
Cabinet

03 January 2017

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Community Development - Councillor L Bigham

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Executive Director, Place

Ward(s) affected:

All Wards

Title:

Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017-27

Is this a key decision?

Yes - This key decision concerns the provision and approval of a cultural strategy for the city of Coventry, which it is anticipated will have a marked effect on communities living across all Wards in the City.

Executive Summary:

Approval is sought for a city-wide, cultural strategy – The ‘Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017-2027’.

This report (and its associated appendices) deals with the outcomes of the public consultation on the role of culture in Coventry and the development of a new ten year Cultural Strategy. The impact of the strategy and its key proposals are considered through the Equality and Consultation Analysis for the Strategy. The adoption of The Coventry Cultural Strategy will provide a strong foundation from which to build a successful bid to become the UK City of Culture 2021.

The proposed strategy’s stated vision is

‘By 2027 Coventry will be a culturally attractive, vibrant and prosperous city to live in, work in and enjoy. The city is a dynamic place of invention, cultural diversity and youthful ambition and is proud to be a leading city of culture in modern Britain.’

The proposed strategy sets out a ten year vision for the cultural life of Coventry and builds on the existing heritage and culture of Coventry. Its development has been funded by Arts Council England (ACE) and Coventry City Council with support from both the University of Warwick and Coventry University and is based on an extensive consultation process.

The strategy proposes ‘Five Goals’ for cultural growth in the city, each of which is under-pinned by ‘Seven Big Ideas’ that support the transformation of the cultural life of the city and have been developed and refined through an extensive period of stakeholder engagement and public consultation.

As the strategy bridges a timescale in which Coventry has the potential to attract significant investment (though its ambition to be UK City of Culture 2021), it is important that this strategy remains flexible and consultative in order to stay fresh and embrace new ideas, people and technologies. Therefore the strategy acts as a framework through which to provide an overarching direction for development plans and should be revisited (bi-annually) through a programme of research and evaluation. This approach will enable the strategy to remain responsive to changing circumstances and will keep the strategy live.

It is intended that the strategy and its underpinning development plans will continue to evolve over the ten year journey towards achieving its vision.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to approve the Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017-2027

List of Appendices included:

1. Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017 - 2027: www.covculture.com
2. Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017-2027: Equality and Consultation Analysis
3. Household Survey 2016 infographic
4. Headline Statistics for Coventry Cultural Strategy 24-11-16

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

In addition to those papers incorporated within the appendices above, the following useful information is posted for reference on the Coventry Cultural Strategy website, at the following link: <http://covculture.com>

They include

- Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017-27 (A film capturing aspirations and voices heard through the consultation process)
- Blogs from a writer, musician, digital artist, young actor, cultural producer and property developer

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017-2027

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1. In July 2015 Cabinet approved the development of a Coventry bid for the title of UK City of Culture and prioritised work with partners to accelerate the development of a new cultural strategy for Coventry in support of the long term positioning of culture in the city.
- 1.2. As a consequence Professor Jonathon Neelands (Associate Dean and Professor of Creativity Warwick Business School, University of Warwick) and Andrew Dixon (Culture, Creativity and Place) were appointed by Coventry City Council as lead consultants responsible for the development of a new cultural strategy. They were also assisted by Dr Geoff Wilcox (Director of Arts and Culture, Coventry University).
- 1.3. The development of a new ten year cultural strategy began with a period of structured primary research that involved a detailed review of the current cultural interests and activities of Coventry residents via The Household Survey and secondary research into resident demographics, educational attainment, community groups and their activities, creative and cultural industries. The findings of these initial research activities were considered, taking into account various local, regional and national strategies.
- 1.4. From April – August 2016 a period of first phase consultation with key stakeholders and community leaders took place which included:
 - The establishment of a steering group of key cultural leaders in the city (including representatives from the Council, education sector, community sector and cultural organisations)
 - Meetings with artists, councillors, community activists, businesses and universities. The meetings were closely documented to inform the development of the principles underpinning the strategy
 - Over 12 hours of cultural strategy workshops and 20 hours of workshops linked to the Coventry 2021 UK City of Culture Bid (including two strategy-specific consultation workshops – May 2016 at Coventry Transport Museum and June 2016 with the Coventry Partnership. Partners have been consulted through these two structured consultation sessions where an open call for delegates was made. Two further meetings have taken place with Coventry’s Youth Forum and Children Plan Group)
 - A film capturing aspirations and voices heard through the consultation process
 - Social media and mobile video feeds from young people (240 responses)
 - Blogs from a writer, musician, digital artist, young actor, cultural producer and property developer
 - Research on demographics, audiences and household engagement
 - An in-depth analysis of audiences and the potential to increase attendance in arts events
 - Extensive research into the cultures, people and neighbourhoods that make up the city
 - An audit of the existing cultural and heritage resources in the city
 - A 12 month tourism profiling study was commenced and will be completed in May 2017. The tourism profiling study focuses on (i) the potential to increase cultural tourism – with circa 2,000 responses to date - and (ii) the profile of audiences of cultural venues to the city)
- 1.5. The research, discussions with key stakeholders and partners (through the series of stakeholder workshops and consultation events) further informed and shaped the proposed Strategy, until a Vision Statement, Five Goals and Seven Big Ideas emerged.

