

From: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services  
Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee - 22 March 2017

Subject: **Draft Cultural Strategy**

Decision Number: **16/00119**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway of Paper: None**

**Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet and County Council**

**Electoral Division: County-wide**

**Summary:** The current cultural strategy “Unlocking Kent’s Cultural Potential, A Cultural strategy for Kent 2010-2015,” has provided a framework for Kent County Council to work more closely with the cultural sector in successfully delivering outcomes across a range of agendas. The strategy has been refreshed and following extensive stakeholder consultation during 2016, a draft document has been produced which will provide a framework for collaborative working and the foundation for a more detailed implementation plan for 2017 to 2027.

The aim is for the refreshed strategy to focus on improving innovation, growth, skills and sustainability in Kent’s creative industries over the next ten years.

The draft sets out the shared ambition of all creative partners in Kent. It is currently out for public consultation to test if people, organisations and partners agree with the overall structure and if there are any obvious gaps.

**Recommendation:**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider the draft strategy document (attached) and offer comments to the Cabinet Member for Community Services.

**1. Introduction**

1.1. ***Unlocking Kent’s Cultural Potential, A Cultural Strategy for Kent 2010-2015*** has been successful in providing a framework for Kent County Council to work more closely with the cultural sector. It has created a common language which has led to a shared understanding of the cultural infrastructure in Kent and the wider political, environmental and social context in which it operates. It has informed a more strategic approach to KCC

investment in the arts and has encouraged leverage by enabling the formation of wider partnerships and a collaborative way of working.

1.2. Notable successes have included:

- The development of the Kent Cultural Transformation Board.
- Relocation to Kent of renowned arts organisations such as Jasmin Vardimon Company.
- The development of a number of new creative workspaces across the county providing opportunities for employment.
- Grass roots development of cultural champions and leaders.
- The launch of ART31, a youth arts movement and a strong co-ordinated offer of cultural entitlement for children and young people.
- Through the South East Creative Economy Network, the development of a Shared Prospectus for the South East to raise awareness of the creative and cultural industries and create a viable economic geography to attract investment.
- A nationally recognised cultural commissioning programme embedding arts and culture into the delivery of public services such as Public Health and Waste Management, providing the sector with new opportunities for development, business models and alternative sources of non-arts investment.

1.3. The refreshed strategy for the period 2017 to 2027 aims to support the continued growth of the creative and cultural sector by making effective use of public and partner investment.

## **2. Consultation**

2.1. The new strategy will be encapsulated in a partnership document. Extensive consultation was conducted during 2016.

2.2. The consultation included two facilitated conference events, 9 local conversations hosted by cultural organisations, a number of smaller focus groups and 121 local conversations and an online survey. The process resulted in high levels of sector engagement and produced a wealth of information.

2.3. 186 responses were received on-line. The responses welcomed increased profile of and advocacy for culture, financial resilience and sustainability, increased high quality cultural offer, business growth and job creation, talent progression and retention.

2.4. The local conversations were a series of small to mid scale events which were organised and run by sector partners. Artsworld, Future Foundry, Art31, Ideas Test, Resort Studios, Tunbridge Wells Cultural Hub and the What Next group all held events. These were successful in capturing views from smaller

groups and individuals such as young people, undergraduates and individual artists who might not be used to working in larger and more formal environments.

2.5. The overall message from the consultation was that the sector had ambition to develop high profile, collaborative work which would raise the profile of culture in Kent. Respondents felt a new strategy should be brief and high level with an online presence capable of being readily updated and that it should be underpinned by an implementation plan and evidence base.

### **3. The 2017-2027 Strategy**

3.1. The aim of the new strategy is to build on the success of the 2010 – 2015 Strategy and identify gaps which the sector should be addressing.

3.2. The Strategy will operate in the context of Kent County Council's Strategic Statement 2015 - 2020, and will inform the Culture and Creative Economy Service Business Plan.

3.3. The Cultural Transformation Board (see appendix A for membership) supported by a small working group have prepared a draft high level document which begins with a vision statement and is then supported by specific high level outcomes under three actions: create, innovate and sustain:

- Create - the production and presentation of excellent art. Bold and experimental art is successful in engaging people. Supporting Kent's network of venues and creative people are essential to maintain quality and wider participation and engagement.
- Innovate – providing creative workspace and learning opportunities enable the development of creative ideas, skills and leadership to encourage new talent and skills.
- Sustain – supporting creative businesses to work more smartly enables them to become more financially resilient. Targeted business support encourages new business models, access to sources of finance and development of audiences and routes to market.

### **4. Next Steps**

4.1. The Strategy was open for public consultation until 12 March and a summary of the findings will be presented to the Cabinet Committee. (The consultation can be found at [www.kent.gov.uk/kentculturalstrategy](http://www.kent.gov.uk/kentculturalstrategy)).

4.2. The draft strategy will be put to the Council before the Summer. It is intended that the published strategy will include illustrations and case studies and a limited print run will be produced for distribution. An online platform will be

established. A detailed implementation plan will be agreed with partners in the Autumn.

## **5. Recommendation**

### **Recommendation:**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider the draft strategy document (attached) and offer comments to the Cabinet Member for Community Services.

## **6. Background Documents**

6.1. Appendix B - Draft Cultural Strategy

## **7. Contact details**

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## Appendix A

### Membership of Kent Cultural Transformation Board

Dawn	Badland	Applause	*
Peter	Bolton	Kent Music	
Andy	Brown	English Heritage	
Barbara	Cooper	KCC	
Sarah	Dance	Freelance	*
Mark	Everrett	Marlowe	
Steph	Fuller	Ideas Test	
Michele	Gregson	Royal Opera House	
Emma	Hanson	KCC	
Peter	Heslip	Arts Council England	
Richard	Hicks	Medway Council	
Dawn	Hudd	Maidstone District Council	
Lucy	Keeley	KCC	*
Jon	Linstrum	Arts Council England	*
Sandra	Matthews-Marsh	Visit Kent	
Janice	McGuinness	Canterbury City Council	
Lucy	Medhurst	Artswork	*
Geoff	Miles	KMEP	
Liz	Moran	Gulbenkian	
Victoria	Pomery	Turner Contemporary	
Ian	Ross	Jasmin Vardimon Company	
David	Smith	KCC	
Bethan	Tomlinson	StrangeFace	*
Alastair	Upton	Creative Foundation	
Tony	Witton	KCC	*

\*Denotes member of working group