

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

**6 November 2023**

<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Cultural Strategy</b>
<b>PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>Councillor Bill Cawley- Portfolio Holder for Communities</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Joanne Blunt, David Smith - Arts, Culture and Heritage Officer, Head of Communities, Culture and Climate Change</b>
<b>WARDS INVOLVED:</b>	

**Appendices Attached**

- Appendix One: Arts, Culture & Heritage Strategy Delivery Plan containing:
- Overview timeline.
  - Detailed timeline.
  - Proposed meeting dates and agenda items for the Cultural Strategy Steering Group.
  - Weekly Task List.
- Appendix Two: Draft Terms of Reference for the Staffordshire Moorlands Cultural Strategy Steering Group.
- Appendix Three: Draft Application Form for Cultural Strategy Steering Group Members.

**1. Reason for the Report**

- 1.1 To obtain approval to create an Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy and an associated Action Plan for the District using the methods outlined in this report.
- 1.2 To obtain approval to create a Cultural Strategy Steering Group, who will assist the Arts, Culture and Heritage Officer to create a Cultural Strategy and Action Plan for the District.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Panel recommends that Cabinet establishes a Cultural Strategy Steering Group to advise on the development of a Cultural Strategy and Cultural Action Plan for the District following the approach outlined in the report.

### 3. Executive Summary

3.1 The Staffordshire Moorlands has a rich variety of arts, culture and heritage assets spread across the District. However, there is no strategy or framework to unite the sector in shared goals, knowledge sharing, fundraising and data gathering.

3.2 The Corporate Plan commits the Council to producing a Cultural Strategy.

3.3 Cultural Strategies provide a framework for cultural activity in the District for the Council, Creative Business', Charities and other Cultural Organisations and Individuals.

3.4 Benefits of a Cultural Strategy include:

- Gathering data and consultation to identify the current and ongoing state of arts, culture and heritage activity, gaps in provision and areas of growth.<sup>1</sup>
- Identification of partnership opportunities, both for the Council, and for external organisations.<sup>2</sup>
- Agreement of priorities with partners.<sup>3</sup>
- Setting of targets in priority areas, which are then achieved by partnership-working activity.<sup>3</sup>
- Increased knowledge sharing and partnership working.<sup>4</sup>
- Increased external funding entering the area as a result of increased partnership working and access to data.<sup>4</sup>
- Increased community engagement with cultural activities which has been proven to have several benefits<sup>5</sup> including, but not limited to:
  - Improving the quality of life for residents.<sup>6</sup>
  - Reducing social isolation.<sup>7</sup>
  - Improving health and wellbeing.<sup>8</sup>
  - Reducing instances of anti-social behaviour.<sup>9</sup>
  - Improved community cohesion.<sup>10</sup>
  - Increased opportunities for young people.<sup>11</sup>
- Demonstration of the Council's commitment to Arts, Culture and Heritage and the social and economic benefits it brings.
- Increased economic activity and roles, both paid and voluntary, in the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector.<sup>12</sup>
- Increased tourism, footfall, and dwell time.<sup>13</sup>

3.5 The absence of a Cultural Strategy Cultural Strategy is providing the following negative effects:

- Lack of shared vision and targets for the Council and the Arts, Culture and Heritage sector in the District.
- Difficulty in gathering useful, up-to-date data and information.
- Difficulty in information sharing among the sector and Council.
- Difficulty in obtaining funding due to lack of partnership working, good data, and a framework for cultural activity for the area.
- Lack of incentive for arts, culture and heritage businesses and charities

to relocate to the area without a cultural strategy framework.<sup>14</sup>

- Absence of shared targets and priority areas between the council and partners.
- Absence of long-term goals leading to intermittent provision and planning.
- Absence of “joined up thinking” across the district leading to missed opportunities and wasted resource.

3.6 The Council is proposing following the model for writing a Cultural Strategy produced by Arts Council England<sup>15</sup> and The Local Government Association<sup>16</sup>.

3.7 The key steps of creating the Strategy and Action Plan are outlined in Appendix Item 1.

3.8 Activity is to take place from November 2023 and the Strategy and Action Plan will be published in October 2024.

3.9 The key steps are as follows. More information can be found in Item 8 of this Report and Appendix Item 1.

- Create an advisory group: The Cultural Strategy Steering Group
- Create a marketing and communications plan
- Set parameters for the strategy
- Gather data
- Literature Review (Research)
- Consultation Stage One
- Identify Priorities
- Publish Data
- Joint Cultural Needs Analysis
- Consultation Stage Two
- Write The Strategy
- Write The Action Plan
- Finalise and Publish the Strategy and Action Plan

#### 4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 The development of an Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy is an Objective of Aim 1 of the Corporate Plan (“Develop and implement an Arts, Culture & Heritage Strategy”).