1.6. The proposed Strategy's stated Vision is as follows:

'By 2027 Coventry will be a culturally attractive, vibrant and prosperous city to live in, work in and enjoy. The city is a dynamic place of invention, cultural diversity and youthful ambition and is proud to be a leading city of culture in modern Britain'

1.7. The proposed Strategy's Five Goals are as follows:

- Goal 1 - Partnership
- Goal 2 - Lifelong learning
- Goal 3 - Diversity
- Goal 4 - Health and well-being
- Goal 5 - Economic growth

1.8. The proposed Strategy's Five Goals are underpinned by 'Seven Big Ideas' as follows:

- Place Partnership
- Creative Production Hubs
- City is the Festival
- 7 Years Younger
- Nation in Coventry
- Diverse City
- Getting Coventry Moving

1.9. The Five Goals and Seven Big Ideas are outlined in more detail in the proposed Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017-27 (Appendix 1)

1.10. A draft strategy report was produced and presented for a Second Phase consultation, as a check and challenge to responses to the First Phase consultation process – via <http://covculture.com>

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1. Option 1 - No Cultural Strategy (Not recommended)

2.1.1. It is ten years since Coventry last approved a strategy for the development of culture in the city. The absence of an approved cultural strategy going forward would limit the ability of key agencies (including the City Council) to articulate a clear vision and set of priorities for the coherent development of culture in the city. This could also negatively impact on the city's ability to maximise and extend the new partnerships that have come together to support the city's bid to be UK City of Culture in 2021. It is also an expressed requirement of key agencies such as Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund that applicants for significant levels of grant funding must be able to demonstrate a strategic rationale for applications. For this reason, particularly within a climate where there is reduced and finite resources available to local authorities for cultural activity, continuing without a strategy that sets the principles and priorities for the development of culture is not recommended.

2.2. Option 2 – Approve a Ten-Year Cultural Strategy (Recommended)

2.2.1. Approving the Cultural Strategy for Coventry will confirm the strategic direction and priorities for culture in the city and support the city in developing a more culturally attractive, vibrant and prosperous place to live in, work in and enjoy through a partnership delivery model. Approving the Strategy will further show recognition of the wide range of benefits that culture can bring in order to provide social, economic and educational benefits for the city.

2.2.2. Early drafts of the goals for the strategy included only four Goals and nine Big Ideas, which through the periods of stakeholder consultation were refined to the Five Goals and Seven Big Ideas that are now proposed.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1. *Structured primary research carried out with households in Coventry via the Household Survey* - The household survey elicited over 2,000 responses to questions relating to cultural preferences. In addition, individual one-to-one consultations also took place with a range of interested stakeholders, as a precursor to developing the draft strategy.

