

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	CITY GROWTH & RESOURCES
DATE	24 April 2018
REPORT TITLE	CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR ABERDEEN
REPORT NUMBER	PLA/18/015
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TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.2; 2.3;

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform members on the development of a Cultural Strategy for Aberdeen 2018-2028 and development of a five-year action plan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee endorse:

- (a) *Culture Aberdeen*, a Cultural Strategy for the City of Aberdeen 2018-2028 as attached in Appendix 1;
- (b) The steps that have been undertaken to develop the Strategy through *Culture Aberdeen*;
- (c) The five year action plan and priority activities for 2018-19; and
- (d) Note the Council's considerable contribution to realising the strategy ambitions through the existing 2018/19 revenue budget commitments and that any future Council financial commitment towards delivery will require a fully costed business case to be brought to Committee for approval.

3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council previously approved 'Vibrant Aberdeen', the Cultural Strategy for Aberdeen 2010-15, which informed a number of significant developments including:

- Establishing an annual £710,000 culture programme bringing in £900,000 additional external funding, including SPECTRA, Granite, Granite Noir, Look Again and the Aberdeen Festivals Collective
- Establishing SPECTRA as the pivotal cultural event in the Aberdeen 365 events plan, with over 90,000 visits across the sites in 2018.
- Investing in major Capital initiatives such as Aberdeen Treasure Hub, the Aberdeen Art Gallery redevelopment, the Anatomy Rooms and the Music Hall redevelopment.

- Improved cultural leadership and cohesion across the sector – with new leadership at Aberdeen Performing Arts, Citymoves Dance Agency, Robert Gordon University and Peacock Visual Arts
- Recognition of the city’s aspirations and improvement from Creative Scotland and Events Scotland
- Improved collaboration across the local authority in engaging schools with cultural provision and integrating culture and events within the City Centre Masterplan
- Evidence of the economic impacts of the city’s investment in culture, and the Culture Network represented on the Aberdeen Prospers Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) group.

Approach and Methodology

3.2 In early 2015 initial steps were taken to begin the review of the previous strategy. A working group was set up which , was led by the Director of Planning and Policy Development at the Robert Gordon University, who has recently been designated as the interim Chair of *Culture Aberdeen*, and included the Council’s Cultural Policy and Partnership team. A public consultation exercise was delivered by independent consultants SNOOK. This involved:

- A citizens circle active research model;
- Workshop sessions, public events;
- Pecha kuccha (quick-fire presentations), ‘Dear Aberdeen’ letters, culture conversations, debates and attendance at cultural activities with partners donating tickets led to a proposed set of priorities; and
- Field research and analysis gathered by the University of Manchester as part of its ‘Everyday Participation’ nationwide research programme, focused on Peterculter, provided a focus for understanding community motivations for engaging in locally designed programmes.

3.5 In addition, the Cultural Policy and Partnership team engaged with schools, Pupil Voice Council, the business sector (through Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce), the Connected Leaders Group (Ernst and Young), other Council officers, and the cultural sector in a wide range of events and activities. The 35th City Voice questionnaire provided feedback on engagement with cultural services. Information and feedback received through all this work was used to form the framework for the strategy. Partnership organisations from the former YACNE (Youth Arts Collective North East) are currently developing a framework for the development of the arts for children and young people.

3.6 A joint action plan was also developed as part of the Strategy and is appended to the Strategy document (see Appendices to this report). This will be reviewed annually with the intention that this becomes a rolling three year action plan and aligns to the LOIP framework.

4. THE STRATEGY

4.1 Aberdeen City’s new Cultural Strategy has five ambitions:

1. Releasing our creativity.
2. Becoming Scotland’s Creative Lab.
3. Making all the city a stage.
4. Connecting us to the world.
5. Shaping our future.

4.2 Within each ambition is a set of priorities to be delivered by the Action Plan.

Table 1: Culture Aberdeen - Prioritisation

Cultural Strategy ambition	Sample priority
1. Releasing our creativity	Increasing the range and number of opportunities for engagement with a range of professional, community and volunteer activity across Aberdeen
2. Becoming Scotland's Creative lab	Grow the number of individuals whose main occupation is a creative one by supporting the development, retention and celebration of our city's creative talent
3. Making all the city a stage	Promoting and supporting the use of open and 'non-traditional' spaces for arts and cultural activity by empowering individual artists, residents and communities to bring their creativity to all corners of the city
4. Connecting us to the world	Commissioning new works which enable the city and its people to explore Aberdeen's rich and evolving culture and heritage
5. Shaping our future	Develop a leadership programme, to develop entrepreneurial cultural leadership and succession planning

4.3 The implementation of the Strategy will be driven by the city's culture network which has been renamed *Culture Aberdeen*. The network is made up of more than 30 cultural organisations in Aberdeen as well as officers in the Council's City Growth and Early Intervention and Community Empowerment services. It identifies short and long-term objectives to enhance the international reputation of Aberdeen:

- To ensure access to cultural activity to all within the city and that cultural activity is broadly representative of our communities To develop dedicated living and working spaces for our creative practitioners to enable and increase retention of talent
- To establish a Scottish Centre for a particular art form in Aberdeen
- To create an Aberdeen Biennale of festival activity to celebrate Aberdeen
- To support the City to apply for designation as a UNESCO Creative City
- To recognise the important role culture plays in city development alongside 'environment', 'economy' and 'social inclusion' by signing up to the principles contained within the international 'Agenda 21 for Culture', a non-binding action plan of the United Nations with regard to sustainable development

4.4 The Strategy has not been developed by the Council but its cultural services team are members of Culture Aberdeen, who have facilitated, provided input and have an active role in delivering those actions that support the Council's priorities including:

- Undertaking the application process for the UNESCO Creative City recognition in 2019 including; exploring the designation options, engaging with local, national and international stakeholders, developing campaign and devising costed programme, developing and submitting the application to UNESCO.

- Monitoring the completion of the major refurbishment of the Aberdeen Art Gallery and supporting the development of other feasible infrastructure projects.
- Exploring the development options and models for a work/live space as per The City Centre Masterplan objective
- Contributing and supporting the Regional Economic Strategy and Skills Strategy objectives to increase the number of Creative Industry employment and start-ups.
- Encouraging and implementing career path and employability opportunities within the culture sector, alongside a comprehensive shared CPD programme.
- Continuing to invest in high quality and risk-taking artistic work and practice.
- Maximising the Council's role in the World Energy Cities Partnership and engaging with Calgary, Houston and Stavanger to strengthen cultural links, collectively learning and developing the city's creative industry to support economic diversification and resilience.

Next Steps

- 4.5 The Strategy will act as the basis for further discussion with external stakeholders on its delivery including Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Visit Aberdeenshire or Opportunity North East (ONE), and ensuring the cultural offer has capacity to capitalise on new opportunities arising from delivery of Aberdeen 365, new tourism opportunities in the city centre (for example, Aberdeen Art Gallery, the new arena and conference centre and/ or the Aberdeen Harbour expansion and the additional tourism impact from the cruise market).
- 4.6 The Council and its Culture Aberdeen partners are finalising an assessment of the economic impact and value of the sector to the city and region. This work will provide a baseline from which the delivery of the new Strategy can be measured. The full findings of the study will be reported to Committee at a future date.
- 4.7 Officers will also undertake a review of funding and service level agreements currently held with organisations to ensure that any new and existing agreements align to both the Council's priorities and the new Strategy, ensuring effective governance to meet Following 'Public Pound' guidelines.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 All activity and actions resulting from the implementation of the plan will be carried out within existing budgetary and staffing resources. Where possible and appropriate, officers will also ensure that any opportunities to lever in external funding (for example from Creative Scotland), are assessed in order to further reduce reliance on the Council.
- 5.2 The Table below summarises the Council's significant investment in Culture for 2018/19 based on the Council budget setting process for existing commitments and new initiatives such as the UNESCO Creative Cities bid. This forms the Council's financial commitment to the delivery of the action plan for year one in addition to current commitments for the delivery of major CCMP cultural and tourism strands such as the Aberdeen Art Gallery redevelopment and Aberdeen 365 events

programme, both of which are highlighted within the plan as key actions towards making the city a more attractive place for investment and visitors.

- 5.3 As noted above, while the Council plays a significant role in supporting the strategy, it is not responsible for implementing the strategy. While funding has been set aside, to support the strategy, the funding will be subject to constant review and scrutiny

Table 2: Revenue Expenditure – Delivering Culture Aberdeen

Ambition Priorities	Portfolio	Activity Breakdown	2018/19 Budget/Cost
1.Releasing our creativity. 2.Becoming Scotland's Creative Lab. 3.Making all the city a stage. 4.Connecting us to the world.	Commissioned Development	Castlegate Arts	£48,000
		Peacock Visual Arts	£93,000
		Station House Media Unit	£70,000
		Sound	£24,000
		Jazz Aberdeen	£15,000
			£250,000
1.Releasing our creativity. 2.Becoming Scotland's Creative Lab. 3.Making all the city a stage. 4.Connecting us to the world.	Core Funding	Aberdeen Performing Arts	£975,000
		Belmont Filmhouse (CMI)	£85,000
		CityMoves - Dance Live	£20,000
		CityMoves	£181,500
		Fishing Memorial	£27,500
			£1,289,000
1.Releasing our creativity. 3.Making all the city a stage	Cultural Awards	Creative Funding	£190,000
		Year of Young People Creative Funding	£100,000
			£290,000
1.Releasing our creativity. 2.Becoming Scotland's Creative Lab. 3.Making all the city a stage. 4.Connecting us to the world.	Cultural Programme	SPECTRA	£275,000
		Aberdeen Festivals	£50,000
		Creative Spaces	£35,000
		Look Again	£25,000
		True North	£50,000
		Granite Noir	£60,000
			£495,000
2.Becoming Scotland's Creative Lab. 4.Connecting us to the world.	Cultural Commissions	VACMA (Creative Learning Team)	£8,000
		Partnership Commissions	£22,000
		Culture Aberdeen programme and event support	£10,000
			£40,000
5.Shaping our Future	Place Partnership *	Place Programme	£145,000
1.Releasing our creativity. 2.Becoming Scotland's Creative Lab. 3.Making all the city a stage. 4.Connecting us to the world. 5.Shaping our future.	UNESCO Creative Cities	Development of bid	£250,000
		Total:	£2,759,000

