

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

A CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL 2011 - 2021

Purpose of the Report

1. This report seeks the approval of Council for a new Cultural Strategy for Nottinghamshire County Council that sets out the Council's long term commitment to the provision of effective cultural services.

Information and advice

2. The development of a new Cultural Strategy was set out as a key action in the revised Strategic Plan agreed by Council at its meeting in June 2011. Under Priority 2 (Promoting the economic prosperity of Nottinghamshire and safeguarding our environment), the key action was to "prepare and implement a new strategy to deliver changes to our cultural services".
3. Similarly, within the Children, Families and Cultural Services Department Business Plan 2011/12, a key milestone was the development and publishing of a Cultural Strategy to set the direction for the Council's cultural services offer.
4. The resultant Cultural Strategy, attached as an **Appendix** to this report, makes 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. The Strategy depicts 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 is the four year period to 2015, which reflects the Council's current Strategic Plan. 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.
5. The Strategy's stated aims are that the Council:-
 - Will work throughout Nottinghamshire to promote, deliver and support cultural services that are high quality and accessible to all
 - Will be guided by Nottinghamshire's communities and visitors to create, nurture and deliver a wide range of inspiring, fun and quality cultural experiences that will excite and engage them

- Will show pride in Nottinghamshire’s rich cultural heritage, and will be ambitious in its efforts to protect, enhance and build on current service provision for the future.
6. The Strategy uses the broad definition of culture set out by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, namely:
- Arts, sports, libraries, museums, heritage, archaeology, archives, architecture, crafts, children’s play, reading, parks, tourism, countryside recreation, etc.
 - Other activities such as entertainments, design, fashion, food, media, visiting attractions, and other informal leisure pursuits.
7. The Cultural 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.

8. 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.

Other Options Considered

9. Alternative styles and scope for the Strategy have been considered. However, a high level strategy focussing on the work of the County Council has been the preferred outcome.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. The Council's Refreshed Strategic Plan for 2010-14 has a specific action to prepare a Cultural Strategy.

Statutory and Policy Implications

11. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, 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

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

Equalities Implications

13. As part of the process of making decisions and changing policy, public authorities are required by law to think about the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics (as defined by equalities legislation) and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

14. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are a means by which a public authority can assess the potential impact that proposed decisions/changes to policy could have on the community and those with protected characteristics. They may also identify potential ways to reduce any impact that a decision/policy change could have. If it is not possible to reduce the impact, the EIA can explain why. Decision makers must understand the potential implications of their decisions on people with protected characteristics.

15. An EIA has been undertaken for the Cultural Strategy and is available as a background paper. Decision makers must give due regard to the implications for protected groups when considering this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the Cultural Strategy for Nottinghamshire County Council 2011-2021 be approved.

Councillor John Cottee
Cabinet Member for Culture and Community

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (LM 23/11/11)

16. Approval of the Cultural Strategy is a decision reserved to the full Council meeting.

Financial Comments (NDR 28/11/11)

17. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 12 of the report.

Background Papers

A Cultural Strategy for Nottinghamshire – Building on Success (April 2001)
Cultural Strategy Equality Impact Assessment
Refreshed County Council Strategic Plan 2010-14
Children, Families and Cultural Services Business Plan 2011-12
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.

M19C2921