

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Cabinet Council	Date:	7 March 2016 9 March 2016 24 March 2016
Subject:	Cultural Strategy		
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	Budget/Policy Framework:	Yes	
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Appendices:	1. Cultural Strategy 2. Indicative Outline Budget for the Cultural Board		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report presents the proposed draft Cultural Strategy 2016 – 2026, for the City of Gloucester. The Strategy identifies 6 key objectives and informs Council of the establishment of a Cultural Board.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** is asked to note the work to date and make any comments on the proposed Cultural Strategy prior to its adoption.

2.2 **Cabinet** is asked to **RECOMMEND** to Council that

- (1) the Cultural Strategy 2016 - 2026 be adopted;
- (2) the Council notes the establishment of a new Cultural Board, as set out in paragraphs 3.5 – 3.7;
- (3) the Council authorises the Corporate Director to enter into an agreement with the formed Cultural Board on terms approved by the Council Solicitor to deliver the Cultural Strategy on behalf of the Council for the period 2016- 2018; and
- (4) appoints the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure as the Council's nominee on the new Cultural Board

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 The current Cultural Strategy was adopted in 2007 and has delivered a number of key projects and set a clear path for how culture is delivered in the City. However, with that Strategy now coming to the end of its natural life, we have been working on a revised Strategy for the period 2016 – 2026.
- 3.2 To help deliver this, an Interim Cultural Board was established in 2015 and Festivals and Events International (FEI) were appointed as consultants to draft the strategy, including carrying out consultation with all interested groups and individuals. The consultation took a number of different forms, including focus groups, workshops and face to face discussions. Further details of the Consultation process is set out in Appendix G of the consultant's report. The attached Strategy is formed from the final report provided by FEI.
- 3.3 Having carried out a reflective review of the current cultural offer within the City, including a benchmarking exercise of existing activity, as well as a thorough challenge to the expectations and deliverability of cultural activity in the City for the next ten years, the draft Strategy identifies 6 clear Objectives –
- Objective 1 – Develop Artists and Arts Organisations
 - Objective 2 – Broaden the Cultural Offer
 - Objective 3 – Develop a Vibrant City Centre
 - Objective 4 – Develop Audiences
 - Objective 5 – Put Gloucester on the Cultural Map
 - Objective 6 – Make Things Happen
- 3.4 The report seeks approval of the Cultural Strategy 2016 – 2026 and associated Action Plan, but also acknowledges that this cannot be delivered by the City Council alone and Section 5 of the Strategy sets out how it should be delivered.
- 3.5 Key to this is the establishment of a Cultural Board that will be tasked with the delivery of the Strategy and identifying partners to deliver this together for the first 2 years of the Strategy. The City Council will not be responsible for setting up the Board, but will be one of the equal partners and will look to work with the Board to deliver the Strategy. The Board will consist of approximately twelve people and the opportunity to apply to join the Board will be advertised . An Independent Chair will also be advertised for and will be appointed. It is proposed that the Cabinet Member for Cultural and Leisure be appointed as the City Council's representative.
- 3.6 It is proposed that the Board should be set up as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and as such will be able to seek external funding and support. An indicative outline three year budget for the Board is attached at Appendix 2.

3.7 The Indicative budget identifies required income for year one, from the Arts Council and the City Council. As part of the City Council's 2016/17 budget setting, a sum of £20,000 has been identified to support the establishment of the new Cultural Board. An agreement between the City Council and the Cultural Board is necessary to deliver the Objectives set out in the Cultural Strategy for the period 2016-18 following which the Board will continue to operate as a private independent company. It is also proposed that the following services in kind will be provided by the Council to help establish the Board:

- HR support- £4,000
- Marketing- £8,000 (from the Communications contractual arrangement with the County Council)
- Administration- £5,000
- Accommodation/utilities - waive licence fee of £4,500
- Stationery- £800
- Accountancy- £1,000

3.8 It is noted that the indicative budget includes the employment of a Director to help shape and deliver the Strategy.

3.9 In addition to the Council's commitments, the Board will be seeking further financial support and in-kind support.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 The existing Cultural Strategy could be refreshed with a revision of objectives identified. However, it is felt that a new Strategy and the establishment of a new Cultural Board is the right vehicle to build on the cultural offer in the City and to ensure that Gloucester is firmly on the map

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

5.1 The current Cultural Strategy requires renewing and updating, and having carried out a significant consultation exercise, a new Strategy has now been produced and is presented to Cabinet and on to Council for approval.

5.2 It is acknowledged that the City Council cannot deliver the Strategy alone, and so it is proposed to support the establishment of a Cultural Board. The City Council will be one of the key partners and will look to set up an agreement with the Board for the delivery of the objectives set out in the Strategy in the early years.

5.3 This is the path recommended by The Arts Council who have supported Gloucester City Council with £15,000 towards the work required to produce the new Strategy and who have indicated further financial support towards the setting up of a Cultural Board and the employment of a Director.

6.0 Future Work Conclusions

- 6.1 Following adoption of the Cultural Strategy, the Council will work with partners to formally establish the Cultural Board and to then set up the required agreement with the Board to deliver the objectives set out in the Strategy for the period 2016-18.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The City Council has already agreed to set aside £20,000 in 2016/17 and 2017/18 towards the establishment of the Cultural Board and to enable funding from the Arts Council of £100,000 to be delivered in the City. In addition, the Council will seek to offer some payments in kind and all necessary agreements will need to be concluded before any payments are made.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The delivery of the objectives in the Cultural Strategy 2016- 2026, if adopted, will be the responsibility of the Council.
- 8.2 It is proposed that the Council provides £20,000 financial support to a newly created company to deliver the objectives for the first 2 years of the Strategy. It is possible for this Council to provide support to the company by entering into a contractual arrangement for the delivery of specified objectives in the Strategy and a Licence to occupy in respect of accommodation (as a benefit in kind). As the contractual sum is below the EU procurement threshold, the Council may support this company without first going out to tender. It is important to note, however, that the Council cannot provide on- going support without complying procurement legislation and the Council must also be mindful of the constraints imposed by the State Aid requirements.
- 8.3 Although the company is an independent private company, in which the Council has no direct interest, it is proposed that the Council has the right to nominate 1 councillor to the Board. It will then be possible for the council nominee to promote the interests of the Council on this Board.

9.0 Asset Based Community Development

- 9.1 Many of the Cultural activities across the City are delivered by community groups and organisations based. The Strategy looks to build on those strengths and to support community lead events.

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 9.1 The decision to support the establishment of the Cultural Board and then commissioning it to deliver the Cultural Strategy means that the Council will relinquish some of the control as to how this will be delivered. Whilst this could be seen as a risk, it is felt that entrusting the Board to deliver this will create greater opportunities for culture in Gloucester.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

10.1 A PIA screening review was undertaken. It did not identify any potential or actual negative impact. For this reason, a full PIA is not required.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

11.1 None.

Sustainability

11.2 None.

Staffing & Trade Union

11.3 None.

Background Documents: None