

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	10 March 2025
Title of Report:	Creative Industries Plan
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:	CII00325
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present the Creative Industries Plan – 'Plymouth Rising' for endorsement and adoption by the city council.

Recommendations and Reasons

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Adopt the Creative Industries Plan;
2. Mandate Plymouth Culture to develop a full implementation plan, based on the outline action plan within the Creative Industries Plan, with support from PCC and city stakeholders, to be presented to Scrutiny/Cabinet in the next financial year.

Reason: so that the Creative Industries opportunity in the city can be fully realised and the sector can play an active part in the city's economic growth.

Alternative options considered and rejected

1. No alternatives identified.

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. The Culture Plan sits alongside this as a mechanism for achieving the strategic objectives and the Creative Industries Plan is a subset of this.

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 the recommendations set out in the plan will be subject to grant funding or external investment on a case-by-case basis.

Legal Implications

(Provided by Julie Parkin/JJP)

None.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

This report has no identifiable environmental implications. Any recommendations taken forward from the plan within the implementation plan will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure environmental sustainability.

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.*

None.

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	Briefing Report							
B	Creative Industries Plan							
C	Equalities Impact Assessment							

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) <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

Sign off:

Fin	DJN. 24.2 5.17 4	Leg	LS/29 60(45)JP/2 6022 5	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: 25/02/2025											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Jemima Laing approved by email Date approved: 25/02/2025											

Creative Industries Plan

Commissioning Process

In the summer of 2024 Plymouth City Council asked Plymouth Culture to lead the development of a Creative Industries Plan. We commissioned creative industries specialist Joanne Evans and data journalist Miriam Quick to deliver this work.

The Creative Industries Plan draws data from a range of sources including Companies House, Data City, the Office for National Statistics (ONS), and DCMS, to understand our baseline. It also takes account of information gathered from cultural organisations and creative businesses through 1-2-1 consultations. The report considers examples of effective support for the creative industries elsewhere in the UK that we might learn from.

To define the scope of the work we used the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) classification of the creative industries. This encompasses nine subsectors:

- IT, software and computer services
- Film, TV, video, radio and photography
- Advertising and marketing
- Publishing
- Music, performing and visual arts
- Architecture
- Design and designer fashion
- Museums, galleries and libraries
- Crafts

Creative Industries Plan Executive summary

An opportunity for growth and diversification

The creative industries sector is one of the UK's eight priority industrial sectors. As a nation, we excel at these industries and they have expanded twice as fast as the UK economy as a whole between 2010 and 2022, contributing 5.7% of all UK GVA.ⁱ

They can flourish anywhere in the UK, given the right conditions, without needing much capital infrastructure or resources. The Great South West had the joint fastest creative industries jobs growth of any British region between 2019 and 2022 (4.1% CAGR) and over the longer term (2015-2022), the GSW's creative industries jobs growth rate (2.8% CAGR) approached London's (3.5% CAGR)ⁱⁱ.

In Plymouth, the Council has made significant investment in cultural assets. Now is the time to leverage the investment in these assets and organisations and work with partners to stimulate growth in the creative industries. The Creative Industries in Plymouth represent untapped potential. Stimulating the sector and participating fully in the national and regional growth trend would gain jobs and GVA in a high growth, high value sector. If Plymouth's creative industries job share reached close to the South West average (a Location Quotient of 0.75), it would generate 1,640 jobs in Plymouth and 2,138 in the TTWA. This would generate an additional £90-126 million GVA per year for the local authority district and £112 - 165 million for the TTWA.

A stronger creative industries sector would help Plymouth diversify its economy, making it more resilient and mitigating its dependence on a small number of sectors and publicly funded service jobs,ⁱⁱⁱ and it would drive innovation. When industry intersects with creativity and technology, the new hybrid businesses form the backbone of the future economy.

A vibrant creative industries sector will also help Plymouth attract talented people, and their families, to live in the city, helping to meet the demand, identified in the economic strategy, for a large number of additional skilled workers in key industries over the next 10 years.^{iv} It may also help repopulate and

regenerate areas of the city as research shows creative industries workers and businesses are more likely to move into deprived areas.^v

Building on Plymouth's strengths

Nearly 9,000 people worked in creative industries and creative roles in Plymouth in 2023, representing the wider creative economy.^{vi} However, the sector is relatively small when compared with the national picture, with just 2.1% of Plymouth employment in 2022 in the creative industries, compared to 4.4% across Britain. The sector is also small relative to other industries in the city, and its recent growth has not tracked that of the wider South West. The creative industries share of Plymouth employment changed little between 2015 and 2022, illustrating that organic growth alone will not be sufficient to meet our growth ambitions.

Three subsectors lead Plymouth's creative industries: IT, software and computer services; Film, TV, video, radio and photography; and Music, performing and visual arts. The largest by raw job count is IT, as it is nationally, but this is significantly lower than you might expect of a city the size of Plymouth, the location quotient of this subsector was just 0.30.^{vii} This subsector is an essential foundation for other industries, driving digital transformation and enabling innovation across the board and is therefore not be under stated as an essential driver for growth.