#### 5. **Alternative Options**

5.1 None identified.

#### 6. **Implications**

##### 6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

Research has shown that increased arts and culture activity

reduces instances of violent crime and antisocial behaviour.<sup>9</sup>

## 6.2 Workforce

A university placement student will hopefully be recruited to assist the delivery of the consultation and research phase.

## 6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. Key actions to ensure that the process is equitable include:

- Recruiting a diverse steering group.
- Targets set around consultation demographics.
- A second round of consultation and data gathering will take place in order to identify gaps from the first round of consultation.
- Further Equality Impact Assessments will be completed at the writing stage for the Cultural Strategy and the accompanying Action Plan.

## 6.4 Financial Considerations

The completion of the cultural strategy will be completed in-house by Council Staff with no external consultant costs. A small, additional budget for workshops and consultation events will be funded by UKSPF funds that have been ringfenced for the Arts & Culture Strategy.

## 6.5 Legal

None

## 6.6 Climate Change

Environmental sustainability will be embedded into the Strategy and Action Plan. “Environmental Sustainability” will be a standing item on the Steering Group Agenda.

The potential environmental impact of the Strategy will be assessed as part of the Joint Cultural Needs Assessment and during the Writing Phase.

The Action Plan will be assigned a Carbon Budget using Julie’s Bicycle<sup>17</sup> tools, and sustainable practices from the Theatre Green Book<sup>18</sup> will be embedded into all activity.

The Cultural Strategy has the potential to raise awareness of

climate topics by presenting them to communities in engaging artistic formats and connecting communities to the natural world around them. <sup>19</sup>

The Strategy has the potential to reduce the environmental impact of the Arts, Culture and Heritage Industry by building knowledge sharing networks, partnership working and fundraising support.

#### 6.7 Consultation

A consultation plan will be devised as part of the Cultural Strategy Development process to ensure that the public (including underserved audiences) and the arts, culture and heritage sector feed into the Strategy.

#### 6.8 Risk Assessment

The absence of a culture strategy represents an opportunity loss for the Council. See 3.5 for more detail.

Neil Rodgers  
**Executive Director (Place)**

#### **Web Links and Background Papers**

#### **Contact details**

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## 7 Current Council Contribution to Arts, Culture & Heritage

7.1 The Council has provided the following Arts, Culture and Heritage related funding in recent years.

Activity	Description	22/23	23/24	Notes
Live & Local	Live & Local gives communities the opportunity to enjoy high-quality, affordable, professional productions in their local village hall, church or school.	£3,000	£3,300	Committed to steady, yearly funding as part of ACE NPO bid until 2025/6 financial year.
Staffordshire Moorlands Arts Grants	Small grants programme administered by Support Staffordshire for arts, culture and heritage events.	£15,637	£10,425 (so far)	Allocation of funds: click <a href="#">here</a> .
OUTSIDE	The Arts Council England has awarded a grant of up to £943,000 to a 3 year project (“OUTSIDE”) to increase participation in arts and culture across Staffordshire Moorlands. Amount is Match Funding.	£15,000	£20,000	Committed to £20,000 per year until 2025 & to underwrite the projected tickets sales (estimated to be £5,000).
Nicholson Institute	Museum and gallery costs. Expenditure is partly offset by income-generating activities that typically amount to around £1,500 per year.	£11,030	£4,347 (so far)	Spending will be reviewed as part of the LUF Project.

7.2 In 2022, a consortium including the Council was successful in obtaining £943,000 funding from Arts Council England for the establishment of a Creative People and Places Programme (CPP): Outside. Delivery began in 2023. Oversight on behalf of the Council is via Board Membership of Neil Rogers (Executive Director – Place) and an external evaluator funded by Arts Council England. The current programme will run until 2025 at which point Outside will be eligible to reapply for a further 3 years of funding. The presence of a CPP presents countless opportunities for growth in unengaged audiences and growing the sector, however without the framework of a Cultural Strategy, it is difficult for the Council to capitalise on these opportunities.

7.3 The absence of a Cultural Strategy for the District makes it difficult to assess current Arts, Culture and Heritage funding distributed by the Council, and how this will be best distributed in the future to best meet the Council’s aims.

7.4 The Council have recently appointed an Arts, Culture and Heritage Officer whose role includes delivery of a Cultural Strategy.

