

REPORT TITLE: APPROVAL OF CULTURAL STRATEGY

14 MARCH 2024

REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER: Cllr Lucille Thompson, Cabinet Member for Business & Culture

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WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

This report sets out the Cultural Strategy for the Winchester district to 2030. The strategy aims to:

- articulate Winchester district's cultural offer and the benefits it provides,
- embolden the sector to work collaboratively and,
- act as a lever to attract investment.

A stakeholder group, representing a broad range of organisations operating in the cultural sector across the district, has been formed. The council is a partner in this stakeholder group. This group has utilised input from sector representatives and resident feedback to collectively agree a vision, set of values, strategic priorities and themes, supported by an action plan.

The council is author of this co-designed strategy and will support, facilitate and enable partnership activity acting as convener, offering the opportunity for the sector to come together regularly to share progress, challenges and opportunities.

A 'live' and agile approach will be adopted throughout the delivery of the strategy which will allow findings to be included as they became apparent.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Approve the co-designed Winchester District Cultural Strategy 2024-2030, which will be led and delivered by the partners operating within the sector, one of which is the council.
2. Agree the actions and the council's current resource commitments made within it, as set out in Appendix 1.

IMPLICATIONS:**1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME****1.1 Tackling the Climate Emergency and Creating a Greener District**

1.2 The cultural strategy features the adoption of sustainable measures as a cross cutting theme throughout the strategy. Partners will review sustainable practices and policies to ensure measures are implemented which reduce negative environmental impact. Culture will be used as tool to engage audiences in conversations about sustainable action and to develop innovative solutions facilitating the promotion of a greener cultural offer. As part of the linkages and interdependencies analysis the connectivity with this key council priority is established along with how the strategy will align with the Winchester District Carbon Roadmap and Carbon Neutrality Action Plan.

1.3 Homes for all

1.4 The council wants to help achieve “diverse, healthy and cohesive communities - not just homes” and culture and creativity can play an integral part in enhancing and enriching community life through participation and engagement.

1.5 Vibrant Local Economy

1.1 The development of a Winchester District Cultural Strategy is an output from the Green Economic Development Strategy. The cultural and creative sector provide a significant contribution to the district’s overall economy, contributing £283m (GVA) in 2019. The adoption of a cultural strategy which has been developed and will be delivered collaboratively across the sector offers resilience.

1.2 Living Well

1.3 The cultural sector and the delivery of the actions outlined in the Cultural Strategy addresses the aims outlined in the Council Plan and supports the delivery of a wide range of cultural activities for all ages and abilities and helps facilitate the opportunity for residents to live healthy and fulfilled lives.

1.4 Your Services, Your Voice

1.5 A stakeholder group was formed in February 2023, comprising of a broad cross-section of cultural and creative providers, as well as linked sectors, and this group has a strategic view of activity across the district. This group has been convened by the Council, met regularly and worked in partnership throughout this process, supported by a range of consultation and communication interventions, as outlined in point 6. This has ensured stakeholders and communities were able to have their say in the future growth and development of the district’s cultural offer.

- 1.6 An action in the first year of the Cultural Strategy is to consider the development of a partnership which builds on the activities of this initial stakeholder group. Consideration will need to be given to the partnership's terms of reference and governance and whilst the council will be a partner in this group, it is anticipated that other partners will be encouraged to come forward to facilitate it.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 Currently, the council fund cultural and creative activity through strategic and project grants. The strategy does not propose any changes to this process, nor suggest any new or additional funding. Existing arrangements between organisations / tenants and the council will continue to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.2 The proposed partnership model supports increased financial resilience by growing and diversifying investment from alternative sources. The themes and priorities set out within the strategy act as an investment framework, with shared responsibility to secure investment which will enable the actions of the strategy to be delivered.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The strategy was developed using Arts Council England guidance and the National Government's Culture White Paper which recommends local authorities coordinate their approach and create a shared vision for culture with partners and residents.
- 3.2 There are no direct implications for procurement arising from the approval of the strategy. The procurement team taking advice from Legal Services are on hand should any need arise as existing arrangement are reviewed under paragraph 2.1 above.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Winchester City Council recognises the strength of sector and how valuable it is for the local economy, sense of community, tourism, wellbeing, and a host of other benefits. Therefore in 2022 the council enhanced its resources with the appointment of a Culture and Creative Sector Development Officer. This role, with the support of the wider existing Economy and Tourism team, will continue to support and advocate for the sector, alongside facilitating and enabling the outputs of this strategy.
- 4.2 This strategy aims to share the responsibilities, its success, and be realistic about the resources it will require and that are available. Hence, whilst the council has been the author of this strategy it has been co-designed by stakeholders. The council will continue its role in a partnership capacity alongside a range of other stakeholders supporting, facilitating, and enabling partnership activity, acting as convener, offering the opportunity for the sector to come together regularly to share progress, challenges and opportunities.

