

## **Culture and Leisure Sub-Committee**

**2 November 2021**

Present: Councillor J Cruddas (Chair)  
Councillors G Bell, L Bell, L Bones, M Hall, J Kirwin,  
G Madden, J Montague and J Shaw

Apologies: Councillors K Barrie and C Davis

### **C&L13/21 Substitute Members**

There were no substitute members reported.

### **C&L14/21 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

### **C&L15/21 Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 September 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

### **C&L16/21 Cultural Strategy Development**

The Sub-Committee received a report on the development of the Authority's Cultural Strategy.

The Senior Manager, Cultural Services, presented an overview of the proposals for the Borough and outlined the framework within which consultation would be undertaken.

The four strategies which formed the basis of the Council's cultural offer all conclude in 2021, these were:-

- Great Art for North Tyneside - Arts Development Strategy 2014 -21
- Visit North Tyneside - Tourism Strategy 2014-21
- Past, Present and Future - Heritage Strategy 2014-21
- Words, Wellbeing and Wifi – Library Strategy 2016-21

All four strategies had been successful in demonstrating, to both funders and professional bodies in the cultural sector, the Authority's commitment to its cultural offer, as well as being a guide to the delivery of service plans and objectives for the periods of the respective strategies. However, much had changed in the seven years since these strategies had been initiated and it was appropriate that they were individually and collectively reviewed, in the light of new developments and new challenges within the sector.

North Tyneside Council's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had accepted the principle, endorsed by the Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport and Leisure, that the way forward in the period ahead should be to embrace a single strategy for the cultural sector. SLT and the Cabinet Member were also of the view that, while the Council should take the initiative in providing a framework for the cultural offer, the active engagement of the private and

voluntary sector would also be vital. The strategy should be one for the Borough, not just the North Tyneside Council.

This approach was consistent with that of Arts Council England (ACE), as outlined in its ten year strategy *Let's Create (2020-2030)*, which emphasised partnership working and the development of broad based cultural compacts in developing the cultural offer of an area.

ACE Chief Executive, Darren Henley states in his summary,

“...if we're going to support the cultural sector to be fit for the future, we have to make sure that everyone, everywhere, benefits from it and can be part of it. If we fail at this, we won't succeed at anything else.”

It was also consistent with the approach recommended by the Local Government Association, *Cultural Strategy in a Box (March 2020)*, which notes:

“A cultural compact is a strategic cross sector partnership that is driven by a shared ambition for culture and place. This ambition links arts and culture with broader strategic plans for local social and economic development. These partnerships seek to bring together local authorities, businesses, education providers, cultural and community leaders, to co-design and consult upon a vision for the role of culture within a place and deliver against shared priorities.”

These priorities were consistent with the way in which the Authority had worked in practice over the period of the previous strategies, as engagement in broad partnerships such as the Culture Health and Wellbeing Network, Local Cultural Education Partnership, Libraries Connected and North East Tourism Alliance all illustrated.

The development of a unified Cultural Strategy would provide the opportunity to give an even greater strategic profile to the cultural offer in the borough, promoting new ways of more effectively engaging communities, supporting the wider objectives of the 'Our North Tyneside Plan' and contributing towards town centre recovery. Recent work by ACE, *A High Street Renaissance (2021)*, illustrated how investment in arts and culture could bring people and pride back to our high streets.

Recent work by the Creative UK Group, *The UK Creative Industries (2021)*, calculated that for every 10 jobs in creative industries a further 7 were created in supply chains and that, with the right investment, the UK's Creative Industries could create 300,000 new jobs by 2025. This could put the sector in a strong position to support the building of an inclusive economy and contribute to tackling inequalities.

In terms of the next steps, a consultation process was to be initiated by the Authority with partners across the cultural sector, businesses and the community, with a view to establishing a cultural compact for North Tyneside.

A steering group would also be initiated to develop the compact as part of the process of developing a Cultural Strategy for the period to 2030, in line with the strategy timescale of Arts Council England.

The following documents had been used in the compilation of this report:

- Let's Create (2020-2030) – (Arts Council England 2020)
- Cultural Strategy in a Box (Local Government Association 2020)
- A High Street Renaissance (Arts Council England 2021)
- The UK Creative Industries (Creative UK Group 2021)

The sub-committee was invited to put forward comments and examined a number of areas of the Cultural Strategy. These included the following:

- The proposed mapping of all areas of the borough to help identify and promote popular facilities and activities available for residents and visitors to North Tyneside was welcomed in helping to ensure that none were exclusive to just one area, to include rural areas (north west), the coast and town centres, and important to be seen as 'one-borough'.
- Inviting school children, college students, local community groups, scouts, brownies, sporting and activity clubs etc, to engage in consultations, would bring parents who would also be involved in the shaping of the cultural strategy.
- The format and how culture was described was important as it meant more than a social tense and needed a broader strategy to be considered.
- Schools and spaces in deprived areas of the borough not currently being used for culture could, subject to funding, be used for engagement purposes which could include involvement by Arts Council England.
- It was suggested that activities such as those that were held in North Shields in September for the first time as part of the Elected Mayor's cultural task force, could be supported by engaging partners to help raise awareness and by promoting future events in their areas.
- In terms of the authority's policy development role, and subject to central government funding, the affordability for young people and what could be given to schools could be explored.

In addition, the Chair commented that during a pre-meeting today, there had been some discussion on how bringing things to life by Member engagement and shaping the policy to be very inclusive could include site visits e.g., Segedunum. She also said engagement with the voluntary sector and local community groups which were our 'eyes and ears' in relation to e.g., deprived areas of the community could also be explored by reaching into the vast networks and lessons learned.

The Chair, on behalf of the Sub-Committee, thanked the Senior Manager for Cultural Services for the very engaging delivery of the report and presentation.

It was **agreed** to note the report and presentation on the developments of the Cultural Strategy; and the comments/suggestions made by the Sub-Committee as part of the authority's consultation.

### **C&L17/21 Date and Time Next Meeting**

6pm on Wednesday, 19 January 2022.