

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 NOVEMBER 2019

Title:

CULTURAL STRATEGY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

[Portfolio Holder: CLLR BEAMAN]

[Wards Affected: ALL]

Summary and purpose:

In 2017 the Council adopted a ten year, borough-wide Cultural Strategy and an associated Action Plan for the period 2017-19

This report invites Members to note the outputs of the current Action Plan (Annex 1) and to agree to the consultation process set out in this report, which supports the development of a new Action Plan.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

This report contributes to the delivery of the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2019-2023 in the following ways:

- The provision of high quality public services accessible for all, including arts, culture and open spaces.
- Supporting small local businesses and a thriving local economy.
- Supporting place-shaping and community engagement.
- Providing opportunities for young people.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

The Cultural Strategy and Action Plan prioritise cultural projects and programmes that contribute to the wellbeing of all our communities regardless of income, wealth, age, disability, race, gender or sexual orientation.

Financial Implications:

The Cultural Strategy Action Plan is resourced from budgets already identified for cultural services within the Council's budget book.

In addition, the Council will seek to maximise investment in culture by using the strategy to build new relationships with national funding bodies. Where new development is planned in the Borough, the council will also harness the opportunities of CIL to enable culture to play a meaningful role in creative place making and community development.

Legal Implications:

There are no legal implications associated with this report. Cultural Services are discretionary services provided by the Council and therefore there are no specific statutory requirements that need to be met in relation to their provision

1. Background

- 1.1 In March 2017, the Council adopted an ambitious ten year Cultural Strategy that encompasses cultural provision and physical infrastructure across the Borough. The evidence base supporting the strategy included a mapping of arts providers, audience segmentation by area, a household survey utilising the citizen's panel, a review of policy and funding and extensive consultation with partners and stakeholders. The consultation process concluded with a cultural stakeholder workshop, which played a pivotal role in shaping the priorities and goals of the 2017 –19 Action Plan.
- 1.2 The 2017-19 Action Plan was developed around three key priorities and a number of inter-related goals. These are as follows:

Priority 1: Culture contributes to the wellbeing of all our communities

Goal 1. Children and young people are able to learn new skills through cultural participation.

Goal 2. Older adults have the opportunity to participate in cultural activity.

Goal 3. Everyone feels welcome and supported when visiting cultural spaces or taking part in cultural activity.

Goal 4. People are able to see and make more art within their own communities.

Priority 2: Culture contributes to the quality of life of the communities of Waverley as places to live and work

Goal 5. Creative graduates and emerging artists can access support in the early stages of their career development.

Goal 6. Culture contributes to the development of distinctive places and provides opportunities for community participation.

Goal 7. Culture enhances the attractiveness and vitality of the town centres and attracts visitors to the Borough.

Priority 3: The cultural sector is thriving and plays a key role in delivering community priorities

Goal 8. The Council's cultural assets are managed effectively.

Goal 9. Culture delivers a maximum return on public investment through partnership, leverage and income generation.

Goal 10. Cultural organisations understand and support the communities they serve.

Goal 11. All residents are able to enjoy a strong local cultural offer.

- 1.3 The Action Plan is a dynamic component of the Cultural Strategy, which has partnership working at its core. While the Council continues to use its leadership and resources to drive the delivery of the actions, the outputs are largely attributed to the artists and arts organisations in the Borough with whom the Council works with and supports.
- 1.4 Annex 1 shows the outputs of the 2017-19 Action Plan to date.

2. Refreshing the Cultural Strategy Action Plan

- 2.1 Since writing the current Action Plan in 2017 the internal and external operating environment has changed. Officers therefore feel that now would be a good time

to refresh the document to ensure its aims and objectives are relevant and consistent with the Council's current direction.

- 2.2 Following the local elections in May 2019 a number of new Councillors have joined the authority and are coalescing around the delivery of a new Corporate Strategy for 2019-2023. Refreshing the Action Plan affords the opportunity to plan cultural delivery in alignment with the Corporate Strategy. This will ensure that the values of access for all, sustainability and inclusivity are supported and that new ideas around young people, supporting small local businesses and the environment are given space to develop. These new ambitions will sit alongside actions that continue to promote the role arts and heritage play in place making and improving the health and wellbeing of Waverley residents.
- 2.3 In December 2019, the Arts Council England will announce its new ten year strategy for 2020-2030. The draft strategy centres on three key outcomes; creative people, cultural communities and a creative and cultural country. There is a shift away from the previous strategy 'Great Art for Everyone' which placed the emphasis on quality and excellence, to 'Great Art with Everyone', which is about ensuring everyone has the opportunity to develop their own creativity and can access culture in its broadest sense throughout their lives. This subtle change in direction appreciates that in order for the arts to be accessible and relevant to peoples' lives, the barriers between publicly funded arts and the amateur, voluntary and commercial sectors need to be diminished. It supports a more collaborative approach where local cultural partners such as museums, libraries and arts organisations work more closely together to better meet the needs and interests of their communities. In addition to supporting and celebrating everyday creativity, the draft strategy continues to advocate the important role the arts play in reducing loneliness, improving health and wellbeing, supporting older people to be active and helping to build and sustain thriving communities. The strategy also pledges to provide more funding for creative activities aimed at young people and young children and their families.
- 2.4 The health and wellbeing context has evolved since writing the current Action Plan. Several projects received investment from the Personalisation Prevention and Partnership Fund, which was allocated to districts and boroughs by Surrey County Council from the Better Care Fund. This funding has now ended so inevitably there will be a challenge to maintain the breadth of health and wellbeing activity within the current action plan.
- 2.5 The Council is in the process of reviewing its Health and Wellbeing and Ageing Well strategies. This follows the introduction of the Integrated Care Partnership, in which the Council is a core partner and the publication of Surrey's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2020-2030. The Cultural Strategy Action Plan will be developed to reflect new priorities and ways of working within a health and wellbeing context.
- 2.6 Surrey County Council is facing huge economic challenges. As a result it is currently consulting on a transformation strategy for the delivery of library and cultural services across the County. It is not yet known what this means for cultural services delivered by the County in the Borough of Waverley, however indications suggest that proposals are being considered at a local level on a case by case basis.

3. Cultural Stakeholders Workshop

- 3.1 Officers propose to invite Elected Members of the Council and cultural providers in the Borough to a stakeholder workshop scheduled for January 2020. The purpose of the workshop will be to report the outputs of the 2017-19 Action Plan, to consult on new and emerging priorities and to begin the process of shaping a new Action Plan for 2020-2023 in alignment with the Council's Corporate Strategy.
- 3.2 A report setting out the new Action Plan will be presented to the Community Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment at its meeting in March 2020 and subsequently for approval by the Executive.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Cultural Strategy Action Plan is reaching the end of its current lifecycle and much has happened since its adoption in 2017. The Borough Elections, a new Corporate Strategy and the Medium Term Financial Strategy have affected the overall direction of the Council. While at the same time, Surrey County Council is consulting on a transformation strategy for the libraries and cultural services in the county, Arts Council England is shortly to announce a ten year strategy for 2020-2030, and the health and wellbeing landscape is evolving and working in new ways to meet the needs of the local population. There will undoubtedly have been developments within the borough's cultural sector too.
- 4.2 Taking these changes into account, Officers would like to take the opportunity to report the successes of the current Action Plan to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and involve Members in the consultation process to renew the document.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Community Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Notes the outputs delivered in the existing Cultural Strategy Action Plan.
2. Agrees to the initiation of a consultation process to refresh the Action Plan for the next three years.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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