

To: Council

Date: 17th December 2012

Report of: Head of Policy, Culture and Communications

Title of Report: CULTURE STRATEGY 2012-15

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: This report provides background to the development of the Culture Strategy and an overview of the vision and priorities of the proposed Culture Strategy 2012-15.

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Councillor Bob Price

Report approved by:

Legal: Lindsay Cane

Finance: Paul Swaffield

Policy Framework: Corporate Plan 2012-2016: Strong Active, Communities and Vibrant, Sustainable Economy; Oxford City.

Recommendation: That Council approves and adopts the new Culture strategy as set out at Appendix 1.

Appendices to report

Appendix 1: Culture Strategy 2012-15 (this will be sent to a professional proof reader following Council meeting on 14 December)

Appendix 2: Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendices 3: Risk Assessment

Background

1. The 2009-2012 Culture Strategy played an important role in: developing partnerships; setting benchmarks for the evaluation of cultural provision to Oxford's communities; highlighting the Council's commitment to cultural regeneration through new projects; enhanced public realm activity; as well as supporting organisations to offer subsidised ticket schemes for young people in particular. In the past three years, Oxford has seen vast improvements in the quality of buildings delivering culture - Pegasus Theatre, Modern Art Oxford, the Ashmolean, plus the redevelopment of the Old Fire Station. An

evaluation of the Council's Culture Strategy 2009-12 has been completed and was reported to City Executive Board on 8th April 2012.

2. Since the publication of the last Culture Strategy there have been substantial changes to Government policies, restructuring of the national, regional and local development agencies, a downturn in the economy and reduced funding for arts and culture. Cultural organisations find themselves competing locally and externally for ever-decreasing pots of money.
3. It will become increasingly important to identify efficiencies and delivery models that encompass different partners, investors and agencies over the next three to five years. Our new Culture Strategy is ambitious and also realistic in its ability to support and innovate.
4. Also, what was not sufficiently explicit in the last strategy was the link between the vision and the city's demography. The levels of disadvantage in the city underpin the City Council's belief that access to high quality cultural experiences can play a significant role in social regeneration. We aim to work through partnerships to create a truly "joined-up" Oxford for our local communities.

Consultation

5. Invitations to join the consultation were emailed to a comprehensive database of around 500 Oxford-based cultural, educational and community organisations. Those who responded to the consultation welcomed the focus on young people and the strong and "inspiring" vision it offered for culture in Oxford. Consultation comments also recognised that the Culture Strategy will play a major role in strengthening both the local economy and the quality of life of Oxford's residents.
6. Suggestions from the consultation included requests for a more explicit focus on diversity and tourism, a commitment to non-financial forms of support as well as funding, and clarity on how the Culture Strategy will be implemented with the widest range of communities and groups, smaller organisations and the amateur arts sector.
7. The Culture Strategy was revised following this public consultation and the updated version was approved at City Executive Board on 12 September 2012. It was agreed that suggestions from Councillor Jim Campbell should be taken into account in the final version. Following a meeting with Cllrs Bob Price and Jim Campbell on 24 September 2012, these suggestions have been taken into account in this final version of the strategy.

Vision and priorities

8. Our shared vision for culture is:
To work in partnership with Oxford's key stakeholders and cultural partners to develop and promote cultural activities and events that enhance and leave a legacy in the lives of individuals and communities, offer affordable, excellent

experiences, encourage attainment amongst young people and promote cultural ambition.

9. Our three key priorities are to:

- Lead a partnership-based approach to sustaining, developing and improving the cultural life of the city.
- Improve opportunities for young people to access and actively participate in high quality cultural activities.
- Improve opportunities for the diverse range of communities in the city to actively participate in high quality cultural activities that reflect their own identities and can be shared with the whole community.

10. Underpinning each of these priorities is a commitment to explore the barriers to participation in cultural activities faced by different sectors of the community and to find ways of removing them. The Culture Strategy (Appendix 1) sets out agreed objectives for each of these three priorities from 2012-15.

Delivery

11. The Culture Strategy 2012-15 is being led by Oxford City Council in conjunction with the Cultural Action Group, a partnership involving Visit Oxfordshire and the following organisations in Oxford funded by Arts Council England: Oxford Playhouse, Pegasus Theatre, Modern Art Oxford, Oxford Contemporary Music and the University Museums. Arts at the Old Fire Station, Film Oxford, the Story Museum and Arts Council England will be invited to join the group from January 2013.

