

Policy Committee Decision Report

Title of Report:	Approval of Sheffield Culture Strategy
Date of Decision:	31 October 2024
Report To:	Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee
Report Of:	Kate Martin, Executive Director, City Futures Portfolio
Report Author:	Diana Buckley, Director - Economy Skills and Culture Katy Ashton, Head of Culture and Place Marketing

Executive Summary:

This report accompanies the final Sheffield Culture Strategy which is being shared with the Economic Development and Skills Committee for approval and adoption.

The report provides an overview of the process that has been completed to develop this Strategy in consultation and collaboration with the creative and culture sector in the city, as well as with key partners and stakeholders.

Committee members are asked to approve the Sheffield Culture Strategy for publication and dissemination; and support the Council Culture Team in their ongoing work to activate and deliver the strategy in partnership with the sector.



Council Plan outcomes:

The primary relevant outcome for the new Culture Strategy is:

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

Secondary outcomes include:

[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](#)

Policy Committee remit:

This report is to be considered by the **Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee** as its remit includes arts development and projects, and theatres, museums and galleries.

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? No

Recommendations:

The Economic Development and Skills Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the Culture Strategy for adoption and publication.

Financial Implications: Yes: Approved by: Jonny Mcquillin

Legal Implications: Yes: Approved by: Gemma Beecroft

Equality and Inclusion Implications: Yes: Approved by: Bashir Khan
Full Equalities Impact Assessment completed with EIA number: 2650

Climate Change Implications: Yes: Approved by: Kathryn Warrington

Background Papers: N/A

Appendices:

1. Sheffield Culture Strategy
2. Sheffield Culture Audit
3. Partner and Stakeholder Engagement Report

1. Background to the issue

The purpose of the Cultural Strategy is to be a guiding vision for culture in Sheffield for the benefit of everyone both living in and visiting the City. 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 Council plan, the Growth Plan, Destination Management Plan, and Heritage Strategy.

In September 2022 the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee (the Committee) endorsed a new Strategic Approach to Culture that included the development of a new Cultural Strategy through engagement with the sector, and the Council being committed to more actively seeking funds for activities in culture.

The Committee further approved a proposal for the 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 a draft strategy was shared with the Committee in July 2024. The final Sheffield Culture Strategy is now being brought back to the Committee in October 2024 for final approval and adoption on behalf of the Council.

The agreed outcomes for the Culture Strategy were:

- An ambitious vision, and a common narrative, outcomes and objectives.
- 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 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (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.

2. Proposal

The Council (working with partners and stakeholders across the culture sector) have been working on a new Culture Strategy for Sheffield over the last 12 months.

The process of developing the Strategy has involved a large amount of detailed consultation and engagement with Councillors, the leadership of the Council, colleagues across the Council and with the cultural and creative sector.

As a result of the detailed feedback received there is now a Culture Strategy in 3 parts

- The main **culture strategy** includes our creative missions, values, and collective leadership aspirations, alongside a summarised and high-level delivery plan with the intention of capturing the main strategic direction, whilst offering a sense/flavour of the actions. This plan will be subject to more collaborative work and development over the coming months.
- The detailed **cultural audit** and the strategy **engagement report** are captured in 2 distinct documents which complement the culture strategy. These represent the richness of the research and engagement to date and give us the opportunity to share the process of creating the Strategy and the detailed data that sits behind it.

The Culture Strategy includes 3 creative missions

1. **Ignite**

Invest in the foundations for culture to thrive

- We will build an equitable, transparent, collective leadership structure where everyone can play a part in how the sector is run and decisions are made.
- Creative organisations and individuals will have the spaces, skillsets, networks and tools they need to grow and thrive. The cultural ecosystem will be better connected and collaborative.
- We will establish new funding mechanisms through public, private, and co-investment to turbo-charge the sector.
- Our city and sector welcomes everybody, and everyone can grow and shine here. We will be inclusive, anti-racist, and fight prejudice of all kinds, acknowledging, protecting, and sharing our rich cultural heritage in a way that is accessible to all.

2. **Accelerate**

Catalyse the sector's creative potential sustainably, to make more of a difference to people's lives and the environment

- Our creative economy will be larger, providing more jobs, investment, reach, and profile. This growth will take place across the ecosystem, from the visual art to digital innovation, and community initiatives to our largest institutions.
- All young people and future talent will have broad access to clear pathways to pursue creative hobbies, passions, and careers, in schools, higher education, and in early and mid-career development.
- Growth will have positive social and economic impacts across the city, through expanded Creative Health initiatives, equitable investment and partnership, and assertive responses to the climate emergency.

3. **Elevate**

Dream big and celebrate loudly, to bring the world to Sheffield and Sheffield to the world!

