

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Date:	14 September 2015
	Cabinet		16 September 2015
Subject:	Cultural Strategy Update: January – June 2015		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
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Appendices:	1. Achievements from January to June 2015		
	2. Planned activities from July to December 2015		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Members on the progress that has been made in achieving the Cultural Strategy's targets from January to June 2015.
- 1.2 In addition to the achievements made, an action plan has been produced to show the planned activity from various stakeholders from July through to December 2015. The aim of this is to ensure that the Cultural Strategy aims and objectives are achieved and to identify areas that may need further work.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** is asked to consider the information contained in the report and make any recommendations it considers appropriate to Cabinet.
- 2.2 **Cabinet** is asked to **RESOLVE** that:
 - (1) The achievements made in delivering the Cultural Strategy from January to June 2015 be noted.
 - (2) It be noted that the planned activities by various stakeholders are recognised as contributing to the Cultural Strategy aims and objectives.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Members were last updated on progress about the Cultural Strategy action plan six months ago in a bid to provide an effective feedback mechanism on how well the City was achieving its cultural targets.

3.2 It was agreed with senior management that the format of the update was to be changed to include the planned activities for the next 6 months by all City partners. This will inform and update Members and will highlight any potential gaps in fulfilling the aims of the strategy.

3.3 The strategy proposed seven distinct action areas over a ten-year period – starting in 2007. The seven areas are:

- Making sense of the City Centre – creating an attractive and vibrant City Centre.
- Rethinking heritage and cultural tourism – improving access, visibility and quality of heritage facilities with a particular emphasis on the water/maritime history.
- Raising the stakes for creativity – making provision for the growth in creative industries.
- Broadening Gloucester’s excellence in sport.
- Enjoying and supporting diversity.
- Planning for a ‘transformational’ project.
- Marketing and promoting Gloucester.

A full version of the strategy can be viewed on the City Council’s website at <http://www.gloucester.gov.uk/resident/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/Pages/Evidence-Base.aspx#culturalstrategy>

3.4 Progress over the last six months has been significant and varied. This update is in no way comprehensive, but does indicate the extent of cultural activity taking place in our City. Around twenty people were contacted from the City Council and local cultural organisations to request information on what has been achieved in the last six months in relation to the seven strands of the Cultural Strategy.

3.5 **MAKING SENSE OF THE CITY CENTRE**

This strand of the Cultural Strategy is about physical improvements to the City Centre and its buildings, as well as the interpretation and animation of the City and its public realm. This strand is about linking up various areas of the city including the Docks and City centre and providing public art of iconic status which leave strong impressions on visitors and residents.

3.6 **RETHINKING HERITAGE AND CULTURAL TOURISM**

The second strand of the Cultural Strategy looks to improving access, visibility and the quality of heritage facilities and attractions in the City. There is a real appetite for heritage and cultural tourism, not only from visitors but also our residents. To address this interest, a range of initiatives and projects have been developed that increase residents’ pride in their City.

3.7 **RAISING THE STAKES FOR CREATIVITY**

Raising the stakes for creativity is about increasing opportunities for participating in arts including increasing activity in our schools and developing creative industry workspace in the City.

3.8 **CONSOLIDATING GLOUCESTER’S REPUTATION FOR SPORTING EXCELLENCE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

This element of the Cultural Strategy requires the right balance between developing world class provision of sporting facilities and achievement with access for all.

Gloucester has the lowest participation rates in sport in the County and therefore, increasing participation is important.

3.9 ENJOYING AND SUPPORTING DIVERSITY

Gloucester is home to a large number of community groups representing different faiths, cultures, genders and generations. Being one of the most diverse cities in England, it's important that all communities feel as though they are involved in the life of the City.

3.10 PLANNING FOR A TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECT

The Cultural Strategy suggests that the transformational project should be of international importance and be based on a strong public and private partnership. At the time of developing the Cultural Strategy in 2007, it was not clear what this project should be; only that it should put Gloucester on the map. A number of smaller projects could be described as transformational.

3.11 MARKETING AND PROMOTING GLOUCESTER

The consultees involved in helping to create the City's Cultural Strategy felt that Gloucester should make more of what already existed in the City and that the cultural message should be woven into Gloucester's marketing approach. The new cultural image that the consultees refer to is set out in strands 2 and 3 of the Cultural Strategy; however, they include making our heritage and culture more accessible and developing Gloucester's image as being a cool place to be.

In tandem with this, residents should feel involved in their City through regular communications and public events. They also advised that Gloucester's brand should be significantly improved. This was one of the purposes in the creation of Marketing Gloucester who have worked in consultation with partners to develop a brand for the City.

3.12 Appendix 1 shows the achievements made from January to June 2015.

3.13 Appendix 2 indicates the planned cultural activities due to take place from July to December 2015 from the various cultural partners.

4.0 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Considerations

4.1 The current Cultural Strategy does not consider the skills that are available within the communities of Gloucester. It is clear that from some of the activities described that the communities within Gloucester have the necessary skills and assets to contribute to Gloucester's cultural activities.

4.2 The newly established Gloucester Culture Board will be able to determine the strengths held within the community and establish how the community can help deliver the strategies aims and objectives.

5.0 Alternative Options Considered

5.1 Not applicable for this report.

6.0 Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 The progress made during the last six months has been significant and has contributed to achieving the objectives of the Cultural Strategy.

7.0 Future Work and Conclusions

7.1 It is clear that a significant amount of work has been done over the past 6 months contributing to the Cultural Strategy. The City Council and Marketing Gloucester are both key drivers in all future works in the City and with 2015 being Gloucester's BiG Year, cultural development will certainly improve this year.

7.2 It has however been widely recognised that the time has come to review Gloucester's Cultural Strategy. An interim Gloucester Culture Board has been established whose mission is "*to ensure culture is at the heart of the City for the good of all*". They are working to produce an up to date Cultural Strategy with the aim of producing:

- Thriving Residents – quality of life generally via cultural provision, choice, social mobility, improved employability, lifelong learning, individual progression routes, access, active citizenship, representation, social cohesion, civic pride, confidence and ambition, improved health and championing diversity.
- Thriving City – a distinctive cultural identity for Gloucester – locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Thriving Economy – increased visitor numbers bringing increased economic and social benefits; improved reputation of the city locally in Gloucestershire and nationally, increasing opportunities for local young people which will help retain University graduates.

7.3 The Arts Council has representation on this Interim Board, along with representatives from the University, the Cathedral and Create Gloucestershire.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications relating to this report at this stage.

9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 There are no legal implications relating to this report.

10.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

10.1 None at this stage. Appropriate risk management will be undertaken for each project as they arise.

11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

11.1 A People Impact Assessment will be completed in conjunction with the new Cultural Strategy which will be produced by the Gloucester Culture Board.

12.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

12.1 Gloucester City Safe has the sole intention of facilitating the reduction of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour which can blight both day and night time economies. The work of the partnership supports the delivery of this strategy.

Sustainability

12.2 Sustainability issues will be addressed within individual projects within the action plan.

Staffing & Trade Union

12.3 Not applicable.

Press Release drafted/approved

12.4 Not applicable.

Background Documents: None