

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee**                      **Adult & Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**Date of Committee**                      **10 January 2006**

**Report Title**                                **Taking the Cultural Strategy Forward**

**Summary**                                      The report reviews the Cultural Strategy and asks Members to consider the priority they wish to give it in the future. It asks Members to set up a small group to assist in a review of progress and options for further development and deployment.

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No.

**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?**

**Background papers**                      Warwickshire Cultural Strategy 2003

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-**                      Details to be specified

Other Committees                       .....

Local Member(s)                       Not applicable

Other Elected Members                       Councillor S Tooth, Councillor R Dodd, Councillor Mrs M Haywood – “The scope of this paper appears to me to be very wide. Shall be interested to see the cross parties’ recommendation and to know the level of funding and where it will come from.”

Cabinet Member                       Councillor C Hayfield

Chief Executive                       .....

Legal     Ian Marriott – comments incorporated

Finance     Paul Walsh, Financial Services Manager - approved

- Other Chief Officers  .....
- District Councils  .....
- Health Authority  .....
- Police  .....
- Other Bodies/Individuals  .....

**FINAL DECISION NO**

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:**

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee  .....
- To Council  .....
- To Cabinet  .....
- To an O & S Committee  Adult & Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- To an Area Committee  .....
- Further Consultation  .....

## Agenda No

# Adult & Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 10 January 2006

## Taking the Cultural Strategy Forward

### Report of the Director, Libraries, Heritage & Trading Standards

#### Recommendation

- 1 That members of the Adult and Community Services O&S Committee appoint a cross party group (comprising one of its elected members from each of the political parties) to work with officers and Portfolio Holder to:
  - Review the progress and impact within WCC of the Warwickshire Cultural Strategy
  - Review the priorities identified in the current strategy
  - Make recommendations on the future development of the strategy and its deployment within the overall WCC strategic planning framework
- 2 That a further report be brought to Adult and Community Services O&S Committee containing those recommendations

## 1 The Warwickshire Cultural Strategy

In 2003 the County Council formally adopted the Warwickshire Cultural Strategy 2003-5. The Strategy had been developed in partnership with all 5 District and Borough Councils following extensive consultation with stakeholders. In accordance with guidance from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, the term culture encompassed arts, heritage, libraries, leisure, sport, natural and built environment and tourism. The document is therefore necessarily broad in scope and is intended to be flexible enough to be deployed by each of the Authorities in their own context and in partnership with other agencies.

The Strategy identified 4 key themes and a number of priorities within each of these as set out in the Table below.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Taking Pride in Warwickshire</b></p> <p><b>Our priorities are to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build awareness of, celebrate and take pride in our built and natural environment.</li> <li>• Take a more imaginative approach to making Warwickshire vibrant and attractive</li> <li>• Make sustainability central to all our actions to improve the environment</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Growing the Grassroots</b></p> <p><b>Our priorities are to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the voluntary and community sectors.</li> <li>• Celebrate local communities and diversity.</li> <li>• Build stronger links with projects that contribute to a sense of active citizenship, community safety, lifelong learning, environmental well-being and health.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Increasing Cultural Opportunities</b></p> <p><b>Our priorities are to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broaden access to a wide range of cultural activities.</li> <li>• Plan together and identify priorities for filling gaps in facilities and resources.</li> <li>• Increase the programmes of activities taking place in existing core facilities.</li> <li>• Widen experience and raise aspirations especially among young people.</li> </ul> | <p><i>Investing in Culture</i></p> <p><b>Our priorities are to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the case for culture’s economic contribution</li> <li>• Create better local economic conditions for cultural enterprises to flourish</li> <li>• Help Warwickshire increase community and individual benefits from growth in the creative economy.</li> </ul>                         |

The Strategy has to date had a limited impact on the County Council’s strategic planning as a whole although it has been a driver within LH&TS service planning, supporting partnership working and bids for external funding. Clear correspondence can be found between its priorities and those in the Corporate Business Plan and other WCC strategic documents but this is implicit rather than explicit.

It now seems appropriate to review the priority which the Authority wishes to assign to “culture” in future strategic and service development and also to consider the priorities identified in the Cultural Strategy. In doing so account may be taken of a number of recent developments noted below.

## 2 Culture and CPA

The new CPA framework for single tier and county councils gives significantly more weight to assessment of cultural services than was previously the case. A new and much broader “Culture block” will replace the previous Library and Leisure block” underpinned by a range of performance and benchmarking measures currently under development in all sectors. A clear strategy for cultural services, integrated with the Authority’s overall objectives and supported by good performance results, will in future be essential for the achievement of 3 or 4 star status.

### 3 Culture and Local Area Agreements (LAAs)

All four LAA blocks (see below) offer great potential for recognition of the impact of cultural services, drawing upon the ability of these services to contribute to improvement in quality of life, to do so in partnership with a wide variety of other agencies and to do so at local community level. Arts, Libraries, Heritage, Environment and Tourism services are already engaged in activity directly relevant to LAAs but without a single strategic plan for doing so.

| <b>Local Area Agreement blocks</b>  |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children and young people</li><li>• Safer and stronger communities</li><li>• Healthier communities and older people</li><li>• Enterprise and Economic Development</li></ul> |

### 4 Culture and Learning and Health

There is a particularly strong linkage of culture to learning and to providing individuals and communities with opportunities for self development and maintaining independence. A variety of WCC/partner arts and heritage services (eg Artszone, Warwickshire Youth Arts Network, Social Services arts fund, Heritage Education) currently work with young people and Extended Schools will offer a new basis for delivering cultural opportunities to communities. Learning opportunities for older people in Warwickshire are also currently being reviewed and a report to assist consideration of priority has recently been prepared. This looks at services provided by the Adult and Community Learning Service, Libraries, Heritage and Arts, and Social Services. At national level the Department of Health has published papers (eg 'Independence, Well Being and Choice') which illustrate the value of learning and cultural services in improving the quality of life and well-being of older people.

### 5 Modernisation of WCC

The diverse nature of cultural services prevents their aggregation in any one directorate or department. In the new WCC structure the closer association of Health and Library/Heritage/Arts services will be helpful with regard to that part of the agenda. However key cultural components will still be spread across Adult, Health and Community Services, Environment and Economy, and Children, Young People and Families Services. If an appropriate and deliverable mix of WCC and partner cultural services is to be developed for individual audiences, communities or areas, then both a clear corporate strategy and a planning framework that transcends departmental boundaries will be needed.

## 6 Conclusion

Whatever priority is accorded to “culture”, a more sharply focused strategic framework for culture is needed within WCC to support services, and the authority as a whole, in responding to current challenges and opportunities. Although the existing cultural strategy does not seem to fully fulfil that role, it is nevertheless the logical place to start and is anyway due for review. This is therefore a timely opportunity to develop a prioritised approach reflecting the Authority’s current needs and aspirations with regard to Culture and to share this with partners.

NOEL HUNTER  
Director, Libraries, Heritage & Trading Standards

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01 December 2005