

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL SERVICES

DRAFT ARTS AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

1.0 WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO THE COMMITTEE?

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an opportunity to comment on the Draft Arts and Creative Development Strategy for Sunderland.
- 1.2 The Draft Arts and Creative Development Strategy will support the Council in achieving its Strategic Priorities of a Prosperous, Healthy, Learning, Attractive and Inclusive City and support delivery of related themes within the Local Area Agreement.
- 1.3 Monitoring delivery of the Draft Arts and Creative Development Strategy will support the Council's Corporate Improvement Objectives of C101 (delivering Customer Focused Services) and C104 (Improving Partnership Working to deliver 'One City').

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The creative scene in Sunderland is characterised by its growing number of talented practitioners, innovative promoters and enthusiastic participants; by its varied levels of provision and by its continued need for funding and co-ordination to match its extraordinary vision and aspiration. There is a real need for a city wide strategy to protect and nurture the sector and to provide a framework that will help achieve growth and recognition for Sunderland's outstanding creativity and the benefits this can bring.
- 2.2 A strategy can:
 - Ensure the city is well placed to make the most of international, national and regional opportunities to drive local growth and development
 - Enable the City Council to take stock of existing arts provision and decide how best to allocate future resources to achieve its corporate objectives
 - Improve access and opportunity to good quality arts activity for Sunderland residents
 - Set out a vision for the arts in Sunderland which addresses the needs of practitioners, promoters and participants both current and potential

- Ensure that our residents and businesses take full advantage of the economic benefits which sustainable creative sector growth can provide
- Demonstrate to local people, to regional and national bodies and to government the City Council's clear commitment to the creative sector and the benefits it brings
- Provide a framework for officers to plan and deliver a manageable work programme and against which to assess the value of new opportunities which arise during the life of the strategy
- Provide a context for arts practitioners within which to develop their professional practice
- Support arts practitioners in sourcing external funding for projects in the city
- Inform partner authorities and agencies of our aspirations and commitments
- Provide a mechanism for evaluating effectiveness, efficiency and value for money of City Council activity in the creative sector.

2.3 To be successful, a strategy needs to be adopted not simply by the City Council but by all those who wish to see the arts flourish in Sunderland. The Arts and Creative Development strategy has therefore been developed through a process of consultation and research and it is hoped that all those engaged in or affected by the arts will play a part in carrying forward the objectives and actions of this strategy.

3.0 DRAFT ARTS AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1 Our vision for the arts is

engage, inspire and create

In order to sustain this vision, our strategic objectives for 2008 to 2012 are:

- to increase opportunities for Sunderland's residents, visitors and businesses to become involved in creative activity
- to support the development of Sunderland's creative sector in order to maximise the social and economic contributions it makes to our community
- to develop and support creative projects which enhance the built and natural environment

3.2 **Objective 1**

To increase opportunities for Sunderland's residents, visitors and businesses to become involved in creative activity.

3.2.1 **We will increase opportunities for children and young people to become involved in creative activity by:**

- a) Developing facilities and activity at Arts Centre Washington
- b) Creating an environment within the Project Space of the Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art (NGCA) that will encourage families with young children to visit the gallery
- c) Continue to support The Forge Arts Education Agency
- d) Seek to engage 'hard to reach' groups in creative activities

3.2.2 **Developing Sunderland as a Music City**

- a) Commission the production of a Music City Framework
- b) Develop Sunderland Music Forum
- c) Develop programme of youth music activity with a focus in Washington
- d) Develop programme of performance at indoor and outdoor venues across the city
- e) Implement the five year music strategy

3.2.3 **Develop creative interventions and opportunities within the city's festivals and events programme, where appropriate**

- a) Work in partnership with Culture and Tourism's Events Team to deliver Sunderland International Friendship Festival
- b) Create a new focus for the Christmas Festival
- c) Aim to incorporate the bi-annual Audio Visual Festival into the Festival and Events programme.
- d) Explore new opportunities for festivals around public art, World Heritage Site status, riverside and coast.

