

## Oxford City Council's Culture Strategy Review & Evaluation - Summary

### Oxford – A World Class City for Everyone A Vision for Culture 2009-2012

#### 1. Purpose & Vision

The purpose and vision for culture in 2009 was threefold; to improve our city through cutting edge facilities, cultural regeneration and pride of place; to improve people's lives through providing access to the very best arts and cultural activity and encouraging creativity; to improve our creative economy by providing increased investment, employment and value for money. Our cultural vision was:

**“To be recognised internationally as a world-class city for culture; a city that others look to for ideas and models of best practice; a city that integrates and encourages creativity and innovation, bringing the unexpected into everyday living and inspiring others by example.”**

This purpose and vision remain integral to the City Council's cultural mission. What was not sufficiently explicit in the last strategy – although it was addressed in the delivery of the 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.

#### 2. Changing landscapes

The funding situation for the arts has changed significantly in the past two years and the cultural sector finds itself competing both locally with each other and externally for ever-decreasing pots of money. It is and will become increasingly important to identify efficiencies and models of delivery that encompass many different partners, investors and agencies over the next three to five years in order for many cultural organisations to survive. Our new strategy needs to be SMARTER, ambitious and realistic in its ability to support and innovate. There will be less national and regional support with the loss of so many agencies and there will be a focus on bringing in commercial sector support and public investment.

#### 3. Key Achievements

Despite the external challenges that it has faced Oxford City Council has made significant progress over the last three years. There have been cuts to the arts budget, as to all other Council functions but the Council has retained its commitment to and belief in the value of culture. The Council is currently upgrading its own Museum and integrating this with the Town hall to create a more coherent visitor attraction. It has also enabled, delivered, supported, researched and pulled in considerable external investment for arts and cultural activity. We have pioneered new ways of working in partnership and commissioned core services that have enriched and increased people's participation in the arts. (See Appendix 1 – Evaluation of the Cultural Strategy Action Plan for full detailed analysis of the objectives.)

With regard to our core-funded partners, each has a Service Level Agreement directly linked to the cultural objectives and a summary of the past two years' significant numbers is documented below (NB Still awaiting data & reports for 2011/12).

In addition Oxford City Council has received over £100,000 from external sources for our annual dance festival Dancin Oxford and delivered 5 years of successful dance festivals in the city.

Art projects/activities funded through open bidding, small grants & area committees in 2009/10 total £12,900 (including £7500 for Cowley Rd Carnival, £1000 for Kuumba Nia Arts & £4400 for OYAP). In 2010/11 the total was £36,858 (including £15000 for Cowley Rd Carnival, £10000 for Childrens International Art Organisation (CIAO – the ark), £5000 for Oxfringe, £1834 for Kuumba Nia Arts, £1500 to the OFS from CSW, £3524 to Cuttleslowe Community Association for a Mural project on the underpass. Oxford City council also allocated £10,000 to arts projects in 2009/10 and £5,000 in 10/11 aimed at supporting emerging talent and individual artists.

<b>Commissioned arts partner</b>	<b>Grant Awarded (£) 09/10 &amp; 10/11</b>	<b>Description of work area</b>	<b>Total no of Beneficiaries (attendances/participation at events &amp; activities) 09/10</b>	<b>Total number of Beneficiaries (attendances/participation at events &amp; activities) 10/11</b>	<b>Other funding levered in for this project (£) (exc. Earned income) 09/10</b>	<b>Other funding levered in for this project (£) (exc. Earned income)</b>
Fusion	46,923	A community arts organisation delivering a programme of arts for adults and children	50,614	74,496	62,338	60,848
Modern Art Oxford	72,100	Working with artists to deliver community & education programme aiming to increase the enjoyment and understanding of contemporary art and providing an internationally renowned exhibition programme.	98,871	98,394	1,312,840	1,353,286
Oxford Contemporary Music	10,000	Working with musicians and artists to deliver music focused projects in the community and providing a professional music series.	4,823	6,723	162,981	118,777
Oxford Film & Video Makers	39,303	Making film and digital media more accessible.	6,555	8,100	136,854	220,000
Oxford Inspires	55,735	A cultural development agency creating new opportunities for arts and heritage organisations	212,000	37,200 (known)	217,513	357,828
Oxford Playhouse	51,690	A theatre for everyone - delivering performances out	167,342	161,674	769,751	769,751

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		in the community				
Oxfordshire Touring Theatre Company	8,720	A touring theatre company - making theatre more accessible	879	1,173	265,451	258,578
Oxfordshire Visual Arts Development Agency	15,500	Promotes access to high quality visual arts for all residents of Oxfordshire	6,167	3,330	32,501.65	11,310.00
Pegasus Theatre	26,459	Oxford's Youth Theatre. Offering a wide range of cutting edge contemporary performances	5,837	14,735	515,148	509,807
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>326,430</b>		<b>553,088</b>	<b>368,625</b>	<b>3,475,378</b>	<b>3,660,185</b>

Detailed summary reports have been submitted for each funded partner outlining key outcomes and outputs against objectives, all available on request.

#### 4. Moving Forward

The future still represents uncertainty regarding funding for the arts, however, by cementing and developing strong partnerships within the sector and with key stakeholders, a new strategy will be developed for Oxford, to build on the successes of the last one and identify new ways of working to ensure that the people of Oxford continue to benefit from and have access to the kinds of excellent cultural experiences befitting a world-class city.