.

4.27 An initial partnership with Sistema Scotland will cover the first five years of the programme. A Steering Group made up of officers, elected members and Sistema Scotland staff, will provide governance, overseeing the partnership, evaluation at key milestones and progress made by the fundraising committee. During the first five years, in-kind support will be explored and provided within existing council budgets. The Steering Group is likely to be chaired by the chair of Sistema Scotland.

4.28 The Council has not financially committed to Big Noise meaning a future council will need to agree approaches to and arrangements for longer term sustainability. Sistema Scotland and the Council will work together over the initial five years to ensure partnership roles and responsibilities are clear and agreed for year 6 and beyond.

4.29 A new partnership agreement from year 6 will be for a future council to agree, based on programme evaluation and the success of Sistema Scotland's Fundraising Committee.

4.30 To facilitate effective partnership working, Sistema Scotland proposes the establishment of a Big Noise Edinburgh Steering Group, which they suggest would include elected members and senior officers from City of Edinburgh Council along with board members and senior executives from Sistema Scotland, and potentially chaired by Sistema Scotland's Board Chair. The group's remit of would be to:

- oversee the effective implementation of the Big Noise programme in Edinburgh
- ensure strategic links with the Councils' priorities
- consider funding opportunities to secure the long-term sustainability of the Big Noise programme.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Sistema Scotland will provide an update on and feedback from their engagement and consultation with the Wester Hailes community.
- 5.2 Sistema Scotland and Council officers will consider the potential for added value, impact on and relationship with existing interventions and opportunities in Wester Hailes, particularly where there are inter-dependencies (e.g. Pupil Equity Fund, Discover, Youth Music Initiative, Instrumental Music Service and local third sector opportunities)

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There will be no financial cost to the council for the first 5 years as all costs will be covered by Sistema Scotland's fundraising.
- 6.2 All in-kind support will be contained within existing council budgets.
- 6.3 There is no identified budget source for a Big Noise programme in Edinburgh. A future council will need to agree a new partnership agreement with Sistema Scotland for programme sustainability from year 6
- 6.4 Sistema Scotland has provided the following information regarding the first 5 years:
 - 6.4.1 Sistema Scotland is committed to working with private and other funders to secure funding for the introduction of a Big Noise programme in Edinburgh. Sistema Scotland is also committed to meeting the full delivery costs for the first five years of Big Noise Wester Hailes.
 - 6.4.2 Based on the size of the Wester Hailes community and experience with comparable Big Noise programmes, Sistema Scotland anticipates that the costs of delivering Big Noise Wester Hailes for the first five years will be around £2.6m.
 - 6.4.3 Sistema Scotland has to date secured funding commitments equivalent to approximately 60% of estimated expenditure over the first five years.
- 6.5 When a council agrees to entering a strategic partnership with Sistema Scotland, current Councils' contributions vary (as of 2019/20 between 15.5% - 75%).
- 6.6 Sistema Scotland has confirmed that the funding model with Edinburgh does not need to be the same as with other local authorities and has committed to establishing a fundraising committee to identify future funding.
- 6.7 A future council will make the decision to enter into a further strategic partnership with Sistema Scotland regarding the long term sustainability from year 6 and beyond.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Sistema Scotland initiated discussions with City of Edinburgh Council several years ago, with a view to bringing a Big Noise programme to the city. Over 8+ years Sistema Scotland has spoken with elected members, Corporate Directors, Heads of Service and senior officers.
- 7.2 In 2019, Sistema Scotland engaged with the education representatives of each political group on the Education, Children and Families Committee. It was agreed that Sistema Scotland would undertake a scoping exercise. The purpose was to identify and recommend a community within Edinburgh which would be the best fit for, and potentially benefit most from, a Big Noise programme.
- 7.4 Following discussion with officers, desk research and local discussions, Sistema Scotland recommended Wester Hailes as the first community to host a Big Noise programme in Edinburgh. This is based on the assessed level of need, fit with the Big Noise programme delivery model, and, opportunities to contribute towards regeneration plans for the community.
- 7.5 Sistema Scotland confirms this remains a recommendation and is subject to further community consultation.
- 7.6 Sistema Scotland is currently undertaking community consultation with local schools, community members and organisations working in the area. Details of Sistema's current community consultation is provided in Appendix 1
- 7.7 At the appropriate time an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) will be carried out

