



Committee and Date

Council

21st January 2010

Item

17

Evolution, Revolution & Innovation: a Cultural Strategy for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin

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Summary

This report presents 'Evolution, Revolution & Innovation: a Cultural Strategy for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin'.

The new cultural strategy presents a joint vision for culture across the sub region of Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. It celebrates the shared connections, ambitions and the values that many people have told us they most associate with Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin: that it is authentic, real, hand-crafted and green.

The Strategy has been developed through a unique collaboration between elected members, council officers of both Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council along with key individuals from the cultural sector. It also represents the views of the people Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin and their priorities for the county in which they live, work, learn and enjoy their leisure time. The full length Cultural Strategy is available in the members library.

Recommendations

- A. That Full Council formally approve the new Cultural Strategy for Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.
- B. That Full Council ask Community Services Scrutiny Committee to monitor progress against the action plan on an annual basis

REPORT

1. Background

The initiative to establish a Cultural Consortium and Cultural Strategy for the sub region began in June 2007 and was led by a steering group of the 6 Shropshire local authorities and Telford & Wrekin. The Consortium has been set-up to promote the cultural industries and tourism, regionally and nationally and to create opportunities for economic growth in this sector. Members of the Cultural Consortium represent culture, regeneration, health, equality and diversity, safer communities and young people. The Cultural Strategy embraces this partnership approach between Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Councils and the private and voluntary sectors.

The strategy has been developed in partnership with Telford & Wrekin because:

- The current separate Cultural Strategies for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin were either at or near their end;
- There is increasingly closer partnership working across the sub-region between the two local authorities and cultural sector partners

Whilst there is no formal requirement to have Cultural Strategy it was felt important to develop one now because:

- There is increasing evidence of the value of culture's contribution to overall quality of life and the part it can play in other linked policies and strategies including education, regeneration and health
- A Strategic plan to support the development of the cultural and creative industries sectors is needed to support economic development in the sub region

2. Cultural Strategy - what is included

At one level culture is about places to go and things to do. For the purposes of this strategy it includes arts, sports, libraries, reading, museums, heritage, archaeology, archives, architecture, crafts, children's play, parks, open spaces and green networks, countryside recreation, leisure, tourism and the cultural and creative industries. However it is also about our sense of identity, our traditions, beliefs and values.

3. The process adopted

A significant amount of research and consultation has informed the development of the Cultural Strategy. Morris, Hargreaves, McIntyre (MHM) an award-winning strategic research consultancy undertook the development of the Strategy alongside officers and members of the Cultural Consortium.

By working with MHM Shropshire Council has benefited from working with the market leaders and as such gaining access to a whole wealth of information that otherwise wouldn't have been accessible.

The research and development has included:

- Reviewing the socio-demographic, cultural, environmental, economic and cultural profile of Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin; the strategic context in which the two local authorities operate; current levels and profile of participation and non-participation and wider social trends.
- 7 Community workshops and interviews with representatives from a range of cultural and partner organisations to develop the vision and plan
- Consultation with young people through workshops and focus groups
- A survey of the public's participation in, response to, needs from and desires for culture to which over 360 people responded
- A review of the economic impact of culture in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin

4. Vision, Key aims and purpose of the Strategy.

Our vision is for culture to inspire us all and to shape how we live, learn, work and play.

The strategy celebrates the values that many people have told us they most associate with Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin: that it is authentic, independent, real, hand-crafted and green. The purpose of this strategy is to enrich the life of every resident and visitor.

The Strategy has seven key aims. We want to:

1. Improve health and wellbeing
2. Think Green, Live Green
3. Provide cultural and creative learning
4. Achieve regeneration and economic sustainability
5. Build on our sense of place and a sense of identity
6. Connect people, places and organisations
7. Prove the value of culture

Individual strategies have been identified for each aim.

5. What does this strategy do?

The Cultural Strategy:

- Presents a shared vision and strategy for culture across the sub-region of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
- Highlights the key cultural assets in the sub-region and existing levels of engagement
- Provides evidence of the contribution that culture makes towards the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin communities
- Suggests ways to build and strengthen cultural provision and activities
- Encourages cooperation, collaboration and partnership between the public, private and voluntary sectors in the provision of culture
- Paints a picture that wider regional and national agencies can understand in order for them to support culture in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
- Provides a plan for engaging more people, more often and more deeply in culture.

Attached at Appendix A is a summary version of the Cultural Strategy. The full length strategy is available in the members' library.

6. Delivery of the Cultural Strategy

The Strategy will be delivered through the co ordination and refocusing of resources within local government and the private and voluntary sector. The Cultural Consortium will monitor the delivery of the Cultural Strategy action plan and advocate for the cultural sector regionally and nationally. The Consortium will represent the sub region in funding bids to regional and national funding opportunities.

The strategy will be taken to Telford & Wrekin Cabinet on the 23rd February 2010 and will then be formally launched in March 2010.

Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Councils will then produce a detailed action plan with timescales which will then be monitored by both the Cultural Consortium (quarterly) and, it is recommended, by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee (annually)

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

None specific although a range of strategy documents have been used to position this Cultural Strategy.

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The strategy aims to provide access opportunities for everyone so there are no implications for the Human Rights Act.

Environmental Appraisal

The strategy has a strong focus on the environment and forms a key part throughout the whole of the report.

Risk Management Appraisal

A full risk management appraisal was undertaken as part of this process

Community / Consultations Appraisal

Extensive consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders, elected members, young people and the public throughout 2009

Cabinet Member

Councillor Steve Charmley

Local Member

All

Appendices

Appendix A – Summary version of *Evolution, Revolution & Innovation: a Cultural Strategy for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin*

Evolution, Revolution & Innovation: a Cultural Strategy for

Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin

The new cultural strategy presents a joint vision for culture across Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. It celebrates our shared connections, ambitions and the values that many people have told us they most associate with Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin: that it is authentic, real, hand-crafted and green.

It has been developed through a unique collaboration between elected members, council officers of both Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council along with key individuals from the cultural sector. Most of all though, it represents the views of the people Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin and their priorities for the county in which they live, work, learn and enjoy their leisure time.

Why have a cultural strategy?

The Cultural Strategy sets out the priorities for cultural development in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin and the ways in which culture needs to be embedded in all our planning and development. It will enable the cultural sectors to make strategic connections with key regional strategies including the West Midlands Economic Strategy, the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy and with national public bodies such as Arts Council England, Sport England and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. The strategy will ensure that we can release the full potential of culture to drive our economic sustainability and long-term community well being, making Shropshire both a great place to live and a rewarding place to visit.

Vision, aims and objectives

The vision of the new cultural strategy is to inspire us all and to shape how we live, learn, work and play. We want culture to enrich the life of every resident in and visitor to Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin.

The strategy is founded on seven key objectives. We want culture to help us improve health and wellbeing; to think green and live green; to provide cultural and creative learning; to achieve regeneration and economic sustainability; to build on our sense of place and sense of identity; to connect people, places and organisations and to prove the value of culture.

How it will be delivered

The Strategy will be delivered through the co ordination and refocusing of resources within local government and the private and voluntary sector. The Cultural Consortium will monitor the delivery of the Cultural Strategy action plan and advocate for the cultural sector regionally and nationally. The Consortium will represent the sub region in funding bids to regional and national funding opportunities.

