

**ROLE OF CULTURE IN SUPPORTING  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES - POLICY  
REVIEW 2010/11: SCOPING AND BASELINE  
REPORT**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP: PROSPEROUS CITY**

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES: C101: Delivering Customer Focussed  
Services, C102: Being 'One Council', C103: Efficient and Effective  
Council, C104: Improving partnership working to deliver 'One City'**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out set out the remit, scope and background to the forthcoming policy review into the role of Culture in supporting sustainable communities.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The Annual Scrutiny Conference was held at the Marriott Hotel on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2010. During the Scrutiny Café sessions a number of viable policy reviews were formulated for discussion by Members of the Committee. At the meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2010, following discussions regarding the Work Programme, the Committee agreed to focus on the theme of the role of Culture in supporting sustainable communities.
- 2.2 Members agreed that the study should focus on a number of key themes. The review will explore the ways in which Culture Services (including services such as art, heritage, sport, libraries, leisure and events) can contribute in supporting sustainable communities and promoting a sustainable city.

**3. The Scrutiny Review Process**

- 3.1 Scrutiny reviews will carry out a number of stages in undertaking and completing a review. The stages broadly are:

**Stage 1 Scope**

The initial stage of the review identifies the background, issues, potential outcomes and timetable for the review.

<b>Stage 2 Investigate</b>	The Committee gathers evidence using a variety of tools and techniques and arranges visits where appropriate.
<b>Stage 3 Analyse</b>	The key trends and issues are highlighted from the evidence gathered by the Committee.
<b>Stage 4 Clarify</b>	The Committee discusses and identifies the principal messages of the review from the work undertaken.
<b>Stage 5 Recommend</b>	The Committee formulates and agrees realistic recommendations.
<b>Stage 6 Report</b>	Draft and final reports are prepared based on the evidence, findings and recommendations.
<b>Stage 7 Monitor</b>	The Committee monitors recommendations on a regularly agreed basis.

#### **4. Overall Aim of the Scrutiny Policy Review**

- 4.1 To examine the contribution of Culture in supporting sustainable communities and a sustainable city.

#### **5. Proposed Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Policy Review**

- 5.1 The draft terms of reference for the policy review are proposed:-
- (a) To clarify what we mean by terms such as “Sustainable Communities” and “Culture”;
  - (b) To understand the role of Culture and Cultural activities in supporting sustainable communities, reinforcing community identity and combating social exclusion. To consider the part played by the voluntary and third sector in promoting Culture and delivering associated services as a route to sustainable communities;
  - (c) To consider the Cultural offer available to residents of the city and any ways in which this can be improved or done differently, within the context of the current economic climate;
  - (d) To highlight examples of good practice within the city and among other local authorities and to include a cost benefit analysis of these when appropriate;
  - (e) To examine the role of Culture in supporting economic well being and attracting people to the city;

(f) To consult with the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee on their review of 'ThePlace' as/when appropriate.

## **6. Potential Areas of Enquiry and Sources of Evidence**

6.1 The Scrutiny Committee can invite a variety of people, key stakeholders and interested parties to provide written or oral evidence in order that a balanced and focused range of recommendations can be formulated. A list of potential witnesses, though not exhaustive, is included for Members information:

- (a) Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holders;
- (b) Appropriate Officers of the Council;
- (c) Key Stakeholders and partner organisations ;
- (d) Representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)
- (e) Local residents;
- (f) Representatives of minority communities of interest;
- (g) Ward Councillors;
- (h) Local MPs;
- (i) Local Strategic Partnership, and
- (j) Examples of good practice among other local authorities.

6.2 Community engagement plays a crucial role in the scrutiny process. Consideration will be given to how involvement can be structured in a way that the Committee encourages those views. If felt appropriate the Committee is able to co-opt an additional member to the Committee for the duration of the policy review.

6.3 In addition, diversity issues have been considered in the background research for this enquiry under the Equality Standards for Local Government. As such the views of local diversity groups will be sought throughout the inquiry where felt appropriate and time allows. Consequently, consideration has been given as to how the views of people from minority communities of interest or heritage (for example, people with disabilities, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems, black and minority ethnic people, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people), which may not be gathered through the usual community engagement routes, can be included over the course of the inquiry.

## **7. Funding from the Dedicated Overview and Scrutiny Budget**

7.1 Consideration has been given, through the background research for this scoping report of the need to use funding from the committee's dedicated Overview and Scrutiny budget to aid Members in their enquiry.

7.2 At this stage it is suggested that funding may be necessary to support the following activities:

- (a) Key witnesses;
- (b) Engagement with voluntary and statutory organisations;
- (c) Delegates for expert jury, or a public event;
- (d) General publicity;
- (e) Visits (as necessary) to deliver effective scrutiny; and
- (f) Task and Finish activities (if appropriate).

## **8. Proposed Timetable of the Scrutiny Investigation**

8.1 The following scheduled meetings will include evidence gathering for the study:

Remit and Setting the Scene - September 2010  
Evidence Gathering - October 2010 to February 2011  
Consideration of Draft Final Report - March 2011  
Consideration of Final Report by the Scrutiny Committee - April 2011  
Consideration of Final Report by the Cabinet/Council- June 2011

8.2 Additional working group meetings are likely to be necessary to complete the evidence gathering.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 Members are recommended to discuss and agree the scope of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee's policy review for 2010/11 as outlined in the report.

9.2 Members are also asked to decide upon the operation of any Task and Finish Group.

## **10 Background Papers**

Scrutiny Event Conference Papers  
Sunderland Strategy

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