8. Background reading/external references

8.1

9. Appendices

9

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Sistema Scotland's overview paper



1. CONTEXT

Sistema Scotland works to improve the lives of children and young people and strengthen communities through music and nurturing relationships. The charity is committed to bringing the benefits of its evidence-based Big Noise programmes to more children, families and communities in greatest need. Sistema Scotland's four established Big Noise programmes work immersively, inclusively and over the long-term with around 2,800 children and young people in the four communities of Raploch, Stirling (est 2008); Govanhill, Glasgow (est 2013); Torry, Aberdeen (est 2015); and Douglas, Dundee (est 2017).

“Big Noise to me means music and life. It doesn't just improve your music skills, it improves your teamwork skills, your independence, your improvisation. Even taking part in an orchestra can help you overcome your fears. Some people think Big Noise is just a music group, but it is so much more than that to the people that take part.” – Big Noise Participant

The Big Noise programmes give children and young people invaluable life skills and experiences. Big Noise provides a place of safety and wellbeing, a nurturing community in which children are supported to realise their full potential. Through their participation in the programme the children develop confidence, learn to work together and be kind to each other, they build resilience, pride and aspiration, and are supported to lead successful and fulfilled lives. The programmes work intensively with the children and young people, and inclusively with families and the broader community, to achieve permanent social change. Key to this are the long-term, trusting relationships which the children develop with Big Noise staff musicians. The unique design of the Big Noise programme allows this relationship to develop based on consistent daily contact over many years, free at the point of delivery, with the musicians acting not only as educators, but also as compassionate mentors and inspirational role models, supporting positive behaviours and life choices.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the Big Noise programmes have used established and trusting relationships to support children's and young people's emotional wellbeing and ongoing engagement with learning, initially through the rapid implementation of an online programme and then a blended model of face-to-face and online delivery.

“Big Noise was the only interaction my daughter had during the lockdown. ... Her mood jumped back up after her Big Noise sessions; the group sessions were extremely beneficial as she'd been feeling isolated and had little other interaction. Big Noise is where her good friends are.” – Big Noise Parent

2. FEASIBILITY STUDY

Sistema Scotland has been in discussions with City of Edinburgh Council for a number of years with a view to bringing a Big Noise programme to the city. In 2019, agreement was reached across all political groups represented on the Education, Children and Families Committee to move forward with a scoping exercise. The purpose of this work was to identify a host community within Edinburgh which would be the best fit for, and would benefit most from, a Big Noise programme. During this period of work, key officer contacts have included the Executive Director for Communities and Families, the Chief Education Officer and the Lifelong Learning Strategic Manager.

During initial discussions between Sistema Scotland and the Council, seven communities were identified for initial consideration:

Following research and discussions as outlined in the following section, the community of **Wester Hailes is recommended** as the first community to host a Big Noise programme in Edinburgh. This is based on the assessed level of need and fit with the Big Noise programme delivery model, and opportunities to contribute towards regeneration plans for the community. *Please note that the recommendation is subject to community consultation which is currently ongoing.*

3. PRINCIPLES AND METHODOLOGY

There are certain principles on which Big Noise is founded which have informed the approach taken to the feasibility study. These are set out and summarised in the table below.

However, it is important to note that once a community has been identified it is essential to seek their agreement and endorsement to build the work. Sistema Scotland will work in partnership with the community to agree the programme implementation to ensure it meets the specific needs of the community.