3.2.4 **Encourage and inspire residents of and visitors to Sunderland to engage with the key cultural venues in the city**

- a) Work in partnership with NGCA, National Glass Centre and Tyne and Wear Museums to develop a programme of activity that encourages residents and visitors to visit all key cultural venues in the city with a focus on families, 16 to 19 year olds and students.

3.2.5 Support the development of the voluntary arts sector in Sunderland

- a) Provide surgeries for groups to attend and hear about new opportunities
- b) Coordinate networking events / speed-dating style for people to meet and look at opportunities for joint working
- c) Continue to involve the voluntary arts sector in advance programmes or community arts projects
- d) Provide opportunities to showcase work created by the voluntary arts sector

3.2.6 Identify ways in which 'hard to reach' groups can engage in creative activity

- a) Establish relationships with key organisations that have access to hard to reach groups
- b) Research and use models of best practice for working with specific groups
- c) Seek to support and help develop arts professionals working in this field in Sunderland
- d) In consultation with Voluntary Arts England, explore the notion of increasing arts/crafts participation amongst priority groups – those belonging to C2DE socio-economic groups, those with a limiting physical or learning disability, or mental illness, those from black and ethnic minority groups.

3.3 Objective 2

To support the development of Sunderland's creative sector in order to maximise the social and economic contributions it makes to our community

3.3.1 We will develop the capacity of the creative industries by:

- a) Engaging a Creative Industries Co-ordinator to map existing provision and work in conjunction with the Arts Team and key partners to deliver the following:
 - Develop networks and communications
 - Provide support and advice to partner organisations to help them to develop their artistic, social and economic impact
 - Provide advocacy and support for young and early career arts practitioners
 - Promote local practitioners through publications, websites, events and festivals, advocacy and commissioning opportunities
 - Help to provide additional spaces for showing and producing work – Arts Centre Washington, ThePlace, NGCA

- Work with Libraries, Community Services, Economic Development and other Council Directorates to help provide further cultural facilities in non arts spaces
- Develop a Creative Industries Group for Sunderland in collaboration with key partners – Arts Council England, North East (ACE NE), Sunnyside Partnership, University of Sunderland. The group's aims would be to develop Sunnyside as a hub for creative industry development in Sunderland.
- Support, advise and signpost young and emerging artists.

3.3.2 We will support practitioners in the creative sector, encouraging skills and professional development by:

- a) Maximising opportunities to provide affordable workspaces or projects where education of skills development is a focus, including development of commercial viability, through advocacy and strategic working across all Departments of the Council and if available through financial support.
- b) Working with others to help provide professional development and support for those in the creative industries.

3.4 Objective 3

To develop and support creative projects which enhance the built and natural environment

3.4.1 We will enhance the city's environment and attractiveness through appropriate commissioning of public art. We will do this by:

- a) Producing a public art strategy
- b) Deliver the current programme of public art commissions
- c) Employing a public art consultant for fixed term assignments
- d) Promoting the programme of public art through high quality work and education programmes, increasing audiences and awareness of public art through temporary commissions, events, exhibitions and performance.
- e) Working with Development and Regeneration Directorate, Sunderland Arc, Sunnyside Partnership and Commissions North to encourage appropriate commissioning of public art in new developments
- f) Working with Children's' Services to encourage appropriate commissioning of arts activities within the Building Schools for the Future initiative.
- g) Delivering the four year 'Fighting Fund' initiative.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The adoption and implementation of the Draft Arts and Creative Development Strategy will support the Council in achieving its Strategic Priorities of a Prosperous, Healthy, Learning, Attractive and Inclusive City and support delivery of related themes within the Local Area Agreement.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Members are requested to consider the information provided and comment on the Draft Arts and Creative Development Strategy.

6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 The Draft Arts and Creative Development Strategy was used to prepare this report.

7.0 APPENDIX

- 7.1 Draft Arts and Creative Development Strategy

8.0 GLOSSARY

NGCA	- Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art
ACE NE	- Arts Council England, North East

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