- 4.3 In addition to this, the strategy has established an action in year one to explore options for formalising a partnership to drive forward the strategy. It is proposed that the council provide resource as a partner in this partnership.

5 **PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The council own, and in some cases contract organisations to operate properties which are used for cultural and creative activities. Whilst the strategy does not impose any obligations on these properties and organisations, as active partners in the delivery of the strategy, some changes may be suggested in the future.

6 **CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION**

- 6.1 Extensive external consultation and engagement with over 100 individuals operating within the arts, heritage, community, faith and creative industries has taken place which has underpinned the collaborative development of the Cultural Strategy. A cross-sector representational stakeholder group was formed at the inception of the work to develop this strategy. This group has been facilitated by the council and has met throughout this process; discussing and agreeing the vision, themes, priorities, and action plan. The Cabinet Member for Business and Culture has attended all these stakeholder meetings.
- 6.2 Subgroups were established to define specific strategic actions and subsequently made recommendations to the stakeholder group. A series of workshops with cultural sector practitioners was undertaken to test the proposed themes and priorities, to ensure those at the front line in delivering cultural experiences could influence the emerging strategy.
- 6.3 The existing Cultural Network and Festivals in Winchester group, along with the Arts News e-newsletter, were used to further enhance communication and consultation.
- 6.4 A residents' survey, designed to capture thoughts about what culture and creativity means to them, was undertaken. Over 450 residents have responded so far and come from a large geographic spread across the district. It should be noted that most respondents were aged over 45. This supports the need to include Education and Young People as a strategic priority, with associated actions. This will include a review of how the cultural offer is promoted as well as a focus on collecting and sharing robust data which captures youth voice to add to this sentiment.
- 6.5 96% of respondents said cultural and creative activities contributed positively to their quality of life and around 70% had been to an art gallery, museum, or theatre in the last 12 months. Less than 8% said they were very well informed about what is on offer locally, 38% thought the cultural offer was limited which might also suggest a lack of knowledge of the offer. This survey remains open for the foreseeable future and further findings are outlined in the strategy.

6.6 In addition to the above consultation with the cultural sector the following has been undertaken and consideration has been given to the feedback from:

- The Business and Housing Policy Committee have considered:
 - BHP041 – 28 February 2023 - Winchester District Cultural Strategy – Scoping.
 - BHP041 – Appendix one – 28 February 2023 - Early findings and evidence base.
- A Members' Briefing –16 November 2023 – opportunity to input towards the themes, priorities, values and vision.
- Relevant senior officers across the council have been provided opportunity to comment on the strategy.
- The Economy and Housing Policy Committee considered - presentation of the Cultural Strategy (EHP051) on 20th February 2024. The committee asked:
 - What groups focussed on inclusion and diversity have been engaged with. Many groups and individuals took part in the wider engagement workshops representing a broad range of interests including, but not limited to, age, faith, ethnicity, local community and education. Inclusion and diversity is a cross cutting theme within the strategy in the recognition that more engagement with a wider range of stakeholders is needed, this includes with groups that represent those with protected characteristics.
 - The need to develop performance measures (KPIs) to be able to assess the success of the strategy and to monitor the impact actions. These will be developed and agreed in the first year, as project specifics emerge. Likely KPIs will range from counting the number of events and festivals in the district to surveys which will measure audience participation and workforce characteristics. Detailed and specific baselines will be established in year one to enable accurate and measurable evaluation of success.
 - Give further consideration to the future arrangements of the stakeholder group ensuring appropriate governance and terms of reference. This will also be a focus for the first year. It is anticipated that the partnership will be cross-sector and district wide and is likely to grow organically as required to effectively deliver the strategy and action plan. Further information around governance is outlined in points 11.6 and 11.7.