- Everyone in the city should experience the benefits of culture, and feel comfortable to take part, try something new, and develop their own creativity.



- Culture will be the world's window into Sheffield, helping to attract visitors and footfall as well as new residents. The city's regeneration will be an exemplar of using creativity to drive transformation.
- Our festivals, events, and night-time economy will be famous internationally, be more sustainable and successful, and reflect the diversity of our communities.

There are then 3 values which provide guidelines for everyone involved in delivering the Culture Strategy:

1. Inclusive and welcoming – we ensure representative voices around every table. We do not accept discrimination or inequality of any kind and call it out as and when it occurs. Our spaces, stages and workplaces are accessible and safe for everyone to experiment, participate, try, and learn.
2. Collaborative and Mentoring – we smash traditional siloes and aren't afraid to do things differently, working across sectors and communities and building partnerships with respect. We care for and develop each other and the next generation, sharing our knowledge and carving out opportunities for young people to shine.
3. Open, transparent, and accountable – we communicate clearly and regularly, share our progress, take responsibility, and deliver

It also has a set of 10 outcomes which align with these missions and provide the structure for a high-level delivery plan. These outcomes provide a framework for the Council and the whole cultural sector to work together collectively on priority areas, key workstreams and iconic projects for Sheffield. The newly formed Culture Team will now be working with the sector to establish a new collective leadership model to deliver the Strategy which will take a hub and spoke model to ensuring everyone involved in cultural development and delivery is able to come together during the activation and implementation phase. Priorities will be agreed for Year One of the Strategy; with further work to come over the ten years of the strategy's lifespan.



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

3.1 Council Plan outcome

The City Goals, the Council Plan, and the Growth 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.

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.

3.2 People – Prosperity - Planet

The Council's triple-lock has been actively considered in the development of the new Culture Strategy:

People

The Culture Strategy has been developed with the involvement of a large cross section of people in Sheffield with over 1000 people taking part in consultation activities and the governance of the Strategy development taking a diagonal approach across the city to reflect the diversity of the city and the cultural sector.

Prosperity

Culture and Creativity have been placed as a core mission in the city's draft Growth Plan, and the Culture Strategy will help achieve our ambitions as a growing, creative, internationally leading city economy. The importance of economic growth and impact is reflected throughout the Culture Strategy with a number of outcomes that will help achieve prosperity.

Planet

Sustainability is one of the ten outcomes identified in the Culture Strategy and the importance of the environment has been considered throughout the process of consultation and strategy development. The Culture Strategy will support cultural organisations on their journeys to low carbon, while also engaging audiences and communities through improved climate awareness and calls to action through cultural programming and content.

3.3 City Goals

The Culture Strategy aligns with the following City Goals and will support Sheffield in achieving these goals for people across the City:

- 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.

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

Sheffield's new culture strategy is founded on a far-reaching engagement process, to ensure it was co-created with the passion, knowledge and expertise of Sheffield's creative and cultural community.

The partner and community engagement for the Sheffield Culture Strategy reached over 1,000 people across a programme of 13 online and in person events, 15 one to one interviews, and 3 online surveys.

It was important that communities and the wider creative and cultural sector had multiple ways to engage in the consultation process, including feeding back at key stages.

The following methodologies were designed to ensure multiple ways to take part:

- Task and Finish Group - An advisory group that met monthly to offer guidance and advice and hold the culture strategy team accountable. This group was made up of a 'diagonal slice' of Sheffield's creative and cultural community.
- Culture Strategy Project Team - Oversaw and stewarded the engagement process alongside the Task and Finish Group. Members of the project team were publicly contactable to receive input, and maintained open, two-way conversations with key cultural and civic consortia and groups throughout the process.
- In Person and Online Workshops and Public Events - Open and targeted consultation events and workshops for the wider creative and cultural community to offer feedback
- 1 to 1 Interviews - Interviews between culture strategy team and individuals and organisations.
- Have Your Say - Sheffield City Council's consultation website provided constant updates and invited feedback on the strategy's creative missions and draft version of the strategy.



A set of values, principles and methodologies were established to shape the engagement work.

- 'Nothing About Us, Without Us, is For Us' - Work on the Sheffield Culture Strategy adopted a broad definition of culture and creativity to reflect the range of activity that happens in our city across our homes, community centres, spaces and cultural organisations. This involved adopting a 'Diagonal Slice' engagement approach to include our communities, the voluntary and community sector, health and wellbeing sector, education institutions and businesses as well as freelancers and small and large culture organisations.
- Co-production and Co-creation - Methodologies for community engagement were used in both the design and delivery of consultation sessions. These principles included valuing all voices equally and ensuring communities had the capacity and resource to take part in consultation sessions.
- An iterative process with feedback and listening stages - The engagement process provided space for constant re-evaluation of the activity to check delivery against the stated objectives and outcomes. The engagement process and its results were published and shared on the Council's online consultation platform 'Have Your Say' throughout the development of the Strategy.

