

# APPENDIX A 1      BRISTOL COUNCIL Cabinet

**REPORT TITLE:** Cultural Events in Bristol

**Ward(s) affected by this report:** City-wide

**Strategic Director:** Barra Mac Ruairi - Strategic Director of Place

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## **Purpose of the report:**

To provide background information and further details on the development of the cultural strategy for the city

## **List of Appendix also provided with the decision development summary:**

Appendix 1- this background and detail paper  
Appendix 2- draft copy of Bristol's Cultural Futures paper  
Appendix 3- Overview of people consulted for Bristol's Cultural Futures

## **1. Bristol's Cultural Futures Strategy**

1.1 The Cultural steering group set up by Cllr Tincknell in Summer 2016 appointed Tom Fleming Creative consultants to develop a new cultural strategy- Bristol's Cultural Futures

1.2 *Bristol's Cultural Futures* will seek to *ensure the delivery of an enhanced, inclusive and sustainable cultural offer*. It will have :

- Full endorsement of the local cultural community and stakeholders, with their commitment and buy-in to support the delivery of the objectives.
- Be evidence-based and result from research and findings of local consultation and a wider knowledge of national arts and cultural development.
- Develop the framework for the delivery of a sustainable cultural programme and the development of an appropriate cultural infrastructure, physical and human, to support the objectives

1.3 Core approaches include:

- An interview programme where individuals from across the cultural sector, plus partner sectors (such as education, health, business and governance), have been engaged. Over 70 in-depth interviews have been undertaken.
- A thematic workshop programme where different stakeholders have been reached in a range of settings.
- Social media – with the twitter handle @CulturalBristol enabling wider coverage of activities and a different way of staging the conversation.
- Extensive desk-based research – to ensure a detailed understanding of the strategic landscape – from an international to local level. This includes issues of urgent relevance such as devolution, Brexit, Arts Council England priorities, and changes to local government funding.
- Ongoing liaison with the *Bristol's Cultural Futures* steering group and lead officer Laura Pye (Head of Culture).

*Bristol's Cultural Futures* will be completed in late March / early April, with a period of review anticipated.

1.4 The workshop programme has played a vital role – in engaging with a wider range of people and in exploring key issues in a more inclusive and conversational way. *Bristol's Cultural Futures* has involved 8 workshops.

These were:

- **Bristol as an international city of culture.** This workshop brought together 15 key cultural and educational partners to explore how Bristol 'does international', how it can do better, and how it can connect international and local activities. It resulted in a new thought leadership paper which is published via @culturalbristol and available via Laura Pye.

**Culture and community value.** Co-hosted by Voscur, this workshop brought together over 20 people from across the community, voluntary and education sectors of the city. It focused on how we open up cultural opportunity, different models for procurement and engagement, and alternative approaches to commissioning and partnership.

- **Bristol's Festivals and events.** Co-hosted by Bristol Festival and Events Forum, this workshop explored how the sector can grow, diversify, innovate and play a more strategic role for the city.

- **Children and Young People.** Co-hosted by the Bristol Creative Youth Network, this interactive workshop explored different senses of identity and place and worked to reimagine a future Bristol which is more open and relevant to the diverse interests of young people.

- **Digital Creatives.** Co-hosted by the Pervasive Media Studio, this workshop explored how Bristol delivers the enabling conditions for creative practice and creative business. This included a focus on the key spaces and platforms, networks and support programmes. It also focused on different senses of place, aspirations for the city and ideas for improvement of the city's creative and knowledge infrastructure.

- **Bristol as an intercultural city.** Co-hosted by the Black South West Network, this workshop explored how Bristol operates as an intercultural city. It discussed the city's incredible range of cultural activities and identified the main challenges to and opportunities for diverse cultural practice to flourish.

- **Additional workshop-style interventions.** These have involved participation in previously planned events where *Bristol's Cultural Futures* has secured a slot on the agenda. This includes two meetings of the DIY Arts Network and a symposium on higher education and cultural partnerships (hosted by Watershed; produced by the Bristol Cultural Development Partnership).

2.4 The themes and key commitments. The steering group have meet to review the first draft of the strategy which is also attached (appendix 2) and has agreed to the 3 themes and to 6 key commitments (which are the first 5 in the draft of the strategy and a combination of the 6 & 7). The steering groups main feedback is the document is too long and commits to too much. It also believes the languages need to be altered to make it more user friendly. We expect the final version of the strategy to look very different and it is still in consultation with internal and external colleagues around what we are committing to.

2.5 The Strategy will follow the following 3 main themes-

- A city of Openness- The cultural sector in Bristol has thrived through its openness and generosity – it is relatively informal, networks are organic and the overarching sense of identity is one of tolerance, inclusion, sharing and environmental sustainability. However, individual organisations and artists have limited capacity to reach out and ensure Bristol culture as a whole is open. Plus approaches to planning and development have been too closed to the possibilities of a culture-led approach.
- A city of originators- Bristol is a city of artists, creatives and makers. Often small-scale and fiercely independent, such enterprises fuel a creative economy where high growth technology, creative and science businesses have given the city a leading edge in the UK. Bristol's strengths in advanced engineering and aerospace technology, its pioneering animation and wildlife film clusters, and its independent and radical arts all exemplify the city's power of origination. The universities and larger cultural organisations are playing a

vital enabling role, convening collaboration between networks of originators, encouraging R&D and catalysing innovation and growth. But not enough originators are able to scale up their activities beyond R&D and the creative economy of Bristol is not accessible to many originators from across the city's diverse communities.

- A city of imagination- The cultural sector in Bristol has thrived across the city's vivid and interactive spaces and places, many of which have been produced, curated and actively encouraged by some quite visionary and passionate Bristolians. They have given Bristol a longstanding reputation for innovation, especially in the fusion of art and science, creativity and technology. But do we make the most of our creative talent when we plan for Bristol's future(s)? Can we position culture to fire the imagination of all our communities in all of our districts? And can we utilise culture as a resource for re-imagining the city's economy, its transport and housing infrastructure, and its identity?

## 2.6 And to have an action plan based around these 6 commitments-

- 3.1 Cultural Leadership and Partnership
- 3.2 Cultural Investment and Infrastructure Programme
- 3.3 Bristol Cultural Curriculum and Pathways
- 3.4 Districts of Culture
- 3.5 Cultural Place-making
- 3.6 Unlimited Collaboration