7 **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 Environmental responsibility is one of three key themes crosscutting the strategy. The strategy recognises the role of the cultural sector in inspiring people to explore the great outdoors and uses nature to inspire great works of art. Creativity and culture can also be used to engage people in considering, addressing and seeking local solutions to climate issues. The sector commits to reviewing its practices and policies to ensure appropriate measures are taking place to reduce the sectors impact on climate change.

8 **PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY**

- 8.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requires public bodies, including the council to have due regard to the aims of the general equality duty when making decisions and when setting policies.
- 8.2 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves considering the need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- 8.3 The strategy recognises the importance to equality, diversity and inclusion and embeds this as one of the key themes which crosscut the strategy. It recognises increased diversity and inclusion broadens perspectives, introduces new ideas, bolsters creativity, and supports people who may otherwise be underrepresented. By 2030, the strategy aims to achieve a greater proportion of the cultural and creative workforce and audiences from a diverse background and programming will more accurately reflect our local population.
- 8.4 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, see appendix three. Winchester district residents are more culturally engaged than the local and national average (Arts Council England, Active Lives Survey) and are in better health than average (Census 2021). Winchester district has a higher proportion of white, Christian residents than the national average (Census 2021), although this has shifted slightly in recent years. As there are smaller proportions of underrepresented groups in Winchester district, they may be more hesitant to engage, which is why a collaborative and strategic approach is required. By 2030, a greater proportion of the cultural and creative workforce and audiences will be from a diverse background and programming will more accurately reflect the UKs population. It is also recognised that feedback from the under 45's was low, which reflects the decision to include Education and Young People as a strategy priority, see section 6.4 and 11.14.

9 **DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 9.1 All personal information collected as part of the process to develop the strategy will be held in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy and comply with the six Data Protection Principles set out in Article 5(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and sections 35 to 40 of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

10 **RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 10.1 The council's current overall risk appetite is defined as MODERATE. This means the council remains open to innovative ways of working and to pursue options that offer potentially substantial rewards, despite also having greater level of risks. However, the council's preference is for safe delivery options which have a lower degree of risk, especially for those services required by statute. This Strategy aligns with the Councils risk appetite.

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
Financial Exposure External investment and funding cannot be secured to enable implementation of the action plan	Development of strong partnerships and collaborations for projects supported by robustly developed business cases to stand the best chance of attracting external funding and investment.	Successfully securing external investment will increase the district's reputation for producing high quality cultural opportunities.
Exposure to challenge There are no legal and procurement implications arising from this report	Extensive engagement with the sector to ensure proposed actions are achievable and realistic for the sector to deliver. Engagement with residents through a resident's survey has been undertaken to ensure priorities are aligned to sentiment.	Flexible approach allows sector to be responsive to new or emerging challenges.
Innovation		

	Working in collaboration reduces the risk on individual partners (including the council) to enable innovative ways of working.	A co-designed and partnership delivered strategy could be considered innovative?
Reputation The delivery of the strategy and action plan fails to build consensus amongst the stakeholders and damages the perception of the council's role in supporting the development of the cultural and creative sector	The further development and delivery of the action plans will be closely monitored and measured through robust management and corporate reporting processes in accordance with the council's contract management framework.	Successful delivery of the strategy will recognise and build a reputation for the districts cultural offer. The council's role as a partner will enhance the reputation of the council as a supportive entity.
Achievement of outcome The Cultural Strategy priorities and actions are not achieved within timescales	Scenario planning with regular reviews via the stakeholder group will allow for different levels of effort both by the council and the other strategy stakeholders to be directed at those outcomes that most need addressing.	
Property None		Proposed meanwhile use of empty properties enhances the districts offer to visitors and residents.
Community Support The sector does not participate in working collaboratively to deliver	An active group of stakeholders have already been engaged, of	Creation of a formalised group could increase opportunities for funding

