

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel



Date of meeting:	11 December 2024
Title of Report:	Culture Plan Annual Update
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications)
Lead Strategic Director:	Karime Hassan (Interim Strategic Director for Growth)
Author:	Hannah Harris
Contact Email:	hannah@plymouthculture.co.uk
Your Reference:	Culture Report 2024
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The Culture Plan was formally adopted by Plymouth City Council in March 2021. As part of our annual reporting process this report provides a snapshot of cultural activity in the city, how activity aligns with the objectives set out in the Culture Plan and what the priorities are for the coming 12 months.

Recommendations and Reasons

Recommendation – to note the report

Reason - to ensure that the committee is kept up to date with progress on the Culture Plan and contributes to setting annual priorities

Alternative options considered and rejected

Update report only, no alternatives required.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This supports the City Vision to be one of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities and the City Council priority of a vibrant cultural offer.

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 have 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.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

None identified directly connected to this report.

Financial Risks

None identified directly connected to this report although it is important to note that the Culture Plan is not supported with a delivery budget and instead works on a distributed partnership model and a number of work programmes are subject to grant funding or external investment.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

Whilst this report has no identifiable environmental implications, being produced in digital format only, the Culture Plan has the environment as a key driver stating, 'We will be a city of culture with green credentials, using culture and creativity to tackle the climate emergency'. As such this will be a key criteria for decision-making as projects develop, to ensure the sector acts responsibly and facilitates others to do the same.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

No other implications identified

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
		<i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Culture Plan Annual Update							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	CH.2 4.25.0 47	Leg	LS/29 60(29)JP/2 7112 4	Mon Off	N/A	HR	N/A	Asset s	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Draffan (Service Director Economic Development)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 25/11/2024											
Cabinet Member approval: Cllr Jemima Laing approved by email Date approved: 25/11/2024											

Culture Plan Annual Update

1.0 Background

The Culture Plan (https://plymouthculture.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Plymouth-Culture-Strategy_REV_P08_fulldraft.pdf) was adopted by PCC in March 2021 and published in May 2021. The Plan is the culmination of extensive consultation with stakeholders and part of a robust process to co-design the ten-year strategy for Culture. The Culture Plan has at its core a focus on people, place and planet and is a direct response to the Arts Council Let's Create Strategy (<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create/strategy-2020-2030>) and is aligned with the Plymouth Plan.

The Culture Plan provides a framework for decision-making and helps to direct resources to identified priorities. The Plan outlines how we grow and sustain a thriving cultural sector in order to positively impact the lives of individuals and the economic and social prosperity of the city. It has been compiled by the sector and key stakeholders to ensure that it is collectively owned and that individuals and organisations understand the contribution they can make towards achieving our long-term ambitions. Ultimately this ensures that we have a strong, collective sector voice within the city and that culture in Plymouth remains an investable proposition to partners external to the city. Our job now is to create the conditions for culture to thrive.

2.0 The Case for Culture

The Creative and Cultural Sector is a high-value, growth sector for the UK. The sector expanded twice as fast as the UK economy as a whole between 2010 and 2022. Latest figures (2022) show that the sector contributed 5.7 percent of all UK GVA, equating to £124.6 billion, in 2022. The spillover effect of the sector is also significant, and somewhat unique. Reports show that on average, each creative job in a locality generates 1.9 jobs in leisure and retail, because creative workers spend their money locally. Data shows that for every 10 jobs in creative industries, a further seven are supported in other sectors and for every £1 contributed in GVA, a further £0.50 is generated in other sectors.

Aside from the obvious economic benefits the sector brings, Culture is an essential part of society. Culture supports the wider place-making agenda, achieving social impact as well as economic output. A strong and authentic cultural offer makes a place more attractive helping to attract and retain students/graduates and the wider workforce. Access to this offer for all can help to support improved mental and physical health outcomes for individuals, community cohesion and educational attainment.

The cultural sector is uniquely positioned to contribute to economic and social outcomes and requires continued and enhanced investment in order to meet the wider objectives of the city and in turn the UK. It is encouraging to see Culture and the Creative Industries identified within the Labour Missions and Industrial Strategy but further and continued alignment is needed to make the case for culture in a holistic way.