- When asked if adults attended cultural events at least three times in the last 12 months, 73% indicated that they did; 69% of households with children aged 18 years old or younger also indicated that their children attended cultural events at least three times in the last 12 months. However, if we only consider residents who participate in at least one other arts and cultural activity in addition to going to the cinema or pub, clubs, and bars, participation drops to 67% for adults and 64% for children. Around 20% of respondents count the cinema or going to pubs, clubs, and bars as their only arts and cultural activity.¹
- It is difficult to compare this to national levels as the national Taking Part Survey focuses more on getting more information about specific art forms rather than getting local level data on general participation. The latest available survey which looked at local level data is the 2008-2010 Active People Survey. Based on this survey, Coventry ranked 250th out of 355 local authorities in terms of participation in arts and culture.

3.2. *Workshops and meeting with individuals (held between January 2016 and November 2016)* - This included over 12 hours of cultural strategy workshops and 20 hours of workshops linked to Coventry 2021 (partners have been consulted through structured consultation sessions where an open call for delegates was made), Coventry's Youth Forum (7th July 2016) and Children Plan Group (25th July 2016). Various meetings with artists, councillors, community activists, businesses and universities have also been held (between January 2016 and November 2016). The meetings were closely documented to inform the development of the principles underpinning the strategy. In addition, the consultation process also included the collection of social media and mobile video feeds from young people (1-15 August 2016, 240 responses). The consultation process showed that there is a strong commitment and agreement across the city for a cultural strategy that:

- is inclusive
- is accessible to all ages, cultures, communities and abilities
- reflects the rich diversity of the city
- builds on the heritage and values of the city
- provides education and well-being
- is sustainable and contributes positively to the local economy
- has the vision to build Coventry's reputation as a visitor destination

3.3. The workshops also produced a number of recorded outcomes that can be viewed on <http://covculture.com/> and include a film that captures the aspirations and voices heard through the workshop consultation process. Blogs have also been published from a writer, musician, digital artist, young actor, cultural producer and property developer.

¹ Coventry Household Survey 2016

- 3.4. *An in-depth analysis of audiences and the potential to increase attendance in arts events is being conducted* - This ongoing research will enable the Council to define current levels of participation in cultural activities and will identify communities that indicate a low level attendance. This data may be used address issues that act as barriers to engagement and therefore offer a more inclusive city wide cultural programme.
- 3.5. *An audit of the existing cultural and heritage resources in the city led by Coventry University* - The headline findings from this audit were that:
- 3.6. There is a significant and lively independent, amateur, and professional artist sector, spread evenly across the city, however Coventry does not compare well with other cities in terms of the number of its National Portfolio Organisations (organisations that receive regular funding from Arts Council England). Coventry needs to grow its cultural infrastructure and invest in the track records of both existing producers and venues. More diverse and experienced cultural mentors (advisors/experienced practitioners to support emerging cultural producers and the development of the cultural sector) are needed across the city and BAME communities should be fully represented at all levels in cultural organisations within the city. There is under developed potential for the City Council to make its medieval and post war built more visible and valued.
- 3.7. *A tourism profiling study* - A tourism profiling study has been in action for six months with sampling undertaken at venues attractions and key events. (circa 2,000 responses to date). The initial findings indicate that there is evidence of a lack of awareness of Coventry's offer and more needs to be done to communicate the breadth of tourism opportunities within the city. Over half of the sample respondents visited for a cultural purpose. There is significant potential for growth in the city's approach to tourism communications. This work is due to be completed in May 2017.
- 3.8. *A steering group of key cultural leaders in the city* - The group met four times between 21 March and 19 October 2016. The steering group acted as a further check and challenge throughout the development of the strategy. The group provided guidance and commentary on the emerging themes and strategy drafts and were also included as Phase 2 consultees.
- 3.9. *Desktop research and analysis* - Extensive desktop research and analysis was undertaken in order to consider the findings from the first phase research within the context of wider data. This exercise incorporated secondary research into resident demographics, educational attainment, community groups and their activities. The headline findings were that:
- Based on the latest estimates, there are 345,400 residents in Coventry as of mid-2015. It is the 15th largest local authority. The population rose 2.4% compared to mid-2014 and, when compared to the average population growth in England of 0.9%, this means that Coventry is the 9th fastest growing local authority in all of England.
 - Coventry is home to a diverse population, with only 66.6% of residents classified as White British compared to 79.8% in England. Other major ethnicities represented in Coventry include Indian (8.8% in Coventry vs. 2.6% in England) and Black African (4.0% vs. 1.8%). 6.9% of the city's residents were born in other European countries, compared to 5.0% of England's population.
 - It is likely that Coventry will become even more diverse given the share of ethnic minority students in the city's schools. According to the January 2016 School Census, 48.7% of students in state-funded primary schools in Coventry are from ethnic minorities (vs. 31.4% in England).
 - Over 100 languages are spoken in Coventry, which is another indication of the wide range of ethnicities represented in the city. 9% of households in the city do not have

