

CULTURE PLAN 2021-2030

Appendix A: Briefing Report



1.0 Introduction

In March 2020 Plymouth Culture was mandated to develop a new ten year culture plan, in recognition that the current strategy 'Vital Spark' covered the period 2010 - 2020. Plymouth has, undoubtedly, evolved as a cultural destination over these ten years and in order to continue to strategically position culture as a driving force for regeneration, economic and social prosperity, a refreshed culture strategy was commissioned.

Shortly after this mandate was issued the UK entered a national lockdown, as a result of the escalating Covid-19 pandemic. Rather than halting the development of the Culture Plan this only served to highlight the importance of the Plan in driving recovery and responding to the evident need to reimagine a fairer, greener future for the sector and city.

2.0 Engagement Process

The Culture Plan is the outcome of an extensive and robust engagement process undertaken from March - November 2020. The Arts Development Company were commissioned through an open tender process to undertake a programme of stakeholder engagement. This was adapted in response to the pandemic and emerging thematic to include 38 one-to-one interviews, three externally facilitated workshops, three consultation workshops and five partner-led focus groups. Sector stakeholders have also contributed feedback through the Covid Sector Survey (completed June 2020) and the draft Creative and Cultural Industries Sector Recovery Plan.

This engagement work has been accompanied by work undertaken by the Audience Development Agency, following an open tender process, to collect economic and social impact data relating to the creative and cultural sector in Plymouth. Data from the full report has been used within the strategy.

3.0 Summary Plan

The Plan is aspirational but builds on our proven track record in order to amplify our existing cultural assets. It sets a vision for the future which acknowledges the city's heritage and propels us into a new era where culture is at the heart of the city's place-making agenda. The strategy identifies a need to make culture visible, accessible and investable, so that we can grow audiences, achieve positive social impact and drive inclusive growth.

3.1 Vision

Plymouth is a magnet city, attracting artists, creatives and social activists. Our city's appeal is characterised by our commitment to people and planet and evidenced by our unique cultural offer that reflects, includes and values our diverse communities.

3.2 Key Drivers

Community

1. We will use culture and creativity to nurture community engagement, building happy, healthy, empowered and connected communities.

Environment

2. We will be a city of culture with green credentials, using culture and creativity to tackle the climate emergency.

Inclusive Economy

3. We will position culture as an economic driver, growing and sustaining a diverse ecology of creative individuals and organisations.

3.3 Ambition Statements

1. We will embrace our unique blue-grey-green landscapes, unlocking assets in our built and natural environments to create memorable experiences only imaginable in Plymouth.
2. We will make cultural encounters part of the everyday for everyone.
3. We will develop an exemplary model of co-creation where our audiences are active participants, making our cultural offer authentic and relevant.
4. We will be the UK's leading city for immersive cultural experiences, recognised for our ability to use digital technology to engage communities and build cross-sector connections.
5. We will embed equality at every level of the sector to actively support diversity of voice and celebrate the creativity in everyone.

3.4 Approach

The Plan identified three strategic priorities that will shape decision-making and resource allocation.



3.5 Programmes of Work

The Plan identifies five programmes of work which will enable the Plan to be implemented. Specific projects and initiatives will sit within each programme which will form an operational business plan which, in turn, will be monitored and reviewed at regular intervals.

Our city is our venue - considering the infrastructure required to unlock spaces for culture across the city.

Culture is Alive - coordinated cross-city programming of cultural activity to create an annual programme and more effectively market the cultural offer and in turn the city.

Creative economy - creating the conditions to build and sustain a diverse and vibrant ecology of artists, creatives and cultural organisations.

Community clusters - positioning culture as a key component in building and supporting resilient and empowered communities how can help shape a better future.

Data story telling - a coordinated approach to collecting and presenting sector data so that we are able to tell the story and make the case for culture.

4.0 Strategy Alignment

The Plymouth Plan remains the City's overarching strategic plan, looking ahead to 2034. The Plan sets out a shared direction of travel for its long-term future bringing together a number of strategic planning processes into one place. The Plan sets out the aspiration to be a healthy and prosperous city with a rich arts and cultural environment and we see the Culture Plan sitting alongside this as a mechanism for achieving the strategic objectives.

Policy INT4 is of particular relevance as it seeks to delivering a distinctive, dynamic, cultural centre of regional, national and international renown and sets out how the city will support a thriving arts and cultural sector.

The arts and cultural sector has the ability to have a positive impact across a wide range of topic areas ensuring this Culture Plan also contributes to the following policies:

- Policy HEA1 Addressing health inequalities, improving health literacy;
- Policy HEA2 Delivering the best outcomes for children, young people and families;
- Policy HEA4 Playing an active role in the community;
- Policy HEA7 Optimising the health and wellbeing benefits of the natural environment;
- Policy GRO1 Creating the conditions for economic growth;
- Policy GRO2 Delivering skills and talent development;
- Policy INT3 Positioning Plymouth as a major UK destination;
- Policy INT6 Enhancing Plymouth's 'green city' credentials;
- Policy INT8 Celebrating diverse communities.

The Culture Plan does not specifically include actions relating to sport. However, we see sport as part of the wider cultural identity of the city and recognise that the lines between some art forms and physical activity, such as dance, are rightly blurred. As such we will work closely with the Plymouth Sports Board to ensure the Culture Plan complements the Plymouth Plan for Sport. Where possible we will align our efforts around our shared ambitions to 'get people active' and 'reduce health inequalities and improve people's health and wellbeing'.

The mutually beneficial relationship between culture and the visitor economy remains important for Plymouth. We have worked closely with Destination Plymouth to incorporate the theme 'Our brilliant culture and heritage' into the Plymouth Visitor Plan and see the Culture Plan as a mechanism for delivering again this objective.

The Plan is also aligned with national policy and thinking. We have taken account of National and Local Industrial Strategies to identify how this Plan can support headline ambitions for inclusive growth. Equally, we are mindful of the times we are living in and the need to reflect, reimagine and rebuild, and so have paid close attention to recommendations for recovery, such as Cultural Cities Recovery, published October 2020.

The Plan responds to the Arts Councils strategy, Let's Create, and the four investment principles. These principles naturally align with the ambitions and approach set out in this Plan. They provide a framework, creating the conditions needed for the growth and evolution of the sector and the city.

5.0 Next steps

The Culture Plan will be converted into easy read and audio versions to support accessibility. A pocket guide will also be created in order to reach a wider, more public audience.

In support of the Plan an implementation plan will be developed. It is acknowledged that the sector remains in crisis, which will have implications in the short to medium-term. Therefore, the Creative and Cultural Industries recovery plan will be further developed to serve as the Plan's implementation plan for the next 12-24 months. This will ensure that short-term actions are directly linked to our long-term ambitions whilst enabling us to remain agile and adapt delivery plans over time