

**Report to: Place and Economic Development Sub-Committee, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

**Report of: Corporate Director, Place**

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**Subject: WORCESTER CITY CULTURAL STRATEGY**

**1. Recommendation**

- 1.1 That the committee agrees to commission a consultant to develop the Worcester City Cultural Strategy; and**
- 1.2 That the committee agrees to the formation of a Cultural Partnership to lead the development and strategic engagement of culture in the city.**

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Worcester has demonstrated that it is economically and culturally ambitious through successful bids for a total of £21.5m from the Cultural Development Fund (the Arches Project) and Future High Streets Fund, as well as a Town Investment Plan which has been developed by a wide range of partners.
- 2.2 Through the Arches Project, the Council is developing an excellent relationship with organisations including Arts Council England and DCMS. The Future High Streets Fund will transform the northern part of the City Centre into a diverse leisure, cultural, entertainment and residential quarter that will attract younger people and families.
- 2.3 This investment will be transformational for Worcester, but it needs strategic management. The creation of a cultural strategy will maximise the potential benefits of this opportunity, cementing existing partnerships and attracting future investment.
- 2.4 Worcester City Council is therefore looking for a consultant to lead the development of a new five-year cultural strategy. The successful consultant will be commissioned to deliver the following two pieces of work:
- i) An overarching vision and ambition for culture in the city
  - ii) A cultural strategy which can be used to support and develop cultural provision within the city and provide a road map for the Council's cultural investment and partnerships
- 2.5 The development of the strategy will be supported by Council officers as well as a newly formed Cultural Partnership made up of cultural stakeholders in Worcester.
- 2.6 The Worcester Cultural Partnership will bring together many of Worcester's cultural stakeholders including local authorities, funders and practitioners, to coordinate cultural vision, promote joint planning and facilitate better engagement between partners across the city.

2.7 The strategy will include:

- A set of priorities, high-level aims and objectives to support and develop cultural provision within the city of Worcester, along with the key actions identified to achieve these objectives;
- A delivery plan to include details of recommended projects and initial actions for delivery of the objectives of the strategy;
- Asset mapping - evidence-based synopsis of existing local and regional cultural provision;
- Analysis of the external environment for arts and culture;
- An audit and review of the current funding and support for culture provided by the City Council;
- A methodology to monitor and evaluate the strategy; and
- Recommendations for the future governance arrangements for the delivery of the strategy.

### **3. Preferred Option**

3.1 The preferred option is to commission a consultant to deliver this work.

### **4. Alternative Options Considered**

4.1 It is not recommended to use existing staff as an external consultant will bring dedicated capacity and the experience of delivering similar projects.

### **5. Implications**

#### 5.1 Financial and Budgetary Implications

£15,000 allocated at P&R committee on 31 July 2019 and £5,040 remaining from the Small Projects Fund.

#### 5.2 Legal and Governance Implications

None identified

#### 5.3 Risk Implications

There is a risk of poor performance from the selected consultant, this will be managed by continual monitoring of performance.

#### 5.4 Corporate/Policy Implications

The consultant will manage the process of developing a cultural strategy to be adopted by the Council in 2022.

#### 5.5 Equality Implications

None identified

#### 5.6 Human Resources Implications

The consultant will report to the Tourism and City Centre manager

#### 5.7 Health and Safety Implications

None identified

#### 5.8 Social, Environmental and Economic Implications

None identified

**Ward(s):** All  
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**Background Papers:** None