any members whose first language is English. Among primary school children, there is a larger share who speak English as an additional language compared to the England average (28.7% vs. 18.0%).

- Average age: 33 (seven years younger than UK average).
- Almost 1 in 5 live in the 10% most deprived wards in UK.
- With regards to business attitudes to creativity, the most frequently cited barrier to innovation (28.7%) was the ability to recruit new staff or talent.

- 3.10. Based on the findings of the research and consultation process a draft of the Cultural Strategy 2017-27 has been produced and presented for a 2nd phase consultation as check and challenge to those consulted in the first phase consultation process via <http://covculture.com>. The results of this consultation have been incorporated into the proposed cultural strategy document.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1. Subject to approval of the recommendations contained within this report, The Cultural Strategy 2017-27 will be adopted as policy with immediate effect.
- 4.2. A City Council Action Plan will be developed to map the Council's contribution to all relevant strategic objectives.
- 4.3. The proposed strategy covers a ten-year period, and although the strategy will guide cultural activity in the city, it will not be allowed to constrain development where further change is needed to ensure that Coventry is a city where culture has an important role to play in everyday life. Over the lifetime of the strategy, there will regularly evaluation to assess progress and align action plans to changes in local, regional or national policies. To monitor and measure progress in delivering the strategy, a wide range of data sources will be used.
- 4.4. Monitoring of the strategy will be undertaken with support from Coventry University and the University of Warwick.

5. Comments from the Executive Director of Resources

5.1. Financial Implications

No specific funding or new money is required from Coventry City Council for approval of the Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017 - 2027.

If the strategy is approved by Cabinet, any approval for funding that is required from the City Council to deliver specific schemes or initiatives that contribute to delivery of its Strategic Objectives will be considered through separate Cabinet and/or Cabinet Member papers, as applicable.

5.2. Legal implications

The Council has powers, in particular under Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972, to promote the arts as well as providing entertainments, libraries, museums and art galleries. The adoption of the proposed strategy does not have any direct legal implications, but the legal implications of activities delivered under the strategy and action plan will need to be considered on a case by case basis.

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

The recommended proposal will contribute to the Council's core aims of:

- **Making the most of our assets** - Goal 1 (Partnership) of the strategy proposes the development of a new partnership approach to cultural growth which would ensure access and sustainability for a wide range of cultural organisations activities and events across the city. For example, there is an opportunity to bring forward a new partnership with external heritage partners that could enable the City Council to make more of the currently underutilised Heritage Assets owned by the Council as cultural and tourist attractions and which would support the promotion of Coventry as a Heritage Action Zone.
- **Improving educational outcomes** - Coventry has a strong cultural education offer within the city, provided not only by schools and education services but also through both universities, colleges and arts business. However, more could be done to improve the connection and signposting between the cultural education sector. Goal 2 (Lifelong Learning) proposes that all children and young people have an entitlement to the arts and digital creativity in schools and in their community which is not limited by family income, location or age. And that through a better connected cultural sector, talent is recognised, developed and supported through to early careers in the cultural and creative industries and beyond. Goal 2 also proposes actions that ensure that there are opportunities for all generations to learn from and develop through the arts and heritage in the city.
- **Developing a more equal city with cohesive communities and neighbourhoods and supporting active communities and empowered citizens** - The strategy has identified the city's diverse population as one of Coventry's strengths. By recognising this, Goal 3 (Diversity) of the strategy further explores how the through cultural activity, the heritage, cultures, abilities and participation of all the city's diverse communities can encouraged in the cultural life of the city. Proposed activity in this area ranges from the development of a cultural diverse education offer for schools and communities to co-created cultural programming.
- **Improving the health and well-being of the city** – Goal 4 (Health and Well-being) of the strategy identifies how the arts and culture are core to the health and well-being of the city. It sets the ambition that the development of arts and health partnerships will enable wider participation in and enjoyment of city wide professional and community arts programming that is responsive to the needs of all generations and combats isolation and mental health in our most vulnerable communities. Cultural interventions will also make a major contribution to encouraging and motivating residents to participate in healthy lifestyles and physical activity whilst raising awareness of key health priorities as outlined in the Marmot agenda (focussing on addressing health inequalities).
- **Raising the profile of Coventry through promoting Coventry as a visitor destination and centre** - Goal 5 (Economic growth) of the strategy identifies Coventry as a culturally vibrant, attractive and prosperous city and sets the ambition that as a cultural city we work to enrich the lives and environment for all residents. The strategy aims to address the need of the city to improve the way it promotes itself as a major tourist destination for the West Midlands and as a result, through a better articulated tourism offer, successfully attract more visitors increase spend and secure and sustain new businesses and investment.