<p>the strategy and its actions.</p>	<p>which the council is one. This group have been meeting regularly throughout the last year and it is proposed that it will continue to meet and take an active role in the delivery of the strategy which will include influencing and mobilising the sector.</p>	<p>as well as a more strategic, joined-up funding landscape.</p>
<p>Timescales</p> <p>This is a five-year plan however there is expectation that change and action can be demonstrated early, which may not be possible due to the long term nature of some of the projects to design, resource and deliver.</p>	<p>The Action Plan identifies projects that need to be implemented early, and have the greatest impact, or large transformational projects are planned and commenced as they will take time to complete.</p>	
<p>Project capacity</p> <p>Key internal personnel monitoring delivery of the strategy or involved in delivering actions become unavailable</p>	<p>The strategy and action plan has been developed collaboratively with the sector and strategy stakeholders, one of which is the council, will be responsible for leading delivery. This offers resilience in event of reduced capacity from within the council.</p>	<p>Empowering the sector to lead themselves</p>
<p>Other</p> <p>The lack of evening public transport forces people to drive to venues or miss the opportunity to attend, work or participate in cultural activity.</p>	<p>Facilitate engagement between the sector and public transport providers, e.g. Stagecoach.</p>	<p>Establish additional public transport options which are driven by demand and are economically viable, offering additional opportunities to access culture across the district.</p>

11 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION:**

- 11.1 Winchester district's last Cultural Strategy was developed in 2014. Since then, many local, national and international developments, events, conflicts and social movements have occurred which have fundamentally changed the landscape within which the cultural sector operates and the manner in which audiences engage with culture. The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected the sector with cultural venues amongst the first to close and last to re-open. Whilst navigating these challenging times, organisations have had the chance to test new approaches and it presents the opportunity to 'build back better'. Therefore, the themes of the strategy respond to these concerns.
- 11.2 Winchester district already has a well-established and recognised culture and creative sector which delivers for both visitors and residents. From events such as Boomtown, Wickham Festival and Hat Fair, to iconic heritage such as Winchester Cathedral and Bishops Waltham Palace, through to multi-use spaces such as The Arc. There is a thriving creative industries scene with over 350 design companies, 300 film, television and video organisations and 100 architecture firms. The possibilities within community infrastructure, independent and grassroots creative activity must also be acknowledged, particularly in the more rural areas of the district.
- 11.3 The strategy aims to create the conditions for partnership within the cultural sector and with other sectors to balance the wants and needs of the residents with the desire to encourage tourism, whilst taking into account wider considerations. It is also noted that the differences between the needs of urban and rural communities, heritage and contemporary culture and, appetites of younger and older audiences are considered throughout.
- 11.4 The strategy is underpinned by a robust evidence base and best practice research. This has included a thorough assessment of the district's demographics, geography, its cultural assets and sector analysis along with the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It has also considered the complex linkages and interdependencies a cultural strategy would have on, and with, a wide range of national, regional and local strategies, plans and organisations. See Appendix 2.
- 11.5 The council is a partner and author of this strategy which has been co-designed by a stakeholder group along with partners and practitioners across the district. This stakeholder group, utilising input from sector representatives and resident feedback, has collectively agreed a vision, set of values, strategic priorities and themes, supported by an action plan.

11.6 Partners will be encouraged to consider the future arrangements relating to the stakeholder group and how this might evolve to ensure a robust and transparent governance is achieved with appropriate representation. This is likely to develop over a period of time, as the delivery of the strategy gains momentum. Options could include being constituted as a CIC or cultural compact, for example. Areas for specific consideration will include how the partnership is funded, if the partnership is to make funding applications and if so, how will it receive and disperse funds. Depending on its roles and responsibilities consideration would need to be given as to the need to emerge as a self-determining constituted body, along with:

- a) develop and agree the role of this group in relation to delivery of the strategy,
- b) develop and agree its terms of reference and governance.

Partners would be encouraged to come forward to facilitate this group.

11.7 At the appropriate time the council's representation in the partnership or constituted body will need to be considered, including any investment and funding into it. Any members will be appointed using the appropriate nomination process.

11.8 It is however envisaged that the council would continue to deliver the strategy in partnership with this group and the sector.

11.9 Arts Council England (ACE) are a partner on the stakeholder group and have provided support and guidance throughout the development of the strategy. ACE have gone on to endorse the strategy, stating (statement to follow). ACE will remain engaged through the delivery of the strategy going forward.

