

Meeting:	Cabinet
Meeting date:	Thursday, 15 October 2020
Title of report:	Endorsement of the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-2029
Report by:	Cabinet member commissioning, procurement and assets

Classification

Open

Decision type

Non-key

Wards affected

All wards

Purpose

That Cabinet approves the endorsement of the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-2029.

The Cultural Strategy reflects the approach to supporting arts, culture and heritage as stated in the Herefordshire Council County Plan 2020-2024

The Cultural Strategy provides a basis for collaborative working and for supporting bids for external funding to support the sustainability and development of the arts, culture and heritage sector in Herefordshire.

Recommendation

That:

Cabinet agrees to endorse the Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-2029 to inform and support its work with the arts, cultural and heritage sectors in the county.

Alternative options

1. Cabinet could choose not to endorse the Cultural Strategy. This could have a limiting impact on future funding bids and also send a negative message to the arts, culture and heritage sector. This may also have a negative effect on the reputation of the council amongst the arts, culture and heritage sector both in Herefordshire and more widely. Failure to endorse the Cultural Strategy may also lead to missed opportunities to support wider growth and development in other sectors such as tourism and local creative industries.

Key considerations

2. The council has been an active member of the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership for a number of years.
3. Through its membership of the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership and support for other projects such as Herefordshire's A Great Place, the council has had a central role in the development of the Cultural Strategy.
4. The strategy has five priority objectives. These are Herefordshire as a Great Place providing a resilient cultural infrastructure supporting people who live work and visit the county; listening to children and young people and connecting them to creativity and culture; building and supporting vibrant and creative economies; ensuring the arts and culture are available to everyone; and raising Herefordshire's national and international profile through cultural tourism.
5. Each of these priorities align with and support the council's wider social, economic and cultural priorities as outlined in the Herefordshire Council County Plan 2020-2024.
6. Endorsement of the strategy will provide extra support for potential funding bids to promote investment in creative skills and talent.
7. Endorsement of the strategy will complement the forthcoming report on 'Developing Cultural Places and Spaces in Hereford City'. This report has been commissioned by the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership.
8. Hereford has secured a place in the Government's Towns Fund programme which brings the opportunity to secure up to £25m in funding. One of the strands in the programme is arts, culture and heritage. Endorsement of the strategy would strengthen any future funding bids to support arts, culture and heritage in the city.
9. In endorsing the Cultural Strategy, council supports the opportunities this presents for encouraging further development of cultural activity that interacts positively with the natural environment, as well as providing a framework for those operating in the cultural sector to review further their carbon footprint.
10. Following the development of the Cultural Strategy, Arts Council England has awarded Herefordshire Cultural Partnership £20,000 to establish a Cultural Compact for the county. The council's commitment to Herefordshire Cultural Partnership and its support since 2017 for the Herefordshire's A Great Place programme and its part in the development of the Cultural Strategy was identified in the bid for this funding. The Cultural Compact

Project will run from October 2020-December 2021 and will be managed by the Rural Media Company on behalf of Herefordshire Cultural Partnership. As well as developing a three year business and investment plan to deliver the Cultural Strategy's priority objectives between 2022 and 2025, it will also support capital investment schemes such as the Towns Fund bid in Hereford and the Heritage Action Zone in Leominster. The Compact will also address issues around digital connectivity and inclusion, health and well-being, equality and diversity. Endorsement by the council of the strategy will be another indication of commitment to involvement in and support for this work.

Community impact

11. Endorsement of the Cultural Strategy would evidence the message contained in the Herefordshire Council County Plan 2020-2024 which places art and culture at the centre of the Council's plans for Herefordshire. Within this plan, there is a stated commitment to working with the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership to ensure that Herefordshire continues to build on our many strengths and successes.

Environmental Impact

12. The council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.
13. Whilst endorsing the Cultural Strategy will have minimal environmental impact, consideration will be made to minimise resource use in line with the Council's environmental Policy through avoiding the use of paper and printing and by officers using webex or active travel methods to attend meetings wherever possible.

Equality Duty

14. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
15. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.
 16. The Cultural Strategy takes a positive view of equality with several examples included in the document. In the overview to the 'What do we mean by culture?' section on page 6,

the strategy recognises ‘the need to increase participation and promote inclusion in cultural and creative activity’

17. One of the main strands of the Cultural Strategy is Cultural Democracy, emphasising that the arts and culture are for everyone. One action listed is to ‘Address barriers to participation and improve access to arts and cultural experiences’
18. Inclusion and diversity is one of the five cross-cutting themes of the Cultural Strategy as identified on page 26 of the document. This will be used as criteria for evaluating and developing projects by the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership. Specifically, this will provide support for organisations to develop creative opportunities for individuals and groups who experience isolation or discrimination.
19. The Cultural Strategy references Herefordshire Council strategic documents including ‘Herefordshire’s Children and Young People’s Plan’ and ‘Herefordshire Health and Well Being Strategy: Be well, keep well, live well. Endorsement of the Cultural Strategy will provide an opportunity to link in with these strategic documents and develop opportunities to work with Public Health.
20. Endorsing the Cultural Strategy would demonstrate that Herefordshire Council takes its Equality Duty seriously by supporting the above points and would provide a connection between the Cultural Strategy and the Herefordshire Council strategic documents mentioned.

Resource implications

21. Endorsement of the Cultural Strategy has no direct implications on resources.

Legal implications

22. There are no direct legal implications in endorsing the Cultural Strategy.

Risk management

23. No risks have been identified in endorsing the Cultural Strategy.

Consultees

24. No formal consultation has been required for this decision but positive discussions have taken place with Arts Council England and organisations represented on the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership. Consequently, there is a consensus that endorsement of the Cultural Strategy by council would be a progressive step for arts, culture and heritage in the county.

Appendices

Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-2029

Background papers

None