

## Bath & North East Somerset Council

DECISION MAKER:	<b>Cllr Terry Gazzard, Cabinet Member for Development &amp; Major Projects</b>	
DECISION DATE:	<b>On or after 12<sup>th</sup> March 2011</b>	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE: <b>E 2244</b>
TITLE:	<b>Cultural Strategy 2011-2026</b>	
WARD:	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b> Appendix 1: Cultural Strategy 2011-2026		

### 1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The Cultural Strategy has been developed jointly by Bath & North East Somerset Council, Future Bath Plus, and the Cultural Forum for the Bath Area. It sets out the high-level objectives for how cultural activity will be supported and developed across the district, and relates strategic planning for culture to the Sustainable Community Strategy.

### 2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet member is asked to agree that:

2.1 The Cultural Strategy 2011-2026 is adopted.

### **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The Cultural Strategy is led by the Council and, like the Sustainable Community Strategy, is delivered in partnership with other bodies.
- 3.2 Many of the actions identified in the Strategy simply require the alignment of priorities between partners and commitment to different ways of working, and do not require additional resources.
- 3.3 Actions identified for the Council to deliver will be kept rigorously within the service plan budget for Tourism Leisure & Culture Division. Projects requiring additional resources will be agreed and implemented only if all required external funding or income has been secured.
- 3.4 Actions identified for partner organisations to deliver will be the financial responsibility of those organisations.
- 3.5 The Cultural Strategy presents huge opportunity for greater strategic working with Cultural Forum for the Bath Area, the wider voluntary sector, Future Bath Plus, and other private sector partners, in order to realise the potential of what can be achieved.
- 3.6 Delivery of cultural activity is very largely achieved through the voluntary sector working in partnership with public bodies such as the Council.
- 3.7 The cultural sector contributes significant income to the locality, creating an economic impact of some scale. Research commissioned by Cultural Forum for the Bath Area from University of Bath in 2009-10 suggests the following:

Visitors to cultural events and heritage attractions (consumers) spend a total of at least £114m per annum in to the local economy;

Cultural and heritage attractions and businesses (providers) spend a total of appx £10m in to the local economy (through trading with other local businesses);

There are at least 6,000 jobs in the cultural and heritage sector locally.

### **4 CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

The Cultural Strategy's purpose is to contribute to the Council vision "Make Bath & North East Somerset a better place to live, work and visit" and to the Sustainable Community Strategy themes. The following Council priorities are particularly relevant:

- *Building communities where people feel safe and secure*
- *Promoting the independence of older people*
- *Improving life chances of disadvantaged teenagers and young people*
- *Improving school buildings*
- *Sustainable growth*
- *Improving transport and the public realm*

## 5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Cultural Strategy sets out how culture contributes to the delivery of the district's Sustainable Community Strategy. It is a revision and refresh of the existing, and out of date, Bath & North East Somerset Cultural Strategy published in 2002.
- 5.2 Cultural activity embraces a wide range of services and activities. The lead has been taken by the Tourism Leisure & Culture Division, working with external stakeholders and a project group of Officers from across the Council. This has ensured that those with the right knowledge and expertise have been able to contribute.
- 5.3 There is a potentially diverse audience for the Cultural Strategy, ranging from those with a professional or business interest or expertise, to those who have a more general interest because they enjoy and participate in cultural activities.
- 5.4 The primary target audience for the Strategy are suppliers and providers of cultural services and activities: voluntary, private and public sector organisations which deliver cultural activities of all kinds to our residents and visitors. These suppliers and providers are represented by the three strategic partners: Cultural Forum for the Bath Area, Future Bath Plus, and Bath & North East Somerset Council. They have an overview of cultural activity across the district, and the authority and responsibility to make decisions about priorities.
- 5.5 The secondary audience for the Strategy are members of the public and those who have an 'informed', but more general, interest. A short and accessible publication (print and online) will be produced once the Strategy has been adopted. This will be used as an advocacy tool to promote and celebrate cultural activity and to encourage engagement, participation and volunteering. It will direct people to the Cultural Strategy which will be published online.
- 5.6 The process of developing the new Cultural Strategy started three years ago in April 2008 and was undertaken through a process of both internal and external consultation. Throughout, a steering group with representatives from Cultural Forum for the Bath Area and Future Bath Plus has guided the work and has provided detailed and valuable challenge and critique.
- 5.7 Extensive and detailed consultation took place in summer 2008, with focus groups representing areas of interest such as sports, heritage, the arts, and public realm. This was supported by desk research to understand how cultural provision in Bath and North East Somerset compared with that of other local authority areas.
- 5.8 Officers have also been able to draw on national and local data on participation in cultural activity, for example: Taking Part survey (Arts Council England); Active People survey (Sport England); T-Stats (software package used by Bath Tourism Plus); Voicebox surveys; MOSAIC data (analysed by Research & Intelligence team); trends in arts attendance (produced by Audiences SW for Arts Development team). Officers have also undertaken a SWOT analysis for culture locally.

