

12 June 2019

## **Cultural Strategy in a Box**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

The Board approved the commissioning of a 'cultural strategy in a box' at its meeting on 21 March. This paper outlines a proposed narrative, scope and budget for the project, in preparation for inviting tenders to deliver it.

### **Recommendation**

For discussion and direction.

### **Action**

Officers to amend, and procure bids to deliver the project following confirmation at the Board's meeting on 12 June.

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## **Cultural Strategy in a Box**

### **Background**

1. Culture is part of the glue that brings our communities together in welcoming, exciting environments. Used effectively, cultural services can revitalise communities, providing hope and a sense of direction towards a more positive future.
2. Culture and cultural institutions like libraries and museums can help change perceptions where a community may have suffered the loss of an important industry, or faced particular challenges of integration or other stresses.
3. Many cultural services provided and supported by councils also provide a driving force for the UK's visitor economy. This can extend our influence beyond local boundaries and even internationally through world-class events, festivals and heritage celebrations.
4. Many councils have been looking at developing cultural strategies to coordinate their approach and develop a shared vision with residents and cultural partners. The recent [Cultural Cities Enquiry](#) endorsed this approach and further encouraged councils to develop cultural compacts.
5. However, many smaller councils have limited resources to develop strategic plans. The LGA wishes to assist these councils to by providing a core framework approach and set of key considerations to explore when developing a strategy.
6. The work will need to draw on the following LGA work:
  - 6.1 [Culture-led regeneration](#)
  - 6.2 [People, Culture, Place: The role of local government in placemaking](#)
  - 6.3 [Culture Hub](#)
  - 6.4 [New Conversations](#)
7. It will also need to draw on publications by Arts Council England, DCMS, and other organisations.
8. While the document will identify key areas that every strategy should expect to include, and outline ways to go about incorporating them, it should not set out to provide a pro forma strategy that could be adopted with minimal local customisation. For a strategy to have a maximum impact, it must be tailored directly to local needs and contexts.

### **Contents outline**

9. The below are suggested as probable chapters within the new document:
  - 9.1. Community engagement – built in from the start to understand local views on sense of place and community, including any key features the community wishes to be known for or develop.

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- 9.2. Co-producing and commissioning with communities – working with communities to design and commission the culture they want.
  - 9.3. Understanding the asset base – identifying people, partners and buildings that can contribute to delivering a cultural vision.
  - 9.4. Managing and aligning the day and night time economies – ensuring an appropriate balance of activities and offer for the area.
  - 9.5. Strategic governance – options for coordinating and managing delivery of the strategy.
  - 9.6. Cultural growth – harnessing and creating opportunities to grow the local creative economy, and how to work with businesses.
  - 9.7. Culture experiences – extending and opening up local residents access to creative and cultural experiences or activities.
  - 9.8. Cultural spaces – managing the asset base most effectively.
  - 9.9. Cultural skills – ensuring that local residents, and particularly children, are able to develop creative and innovative skills.
10. The list above is not exhaustive, and will be developed further in consultation with ACE and the Chief Culture and Leisure Officers Association. Board members are also invited to put forward their own suggestions.

### **Implications for Wales**

11. The WLGA does not commission us to work on wider improvement issues. This service is provided directly by WLGA.

### **Financial implications**

12. We recommend that this project is considered the Board's priority publication during 2019/20. Although this is not envisaged to be a long document, it is likely that extensive consultation will be required.
13. Based on the outline above, we suggest £15,000 is set aside for this work, with comparable documents previously coming in at £12,000.
14. The Board has £40,000 available to it in 2019/20, which will also need to support the new Board that convenes in September 2019. Separate budget proposals are included in other Board papers.

### **Next steps**

15. Officers will develop the proposal further following a steer from the Board.
16. If approved, the project will be put out to tender in mid-June, with an expected completion date of January 2020, in readiness for launch at the annual CTS conference 2020.