11.10 The agreed vision is *"Winchester district's creative dynamism enriches lives and makes amazing things happen"*.

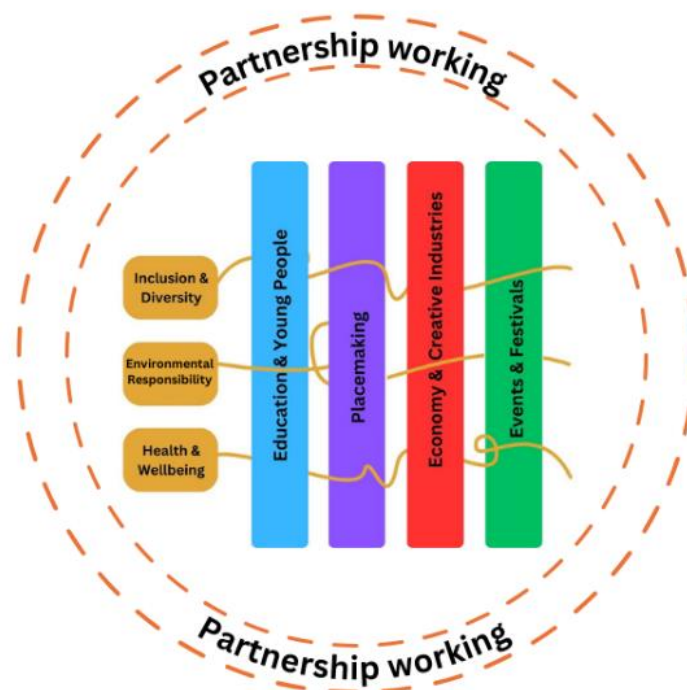
11.11 Five core values have been established upon which the delivery of the strategy will be founded. These are:

- a) Inclusive
- b) Collaborative
- c) Ambitious
- d) Resilient
- e) Distinctive

11.12 The strategy established five strategic priorities with three cross-cutting strategic themes.

Strategic priorities

11.13 Partnership has its own dedicated priority. The strategy recognises that a robust, collaborative, and cohesive partnership across the sector offers the best possible chance of success. It offers the opportunity for shared skills, knowledge and resources whilst reducing the chances of a single point of failure and decreasing the burden on individual organisations.



11.14 **Education and young people.** 30% of Winchester residents are under 25 and some young people will not have the opportunity to engage with culture through their everyday lives. By 2030 the strategy aims to have established a youth-led movement designed to encourage a growing number of young people who are discovering and engaging in a wide range of cultural activities.

11.15 **Placemaking.** The strategy recognises the opportunity to use the place as a canvas and allow culture to grow from the community. The opportunity to celebrate and bring to the fore the uniqueness of Winchester, “where the past and present collide”. By 2030 the strategy aims to harness the sector’s collective power and influence to bring about change, showcasing and connecting communities to our diverse cultural and creative offer. The sector will be attracting external investment and culture will be considered central to the district’s identity.

- 11.16 **Economy & creative industries.** The creative industries play a crucial role in the district's economy, contributing £283m (GVA) in 2019 and employing almost 5,000 people in 2021. The workforce is projected to grow by a further 7.5% between 2021 and 2032. By 2030, built on research and developed relationships, collaborative ideas and projects will have brought about a greater visibility of the sector, including a focus on career opportunities which together will bring about a retention of the existing as well as drawing back people and organisations operating in the creative sector.
- 11.17 **Events and festivals.** Events and Festivals are a platform to explore culture and community in a diverse and inclusive way. Winchester district already hosts approximately 30 events and festivals each year and there is opportunity to develop this. By 2030 will have grown its events and festivals in terms of number as well as broadening the range and diversity of the offer, whilst retaining existing attracting new audiences.

Strategic themes.

- 11.18 **Inclusion and diversity.** Increased diversity and inclusion broadens perspectives, introduces new ideas, bolsters creativity and supports people who may otherwise be underrepresented. Winchester district is predominantly white (88%), in very good health (53%), physically able (84%) and heterosexual (90%). By 2030, a greater proportion of the cultural and creative workforce and audiences will be from a diverse background and programming will more accurately reflect the UK's population.
- 11.19 **Environmental responsibility.** Climate change is one of the most urgent and pressing challenges we face today. The council has declared both a climate and nature emergency with tackling the climate emergency as its key priority. By 2030, environmental responsibility will automatically be considered by partners when developing projects, it will be a first thought opposed to an afterthought.
- 11.20 **Health and Wellbeing.** Culture has a key role to play in supporting health and wellbeing. This was clearly demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. By 2030 culture and creativity will have made a demonstrable difference to the health and wellbeing of Winchester district's residents.