6.2. **How is risk being managed?**

Key risks associated with the proposal are identified as outlined in section 2.1

In order to mitigate any associated risks with the delivery of the strategy over its lifespan, it is proposed that the delivery is monitored by officers within the City Council in partnership with the University of Warwick and Coventry University via a biannual evaluation, annual review of progress and the development of action plans with key partners.

6.3. **What is the impact on the organisation?**

Approval of the report recommendations would secure an adopted ten-year Coventry Cultural Strategy.

Approving the Cultural Strategy 2017-27 for Coventry will confirm the strategic direction and priorities for culture in the city and support the City Council in seeking partnerships with other significant stakeholders in developing a more culturally attractive, vibrant and prosperous place to live work and enjoy through partnership delivery model. Approving the strategy will further show recognition of the wide range of benefits that culture can bring in order to provide social, economic and educational benefits for the city.

From a City Council perspective, it is anticipated that the strategy will deliver benefits for the city that support service objectives across the Directorates, including:

- The development of a new city-wide partnership approach to cultural growth, which ensures access and sustainable funding for a wide range of cultural organisations activities and events across the city
- Increased opportunities for lifelong learning where talent is recognised, developed and supported from birth, through education and early careers in the cultural and creative industries and beyond
- Coventry's diverse communities will be enabled to celebrate and participate in the cultural life of the city promoting and encouraging social inclusion and community cohesion
- Culture makes a major contribution to encouraging healthy lifestyles and physical activity
- A revitalised and clear tourism offer increases the perception of the city as a major tourism destination for the West Midlands and successfully attracts new business and investment.

There are no HR implications for the organisation as these proposals will not affect City Council employees.

6.4. **Equalities / EIA**

No negative impact of protected groups or concerning the three aims of general duty is anticipated. The Cultural Strategy identifies how structured investment can occur to ensure that the priority groups are more included in cultural life in the city. Key aspects of this work are identified in Goals 2-4 of the strategy.

6.5. **Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

If the Coventry Cultural Strategy is approved by Cabinet, the environmental impact of any resultant capital schemes will be considered within the context of any proposal considered for approval by Cabinet and/or Council.

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

The proposed Coventry Cultural Strategy 2017 - 2027 is a document developed through consultation with a range of stakeholders and proposes a partnership approach to delivering the strategy.

Approving the Cultural Strategy 2017-27 for Coventry will confirm the strategic direction and priorities for culture in the city and will further show recognition of the wide range of benefits that culture can bring to both individuals and communities.

Approval of the Strategy will give confidence to external funders that the city has clear objectives and priorities for culture in the next ten years. This should assist partners in applying for external grant funding and will bring greater coherence in the links from culture to wider city agendas (e.g. community cohesion, tourism, education health, jobs and economy, regeneration).

The proposed formation of a Coventry place partnership will provide a coordinated, partnership body that can advocate for and speak on behalf of cultural organisations across the city, from a wider perspective than any one partner.

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