**Not Council Money, Grant from Creative Scotland*

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The legal implications arising from this report relate to the outstanding review of Service and Funding agreements which will require to be resourced.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	The cost of delivery goes over budget.	L	Continuous budget monitoring to ensure activity arising from the implementation of the Cultural Strategy will be managed within existing resources. Having a clear and deliverable Cultural Strategy assists external organisations with raising additional revenue and capital funding.
Legal	Agreements with external service providers do not align to the delivery of the action plan.	L	The proposal to revise Service agreements provides an opportunity to review outstanding legal and governance matters and to ensure best value for the Council's resources and reducing the requirement for ongoing staff commitment towards monitoring.
Employee	Insufficient Council staffing to support the delivery and monitoring off the action plan.	M	The Cultural Strategy action plan will articulate the lead contributing partners for each project/programme of activity. In most cases, these will not be owned but monitored by the Council through the existing Cultural Policy and Partnerships staff resource of 1 Cultural Policy and Partnerships Officer, 1 Cultural Planning Officer and 1 Marketing and Communications Officer
Customer	Lack of a diverse and accessible programme for culture negatively impacting the quality of life for residents and visitors.	L	Culture Aberdeen 10 year plan provides a strategic approach to growing the level and quality of activity, providing more opportunities for culture to enhance lives positively.
Environment	None		
Technology	Insufficient resources within technology to ensure the programmes of activity engage with communities and audiences.	L	Under 'Shaping Our Future' and 'Releasing Our Creativity' the action plan priorities collective approaches to using technology effectively to engage with audiences and hard to

			reach communities, ensuring a joined up approach to maximising resources.
Reputational	Council's reputation is damaged due to events and activities not being supported or delivered, impacting on the quality of the cultural offer and attracting external funding.	M	The Cultural Strategy and action plan demonstrates the Council's commitment and financial support to Culture and the realisation of the aspirations. The action plan sets out a realistic set of development aspirations which takes stock of the current financial climate but also identifies new opportunities for attracting new investment and enhancing Aberdeen's reputation for quality.

8. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous Economy	The Culture Aberdeen Network is part of the Aberdeen Prospers thematic group on the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. The culture programme managed by the Council brings in significant additional investment through partnership working and private sponsorship. Previous research has shown SPECTRA and Aberdeen Festivals combined contributes £2,000,000 to the local economy and the initial findings of the Ekosgen led Cultural Impact study indicates significant returns, with annual core investment supporting 263 equivalent (FTE) posts per annum, which generate up to £6.57 million of gross value added (GVA) per annum.
Prosperous People	<p>The Cultural Strategy has a number of priorities which directly contribute to the engagement of people with protected characteristics, and more widely has a stated intent to increase opportunities for engagement in high quality cultural provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting more clearly the increasing cultural diversity of the city. • Developing a collective equality and diversity plan ...with a central aim to improve accessibility and engagement from all protected characteristic groups. • Striving for an equality of access to the city's cultural activities and organisations including exploring the concept of cultural entitlement. • Developing approaches to working with the community planning partnership and locality planning, contributing to city wide strategies for health and wellbeing. <p>Consultation on the cultural strategy has been extensive and these priorities are a reflection of that engagement.</p>
Prosperous Place	Aberdeen and the wider city region's inward investment and internationalisation offer is enhanced by the development of a strong cultural sector offer – to visitors, business, students and employees – from across the world. The Strategy recognises the opportunities presented through supporting the

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
	<p>diversification objectives in terms of the economy, and within the sector, developing not only enhanced leisure markets but a strong creative industries sector to provide employment and inward investment opportunities which is highlighted within all five ambitions. Furthermore Ambition 3 'Making all The City a Stage' sets out a number of actions which would attract additional footfall to city, supporting the overarching aims of the CCMP.</p> <p>The newly developed evaluation tool kit will be used to monitor progress of the action plan delivery over 2018/19 and will form the evidence base for an annual 'Culture Aberdeen Report'.</p>
Enabling Technology	In particular the use of social media to engage local people in the planning and delivery of events and festivals, and to provide opportunity to engage in collective sharing of their experiences, improves the public's experience of public services.

Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Customer Service Design	The Cultural Programme will align with the Customer Service function for the promotion of events and activities.
Organisational Design	None
Governance	Monitoring of budgets and development of new service agreements.
Workforce	None
Process Design	None
Technology	Linking to the Customer Service function in effective use of technology to deliver engagement and promotion campaigns.
Partnerships and Alliances	The action plan will be delivered through partnership working.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	<i>Completed</i>
Privacy Impact Assessment	<i>Not Required</i>
Children's Rights Impact Assessment/Duty of Due Regard	<i>Not applicable</i>

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None

10. APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix 1: Culture Aberdeen, A Cultural Strategy for the City of Aberdeen 2018-2028; and the Culture Aberdeen Action Plan

11. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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