

REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

27 AUGUST 2009

CULTURAL STRATEGY

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Summary

The Cultural Strategy sets out a vision for Medway's cultural offer over the next five years, underpinned by a detailed Delivery Plan.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 The current Cultural Statement expired last year and the attached Cultural Strategy will take its place, guiding the delivery of Leisure and Culture services over the next five years. Although there is funding in place for a number of the projects included in the strategy, additional funding will be required which will need to be secured through external funding, the budget-setting process or through Partner contributions.

1.2 Medway's cultural offer has a direct impact upon the Local Area Agreement. It direct influences:

NI 1	Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
NI 8	Adult participation in sport
NI 17	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour
NI 56	Obesity among primary school age children in Year 6

It indirectly impacts on:

NI 121	Mortality rate from circulatory diseases at ages under 75
NI 161	Learners achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy
NI 163	Proportion of population aged 19-64 for males and 19-59 for females qualified to at least Level 2 or higher

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's cultural offer is fundamental in establishing a sense of place for Medway, adding to the extensive physical regeneration that is underway. It helps to establish pride in Medway, recognising the rich cultural offer that already exists and exciting proposals for the future.
- 2.2 Culture also brings prosperity to the local economy through the vibrant creative sector, by serving as a magnet for tourism and by ensuring an attractive offer for Higher and Further Education students, as well as acting as an inducement for them to live in Medway, retaining a highly skilled workforce for the benefit of the region.

The Cultural Strategy sets out four strategic priorities:

- Stewardship
- Engagement
- Contributing to Economic Prosperity
- Health / Wellbeing.

It identifies the outcomes each will deliver and a number of specific projects are identified within the Cultural Strategy, underpinned by a Delivery Plan.

The Strategy also identifies the opportunities for a year of celebration in 2012, marking:

- The 2012 Olympics, Paralympics, and British Transplant Games
- Cultural Olympiad
- Dickens' Bicentenary
- 200 years of REs in Medways
- The Queen's Diamond Jubilee

3. Advice and analysis

- 3.1 The Cultural Strategy has been produced through the Cultural Partnership and will provide a strategic framework against which Medway's cultural offer will be delivered. A number of projects are longer term and aspiration and funding will need to be secured for them.
- 3.2 Consultation with the Community Cohesion Group found that no differential impact has been identified. Officers are currently compiling the evidence and a Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) will be included in the Cabinet report.
- 3.3 Following this committee's consideration, the Cultural Strategy will be submitted to Cabinet on 13 October 2009.

4. Risk Management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Funding is not identified for key projects.	Some projects are longer term in nature, such as the Waterfront Arts Complex and significant funding will need to be secured if they are to be delivered.	External sources of funding will be sought and sound proposals drawn up to secure Council funding.
Pressures on revenue funding.	The current economic downturn is putting pressure on income generation across Medway's cultural offer.	Continued focus on promotion and marketing.

5. Financial and legal implications

- 5.1 Further funding will need to be secured for a number of projects and this will be sought internally and externally, as well as from partner organisations. Opportunities will need to be maximised as they arise.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The strategy not only presents an opportunity to set out the direction over the next five years, it also provides a platform to promote what Medway does and intends to do, underscoring the richness of the existing cultural offer.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 Members' views are sought on the strategy prior to consideration by Cabinet.

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