

Item No. 12.	Classification: Open	Date: 16 July 2013	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Cultural Strategy 2013 - 2018	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Veronica Ward, Culture, Leisure, Sport and Volunteering	

FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR VERONICA WARD CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE, SPORT AND VOLUNTEERING

There is a crucial sentence at the beginning of section 9 “The Strategy is intended as the Strategy for the Council and not solely for the Culture Service”. The Strategy clearly sets out the cultural dimension in all the ways it impacts on the borough and the central role of all the creative projects in the life of Southwark. Culture is key to the economy of Southwark as the figures show. It inspires and supports many of our young people and creates opportunities for them.

We have some of the major tourist and heritage attractions in the whole of the UK together with cutting edge artistic interventions that also draw thousands of visitors to Southwark each year. These include the degree shows of the various colleges and the innovative arts work that goes on across the borough. The cultural sector is integral to regeneration. Balancing the nurturing of this sector with development ambitions is critical. Festivals, pop up art, studios in old factory buildings in themselves contribute to the life, vibrancy, economy and footfall of an area. In the introduction to the strategy it states that we have taken an essentially “instrumentalist” view of culture because the economic case is so important. The cultural sector is also about health and well-being and this is now widely recognised. This is supported through poetry and reading groups in libraries, access to exciting art which you could not otherwise afford to see and our events and festivals are about quality of life, hope, community cohesion and inspiration for all. It is about meeting our Fairer Future principles – making Southwark a place to be proud of with good employment opportunities for all and support for residents to realise their full potential.

We have a small culture department so there can be no “grand scene” for the Council on the culture front by itself. We have an essential role in enabling the sector to access clear and transparent information about premises issues, collaborating about employment opportunities, ensuring a role for creative projects within all regeneration schemes. This strategy is about the role of the whole Council.

Thank you to all of the officers from across the Council in helping to put this strategy together. A very big thank you in particular to the many cultural and creative organisations, with representation from the large national bodies on the South Bank to the smaller organisations and individuals who contributed to the discussions that have informed the strategy. The conversations were focused and rigorous and have provided the framework for the action plan as well as highlighting the wide ranging issues set out here. Thank you to the Arts Council for their support in advising and bringing an outside perspective to this work. Finally, a big thank you to our very small culture department that had to work so hard to capture the material of the discussions

– thoughts and comments scrawled on the tablecloths, dots on charts, post-its and intense discussion.

Up and down the country the refrain from the lead members for culture is heard time and time again. Culture is not the playful and peripheral end of a council's work. It is at its core. The Council continues to be under acute financial pressure as further cuts to our finances through the Government Spending Review are now pending. I hope the cultural strategy will provide a guide and a focus for what we must do as a Council to sustain the rich cultural life of Southwark.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Cabinet approves the Culture Strategy and action plan for 2013-18 as set out in Appendix 1.
2. That officers bring a further report on progress with implementation within 18 months of the approval date of this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. Culture is important to Southwark. The 2011 census showed that the cultural sector provides 7% of Southwark's population with employment. This compares favourably to the 3% employed in construction. Culture is also the registered trade of 10% of the borough's VAT and PAYE registered businesses. The Council currently invests £335,344 per annum in grants to arts organisations. This helps to lever in £4.9 million from the Arts Council for other cultural providers within the borough. This represents just one element of the economic benefit of culture and does not include additional spend generated in Southwark by the millions of people who visit attractions and events here each year.
4. Southwark is home to one of the country's most dynamic cultural landscapes. This includes institutions, organisations and individuals that have local, national and international impact. This cultural wealth is a major component in the regeneration of the borough as well as being key to Southwark's good record on community cohesion. It is this range and quality of cultural activity that consistently places us in the top five for Arts Council applications for funding across London.
5. We have long established arts organisations working with our diverse communities, providing high quality participatory arts activity for local people, including work in schools, with young people outside of formal education, older people and intergenerational work on housing estates. In addition to this, there are a number of Southwark based organisations addressing the health and well-being agenda including through work for and led by mental health service users and people with disabilities.
6. The Council plays a key role in enabling and ensuring this cultural economy in a number of ways. Most directly, this includes the provision of the Cuming Museum and the Local History Library to give access to the heritage of the borough and the Events programme. In addition to this, the Council provides grant funding for a small number of key local organisations delivering high quality cultural experiences to our residents. The expert advice that the small arts team provides to local organisations helps bring in more funding to the borough and

the Council. The team also advises on the potential for cultural activity and development to stimulate more regeneration, including brokering partnerships with the cultural sector.