3.0 Local & National Context

The sector has been heavily impacted by economic instability over recent years and faces real challenges associated with the cost of living crisis, real time funding cuts and inflationary rises. As a sector and region dominated by micro businesses and freelancers, this impact is often disproportionate, creating a vulnerable ecosystem.

However, Plymouth continues to deliver exceptional culture, working with world-class artists and national/international partnerships. The city continues to build a reputation as a cultural destination and this is highly valued by Plymouth audiences who recognise the quality of cultural programming in the city. The retention of the Arts Council's National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) investment last year is a testament to the hard work of cultural organisations in the city and the strategic relationships that

have built. We will need to continue to champion and value culture locally if we are to retain and grow national investment opportunities in the coming years.

4.0 2024 Strategic Cultural Highlights

The Culture Plan identified a series of Key Actions and workstreams as priorities, designed to create the conditions for the sector to thrive and grow. Below we have highlighted a number of the strategic activities that have been achieved in 2024, contributing to our overall ambitions.

4.1 Sea for Yourself (Place Partnership)

Plymouth Culture has formed a partnership with PCC via the Horizon programme to develop a Cultural Programme for the newly established Plymouth Sound National Marine Park (PSNMP), reconnecting communities with place. Plymouth Culture, on behalf of a city partnership, has applied for funding from the Arts Council Place Partnership programme requesting £751,216 which will be matched by Horizon digital funding (NLHF) of £844,203. The announcement about the funding outcome will be received shortly.

The four-year programme, titled 'Sea for Yourself', has the ambition to harness the full potential of arts and culture to engage audiences and reconnect communities with place, nature and their cultural identity. Delivered as a series of cultural commissions, we will reconnect audiences to their natural environment through a more relevant and inclusive cultural offer. The four large scale commissions will each span 1 year with an embedded community engagement programme to facilitate audience development and co-created artistic outputs.

Commissions will explore the role of digital, testing digital technologies, content and environments to enhance audience engagement. The commissions will be informed by data-insights but we anticipate they will focus on four thematics 1) making visible the underwater world through the activation of citywide screen-based infrastructure 2) exploration of archive & heritage through a co-creation project with communities leading to a digital exhibition 3) inspiring engagement through the creation of an immersive nature-based experience and 4) blending digital and physical locations through outdoor AR/VR enabled installations.

The programme is available to all, but we will focus on a number of target groups within Plymouth which have been identified through baseline segmentation research and the PSNMP pilot programme:

- families with school age children from lower income neighbourhoods;
- Over 55s from lower income neighbourhoods
- Students (HE & FE)
- People with a health condition or impairment
- People from ethnic minority backgrounds

The commissions will sit alongside two interconnected strands of work; 1) a data-insights strand will create a step change in the sectors approach to combining and analysing available data, giving invaluable insights to drive more effective interventions supported by 4 PhD students and 2) a talent development programme supporting people, organisations and ideas that bridge the creative/digital and environmental sector within the blue/green economy.

The project aims to deliver 4 transformational outcomes:

1. Artists – enhanced practice in community engagement, co-creation and nature-based interventions, using digital and in-person approaches;
2. Audiences – more sophisticated audience engagement and retention strategies, using data-insights as a strategic and collective planning tool for cultural activity, diversify audiences and engaging underrepresented communities by making the cultural offer more relevant and accessible;

3. Residents – drive a behavioral shift in residents to become more active marine citizens and cultural participants, with a sense of connection to place and pride in their cultural identity;

4. Partnerships and the Culture sector – strengthen the sector by building new capabilities, related to nature and digital solutions, and establish the partnerships and infrastructures required to sustain culture-led place-making.

We have successfully recruited an experienced Senior Creative Producer to lead the programme and are now focusing efforts on establishing the formal governance for the project and recruiting further staff. We anticipate that the commission process will be announced in early 2025 with delivery of the first creative digital output by December 2025.