Principle	Methodology
<p><i>Communities of greatest need</i></p> <p>The Big Noise programmes are purposely based in communities which will benefit most from their support.</p>	<p>We reviewed indicators of disadvantages (acknowledging their limitations) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 statistics, in particular the percentage of the population living in the lowest quintile overall and the specific domains of education/skills, health, income and crime • Pupil Equity Fund allocation for each of the schools • % of free school meal entitlement amongst Primary 4-7 pupils
<p><i>A community-based programme</i></p> <p>Big Noise is a place-based programme, open to all children and young people attending school, living or being cared for within the community.</p>	<p>We reviewed the size, boundaries and identifiable nature of the community.</p> <p>We spoke to Locality Managers to gain an insight into the communities, assets and challenges, existing interventions, regeneration planning and progress, and potential partner organisations, and their thoughts on how the programme would fit with the needs of the community.</p> <p>We reviewed the extent to which children living in the communities were attending schools within or outside the communities.</p>
<p><i>Early intervention and long-term pathway</i></p> <p>Big Noise initially works with the youngest children in the community, and for early years children we deliver the programme during the school day, with children then signing up voluntarily to the after-school programme.</p>	<p>We met with the head teachers of the primary schools within the communities (and visited each school) for their perspective on how Big Noise could support their pupils and the broader community, as well as other activities available to the children.</p>

4. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

A programme of community consultation is now underway and phase one will continue until June 2021. This is to ensure that community members are well informed about Big Noise, to gain endorsement for the programme, and to enable community members and key practitioners working in the community to shape the initial programme design and delivery.

Discussions have been held with the head teachers of the three local primary schools (Canal View, Clovenstone and Sighthill) in the community, the local secondary school (Wester Hailes Education Centre), as well as the schools' home link teachers; arts-based organisations working in the community (including WHALE Arts and Starcatchers); local community workers (from City of Edinburgh Council and organisations including About Youth) and some other community based organisations. Meetings are planned in the coming weeks with parents and family members arranged through the schools and their home link teachers, as well as follow up discussions with the head teachers to scope together an initial programme design. There will also be opportunities for practitioners and community members to meet with peers from other communities who currently have a Big Noise programme based there.

“We are very fortunate to have Big Noise as partners within our school community. Our staff and the Big Noise team share the same vision of ensuring our children and young people have high-quality learning experiences. During the school closure period, Big Noise staff worked extremely hard to engage with the children remotely, in order to continue their learning.” – Head Teacher, Big Noise Partner School

In phase two of the consultation process we would form a group of local stakeholders, who are interested to work with us ongoing to input to programme design and development over the coming year.

[For information – in all communications with community members and representatives, it has been made clear that Sistema Scotland is considering working in Wester Hailes and that the purpose of discussions is to inform and gather views on whether community members would be supportive of this development and how they would like to shape the programme to best support the community.]

5. PROGRAMME DELIVERY OVERVIEW

Big Noise provides a pathway of engagement for children and young people from birth to adulthood, working initially with the youngest children in the community and then building progressively each year as the older children remain engaged and younger children join.

The initial focus is on the recruitment of a leadership team and musicians to be embedded on the ground in the community (the Big Noise Wester Hailes team). The team will initially comprise a Head of Centre, followed by an Operations Manager and then an initial group of Musicians and support workers. The Big Noise Wester Hailes team will be recruited through a rigorous process, run by Sistema Scotland with input/guidance from the Council and community where appropriate. The recruitment process will seek to attract candidates with community and/or educational experience, high level performance skills and passion for music and excellent communication skills.

The Big Noise Wester Hailes team will undergo an induction both into the community (involving shadowing local professionals, meeting key stakeholders) and into the Big Noise programme (shadowing the teams in Raploch, Govanhill, Torry and/or Douglas, learning the curriculum and delivery styles of the organisation).

The Big Noise Wester Hailes team will work with local partners to plan details and logistics of the delivery programme, and to design a community engagement and profile-building programme.

