

## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE**

### **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL CULTURAL STRATEGY 2013**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report provides an annual review for 2013 of the implementation of the Cultural Strategy for Nottinghamshire County Council that was agreed by Council at its meeting on 15 December 2011.
2. The Committee is asked to note the report.

#### **Information and advice**

3. The Cultural Strategy agreed by Council at its meeting on 15 December 2011 made a clear rationale for the County Council's continuing strong commitment to both providing and supporting an extensive range of cultural services for the people of Nottinghamshire and the many visitors who are attracted to the County.
4. The Strategy depicted a direction of travel for the Council's cultural and related services for the next ten years until 2021, though the immediate focus of work was the four year period to 2015, which reflected the Council's current Strategic Plan.
5. The Cultural Strategy provides a high level framework for a number of more detailed, service specific plans which underpin the work of those services that contribute to the delivery of cultural services across Nottinghamshire.
6. The key themes of the Strategy are set out in **Appendix 1**.
7. The Strategy will be used to:
  - underpin the continuing development of key cultural services such as Libraries, Archives and Information, Country Parks and the Green Estate and the Cultural and Enrichment Service
  - emphasise the County Council's continuing commitment to delivering and supporting strong and effective cultural services in Nottinghamshire
  - support efforts to attract investment to the cultural sector in Nottinghamshire
  - further develop joint work with key cultural service partners to maximise the range of cultural opportunities available to local people and visitors.

8. A first year review was considered by the Culture Committee at its meeting 19 June 2013. This report now sets out the achievements of the second year of the Cultural Strategy in **Appendix 2**.
9. This work encompasses not only the main providers of cultural services, i.e. Sports, Arts, Libraries, Archives and Country Parks, but also reflects other service areas across the Council whose work has an impact or influence on the wider cultural life of Nottinghamshire. The key cultural achievements can be summarised as:

#### **Libraries:**

- visitor numbers to the new West Bridgford Library surpassed the target for visits during its first nine months of operation. Over 5000 people joined the library with 11,000 attendances for special events. The visit of Roger McGough to a sold out poetry reading was one of the highlights for the library service and a significant national recognition of the ongoing development of the service
- progress to modernise library buildings was made at East Leake and Stapleford Libraries
- Bookstart gifting achieved 100% take up rate for all new births and the Summer Reading Challenge 2013 saw a 15% increase in take up by children aged 4 – 12 years.

#### **Archives:**

- the capital project to provide the service with 20 years extra space received planning permission and approved designs to meet the new British standard for Archive buildings.

#### **Adult and Community Learning:**

- an OfSTED inspection of the service resulted in a 'Good' judgement under the new common inspection framework.

#### **Libraries, Archives, Information and Community Learning:**

- achieved the 'Customer Service Excellence award for all services.

#### **Country Parks**

- Rufford Abbey Country Park and Sherwood Forest Country Park achieved the Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme (VAQAS) annual award
- the completion of the first, comprehensive strategic development plan for the County Council's portfolio of green spaces
- record attendances of over 50,000 people at the 29<sup>th</sup> Robin Hood Festival held at the Sherwood Forest Visitor centre in August.

## **Cultural Services**

- all participation targets for Arts and Sports for Children and Young People for academic year 2012-13 exceeded with 42,994 people participating in arts and swimming activities
- term time occupancy targets of 80% exceeded at all day visit and residential centres, including occupancy at Hagg Farm at 100% during term time
- successful transition of staff and facilities to the Holme Pierrepont Leisure Trust for the management and development of the National Water Sports Centre. 60% of the capital improvements completed in the first eight months of the contract with the remainder to be completed by April 2014.

## **Other Options Considered**

10. The report is for noting only.

## **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

11. The Council's Strategic Plan for 2010-14 has a specific action to prepare a Cultural Strategy and there was a key commitment when this was approved to carry out a review of service performance.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

13. The Cultural Strategy will be delivered within the financial resources available to the Council.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty Implications**

14. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the Cultural Strategy. Individual actions contained within **Appendix 2** will each have their own Equality Impact Assessments as appropriate.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the annual review for 2013 of the Cultural Strategy for Nottinghamshire County Council 2013 be noted.

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**Constitutional Comments**

15. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

**Financial Comments (KLA 17/01/14)**

16. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

A Cultural Strategy for Nottinghamshire 2011 – 2021: report to County Council on 15 December 2011  
Annual Review of the County Council Cultural Strategy – report to Culture Committee on 19 June 2013  
Cultural Strategy Equality Impact Assessment  
Refreshed County Council Strategic Plan 2010-14  
Children, Families and Cultural Services Business Plan 2012-13  
Service Specific Cultural Action Plans

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

C0348



The Strategy sets out four key themes for delivery and implementation:

### **Theme 1: Creating opportunities for everyone to learn new skills, enjoy and participate in culture and have fun**

- Our cultural services will work to provide opportunities, both formal and informal, for individuals to extend and challenge themselves, develop their creative thinking, build confidence and learn new skills.
- *At the end of 4 years we will have:*
  - increased the participation and involvement of people in the enjoyment, organisation and development of cultural activities
  - contributed to improved life chances and achievement by our young people, and increased opportunities for older people to share their existing skills and develop new skills
  - sought out opportunities to enhance Nottinghamshire as a tourist and cultural destination.

### **Theme 2: Improving the social fabric and participation in community life**

- Cultural activities can have a direct, positive influence on health and community well-being. Our cultural services will provide opportunities for people, especially those facing barriers, to play an active role in their communities and lead cultural development locally.
- *At the end of 4 years we will have:*
  - increased volunteering opportunities in the cultural sector
  - supported communities to develop new 'big society' opportunities to improve their local area
  - worked with partners to improve communities health & aspirations
  - ensured equality of opportunity and fair access to culture and sport.

### **Theme 3: Conserving and providing access to our history and heritage and supporting environmental sustainability.**

- The historic and natural environment is key to unlocking and celebrating the story of Nottinghamshire. The County Council is the custodian of a wide variety of important cultural assets. A number of these are in need of substantial maintenance and improvement in order that they may continue to operate to meet customer expectations. There are also cultural assets that the County Council may wish to acquire in order to improve and enhance its stock, while at the same time dispose of other sites that are less critical to the implementation of the Strategy. The Council recognises that our facilities provide tremendous cultural and economic opportunities, so the Council will make best use of them, maintained and enhanced for the understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of communities and visitors.

- *At the end of 4 years we will have:*
  - responded to the needs of Nottinghamshire's natural and historic environment and heritage to ensure it is conserved and managed in a sustainable manner
  - encouraged local communities to value and make best use of our cultural resources, facilities and assets
  - created new opportunities for our communities to actively engage with our cultural assets to preserve them for future generations
  - reviewed our strategic cultural asset acquisitions and disposals.

#### **Theme 4: Supporting the economic prosperity of the County**

- Culture is a key economic driver and helps drive inward investment and regeneration by contributing to the fabric of local communities, stimulating local economies through the creation of jobs, encouraging social regeneration and the development of sustainable partnerships between local people, statutory and voluntary agencies and the private sector, and supporting the development of Nottinghamshire as a tourist destination. Cultural activities also provide a significant income source for the County Council.
- *At the end of 4 years we will have:*
  - increased skill levels in the cultural sector
  - improved the sustainability of the cultural sector
  - Increased the commercial opportunities and income of the County Council
  - encouraged more visitors to Nottinghamshire.