4.2 Cultural Education

Plymouth Cultural Education Partnership is overseen by a strategic Steering Group formed of partners from across the city who share a vision to improve access to high-quality arts and cultural education for every child and young person in Plymouth. Membership includes:

Chair - Cllr Jemima Laing, Deputy Leader PCC

Emma Hewitt, PCC Skills Lead

Gem Smith, TAP Head of Engagement Programme

Adam Milford, The Box Senior Engagement and Learning Officer

Lisa Linscott, PCC Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills

Jane Pawson, TRP Head of Artistic Planning and Projects

Steven Forsyth, AUP Head of Pre-Degree

Sarah Holt, Principle Brooke Green School

The steering group has evolved out of many years of work with partners to test, deliver and advocate for cultural education across the city. The 2023 With Flying Colours evaluation, the culmination of a four-year programme of work to deliver play writing skills and co-created performances into schools, made a number of recommendations which have formed the basis of the steering groups strategic plans. Strategic objectives include:

1. Improve the quantity, quality and access to cultural education for children and young people
2. Use our collective power to advocate for curriculum reform ensuring high-quality cultural education is a right of every child and young person
3. Increase pathways for children and young people into the creative and cultural industries
4. Improve the perception of the value, importance and career opportunities in the arts, culture and creative economy
5. Reduce the inequality gap for children and young people living in our poorest neighbourhoods by providing early and repeated arts and cultural interventions
6. Enable all children and young people to reach their full potential through the provision of a diverse, accessible and high-quality cultural education offer

With funding support from PCC we have recently initiated a piece of work to map cultural education provision across the city to better understand impact, access, barriers and need. This mapping will provide evidence for the development of future initiatives co-created with young people.

4.3 Creative Industries Plan

Plymouth Culture has commissioned the development of a Creative Industries Plan with funding from PCC. This is in recognition of the fact that we have been successful as a city in developing the cultural sector and securing external investment, but the same strategic approach has not been developed for the creative industries. The plan is intended to be practical, identifying the current scale and growth of the sector, making comparisons between other UK cities, identifying gaps and opportunities and making recommendations for interventions that have been proven to support sector growth.

The full report is still being finalised but early highlights and recommendations are emerging. It is evident that the size and value of the sector in Plymouth is underperforming compared to other cities of this size. However, Plymouth has significant cultural and creative assets that could be built upon to make a step-change in the sectors development. A strategic development plan for the sector would help to underpin other priority sectors and fulfil the city's ambition to attract talent and to repopulate and regenerate areas of the city. The creative industries bring highly productive, highly skilled jobs, and can also support urban regeneration: research shows creative industries workers and businesses are more likely to move into deprived areas.¹ On average, each creative job in a locality generates 1.9 jobs in leisure and retail, because creative workers spend their money locally.² Oxford Economics³ estimated that the contribution of the creative industries is larger than its direct employment and GVA contribution through procurement and supply chain impacts. Their report states that for every 10 jobs in creative industries, a further seven are supported in other sectors. For every £1 contributed in GVA, a further £0.50 is generated in other sectors.

The plan is therefore recommending the prioritisation of the sector due to its latent potential to thrive and creative positive spillover. Recommendations focus on implementing policies and investment programmes specifically designed to create the conditions for growth. These recommendations include:

1. Embed the creative industries across all policy areas.
2. Activate plans for culture and creative zones as the foundation for supporting tech, music and performance subsectors, clustering and regeneration. These should be situated around existing anchor institutions including The Box, TRP, TR2 and Real Ideas.
3. Establish an immersive training production and training facility in Devonport as part of a Createch Quarter.
4. Increase capacity at TR2 with a view to developing a production park. Further support music, performing and visual arts by delivering on the Plymouth Culture Strategy⁴ and Music Action Plan.⁵
5. Stimulate the tech sector with mechanisms to double the number of businesses and IT professionals in Plymouth over the next 3 years.
6. Nurture pan-regional partnerships to amplify the impact of the creative industries in Plymouth and the Peninsula and attract investment.

The plan will be reviewed by key stakeholders and PCC colleagues with a view to recommending adoption in Cabinet in early 2025.

4.4 Creative Leadership Programme

The Creative Leadership programme was delivered by Plymouth Culture as a pilot to explore and build a new model of distributed leadership, challenging dominant models of hierarchical leadership in ways that support the development of Plymouth's cultural ecology. The programme was funded through Arts Council England regional funds at a cost of £38,900.