Subject to discussions with community members and partner schools, the initial programme model could include:

- All Primary 1 children twice a week during the school day
- All Primary 2 children twice a week during the school day
- All Primary 3 children twice a week during the school day
- After-school club open to all children of Primary 3 age, building to three afternoons per week

And from a slightly later stage:

- All nursery children (in the pre-primary year) once a week
- Weekly Baby Noise sessions for babies and toddlers with a parent/carer
- Weekly family orchestra involving parents of Primary 3 children

Delivery of the programme will be supported by the development of a volunteering programme (attracting volunteers from within and outside the community).

In addition to the weekly structured programme, the team will deliver a number of additional activities throughout the year including: performances by the children, performances for the children, external trips and events, and family engagement sessions.

Each year the programme will continue to grow and take in the next year-group of children. By the end of the fifth year the programme will be open to all children and young people in the community from birth through to Primary 6, and will then continue to work with the young people through their secondary school years into adulthood.

It is estimated that in the initial stages the programme will work with around 400 children from the Wester Hailes community, increasing to over 500 children engaging on a regular and ongoing basis within the first five years.

The Big Noise Experience

When the full model is established, a typical child in the Big Noise programme will move through baby and carer classes, to nursery sessions, then orchestra initiation including percussion band and paper orchestra before moving into the Primary 3 string orchestra. Children then opt to join the after-school orchestra where they rehearse intensively up to three afternoons per a week during school terms and attend holiday clubs eight weeks of the year.

The Big Noise Wester Hailes team will work 3-5 days per week in the community, throughout the calendar year (apart from shut down periods, and training and development weeks).

The in-school programme (nursery, Primary 1-3) will be open to all children attending schools within the community (Canal View, Clovenstone and Sighthill). The after-school programme will be open to all children in the appropriate age groups who attend school and/or live in the community.

By being based within the community the Big Noise Wester Hailes team aims to be in constant dialogue with community members and partners. This allows the programme to be creative and responsive, with a rapid pace of progress.

6. EVIDENCING OUTCOMES

Since 2013, Sistema Scotland has been engaged in a strategic evaluation partnership with Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH). GCPH is leading a long-term, longitudinal evaluation of the outcomes delivered for participants, families and the broader community. Over the years the evaluation partnership has included significant contributions from Education Scotland, Audit Scotland and Glasgow Caledonian University.

“I believe Big Noise has helped my daughter develop better concentration with her school work; she can focus better and she’s more confident. Her reading has come on really well from learning to read musical notes. She’s got lots of new friends through mixing with children from other classes in her school and children from another primary school.” – Big Noise Parent

GCPH’s most recent report, [People change lives](#), was published in 2019 and consolidates five years of learning from Big Noise Torry, Raploch and Govanhill. The report strongly endorses Sistema Scotland’s approach to delivery and shows that **Big Noise significantly enhances participants’ lives, prospects, health and well-being** through a variety of identified pathways in the long term:

- increased confidence, discipline, pride and aspiration;
- improved team-working, communication and leadership;
- enhanced academic skills including listening, concentration and creativity;
- increased resilience, happiness, sense of belonging and fulfilment;
- strong musical skills development;
- uptake of physical activity and healthy eating, avoidance of damaging behaviours;
- development of positive social groups, peer relationships and cultural engagement;
- and
- respite and protection for vulnerable participants.

In particular, this latest report focuses on how these impacts are underpinned by the long-term, encouraging, trusting and supportive relationship between the Big Noise musician and participant, where the musician acts not only as an educator, but also as a mentor and a role model, supporting positive behaviours and life choices. The unique design of the Big Noise programme allows this relationship to develop based on consistent daily contact over many years, as participants face the challenges and rewards that come from being part of an orchestra and performing regularly.

