

21 January 2020

## **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 2019, and confirmed the direction of travel at its June 2019 meeting.

Board members will receive a presentation from our consultants, We Made That, at this meeting, and are invited to review the direction of the draft strategy. Please note that as this is a draft, it has not yet undergone proof-reading, style guide checks, or the design process to incorporate infographics and images.

The final document will be launched at the annual Culture and Tourism Conference on 2 & 3 March 2020.

### **Recommendation**

That Board members approve the draft document for design and publication.

### **Action**

Officers and consultants to incorporate comments into the final document.

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## **Cultural Strategy in a Box**

### **Background**

1. This work was commissioned in response to feedback that many smaller councils, often districts, lacked in-house capacity to quickly develop strategic approaches to culture.
2. At the same time, there is a growing requirement from funders of evidence of a strategic approach to investment before they commit funds to an area.
3. This document is intended to assist all types of council to understand the process for developing a strategy, the types of evidence available to draw on, the common points of consideration, and suggest ways in which culture can be aligned with other corporate priorities.
4. The document is not intended to be a pro-forma strategy or template. This is because any effective strategy will need to be fully designed in partnership with local stakeholders and communities. However, the document does highlight common themes and features of existing strategies.
5. The document has been developed through desk based research of existing strategies, a call for evidence from the sector, and telephone interviews with key councils and stakeholders such as Arts Council England.

### **Issues**

6. The draft covers the key sections identified by the LGA and approved by the Board at its meeting in March. It includes a number of case studies and signposting to sources of further reading.
7. Feedback from lead members requested that the first draft be strengthened by:
  - 7.1. Providing more practical references to illustrate key points
  - 7.2. An example of a County Council working with a district council; and give greater prominence to the leadership role that different types of council can play ie through a table of actions
  - 7.3. Signposting to sources of key evidence that could inform local strategies eg LG Inform, Taking Part surveys, and CIPFA data.

21 January 2020

- 7.4. Expanding the community engagement and climate change sections to provide additional information on how to embed these issues effectively.

### **Implications for Wales**

8. The WLGA does not commission us to work on wider improvement issues. This service is provided directly by WLGA. However, the majority of the document will be relevant to Welsh authorities, and will be available to them through the LGA website.

### **Financial Implications**

9. This work is being funded from existing budgets, and is on track to complete within budget.

### **Next steps**

10. Board members are invited to provide comments on the draft, with particular reference to whether they are satisfied that the points in paragraph 7 have been effectively incorporated.
11. The document will incorporate comments from the Board and proceed to design and print on 1 February.
12. It will be launched at the annual Culture and Tourism Conference on 2 & 3 March.