

STRENGTHS

Analysis: Where are we now and where are going?

has been developed through extensive research and consultation carried out to fully examine the current cultural climate of the city. This analysis took various forms including consultation with cultural organisations and the public as well as research into local and national statistical records. The aim was to discover where the city's cultural strengths and weaknesses lay and what the challenges and opportunities are for future cultural development in Aberdeen.

The results from the research and consultation were significant. Not only was the response provided by individuals and organisations both passionate and constructive but displayed remarkable consistency with the findings from statistical based information. This consistency

thus allowed for the shared priorities and overall vision for the city to be clearly established. The below section provides a snapshot of this work, providing a list of the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that were identified.

Active communities and schools

An active voluntary sector

High quality of life

Prestigious educational establishments

Quality cultural venues

Significant collections and archives

Diverse cultural programme

Unique cultural heritage

Below average participation rates

Difficulty retaining creative skills

Lack of collective voice

Lack of evidence for benefits of culture

Relatively low level of cultural investment and ambition

Over reliance on current cultural infrastructure

Perception of the city

Poor communication of cultural opportunities

Creative Scotland

Internationalism

National Organisations

Olympic and Commonwealth Games

Public consultation and debate

UK City of Culture

Work with Aberdeenshire

Ability to access external funding

Changes in access to culture

Demographic trends

Engaging with hard to reach groups

Local authority budgets

Potential changes in government

Reduced expenditure on cultural activities

WEAKNESS

CULTURAL FORUM for ABERDEEN

2010/2015 **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

VIBRANT

A Cultural Strategy for Aberdeen

Our Vision:

Aberdeen will be a vibrant, creative and ambitious city

"Aberdeen will be a vibrant, creative and ambitious city"

Vibrant Aberdeen: An Introduction

This is the executive summary of 'Vibrant Aberdeen', the city's cultural strategy for 2010 - 2015. Developed by the city's Cultural Forum through consultation with hundreds of individuals and organisations, this is the document which sets out a vision for a brighter cultural future for the city. Although words alone cannot produce creativity and vibrancy this is a document which provides a framework which will allow for the city's resources and skills to be used effectively to work towards achieving a shared set of objectives.

Successfully meeting these objectives will be no easy task and it is clear that significant progress is required. The debate, consultation and research that has been carried out in developing 'Vibrant Aberdeen' is a positive starting point however the challenge now is to follow this through. While particular responsibilities lie with the partners within the Cultural Forum, it is clear that this is a strategy for the entire city. The progress that is required cannot be achieved without harnessing all the knowledge, skills and resources from across the city. Only by working together can Aberdeen transform itself into the vibrant, creative and ambitious city is has the potential to be.

Aberdeen's Vision

"Aberdeen will be a vibrant, creative and ambitious city"

This vision, as it should be, is one of great aspiration. It was established from the key themes that shone through during the development of 'Vibrant Aberdeen'. The key requirements and objectives that have been identified clearly stemmed from a will to create a city which is vibrant, full of creativity and which has significant cultural ambition.

Objectives

The research and consultation undertaken to create 'Vibrant Aberdeen' allowed for the key requirements in developing culture in the city to be established. These requirements were considered and have acted as the basis for the establishment of the five main objectives of 'Vibrant Aberdeen'.

These objectives are presented in the table below along with a summary of the key requirements within each. It is crucial to note that these objectives and requirements are intrinsically linked and must be considered collectively. The ability to successfully meet our vision of becoming a vibrant, creative and ambitious city requires successfully meeting each of these objectives.

Cultural Forum Actions

The Cultural Forum has identified five key strategic actions which as a collective group it will lead upon. While these actions will be led and monitored by the Cultural Forum they will require working closely with partners who sit outside the current forum membership. The Cultural Forum will include detailed progress updates on each action as part of its annual 'Vibrant Aberdeen' progress report.

Individual Action Plans

While the specific actions led by the Cultural Forum will be important it is the individual action plans of organisations, groups and individuals within the cultural sector of the city which will be the central component in successfully meeting 'Vibrant Aberdeen's' objectives.

'Vibrant Aberdeen' is a partnership document and thus does not provide a list of individual actions. Instead it provides a collective framework for the:

- Creation of individual action plans which allocate resources towards meeting a shared set of objectives.
- The recording of information to allow for consistent and accurate monitoring on the development of culture in the city.
- Generation of discussion and debate on current and future cultural issues.

The partners within the forum are committed to adopting this framework by establishing individual action plans and by recording and presenting relevant information. However, while this commitment is a useful starting point it is acknowledged that the Cultural Forum partners do not fully represent the cultural output of the city. The forum welcomes engagement with organisations, groups and individuals who wish to work towards achieving the objectives within 'Vibrant Aberdeen'. In order to do this, any interested group or individual can contact t h e Cultural Forum through www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/vibrantaberdeen to discuss planning and monitoring around the 'Vibrant Aberdeen' framework.

| Strategic Objectives | Establish a cohesive cultural sector | Increase community engagement in cultural activity | Improve the city's cultural profile | Increase investment in culture | Effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of culture |
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| | Increase communication and partnership working across the cultural sector | Identify current participation rates across all demographics and areas | Raise awareness of the city's culture and cultural programme | Increased levels of engagement with external funding groups | Improve evidence base of benefits of culture |
| Key requirements | Improve links between individual practitioners and cultural organisations | More detailed information on barriers to access | Change perception of the city and develop stronger cultural identity | Increased awareness of local, national and international funding opportunities | Shift away from culture of recording only measurable outcomes |
| | Establish a collective cultural voice which speaks with suitable authority and influence | Improved communication of cultural opportunities | Increase presence with key national and international partners | Improved support and training opportunities for cultural organisations and individuals to attract funding | Create structure for collating and using existing information |
| Cultural Forum Actions | Develop and expand the role and functions of the Cultural Forum | Deliver extensive research into cultural participation | Lead bid for UK City of Culture 2017 | Commission research into external investment | Record and monitor the impact of 'Vibrant Aberdeen' |
| Individual Action plans | | | | | |
| | Increased levels of effective partnership working | Detailed picture of cultural participation in Aberdeen | Increased media coverage of Aberdeen's culture and cultural activity | Improved levels of external funding for culture | Establishment of baseline figures from which development can be measured |
| Desired Outcomes | Clear, effective and inclusive communication structures | Increased levels of cultural engagement in all areas and demographic groups across the city | Increased levels of cultural tourism | Support network and training programme for all individuals and organisations | Clear evidence of the impact of 'Vibrant Aberdeen' |
| Cultural Strategy for Aberdeen | Establishment of suitable group to represent cultural sector of Aberdeen | Improved local awareness of cultural opportunities | City in a position to confidently bid for UK City of Culture 2017 | Creation of sustainable relationships with external funding groups | Sustainable structures in place to maintain effective recording of the impact of culture in the city Column Column |