

## Policy Committee Decision Report

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>City Culture Strategy Draft Strategic Plan</b>
<b>Date of Decision:</b>	18 July 2024
<b>Report To:</b>	Economic Development and Skills
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Kate Martin</b>
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### Executive Summary:

This report provides an update on the progress to date with the City's Cultural Strategy including sharing a draft for consideration and comment.

Committee Members are asked to endorse progressing to the final phase of the strategy, as we move towards the completion of the document and transition into the adoption and delivery .



**Council Plan outcomes:**

[A place where all children belong and all young people can build a successful future](#)

[Great neighbourhoods that people are happy to call home](#)

[People live in caring, engaged communities that value diversity and support wellbeing](#)

[A creative and prosperous city full of culture, learning, and innovation](#)

[A city on the move – growing, connected and sustainable](#)

**Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? No**



## Recommendations:

That the Economic Development and Skills Committee:

1. notes the progress so far in developing a new City Culture Strategy for Sheffield
2. provides any comments on the draft strategy in general, plus gives any steer on draft priorities for consultation
3. endorses the next steps to finalise and adopt the strategy which will return to this committee in the Autumn

**Financial Implications:** [Yes/No] [Approved by: Finance Officer name]

**Legal Implications:** [Yes/No] [Approved by: Legal Officer name]

**Equality and Inclusion Implications:** [Yes] [Approved by: Equalities Officer name]  
[Initial/Full and EIA number: 1217]

**Climate Change Implications:** [Yes/No] [Approved by: Sustainability Officer name]

**Background Papers:** Draft Sheffield Culture Strategy

**Appendices:** none

## 1. Background to the issue

The City Cultural Strategy is a shared statement of intent to recognise, develop and grow the sector for the medium to long term. The purpose of the Cultural Strategy is that it will be a guiding vision for Sheffield's cultural sector for the benefit of everyone both living in and visiting Sheffield. It will provide the framework to help realise the city's ambitions around culture, it underpins the city goals and aligns to other key strategies and plans such as the Growth Plan, Destination Management Plan, and Heritage Strategy.

In September 2022 the Economic Development and Skills Committee endorsed a new Strategic Approach to Culture that included the development of a new Cultural Strategy and the council being committed to more actively seeking funds for activities in culture. The committee further approved a proposal for Sheffield City Council to commission consultants in Autumn 2023 with skills and time to develop the new **Cultural Strategy** for Sheffield, for completion in 2024.

The Committee asked to be updated regularly on progress; an update was provided in February 2024 and this report provides a draft strategy for consideration.

The desired **outcomes** for this strategic plan are:

- **An ambitious vision, and a common narrative, outcomes and objectives.**
- **Building a more productive and effective relationship with strategic funders** (which will increase opportunities for successful funding bids and develop a pipeline of funding bids).
- **Analysis and synthesis of available data and existing reports, including a SWOT analysis**
- **Clear Engagement plan and supportive capacity to execute it** – understanding of what communities want and need from culture in Sheffield and the barriers to participation.

Through an open tender process, the council commissioned consultants, 'Fourth Street Place Consultants' and Sheffield-based 'Opus Independents', to develop the new Cultural Strategy.

An advisory Task & Finish Group has been meeting monthly since November 2023. As with all the engagement, the group represents a diagonal slice of the sector with equal weight given to a wide range of voices in the city, including those from diverse communities, arts organisations of different sizes, artists and freelancers, and the community sector.

A central pillar of the strategy process is engagement with the cultural sector across the city. A thorough, transparent and inclusive process, has taken place over the last 8 months. The project team established an online platform at the start of the engagement process [Culture Strategy | Have Your Say Sheffield](#) where documents are shared, updates posted and the surveys housed.

The engagement process has been communicated to the sector via existing networks and mailing list and supported by the comms team at Sheffield CC utilising press connections and staff networks across the council.

A cultural audit and research paper formed the foundational document for the strategy's content and themes. This cultural audit and research paper summarises the foundational research into the current state of the cultural sector in Sheffield. This audit demonstrates and quantifies the importance of the Culture and Creative Sector to the city and regional economy, the strengths of the sector nationally and globally and some of the challenges being faced.

The Cultural Audit is shared on the Have Your Say platform and will be included as an appendix with the final strategy. It was presented to EDS committee in February 2024.

Work continues on mapping the cultural infrastructure of the city as part of the cultural strategic work to improve the council's register of cultural venues and provision. This will include community venues and heritage assets. Part of this work will be to understand capital need, which will aid future resource planning .

## **2. Proposal**

The draft strategy is included with this report for consideration and comments. It includes a shared set of missions, agreed as important to the sector; a recognition of where we are and where we want to be and draft priority actions for the medium term. Examples of the many things we should celebrate, through a series of case studies, will be added to the final documents.

### **Four Creative missions framing the strategy are:**

- Dream big and celebrate loudly, to bring the world to Sheffield and Sheffield to the world!
- Accelerate the sector's creative potential, to make more of a difference to people's lives and the environment
- Recognise, value, and connect culture within our communities, to support creativity for all
- Strengthen the foundations for culture to thrive

A draft delivery plan and outcomes has been produced for comment and the next steps are to develop this further through ongoing engagement over the next few weeks.

The draft has been shared and a further survey and questionnaire running throughout July to gather comments. A feedback session on the draft strategy in July is designed to give people the chance to comments in person to the project team on the strategy before it is finalised. The final strategy will return to EDS committee in Autumn for endorsement and the intention is to host a launch event soon afterwards.