The programme achieved its planned objectives by delivering five streams of activity:

- Convening a Focus Group to shape and steer the programme
- Creating Mentorship pairings between Creative Leaders and Mentors

¹ [Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre discussion paper \(August 2023\): Creative Destruction? Creative firms, workers and residential gentrification.](#)

² Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (PEC): [Do Creative Industries generate multiplier effects? Evidence from UK Cities, 1997-2019.](#) Published July 2021.

³ Oxford Economics: [The UK Creative Industries: Unleashing the power and potential of creativity.](#) Published July 2021.

⁴ [Plymouth Culture Strategy](#)

⁵ Plymouth Culture [Music Action Plan](#)

- Awarding Bursaries to Creative Leaders
- Convening Action Learning Sets
- Delivering Events.

Overall, the Creative Leadership programme reached:
40 Creative Leaders and 36 primary stakeholders together representing 46 organisations and 7 independent freelancers.

This was broken down across the streams of activity as follows:

- 7 Focus group members meeting 3 times across the programme and participating in 4 selection panels.
- 20 mentorships pairing creative leaders from 15 organisations with mentors from 16 organisations
- 10 bursary recipients sharing a total of £5224
- 11 creative leaders attending two action learning sets
- A total of 128 people attending the programme events

There are many learning points from the programme and the impact at an individual and collective level has been impressive. We are now disseminating the learning and seeking ways to embed best practice and extend the programme for further cohorts.

4.5 Plymouth Art Weekender

This year we saw the return of the Plymouth Art Weekender (PAW) for the first time since 2020. This important cultural initiative not only activates city spaces but also provides an important platform for artists to showcase their work. Between 18th – 20th October 2024 PAW celebrated the rich and diverse creative community in Plymouth, this year with the theme of ‘do it yourself, help each other out’, capturing the collaborative spirit that flourishes among artists in the city. More than 100 artists exhibited and performed at over 60 venues across the city⁶. This year saw sponsorship from new partners including Plymouth City Centre Company and Drake Circus, helping to match funds from Arts Council England. Effort and support is now required to ensure this becomes and remains a regular feature within the cultural calendar.

4.6 Summer Sessions

The Summer Sessions will be back next June for 4 nights (12-15) delivered in Partnership with Live Nation and sponsored by TK Maxx. This is the next series within our 5 year deal.

Confirmed artists include: Snow Patrol, Pendulum and James. The Saturday night headliner will be announced shortly. Other support acts will be released over the next few months.

PCC’s events team will be facilitating the event alongside the promoters and marketing are supporting Live Nations’ team sharing announcements and advising on local opportunities. The event site will be similar to last year with the set-up and derig currently planned to take place between the 2nd June and 22nd June.

The Plymouth Summer Sessions complies with the Live Nation Environmental Sustainability Charter. This includes commitments to not using single use plastics and prioritising waste reduction, energy recover and disposal. Live Nation/Cuffe and Taylor work closely with The Plymouth City Council’s Events team and towards our shared sustainability goals.

The Summer Sessions set of events across the UK have signed up to the industry recognised Attitude is Everything Live Events Access Charter and have committed to all of their events receiving a

⁶ <https://plymouthartweekender.com/listings/>

minimum standard of SILVER. The Live Events Access Charter is an industry standard designed to help event organisers build disability equality into all aspects of an event. The Plymouth City Council Events team have already adopted the Charter for their own signature events such as Armed Forces Day and The British Firework Championships.

We have a contractual agreement in place regarding free tickets -

- 100 of the 300 tickets must go to the residents around the Hoe, this is distributed via the Hoe resident forum and it worked really well last year.
- The bulk of the remaining tickets should go to disadvantaged groups and first offer to potentially children's services and/or Adult social care which we also facilitated last year via PCC
- We will hold back 50 tickets for councillors and their guests which can be booked through Catherine Gledhill.

The Plymouth City Council Events team have been working closely with the promoters to facilitate local grassroots performance slots on stage which have been offered if and when they become available. Plymouth Culture and the Plymouth Music CIC have requested a number of other interventions that would ensure this event brings tangible benefits to the local grassroots music sector. These requests include a levy on tickets to create a local music fund, internship and apprenticeship opportunities for aspiring musicians and pre and afterparty collaborations with local venues. These opportunities have not been secured for the 2025 event but we will continue conversations with all parties in the hope that they might be achieved for 2026.