The detailed feedback collected during this process is included in Appendix 3: Partner and Stakeholder Engagement Report.

All of the feedback received has been considered during the drafting of the Sheffield Culture Strategy with its three creative missions and delivery plan being formed in response to, and as part of, the consultation process.

Key partners have also supported the development of the Culture Strategy and provided their thoughts on the process undertaken and the importance of the Strategy:

"The University of Sheffield is delighted to have played its part in supporting the Cultural Strategy for the City - it has encompassed and listened to a wide range of groups and individuals, co-produced with their needs and we hope the impact will be a vibrant culturally ambitious city that delivers for everyone across the city."

Professor Vanessa Toulmin, Director of City, Culture and Public Engagement, University of Sheffield

"We have worked with Sheffield City Council on the development of the cultural strategy from its inception and have been pleased to be involved through the whole process. The team have worked incredibly hard to ensure engagement from the cultural sector and communities of Sheffield and we are delighted with the results."

Sheffield has a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate the important role culture plays in a city, to its economy, its communities and visitors. This strategy which is co-developed and owned by the wider stakeholders sets out how Sheffield City Council and its partners can deliver this.

We are excited to work with all the stakeholders on helping deliver the ambitions of the strategy over the coming months and years.”

Karen Durham, Senior Relationship Manager, Arts Council England

“The Culture Collective strategic board was formed to develop and support culture in this city, enhancing the fact that culture is an economic driver.

Being an integral part of creating this new cultural strategy has been a vital part of our work. All our representatives have welcomed the opportunity to do a deep dive into our city’s creative make up. We should all be proud of the collective ‘cultural voice’ screaming out from the rich and broad mix of cultures here in this city. And never has there been a time when Sheffield has been so well placed to make the best decisions over our cultural future. We are pleased to endorse this strategy and look forward to continuing to ensure culture is recognised as the vital part it plays in all our lives - both at work and play, and to maintaining our crucial link to the private sector whom we need to be woven into the fabric of our cultural organisations and their activity.”

Surriya Falconer, Chair, Culture Collective

“Achieving greater cultural diversity is a core aim of the Culture Consortium and we are delighted to see a commitment to inclusive growth and representation at the heart of the new Culture Strategy. Through a process that truly engaged with culture consortium members and recognised the power of local cultural provision, and communities, the new strategy positions Sheffield and its many cultural voices as rightly ready to scale and grow, deepening impact and enriching the lives of all across the city.

We are excited to get going with supporting the city and stakeholders on working collaboratively for the communities of Sheffield to realise what is rightfully an ambitious and forward looking delivery plan.”

Annabel Grundy / Olivier Tsemo, Co-Chairs, Sheffield Culture Consortium

"The recent unsettling events clearly demonstrate the pressing need for Sheffield (and other cities) to tackle inequalities and discrimination in all its pernicious forms. The Forum is greatly encouraged by the inclusive themes that underpin the city's new cohesive cultural strategy. With the welcome support of 'Race Equality Partnership Sheffield' (allied to strong leadership), the Forum is equally committed to driving effective change that best serves Sheffield's 'anti-racist city' ambitions. A city in the near future that remains attractive, diverse and welcoming and is a prosperous and healthy place where people are treated equitably and fairly; diverse leadership is the norm; and all cultures are celebrated equally as part of a vibrant cultural calendar."

Sonia Gayle, African Heritage Culture Forum & Sheffield Race Equality Commission

5. What alternative options did we consider?

Alternative Option 1:

Sheffield continues to use the previous strategy developed by the Culture Collective.

It was recognised that there was a need for further engagement with the culture sector to create a strategic approach and a framework that was representative of the whole sector. The content of the Culture Collective's strategy was embedded into the new Culture Strategy.

Alternative Option 2:

The Committee does not approve the Culture Strategy for adoption and publication

The likely result of such a decision would be that the Council would suffer significant reputational damage in its credibility and cultural leadership regionally and nationally. The Culture Strategy 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?

Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation. Also identified and considered is care experience which is now treated as a protected characteristic in Sheffield.

An Equality Impact assessment has been carried out and highlights that the Culture Strategy will have positive equality 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 and delivery of the Cultural Strategy.

The Strategy also 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.