7.5 The Council has responsibility to maintain the Nicholson Museum and Art Gallery and safeguard the collection. The Cultural Strategy will have a direct effect on the operations of the Nicholson in terms of utilising the space for cultural purposes and audience development. Levelling Up Funding has been awarded from Central Government to upgrade the building including the library and ground floor art rooms. Plans are yet to be finalised.

## 8 Cultural Strategy Delivery Plan Detail

8.1 A detailed plan for the delivery of the Cultural Strategy and Action Plan can be found in Appendix 1.

8.2 The Delivery Plan has been created using the sources cited in this report and the Arts, Culture and Heritage Officer's professional and academic experience, with a particular focus on access and inclusion.

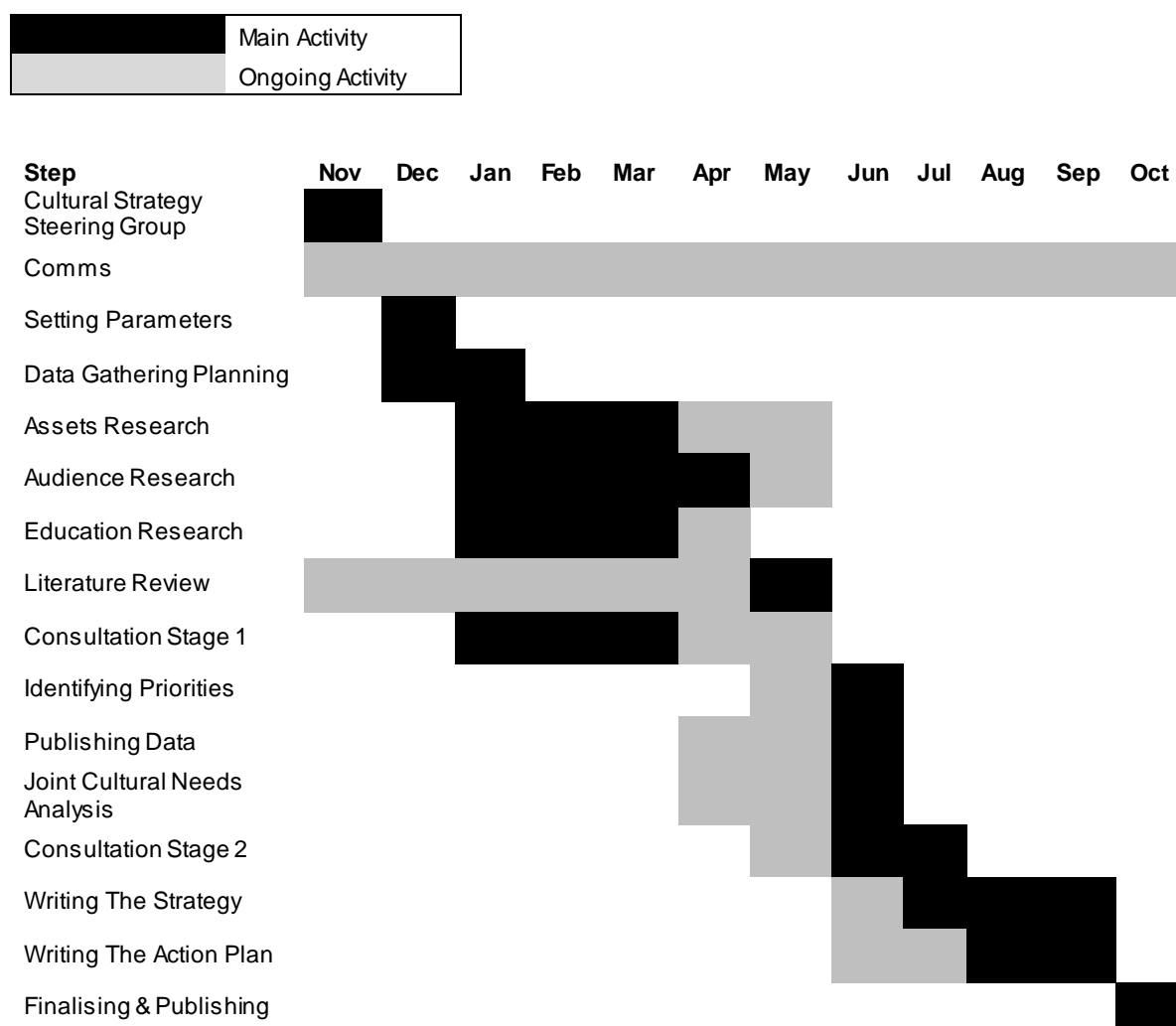
8.3 The key steps of the delivery of the Cultural Strategy and Action Plan can be found below.