“The teachers at Big Noise, you can tell them about anything. You can sit down and have a full conversation with any of the Big Noise musicians, even the ones you don’t know that well. They really listen to you.” – Big Noise Participant

“I can’t thank the musicians and staff at Big Noise enough for what they do teaching our kids. Not only music, but giving them confidence and the ability to believe in themselves. When I do volunteering at Big Noise, I’m mesmerised at the different relationships the staff build with the children. The trust between the staff and the children is profound.” – Big Noise Parent

The report makes clear that the Big Noise programmes are clearly aligned with and support delivery of a range of national policies, notably the National Performance Framework (NPF): “The outcomes that Big Noise is achieving align and contribute to a range of NPF Outcomes and their indicators including culture, health, education, poverty, communities and children. Contributions across these NPF outcomes within the disadvantaged communities that Big

Noise serves, underpins crosscutting NPF themes of addressing inequalities and in promoting sustainable, inclusive economic growth.” (GCPH, 2019)

In the highly diverse community of Govanhill, the report also finds evidence of Big Noise supporting language development: “School teachers in Govanhill believe that the children who participate in the Big Noise after-school programme gain valuable skills concerning language development; they hear sounds and words which then transfer to phonological awareness, which aids them in blending the sounds and structuring sentences. In Govanhill, 86% of teachers described observing increased confidence in children who attend Big Noise after-school, including children being more confident speaking out loud in class, interacting with others and talking in front of groups.” (GCPH, 2019)

Sistema Scotland would work to establish an evaluation baseline within Wester Hailes and would agree with the Council a monitoring framework based on outcomes agreed between the Council and Sistema Scotland.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Sistema Scotland is committed to working with private and other funders to secure funding for the introduction of a Big Noise programme in Edinburgh and to meet the full delivery costs for the first five years of Big Noise Wester Hailes (currently planned as 2021/22 to 2025/26).

Based on the size of the Wester Hailes community and experience with comparable Big Noise programmes, it is anticipated that the costs of delivering Big Noise Wester Hailes for the first five years will be around £2.6m. Sistema Scotland has to date secured funding commitments equivalent to approximately 60% of estimated expenditure over the first five years. Within the first five years, it is estimated that this investment will benefit over 500 children and young people engaging regularly and on an ongoing basis with the Big Noise programme.

8. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

To facilitate effective partnership working between the City of Edinburgh Council and Sistema Scotland it is proposed to establish a Big Noise Edinburgh Steering Group. This group would include elected members and senior officers from City of Edinburgh Council along with board members and senior executives from Sistema Scotland. The remit of the group will be to oversee the effective implementation of the Big Noise programme in Edinburgh, ensure strategic linkage with the priorities and outcomes of the Council, and to consider funding opportunities to secure the long-term sustainability of the Big Noise programme.

It is proposed that the Council and Sistema Scotland enter into a partnership agreement which would clearly outline the role of each of the parties in securing the success of the Big Noise programme.

9. KEY MILESTONES

The following are key high-level milestones, which are supported by a more detailed action plan maintained by Sistema Scotland. Sistema Scotland is currently on-track to meet these milestones and have a delivery team ready for to commence working with children in the community from spring 2022. Sistema Scotland commits to continuing to communicate regularly with local partners and Council officers regarding progress and should any milestones need to be revised.

March-June 2021

- Community engagement programme ongoing
- Virtual visits for community members and teachers to other Big Noise programmes

May 2021

- CEC Education, Children and Families Committee meeting

June 2021

- Sistema Scotland Board decision to proceed

August/September 2021

- Big Noise Edinburgh Steering Group established
- Community Stakeholder Group established
- Work commences on gathering baseline evaluation information
- Development of Partnership Agreement between Sistema Scotland and City of Edinburgh Council
- Recruitment process for Head of Centre

October 2021

- Head of Centre in post
- Recruitment process for Operations Manager
- Detailed planning with local partners
- Development of delivery plan

December 2021

- Operations Manager in post

January 2022

- Recruitment of Musicians

February/March 2022

- Musicians in post and inducted
- Community events to raise awareness and anticipation

Spring/Summer 2022

- Community engagement work ongoing
- Launch of in-school programme
- Launch of holiday programmes
- Launch of after-school programme