The Culture Strategy has considered the importance of culture as one of the recommendations of the Race Equality Commission throughout the consultation process; using a diagonal approach to engagement to ensure diverse voices were present and representation was as broad as possible. Celebrating Sheffield through Sport and Culture: Past, Present and Future is one of the recommendations from the Race Equality Commission and this will be something placed at the heart of the delivery of the Culture Strategy in collaboration with others across the city.

7. Financial and Commercial Implications

The Cultural Strategy has been 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.

This report does not make an assessment of the future costs of enacting this new strategy and the wide range of opportunities and investments that will be encapsulated within the three missions.

Actions for development and other areas covered by the strategy will be assessed on a best value for money, acknowledging the need for a joined up



financial solution; including Council funding, City Anchor intuitions, SYMCA, and other Grant awarding bodies.

8. Legal Implications

The Councils development and implementation of the Culture Strategy supports the Council in meeting various powers under the Local Government Act 1972. This includes Section 145 which permits the Council to do, or arrange or contribute towards the expenses necessary or expedient for activities that include - (a) the provision of an entertainment of any nature or of facilities for dancing; (b) the provision of a theatre, concert hall, dance hall or other premises suitable for the giving of entertainments or the holding of dances; (c) the maintenance of a band or orchestra; (d) the development and improvement of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts and the crafts which serve the arts; (e) any purpose incidental to the matters aforesaid.

Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 also gives the Council the power to do any thing (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

Any further decisions required, for example in relation to grants or commissioning will be taken in accordance with the Constitution.

9. Climate and Environmental Implications

The Culture Strategy acknowledges climate change as a key priority for Sheffield and supports the goal of achieving Net Zero 2030.

Sustainability is one of the ten outcomes identified in the Culture Strategy and the importance of the environment has been considered throughout the process of consultation and strategy development. The Culture Strategy will support cultural organisations on their journeys to low carbon, while also engaging audiences and communities through improved climate awareness and calls to action through cultural programming and content.

10. Other implications

Property implications

There are links to be made between the activation of the Culture Strategy and the need to consider spaces and buildings for cultural organisations in Sheffield. This will require an ongoing collaboration between Culture, Regeneration and Planning to ensure culture continues to play an integral role in the development of the City.

Heritage implications

The Culture Strategy sits alongside the Joined Up Heritage Sheffield Heritage Strategy (adopted by the City Council in 2023) and there will be further work to connect and cross-reference culture and heritage once the Culture Strategy has been adopted. This will involve collaboration with the Heritage Partnership Board, Joined Up Heritage Sheffield and other heritage groups and organisations.

11. Reasons for decision

The recommendation for the Committee to approve the Culture Strategy for adoption and publication follows previous Committee reports in September 2022, February 2023, September 2023, February 2024 and July 2024.

Throughout the process of developing a new Culture Strategy for Sheffield, the Committee have taken a leadership role in endorsing a new strategic approach to culture in 2022, commissioning the work to complete this Strategy in 2023, reviewing progress over the last 12 months and providing feedback on an earlier draft before reviewing the final version of the Strategy being brought to this Committee.

Having a strong, robust and evidence based Cultural Strategy is central to growing investment and funding for the sector across the city. We will use it to develop and bid for funding, develop strategic partnerships, to strengthen Sheffield's relationship with South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA), Arts Council England and private and public funders.

By establishing a clear and agreed set of priorities for the sector, the Strategy 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.

The Strategy is ambitious in its creative missions and outcomes, and these will only be achieved through a joined-up approach to leverage more investment into the city. There is a pipeline of capital cultural projects in Sheffield which are seeking funding, a number of cultural organisations looking for improved or permanent physical spaces, a wide range of

programmes and services which will deliver high quality creative and cultural outcomes for people in Sheffield. These would all benefit from greater financial resources and a redressing of the balance in national funding for Sheffield compared to other Core Cities; and this is something that the Strategy will support the Council to achieve by raising the profile and position of culture in Sheffield and advocating for support to aid growth.

There will be a need for financial support to deliver the Culture Strategy and the team are already looking at a number of areas of work / relationships / applications to kickstart the activation of the Strategy:

- Making a Place Partnership application to the Arts Council (with match funding required from the Council / SYMCA)
- Working with SYMCA to unlock funding and support for culture as one seven regional priorities for growth across South Yorkshire
- Continuing to work with the Culture Collective on mechanisms and models for private sector support for culture
- Sharing details of the pipeline of heritage and cultural projects in the City with the Heritage Fund
- Making use of UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding (in the short term to boost capacity in the Culture Team and deliver some activation events and activity)
- Reviewing the UK Shared Prosperity Fund funded Cultural Pipeline Fund which has provided seed funding to cultural organisations in the City
- Leveraging funding by connecting culture to other city priorities as part of a joined-up approach, including health, skills, education, and regeneration.



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