12. In addition to working with the Cultural Action Group, the City Council's Culture Team will develop new Culture Forums to which individual artists and other cultural organisations across the city will be invited to contribute. These forums will be responsive to the needs of the wider cultural sector and enable the City Council to provide support through training and development as well as funding. In order to ensure that individual artists and grassroots cultural organisations in particular have access to City Council funding, a new Culture Fund will be piloted in 2012-13 to provide modest leverage grants.

Level of risk

13. The Culture Strategy is low risk, although its non-adoption might result in the reduction or loss of funding to arts partners. A summary risk assessment is set out in Appendix 3.

Climate Change/Environmental impact

14. The strategy adheres to the City Council's policy on climate change.

Equalities impact

15. An initial Equalities Impact Assessment is provided at Appendix 2. The City Council's overriding concern in formulating its Culture Strategy has been to engage communities currently excluded from participation in the city's cultural life.

Financial implications

16. The Culture Strategy can be delivered through existing financial resources and through partnership agreements.

Legal Implications

17. Issues relating to governance and/or contractual matters may arise where cultural partners assist with delivery of objectives within the strategy. There are no other current legal implications

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List of background papers:

Summary Evaluation Report Cultural Strategy 2009-12
Evaluation of Cultural Strategy Action Plan 2009-12
Report on the Consultation on the Draft Culture Strategy for Oxford 2012 to 2016

Version number: 1.0

Appendix 2 Equalities Impact Assessment

1. Within the aims and objectives of the policy or strategy which group (s) of people has been identified as being potentially disadvantaged by your proposals? What are the equality impacts?

The Council's previous Culture Strategy 2009-2012 effectively set benchmarks for evaluating the cultural provision to Oxford's communities. Significant changes to Government policies (specifically the restructuring of the national, regional and local development agencies and reduced funding for arts and culture leading to increased competition both locally and externally for diminishing resources) has necessitated a review of the strategy to draw a more explicit link between the cultural vision and the demographics within the city, where acknowledged levels of significant social and economic disadvantage across key areas of the city have driven the Council's belief that access to high quality cultural experiences are important to social regeneration. The City Council's ambition – developed with our partners, including business, community organisations, the health and education sectors, and the County Council – is to make Oxford a world-class city for everyone and our overriding concern in formulating the Culture Strategy has been to engage communities currently excluded from participation in the City's cultural life

Our shared vision for culture is:

To work in partnership with Oxford's key stakeholders and cultural partners to develop and promote cultural activities and events that enhance and leave a legacy in the lives of individuals and communities, offer affordable, excellent experiences, encourage attainment amongst young people and promote cultural ambition.

2. In brief, what changes are you planning to make to your current or proposed new or changed policy, strategy, procedure, project or service to minimise or eliminate the adverse equality impacts?

Please provide further details of the proposed actions, timetable for making the changes and the person(s) responsible for making the changes on the resultant action plan

The Culture Strategy 2012-2015 is being led by the Council in conjunction with the Cultural Action Group (a partnership involving key local arts and cultural organisations and to which the Arts Council will be invited to join from January 2013: see paragraph 11 of the CEB report). It is the intention to develop new Culture Forums to which individual artists and other cultural organisations across the city will be invited to contribute. These forums will be more responsive and enable the Council to provide support through training as well as funding. A new pilot Culture Fund will be piloted in 2012-2013 to establish and provide modest leverage grants.

3. Please provide details of whom you will consult on the proposed changes and if you do not plan to consult, please provide the rationale behind that decision.

Please note that you are required to involve disabled people in decisions that impact on them

The Culture Strategy will be heavily reliant on partnership working and this was factored into the consultation processes post April 2012, with invitations for comments sent to 500 Oxford-based cultural, educational and community organisations. Feedback and suggestions from this consultation highlighted requests for a more explicit focus on diversity and tourism, a commitment to non-financial forms of support and some clarity on how the Culture Strategy will be implemented.

There is a commitment to explore the barriers to participation in cultural activities faced by different sectors of the community and to find ways of removing them (contained within the objectives for each of the three main priorities). Statistics are available from DCMS and the Arts Council that indicate where some of the gaps are in terms of underrepresented groups accessing the arts.

4. Can the adverse impacts you identified during the initial screening be justified without making any adjustments to the existing or new policy, strategy, procedure, project or service?