Film, TV, video, radio and photography is the largest subsector in Plymouth by total turnover. It includes some of the largest creative industries businesses in Plymouth, but recent market disruption is putting these firms under pressure. Supporting this subsector to work together with IT businesses and Plymouth's immersive infrastructure to develop future-proofed immersive content and services will help it grow.

Music, performing and visual arts is the strongest creative industries subsector in Plymouth. In 2022, its share of jobs in the city was comparable to the British average – with a big contribution from Theatre Royal Plymouth, Plymouth's largest creative industries employer. The subsector also contributes the most to the city's economy in GVA terms: at least £42.5 million. Thriving music, performing and visual arts activities bring vibrancy and playfulness to Plymouth – essential for making the city a great place to live, improving the city's quality of life for current residents, helping to retain graduates, and attracting talent to the city. However, this subsector is vulnerable across the UK and employment figures have been declining in recent years. We may still be seeing the effects of the pandemic on a subsector that was particularly hard hit by lockdowns. Music, performing and visual arts businesses will need the right conditions to bounce back fully and maximise their potential to enrich the city.

Developing a thriving ecosystem

Creative industries companies prosper in geographical clusters, where they benefit from proximity to skills, customers and knowledge, and when they are clustered in deprived neighbourhoods, this can have a modest, but important, impact on regeneration. Within Plymouth, creative businesses are scattered, making them less visible to each other and to local communities, potentially creating a barrier to their growth. Establishing creative zones would help businesses work together and grow, make creative activity in Plymouth more visible, and generate more vibrant neighbourhoods.

Cultural organisations, universities and Plymouth City Council have come together before to support the creative industries and an interconnected, long-term plan that embeds stimulation for the creative industries into every policy – from skills to planning – to enable communities and businesses to grow the sector is now needed.

Plymouth has the potential to become the urban creative capital of Devon and Cornwall. Compared to the broader South West region, it has a high proportion of young people aged 18-34, its housing is relatively affordable^{viii} and digital connectivity in the city is currently good.^{ix} It has a much higher share of people in further education and skills than the English average.^x All of these are strong reasons for

creative industries businesses to be based in the city.

Plymouth can learn from strategies adopted in other English industrial cities where the creative sector is becoming a priority. Examples include designating cultural and creative zones (CCZs) or quarters; partnerships to deliver incubators and investment funds to stimulate the birth and growth of tech businesses; and production centres to grow the performance and screen industries.

Creative Industries Plan - Recommendations

- Embed the creative industries in all council policy areas.
- Designate culture and creative clusters (CCCs) around existing anchor organisations as the primary mechanism for partners to deliver business support services, to stimulate clustering and neighbourhood regeneration and make Plymouth's creative identity more visible.
- The initial CCCs should be: the Culture Quarter around The Box; a Createch Quarter focusing on a screen and immersive training cluster around the Market Hall; increased capacity at Theatre Royal's TR2 production base with a view to developing a production park; and a Performance Quarter around TRP, extending from the Guildhall to the Millennium building.
- Nurture regional and national partnerships to attract investment and deliver the business support.
- Build a pipeline of creative businesses by providing support and investment mechanisms for creative businesses at each stage of their growth.
- Stimulate the tech sector with mechanisms including early-stage investment to double the number of businesses and IT professionals in Plymouth over the next 10 years and stimulate R&D collaborations with other sectors.

Cabinet Recommendations

1. Adopt the Creative Industries Plan
2. Mandate Plymouth Culture to develop a full implementation plan, based on the outline action plan within the Creative Industries Plan, with support from PCC and city stakeholders, to be presented to scrutiny/cabinet in the next financial year.

ⁱ DCMS: [DCMS Sectors Economic Estimates Gross Value Added 2022](#). Released 15 February 2024. 2022 data is provisional. Data in current prices.

ⁱⁱ Leading from the Edge: Creative Industries in the Great South West.

ⁱⁱⁱ [The Centre for Cities](#) estimates 35.7 percent of jobs in Plymouth in 2022 were publicly-funded service jobs, the ninth highest of 62 UK cities.

^{iv} [Plymouth Economic Strategy 2024](#)

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

^{vi} ONS Local: [Overview of creative jobs and creative industries, Great South West, 2014 to 2023](#). Released 27 September 2024. Custom data request reference 2381, with data based on the Annual Population Survey. Data for Plymouth local authority district.

^{vii} The local authority district and TTWA have the same location quotient.

^{viii} ONS: [House price to workplace-based earnings ratio](#). Released 25 March 2024.

^{ix} Ofcom via ONS: [Explore local statistics](#). Data for January 2024.

^x ONS: [Explore Local Statistics – Plymouth](#). Data for 2023 or 2022-23.