

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	12th March 2026	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 3688
TITLE:	Cultural Development Plan	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix A - Cultural Development Plan		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 This report presents the new council policy document – the Cultural Development Plan for review and adoption by cabinet.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to;

- 2.1 Approve the Cultural Development Plan 2025 – 2027

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 The current administration had a number of commitments to culture in the election manifesto. Culture is also one of the 9 priorities in the Bath and North East Somerset Council (B&NES) Corporate Strategy: Valuing and developing the contribution of culture to Bath and North East Somerset (BANES).
- 3.2 The Administration and Senior Officers allocated the Cultural Policy brief to the Head of Heritage Services in 2024 with a new job title of Head of Culture and Heritage.
- 3.3 The Head of Culture and Heritage has worked with stakeholders both within and outside of the Council to create a Cultural Development Plan to direct the organisation's approach to this area of place-shaping.

3.4 The Cultural Development Plan is included as Appendix A

3.5 Adopting the Cultural Development Plan as a central pillar of the Council's place-shaping strategy will deliver long-term benefits for BANES. The plan positions culture as a driver of regeneration, economic growth, and social cohesion, ensuring that investment in heritage and creativity underpins planning and infrastructure decisions. It aligns with corporate priorities on health, wellbeing, and inclusive communities, while strengthening the district's identity and visitor economy. Endorsing this approach will enable the Council to leverage cultural assets to attract investment, foster innovation, and create vibrant, sustainable places that reflect our shared ambitions for the area.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 N/A

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 The plan is deliverable within current resource limits.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are central to the success of the Cultural Development Plan.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 The approach to Sustainability as part of the Plan are detailed within the Plan itself.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 N/A

10 CONSULTATION

The first step in this was a peer challenge from the Local Government Association in 2024 which offered a constructively critical look at the Council's approach to culture.

Following a series of engagement exercises with sector representative over early 2025 the Head of Service drafted a cultural development plan in May 2025. This was then used to consult with individuals and organisations within the cultural sector in BANES.

The plan was then updated in-light of this consultation and an action plan created to cover the period 2025 – 2027.

The plan has been further reviewed by the Council's Place Shaping Group and Executive Leadership Team. It has also been considered by the relevant Scrutiny Panel.

Contact person	Robert Campbell – Head of Culture and Heritage Tel: +44(0)7815 018899
Background papers	None
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	