Please set out the basis on which you justify making no adjustments

It is difficult to anticipate any adverse impacts as the rationale behind the strategy is to increase access and remove barriers to involvement in arts activities/ events.

The Council has previously implemented a number of initiatives to offset access issues. These have included subsidised ticket schemes of up to 50% for U26 year olds as part of the national "Good Night Out" programme.

Workshop Clubs have targeted NEETs and been run by the Pegasus Theatre, while a dedicated City Dance Development Officer (although a part time resource) has set up and extended funding for over 50s dance projects.

The City will use its current strengths in community engagement and cohesion to develop outreach programmes and will use available grant support (currently around £250k for the arts and cultural sectors) to enable other partners to facilitate activities, with some of the main equality and inclusion objectives within the strategy being:

1. Work to explore and remove barriers to participation and enable access to quality arts provision for those communities and groups who are currently excluded.
2. Work in partnership with the cultural sector to identify gaps in arts provision and support activity which addresses these gaps.
3. Work with NPOs and Oxford ASPIRE to develop a detailed understanding of current audiences in order to better identify gaps in engagement and take a joint approach to audience development.
4. Support activities, events and audience development schemes aimed at reaching, engaging and celebrating Oxford's diverse communities.
5. Support and develop collaborative initiatives to improve creative skills, and provide mentoring and professional development opportunities for all sections of the community, including elderly or disabled groups.
6. Support arts and cultural organisations to embed diversity into their work and management, for example through building on the recommendations of Arts Council England's report, The Role of Diversity in Building Adaptive Resilience.

Effective partnership working should also ensure that the Council will be able to play a visible local leadership role in influencing and encouraging volunteer schemes, creative apprenticeships and paid bursary/internship schemes for young people and diverse communities.

5. You are legally required to monitor and review the proposed changes after implementation to check they work as planned and to screen for unexpected equality impacts.

Please provide details of how you will monitor/evaluate or review your proposals and when the review will take place

A delivery framework, including milestones and performance indicators to measure success linked to the objectives of City Council staff and the Service Level Agreements of commissioned organisations, will underpin the Strategy. Delivery will be monitored quarterly by the Cultural Action Group and by the City Executive Board on a six-monthly basis. The Cultural Development Manager will undertake an Annual Review of activity to evaluate performance against the Culture Strategy objectives.

Lead officer responsible for signing off the EqIA: Jarlath Brine

Role: Equalities & Diversity Business Partner/ Apprentice Project Leader

Date: 19.11.12

Note, please consider & include the following areas:

- Summary of the impacts of any individual policies
- Specific impact tests (e.g. statutory equality duties, social, regeneration and sustainability)
- Post implementation review plan (consider the basis for the review, objectives and how these will be measured, impacts and outcomes including the “unknown”)
- Potential data sources (attach hyperlinks including Government impact assessments where relevant)

**Appendix 3
Risk Assessment**

Nominations to Outside Organisations

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Risk Score Impact Score: 1=insignificant; 2=Minor; 3=Moderate; 4=Major; 5=Catastrophic Probability Score: 1=Rare; 2=Unlikely; 3=Possible; 4=Likely; 5=Almost Certain															
No.	Risk Description Link to Corporate Objectives	Gross Risk		Cause of Risk	Mitigation	Net Risk		Further Management of Risk: Transfer/Accept/Reduce/Avoid		Monitoring Effectiveness				Current Risk	
		I	P			I	P	Action	Outcome required:	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	I	P
1.	Change in Central Government and national and regional policy direction	3	4	Central Government policy changes	Mitigating Control: Keep up to date and monitor potential changes and the impact on the Oxford Strategy	2	2	Action Owner: Cultural Development Manager	Outcome required: Delivery of Culture Strategy					3	4
2.	Change in Local Government	3	2	Elections	Mitigating Control: To work closely with all members and Groups	3	2	Action Owner: Cultural Development Manager	Outcome required: Delivery of Culture Strategy					3	2
3.	Lack of resources to deliver strategy	3	4	Staff member leaving	Mitigating Control: Appoint new staff Maximise revenue potential and external funding opportunities	3	3	Action Owner: Cultural Development Manager	Outcome required: Delivery of Culture Strategy					3	3
4	Full Council not approving strategy	4	2	Lack of communication with members	Mitigating Control: Continued liaison with key members. Document is properly prepared, consulted upon and supported by evidence.	2	2	Action Owner: Democratic Services Manager	Outcome required: Approval of Culture Strategy					2	2

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