Action plans.

- 11.21 A series of actions, spanning the period of the strategy and split into year one, year two and years three onwards, has been developed.
- 11.22 It is recognised that whilst these provide the direction of travel, this strategy and its associated action plans will remain flexible and agile to adapt to the challenges and opportunities that arise throughout the life of the programme. This provides the opportunity to embed learnings, act on new evidence and ensure ongoing relevance.

- 11.23 All actions have been associated with one of the four priorities or themes outlined in the strategy. 21 actions have been established for year one, 14 for year two and ten for years three onwards, many of which are interdependent upon each other. Partners have indicated their ownership of these actions and in doing so acknowledges that much excellent work, particularly under these priorities and themes, is already being delivered or planned. These have been outlined by year in pages 26 to 30 of the strategy, see Appendix 1.
- 11.24 A series of KPIs will be developed alongside the action plan in collaboration with the stakeholder group. These will be used to monitor success and impact of the strategy. Consideration will be given to areas such as audience participation, engagement levels, business growth, economic impact, financials stability etc.

Adoption across the council.

- 11.25 The council supports the cultural sector across many of its services. The strategy has been developed in partnership with key officers including the economy, community, sustainability, housing, tourism and visitor information teams. This helps to embed the importance of the sector to the district's economy, environment, quality of life and wellbeing in the council's strategies and areas of work, as outlined in appendix 1, page 25. Following the adoption of the strategy officers will be sent a final version and kept regularly informed about its delivery and the progression of projects identified in it.
- 11.26 Over the last year increased multi-team co-operation and joint working has involved the sustainability team and the festivals group; the tourism and cultural team and the Safety Advisory Group and CWR team; Communities and Housing team in respect of the inclusion agenda. Additionally work with the Estates team regarding meanwhile uses and alternative uses of the Guildhall continue to be topics of discussion and consideration.

Financial resilience.

- 11.27 The strategy acknowledges that financial resilience has long been an issue for cultural organisations with even the largest companies relying on public funding and subsidy to survive. Increased costs, risk-averse and cash-strapped audiences, competing priorities and societal pressures are reducing the capacity of earned income. There are also challenges to securing public and private investment. National bodies are facing unprecedented demand for funds and increased pressure to allocate funds in prescribed ways, further reducing possibilities. Schemes such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund offer opportunities to cultural organisations to secure additional support which have already, and will continue to be utilised.
- 11.28 The strategy recognises that the existing creative and cultural assets need to be secure to provide the strong foundation from which to develop and grow the district's offer.

- 11.29 As a result of this strategy, stronger relationships with funders will have been built, enabling partners to create a cohort of projects which will be suitable for joint applications to public funders, trusts and foundations. Acting in partnership and towards strategic priorities will strengthen the applications and increase the chances of success.
- 11.30 Private investment takes time and energy to secure with corporate and individual giving requiring a lot of stewardship and more likely to go to an organisation with a venue. Therefore, the strategy will seek to explore alternative models for private investment, such as establishing a “100 club” for Winchester, securing a specified donation amount from 100 organisations to create an explicit funding pot to support the outputs of this strategy. Stronger relationships with corporate partners, advocating and championing the role of cultural engagement will be developed.
- 11.31 The action plans will remain flexible and open for review to allow the space for the ongoing development of the correct conditions in which culture and creativity can thrive. This will enable the longer-term ambitions to be considered.

12 **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- 12.1 Do nothing: The council’s involvement in the delivery of the cultural strategy is a discretionary function and the council could opt to not get involved and allow the sector to take total responsibility for delivery. This option was rejected due to the important role such a strategy plays in demonstrating the council’s leadership to its communities on the future growth of the district, the important role the cultural and creative sector plays in the overall

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

- BHP041 – 28 February 2023 - Winchester District Cultural Strategy – Scoping
- BHP041 – Appendix one – 28 February 2023 - Early findings and evidence base
- EHP051 - 20 February 2024 - presentation of the Cultural Strategy

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 Winchester District Cultural Strategy

Appendix 2 [Winchester District Cultural Strategy evidence base](#)

Appendix 3 Equality Impact Assessment