7. The new strategy comes at a time of austerity when the Council's role is changing. In order to justify attention, support and resources from Southwark residents, we need to understand the ways in which culture has a positive impact on the borough and its people and specifically how it supports the Fairer Future commitments.
8. Within this context, this strategy sets out how the Council intends to best exploit this rich cultural offer in order to deliver its Fairer Future promises in particular making Southwark a place to be proud of and working for everyone to realise their potential.

Scope

9. The strategy is intended as a Strategy for the Council and not solely for the Culture service. The Strategy covers the following areas:
 - Arts
 - Heritage
 - Arts education and cultural youth provision
 - Creative and cultural Industries
 - Literature and arts development in libraries
 - Public art
 - Health and well being.
10. The strategy does not include sport, peripatetic music provided by the Music Service within Education or the wider library service which was subject to a detailed review in 2011.
11. It is intended that the new strategy will:
 - Ensure best use of our scarce resources
 - Communicate the Council's priorities to the cultural sector and key stakeholders
 - Strengthen the approach to culture across the Council
 - Provide a more informed basis for funding and partnership decisions
 - Guide our approach to economic and regeneration opportunities within the cultural sector.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

12. A significant consultation programme has been completed in order to inform the production of the Strategy (see paragraphs 29 to 35 below). Detailed consideration of the consultation feedback has led to the identification of five key themes for the Strategy. These are explored in the following paragraphs whilst the action plan at appendix one identifies key actions to address each of these themes.

Theme: Communicating, connecting and navigating

13. This theme addresses the need to improve how the Council communicates internally across departments and externally with the cultural sector and partners. It will focus on improved internal communication to secure an improved overview of cultural provision. It will also support the cultural sector in navigating through the Council's systems.
14. This will also mean that the Council is better placed to signpost cultural organisations to appropriate information and opportunities, to facilitate and encourage networking and to broker partnerships between various organisations, artists and practitioners.
15. This theme also includes the need to better promote the borough's cultural offer and its economic benefits.

Theme: Platforms, places and spaces

16. This theme addresses access to suitable spaces for the production and presentation of work and the longer term role of cultural facilities in areas that are physically changing and being regenerated.
17. Cultural activity can transform local areas, making places more attractive and changing the way they are perceived. It can also support communities during periods of transition, bringing communities together when lives are disrupted by what is happening around them.
18. This theme will focus on the need for access to affordable space, including temporary, incubator and pop-up spaces as well as longer term opportunities. It will also consider the issues and challenges facing the cultural sector with regard to premises related matters.

Theme: Creativity, quality and innovation

19. This theme addresses support for the creation and production of new work, to promote innovation and quality. This involves providing opportunities for new and emerging artists, recent graduates and cultural producers to practice in the borough.
20. It will focus on working with partners to provide advice, guidance and support, including access to space, signposting to funding and opportunities to promote their practice. It also recognises the value of new, experimental and immersive cultural experiences and what the wider sector can learn from these new models of working.

Theme: Resilience and sustainability

21. This theme addresses the need to support the longer term viability of the cultural sector. It will focus on the practical support and advocacy that the Council and other partners can provide in terms of training, capacity building, professional development and links to business and enterprise.

22. It will review how the cultural sector currently accesses Council funding and will signpost individuals and organisations to other sources of funding. It will seek to retain existing long established organisations in the borough, alongside the new and emerging companies and practitioners. It also explores how we work with partners to enable organisations to harness the skills of the local community through volunteering.

Theme: People and audiences

23. This theme addresses the need to support the cultural sector to increase and diversify audiences, enabling the sector to reach local audiences and to be aware of the changing nature of the population as a result of the physical changes in the area. It includes recognizing the value of work that is rooted in local communities, encourages engagement and participation and is accessible to Southwark's diverse communities.

Financial implications

24. The actions identified in the action plan at appendix one will be contained within existing Council resources or where appropriate, through accessing external funding. The Council base budget earmarked for Arts and Heritage is £1,267k for 2013/14.
25. In order to deliver the strategy's themes and the action plan it may be necessary to re-align some elements of the budget, taking account of new and emerging priorities identified through the strategy consultation process.
26. There are no immediate financial implications arising from the adoption of the contents of this report. Cabinet is at this stage being asked to simply agree the proposed strategy. Any specific material financial implications arising from the implementation of the strategy that cannot be contained within the existing budgets or external funding will be subject to separate reports for consideration and approval.
27. Cabinet is reminded to consider the discharge of its obligations under the public sector equality duty found in s.149 Equality Act 2010.

Staffing issues

28. The cultural strategy action plan will be coordinated by the libraries, arts and heritage teams in partnership with other council services and key stakeholders and will be delivered within existing resources.