Step	Aim	Output(s)
Cultural Strategy Steering Group	To develop a "Critical Friends" Group of key partners to give advice, assist where possible, and vote on key decisions as set out in the Terms Of Reference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core group of partners to inform the strategy.</li> <li>• Clear framework of feedback and decision making.</li> </ul>
Comms	To inform and inspire the general public and those in the arts, culture and heritage sectors to engage with the development of the strategy. Key focus on using accessible language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement from the culture sector.</li> <li>• Engagement from the general public.</li> <li>• Clear sharing of progress and data.</li> <li>• Accessible communication to engage all.</li> </ul>
Setting Parameters	To establish parameters with the Steering Group and internally such as key definitions (e.g. what is culture?), the scope of the strategy and the timescale of developing the strategy etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear framework for developing the strategy.</li> <li>• Clear timeline to ensure accountability.</li> <li>• Clear scope to ensure clear communication both internally and externally.</li> </ul>
Data Gathering Planning	To finalise areas of research and data gathering, what the purpose of each stand is and identify opportunities to keep data up to date to measure progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear aims for data gathering plan informed by partners to ensure the data gathered is as useful as possible.</li> </ul>
Assets Research	To gather data on cultural physical assets, business' and community groups etc. to evaluate current provision, economic impact, geographical spread etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online data source for all to inform planning and improve funding bids.</li> <li>• Accessible map display of data.</li> <li>• Online registry of cultural assets for locals and visitors.</li> </ul>
Audience Research	To gather data on both frequent and underserved audiences to inform cultural policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online data source for all to inform planning and improve funding bids.</li> <li>• Accessible map display of data.</li> </ul>

Education Research	To gather data on cultural education provision to better inform policy around cultural provision for young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online data source for all to inform planning and improve funding bids.</li> <li>• Accessible map display of data.</li> </ul>
Literature Review	To gather information from a wide range of sources to inform the strategy and action plan, ensuring that best practice is used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of extensive sources to inform the strategy in an accessible format.</li> <li>• Added as an appendix to the strategy.</li> </ul>
Consultation Stage 1	To gather opinions from the public and arts, culture and heritage professionals on where we are now, what the key challenges are, and possible solutions and areas of growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of priorities. Initial ideas for Action Plan.</li> <li>• Clear and widely researched information for the cultural strategy.</li> <li>• Engaged sector and community who have been listened to and are eager to contribute to the strategy.</li> <li>• A more "linked up" culture sector.</li> </ul>
Identifying Priorities	To consolidate information gained from Consultation Stage 1 and Data Gathering to identify and summarise where we are now and key challenges to narrow the focus for Consultation Round 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well informed and discussed consolidation of consultation and data gathering.</li> <li>• Publishing of draft priorities to inform stage 2 consultation which will focus on actions to address the priorities.</li> </ul>
Publishing Data	To inform the general public and relevant sectors about cultural and heritage provision within the area, which can inform their practice and funding applications. This also allows for the public to use data in Consultation Stage 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make data publicly available to inform Stage 2 Consultation.</li> </ul>
Joint Cultural Needs Analysis	To generate initial ideas for an action plan based on information gained in Stage 1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial ideas for the Action Plan to be tested and expanded on in Stage 2.</li> </ul>
Consultation Stage 2	To present the priorities identified in Consultation Stage 1, trial the ideas for the Action Plan gained in Stage 2, and generate further ideas for the Action Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A consultation plan based on findings from Stage 1.</li> <li>• Focussed Consultation on Actions based on Priorities identified in Stage 1.</li> </ul>
Writing The Strategy	To consolidate findings into a clear strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible, clear cultural strategy.</li> </ul>
Writing The Action Plan	To consolidate findings into a clear Action Plan with measurable targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear Action Plan.</li> <li>• Partnership planning.</li> <li>• Measurable targets.</li> <li>• Ongoing consultation group.</li> </ul>
Finalising & Publishing	To inform the general public and relevant sectors about cultural and heritage of priorities and action planning. Specific focus on accessibility of strategy and action plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible, clear communication.</li> <li>• Engaged community and sector.</li> </ul>



8.4 The timeline of the development of the strategy is outlined below.



## 9 Steering Group

9.1 The use of a Steering Group to develop Cultural Strategies is highly encouraged by many methodologies, including that set out in the LGA’s “Cultural Strategy In A Box”.