5.9 During 2009-10 a first draft was produced for consultation with staff only, followed by a second draft which was consulted upon during spring/summer 2010. This consultation included local stakeholders and providers and relevant regional bodies, and Officers provided briefings to various groups as required. Feedback and comments were incorporated into a third draft circulated December 2010, and Officers now present the final Cultural Strategy for adoption.

5.10 The Cultural Strategy articulates the Council's enabling role, whereby it works in partnership with the voluntary sector (represented by Cultural Forum for the Bath Area) and the private and commercial sector (represented by Future Bath Plus). The three partners have agreed shared responsibilities and specific roles in relation to cultural planning, and have agreed six high-level objectives:

- Growth of the creative industries, festivals & events
- Growth and promotion of tourism
- Enabling knowledge transfer across the cultural sector
- Provision of commercially viable heritage and visitor attractions
- Promotion of a healthy & active resident and working population
- Enabling of activities in the commercial, social enterprise & voluntary sectors

5.11 The Tourism Leisure & Culture Division will have responsibility for co-ordination of monitoring and review of the Cultural Strategy. Progress will be reviewed and assessed annually, and a more detailed 'refresh' process will be undertaken every four years.

## **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

6.1 The report author and Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

## **7 EQUALITIES**

7.1 A draft Equalities Impact Assessment has been written and will be reviewed on the same cycle as review of the Cultural Strategy.

7.2 The Cultural Strategy is steered by the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy: specifically, how culture can address the long-term issues and challenges described in the 'Drivers for Change' section of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

## **8 RATIONALE**

8.1 The current Bath & North East Somerset Cultural Strategy was published in 2002 and reflects the priorities of the previous Council administration. Whilst the overall aims and principles remain relevant, its content is out of date and does not relate to current national policy frameworks or to local priorities.

8.2 Government policy on the 'localism' agenda is now the most significant influence on our strategic planning. It is therefore timely to adopt a new Cultural Strategy that captures the Council's enabling role for the community and its desire to work in partnership with the voluntary sector and local business.

8.3 Cultural activity is a key driver of our local economy, in terms of both employment and income generated. Attractions such as Bath Rugby, the Roman Baths and Bath Abbey contribute to the national and international reputation of Bath and the surrounding area. Equally important is the scale of the voluntary sector: volunteers in museums and arts organisations totalled 2,790 in 2009-10, contributing 85,347 hours of voluntary time (or, 30 hours per person per year).

**9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

9.1 None.

**10 CONSULTATION**

10.1 Cabinet members; Town Council; Overview & Scrutiny Panel; Staff; Other B&NES Services; Service Users; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer

10.2 Consultation was carried out by focus group meetings, circulation of drafts for written comment, and meetings of the partners.

**11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION**

11.1 Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Young People; Corporate.

**12 ADVICE SOUGHT**

12.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

<b>Contact person</b>	Ann Cullis, Senior Arts Development Officer  01225 396455 <a href="mailto:ann_cullis@bathnes.gov.uk">ann_cullis@bathnes.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers</b>	Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2026
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	