Consultation

Process

29. A significant consultation exercise was undertaken to inform the production of the new strategy. This included both internal consultation within the Council and engagement with the cultural sector and the wider community.
30. An officer steering group was established with representation from across the Council. It has monitored and informed the development of the strategy including the external communication programme and the feedback arising from it.

31. The external consultation ran from December 2012 until the end of May 2013 and consisted of the following.
- A pre-consultation exercise published on the Council's website and also mailed to cultural organisations and individuals to identify topics they would like to discuss and how they would like to be consulted. 55 responses were received. The following consultation programme was designed according to feedback from this exercise.
 - A series of sector specific consultation workshops were held during March and April 2013 with one session each for the following disciplines:

Visual arts
Theatre
Dance
Fashion
Media
Heritage
Literature
Music
 - Two geographically based meetings were held at venues in the north and south of the borough to explore the role of culture in the context of major regeneration programmes.
 - An online consultation on the Council's website from 27 March to 19 April 2013.
32. The meetings were interactive with much discussion, opportunities to debate a number of questions and comment and feedback boards and forms were available at all sessions.
33. Participants were not restricted to one geographical area or their own cultural discipline but were welcome to attend various meetings. Some organisations were represented at several of the events. In total, over 160 people attended the meetings.

Findings

34. The main findings of the consultation were that:
- There is a need to improve communication both internally between departments re cultural issues and also externally with the cultural sector
 - There is a need for better co-ordination of signposting, advice, guidance, networking and partnership opportunities in the cultural sector
 - There are strong demands for access to suitable space for the production and presentation of work including temporary, incubator, pop-up and permanent space. There is also clear demand for a more transparent method of managing opportunities for space when they arise
 - New and emerging artists need specific support if their creativity is to be retained within the borough
 - There was overwhelming support for the Council to focus resources on supporting locally based providers and on ensuring access to cultural

opportunities for local people, especially young people, children and families.

35. The strategy themes set out in sections 13 to 23 above, and the action plan at Appendix 1 are informed by this feedback and designed to address these issues over the five year period 2013-18.

Equalities impact assessment

36. As set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the specific Public Sector Equality duty (PSED) an equalities impact assessment has been carried out in relation to the proposed Cultural Strategy. The Cultural Strategy is extremely broad in nature, and applies to the whole of Southwark. Extensive consultation has been carried out in the development of this strategy and internal providers, external groups and residents have been consulted.
37. The action plan outlines broad areas of activity, but these are wide ranging and are largely set out to establish baselines in relation to cultural participation or carry out mapping exercises in terms of existing provision. As such they are neither targeted at or delivering a tangible activity to any specific group, but by their nature will foster good relations between people from different communities and advance equality of opportunity.
38. This strategy has no detrimental impact to any group or protected characteristic as outlined in the Equalities Act or the PSED, and the broad aims and actions proposed are likely to increase participation, representation and accessibility to cultural provision within the borough. Where specific activities may be planned as the outcome of this strategy, a separate equalities impact assessment should be carried out to ensure that any impact is minimised or mitigated, and the views of the Forum for Equalities and Human Rights in Southwark (FEHRS) should be sought at this stage.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Legal Services

39. Cabinet is advised that it is enabled to agree the cultural strategy pursuant to the arrangements in Part 3B of the Council's Constitution.
40. Cabinet is advised that a consultation exercise has been conducted in accordance with the duties imposed by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the principles set out in the budget report.
41. Cabinet is also advised of the need to consider the recommendations in light of the Council's role in public health and its promotion in the borough, Cabinet will note information was obtained in respect of this during the consultation.
42. Cabinet will note the reference to the Fairer Future for All promises and the delivery of the objectives for the strategy. Cabinet is reminded of the obligations set out in departmental plans such as the Children and Young People's, Plan.

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services (FC13/046)

43. This report seeks approval of the Cultural Strategy and action plan. The strategic director of finance and corporate services notes that there are no new financial implications as a result of accepting the recommendations of this report.
44. Financial implications are detailed in paragraphs 24 to 27 and show that any material impact on budgets would be subject to further reporting if or when they arise. Officer time to implement this decision can be contained within existing resources.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

	Held At	Contact
None		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark Council Cultural Strategy 2013 to 2018 and Cultural Strategy Action Plan 2013 to 2018

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Veronica Ward, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Volunteering		
Lead Officer	Adrian Ward, Head of Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure		
Report Author	Coral Flood, Arts Manager		
Version	Final		
Dated	4 July 2013		
Key Decision?	Yes		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
	Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
	Director of Legal Services	Yes	Yes
	Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Yes	Yes
	Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
	Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		4 July 2013