9.2 The advantages of a Steering Group as part of a Cultural Strategy include:

- Contribution of a wide range of professional expertise to draw on.
- A ready-made group of core stakeholders invested in the Strategy.
- Representation from other sectors such as Tourism, Health and Education to ensure a shared strategic agenda.
- Shared strategic alignment and goals with key partners for delivery of the strategy.
- Ability to form sub-groups to tackle particular challenges.
- Diverse representation of a range of lived experiences to inform the strategy is suitable for all.

9.3 The Cultural Strategy Steering Group will have the following parameters:

- The Chair will be an elected member of the Council chosen by the Portfolio Holder for Culture.
- The Group will be administered by the Arts, Culture & Heritage Officer.
- The Group will be formalised.
- A Draft Terms of Reference can be found in Appendix 2.
- The Group's purpose will be to advise on the Cultural Strategy and approve certain steps of the development as outlined in Appendix 1.
- No more than 20 individuals.
- No more than 5 Council Representatives.
- Anyone 18 or over is eligible to apply.
- Membership of the Group is voluntary and unpaid.
- Expenses will be paid only to remove barriers to inclusion; for example, transport costs, BSL interpretation.

9.4 Recruitment to the Cultural Strategy Steering Group will be conducted as follows:

- A diverse, representative, experienced and passionate steering group will bring the necessary skills, experience, diversity and creative energy to the project.
- The member selection and application process will follow the UK Theatre Inclusive Employment Guidelines and comply with the Alliance's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- The opportunity to sit on the Steering Group will be widely advertised through the Council's social media channels and in collaboration with external partners.
- The application form will consist of a skills & diversity audit questionnaire (draft version in Appendix 3) and a short paragraph or audio/visual submission explaining why the applicant would like to sit on the steering group.
- Every effort will be made to create a Group consisting of diverse individuals who represent a wide range of experience, geographies and demographics.
- Some applicants may be interviewed before appointment at the discretion of the Chair.
- Members will be chosen by the Chair, with assistance from the Arts, Culture and Heritage Officer.
- Membership and working methods will be reviewed periodically as set out in Appendix 1.

9.5 Draft meeting dates for the Steering Group are outlined in Appendix 1 on the Steering Group Agendas Tab. Meetings will be held via Teams, except for two in-person half-day workshops.

9.6 The Steering Group has the potential continue in some form as a Strategic Body/Cultural Compact after the completion of the Cultural Strategy and Action Plan in order to oversee the delivery of the Action Plan, deliver partnership projects and apply for large pots of external funding as a collective.<sup>3</sup> This will be reviewed during the final stages of delivery of the Cultural Strategy.

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- <sup>1</sup> [Centre for Cultural Engagement – How To Shape Public Policy Through Research](#)
  - <sup>2</sup> [Arts Professional – Why We're Better Together](#)
  - <sup>3</sup> [Arts Council England – Review of the Cultural Compacts Initiative](#)
  - <sup>4</sup> [Arts Professional – Culture & Councils in Coalition](#)
  - <sup>5</sup> [The Arts Dividend Revisited: Why Investment In Culture Pays \(Book\) by Darren Henley](#)
  - <sup>6</sup> [Centre for Cultural Value – Everyday Creativity](#)
  - <sup>7</sup> [Culture Hive - Older people – culture, community, connection](#)
  - <sup>8</sup> [Frontiers In Public Health - Art and Cultural Participation and Life Satisfaction in Adults: The Role of Physical Health, Mental Health, and Interpersonal Relationships](#)
  - <sup>9</sup> [Fund For The Arts – Art Is Crime Prevention.](#)
  - <sup>10</sup> [What Works Wellbeing - Briefing: Neighbourhood influence on culture, arts and community engagement](#)
  - <sup>11</sup> [Arts Connect – Young People's Cultural Journeys](#)
  - <sup>12</sup> [The Creative Industries Council – The Economic Contributions of The Arts](#)
  - <sup>13</sup> [The National Lottery Heritage Fund – Investing In Success](#)
  - <sup>14</sup> [West Midlands Combined Authority – Making The Case For Culture](#)
  - <sup>15</sup> [Arts Council England - Culture Strategy Checklist](#)
  - <sup>16</sup> [Local Government Association – Cultural Strategy In A Box](#)
  - <sup>17</sup> [Julie's Bicycle](#)
  - <sup>18</sup> [The Theatre Green Book](#)
  - <sup>19</sup> [Climate Change - Learning about climate change in, with and through art](#)