

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: The Economy, Arts, Sports & Public Realm Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 18/11/2024

Subject: Cultural Strategy Update

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Responsible Director: Bram Kainth, Executive Director of Place

SUMMARY

This report sets out the progress made on the implementation of the Cultural Strategy adopted by Cabinet in October 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee is recommended to review and comment on the report.

Wards Affected: ALL

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Corporate Plan and the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	The strategy supports local businesses and the creative sector by attracting investment and tourism, boosting the borough's cultural economy.
Creating a compassionate and inclusive council	By prioritising access and diversity through the theme of Inclusion, Where Culture Connects ensures cultural opportunities for all residents.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	Developed in partnership with the community, the strategy reflects local priorities and encourages resident-led cultural initiatives.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	Through external funding and partnerships, the strategy achieves cultural impact with minimal cost to the Council, optimising resources.
Taking pride in H&F	The strategy celebrates local heritage and creativity, fostering a strong sense of community pride in Hammersmith & Fulham.

Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	The strategy incorporates sustainable practices across cultural projects, promoting environmental awareness through its programming.
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Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Background

1. The Cultural Strategy “Where Culture Connects” was approved in October 2023, following an extensive process of co-production with the cultural sector and related stakeholders. The strategy was a recommendation of the Borough’s Arts Commission.
2. Where Culture Connects sets a vision for “A place where our people celebrate together and feel they belong, where visitors are wowed and where local creativity supports innovation and drives investment, jobs and shared prosperity.
3. 55 actions were included in the strategy, which links to both the Industrial Strategy and the Council Business Plan, aligning it with wider strategic aims for the economy, sustainability, health and wellbeing, education and place-making.
4. The term “culture” is used to incorporate contemporary and traditional arts, local culture and community events, heritage and the cultural and creative industries. The strategy has four themes which are Inclusive, Creative, Destination and Together. Addressing climate change is a cross-cutting theme.

Foundation Actions

5. The strategy identified four Foundation Actions which were the initial enabling steps for delivery.
6. Governance – a Delivery Board has been established with diverse representation from local partners. This takes the form of a Cultural Compact, which is a nationally recognised model for a stakeholder partnership including cultural and community organisations, education, health and private sector colleagues. The Cabinet Member is the Council’s representative on the Compact, which is also called Where Culture Connects and which has met monthly since its inception. Discussion has been opened with Arts Council England concerning the potential to support the Compact’s work as part of the national network of Compacts.

7. While the Council is the lead organisation for delivery of discrete actions and has a role to play in many others, the responsibility for prioritisation and delivery of the partnership strategy sits with the Compact as a whole.
8. Work on a data framework to inform planning and monitor progress is currently under way. This framework aims to support data-driven decision-making across Cultural Services by establishing baseline metrics, setting measurable targets, and facilitating regular reporting on key performance indicators (KPIs). The framework will be finalised once the Compact has reviewed the priority actions, to ensure measures are relevant.
9. Promoting our Offer – the Arts Marketing Group established for the H&F bid to become London Borough of Culture has been amalgamated with the Tourism Network to form a strategic approach to Destination Management.
10. The Resource Plan – the Council has supported the initial setup of the Compact with officer time and resources to recruit an independent Chair. As it refines its immediate, mid and long term priorities, the Compact will need to raise funds to support delivery of the action plan, including raising funds from statutory, private and voluntary sector sources. The Council has agreed to act as the accountable body for the Compact and will align the funding of its own activities to support delivery.

Establishing the Compact's Related Partnerships

11. In order to deliver the strategy, a series of related specialist groups are being established, as set out below.

Cultural Forum

12. Through engagement with stakeholders during the development of the Borough of Culture bid in 2023, the need to build local capacity in the cultural sector was identified as being a barrier to fully realising its potential. Where Culture Connects has established a Cultural Forum which is open to any organisation or individual with an interest in developing culture in the Borough.
13. The Forum met for the first time on 8th October 2024 with 80 people attending round table discussions to inform its future programme. The priorities identified at this session were:
 - Collaboration on promotion
 - Mapping and sharing data on participation & inclusion, the Borough's arts organisations and artists, assets and resources
 - Creative and cultural education (including supporting young artists, early career opportunities and apprenticeships)
 - Raising funds and targeting existing funding to support the strategy
 - Using heritage to engage diverse groups and strengthen the local identity including amongst young people
 - Ensuring the Civic Campus complements, rather than competes with the existing offer

- Increasing accessibility by addressing barriers to participation arising from location and transport availability, low levels of awareness or lower levels of disposable income
 - Focussing on 2026 as a year between London Borough of Culture titles to collaborate on a high profile programme
14. The Council's Cultural Services team has launched a bi-monthly newsletter to keep stakeholders informed about arts and cultural developments across the borough, highlighting upcoming events, partnership opportunities and funding news. These regular updates aim to strengthen connections between the Council and the Cultural sector. The newsletter is promoted via the Council's website.

Destination Management Partnership

15. To enable the delivery of the Destination theme, a Destination Management Partnership (DMP) has been established. The DMP is the lead partnership for developing business and leisure visitor-oriented product, for effective promotion of H&F to the domestic and in-bound visitor market, and for improving the experience of visitors while in the Borough.
16. The DMP brings together commercial, retail, events, cultural, hospitality and business representatives and has taken early action to pilot a Countdown to Christmas in H&F campaign to test the effectiveness of collaborative working on cross-marketing and visitor itineraries.
17. The DMP will link to the national structures for the Visitor Economy which include the work of London & Partners and, as it collects and analyses data relating to the visitor market, it will become more effective in creating product and promotional activities which tap market potential.

Heritage Partnership

18. Both the Compact and the wider Forum have identified Heritage as being critical to the success of the cultural strategy. The strategy sets an ambition to create a Black History Museum and a more prominent Black History Month as part of the ambition for Inclusive cultural provision in the Borough, working with historical groups, members of the Windrush generation and others to progress feasibility of a Black History Museum - to review sites, content and funding options. A steering group for this project has recently been established.
19. The Forum meeting on 8th October suggested a new Heritage partnership within the Compact governance, which would consider how trails, built heritage, heritage events, significant sites such as Fulham Palace, national initiatives (eg Black History Month) and local archive and history collections could be optimised. A new Heritage Partnership is therefore in the planning, with the expectation of forming in early 2025.

Cultural & Creative Education & Skills Partnership

20. The Borough's former Cultural Education Partnership was dissolved during the pandemic. Both the Compact and the wider Forum have identified cultural and

creative education as a priority. Cultural and Creative Education and skills link closely to opportunities identified in the Industrial Strategy and the current national review of the curriculum. Higher and Further Education partners are working with the Compact and with the Council's teams in school effectiveness, cultural services and economic development to develop a fit-for-the-future model for a new partnership with support from Arts Council England.

Strategic Actions

21. The actions set out in the ten year strategy have been reviewed by both the Compact and the Cultural Forum to prioritise the tasks. Further work is planned by the Compact to sequence and plan the resources for delivery of the actions.
22. The different Council teams involved (including in Cultural Services, in Economic Development, the Civic Campus and Corporate Communications) have incorporated the actions into their work planning.
23. The Appendix to this report summarises the actions as Green (completed or incorporated into Business as Usual), Amber (work has begun) or Red (not yet started). 31 of the 55 actions are under way in some form. One action has been removed (duplicating another action). 23 Actions remain to be started.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Cultural Strategy Action Status