Work as begun to consider how the strategy will be implemented and monitored. The new City Council culture team are instrumental in shaping this process in ongoing dialogue with the sector. This is at early stages and will require detailed work with stakeholders to ensure the work started in the co-creation of the strategy continues to be fruitful and keep momentum.

### **3. How does this decision contribute to the Council Plan?**

#### Council Plan outcome

The City Goals, the Framework for Growth and City Council plan all identify culture and creative as key components to the city's future success and prosperity. An identified priority was the co-creation of a city culture strategy to guide priorities for the medium term which will lay the foundations for growth. This draft strategy is a key milestone in the process of achieving that set of agreed priorities.

#### Link to City Goals:

Goal 1: where we all have opportunities to invent, make, create and build in ways that grow shared prosperity, create high-quality jobs and enrich our communities and ourselves.

Goal 3: We enable artists, musicians, makers and creatives to thrive, by sharing and learning from one another, as part of an enriching cultural economy

Goal 7: We benefit from vibrant, creative, accessible and diverse public spaces across all of our neighbourhoods and communities.

Goal 10: Everyone has quality access to people, culture, nature and services no matter where they live or background they come from.

#### Council Plan:

Mission 4: a creative and prosperous city full of culture, learning and innovations. Priority over the next 4 years: a vibrant and diverse culture offer that animates and inspires Sheffield. At the heart of this outcome is the co-created Culture Strategy which makes the most of the city's culture assets

#### People – Prosperity – Planet

These areas are being actively considered in the process of drafting the strategy and will be further strengthened in the final draft

### **4. What community or partner engagement has been undertaken and how has it informed the proposal?**

A thorough, transparent and inclusive process, has taken place over the last 8 months to ensure we maximise engagement. The engagement plan for the cultural strategy development was co-created by local not for profit social enterprise We Are Opus working with a small team of freelancers. Over 800 individuals have contributed to the process to date through a series of digital surveys, large workshops, smaller engagement sessions, 121s and written submissions. This has included specific sessions with young people and communities.

The process for developing the Cultural Strategy was based on co-creation, transparency and consultation. The process was designed to be as inclusive as possible reflecting the views and input of the sector and relevant partners. The engagement process used a variety of methodologies from digital surveys, in person sessions, a digital information platform, public meetings, workshops and written submissions. This included specific conversations to ensure that a wide range of voices are heard, including 4 youth sessions, South and East Asian arts consultation, Black Arts Network, LGBTQIA+ consultation and Community/anchor organisations. This process was guided by the Task and Finish Group drawn from the sector.

The project team established an online platform at the start of the engagement process [Culture Strategy | Have Your Say Sheffield](#) where documents are shared, updates posted and the surveys housed.

## 5. What alternative options did we consider?

Alternative Option 1: Adopt the creative missions and delivery plan as is and do no further development.

That the committee accept the draft strategy as presented without any further development.

This would result in a high level strategy without a more detailed delivery plan and would limit further input and buy-in from partners weakening the impact of the strategy.

Alternative Option 2: Reject the creative missions and delivery plan and do no further work

EDS could choose not to support the Culture Strategy draft development

The likely result of such a decision would be that Sheffield CC would suffer significant reputational damage in its credibility and cultural leadership regionally and nationally. The process has been co-funded by Arts Council England and the University of Sheffield and has had significant support and engagement with the cultural sector in Sheffield. Any rejection of the findings or lack of commitment to the adoption would likely result in future relationships with key funders and stakeholders being damaged.

## **6. How has equality, diversity and inclusion been actively considered?**

This process and resulting strategy will have positive equalities impacts on the cultural sector in Sheffield, including currently under-served communities, by bringing the voices of Sheffield's diverse communities and creatives into the development of a renewed Cultural Strategy. The Strategy highlights the needs and aspirations of diverse Sheffield communities; and creates a stronger strategic context, evidence, priorities and direction of travel to guide funding bids in the future.

## **7. Financial and Commercial Implications**

The Cultural Strategy was supported with £25k from the University of Sheffield, £25k from Arts Council England, and the remaining £25k from existing EDS budgets. We are very grateful to the University of Sheffield and Arts Council England for their support.

Having a strong, robust and evidence based Cultural Strategy is central to growing investment and funding for the sector across the city. We can use it to develop and bid for funding, develop strategic partnerships, to strengthen Sheffield's relationship with SYMCA, Arts Council England and private and public funders. By establishing a clear and agreed set of priorities for the sector, the plan will provide a clarity of focus which will enable a coordinated city-wide approach to bidding for limited public resources, reducing unhelpful competition and provide confidence to funders, public and private, of a sector wider response to growing the sector.

## **8. Legal Implications**

The Council's continuing development and implementation of the strategy happens through its use of statutory powers under the Local Government Act 1972 (LGA 72), specifically section 145 and where those powers are not sufficient section 111.

## **9. Climate and Environmental Implications**

While the focus of the proposed actions in this report are on cultural development, they will indirectly support Sheffield's work on climate change and reaching Net Zero.

The city culture strategy acknowledges climate change as a key challenge for the city and at the next stage of development will build in additional measures which will help attain Net Zero 2030.



The cultural assets element of the updated Cultural Strategy considers the importance of building reuse for cultural purposes, a less carbon-intensive approach to development.

## **10. Reasons for decision**

This report provides a progress update on the city's Cultural Strategy including a draft for consideration and comment.

The recommendations build on previous reports in September 2022, February 2023, September 2023 and February 2024.

The final strategy will return to this committee in Autumn 2024 for final adoption.

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