

Report to: East Sussex Strategic Partnership (ESSP)
Date: 18 July 2013
Title: East Sussex Cultural Strategy
Author: Sally Staples, Cultural Strategy Manager, East Sussex County Council
Purpose: To seek endorsement of the county wide East Sussex Cultural Strategy

Recommendation:

That the East Sussex Strategic Partnership:

1. Endorse the county wide East Sussex Cultural Strategy

1. Introduction

The East Sussex Cultural Strategy responds to the vision set out in “Pride of Place”, the Sustainable Community Strategy produced and led by the East Sussex Strategic Partnership. The Strategy states that “We want to raise the quality of life for all our residents by securing their future prosperity and well-being and improving the places where they live, work and spend their leisure time. Our vision therefore is: to create places where everyone can prosper, be safe and healthy, and live in a high quality environment.”

Enabling people to enjoy culture, sports and leisure is one of the ten priorities identified. Culture earns its place as a priority because, as with the others it is not simply important in its own right but has a role to play in delivering the other priorities we have identified for our County. This Strategy describes how the sector can contribute to these overarching County priorities to achieve relevant outcomes.

2. Supporting Information

The County Council has led the development of a Cultural Strategy for the county. It is a ten year partnership framework produced by ESCC on behalf of government agencies and services, key cultural organisations and cultural leaders. The Strategy’s purpose is to:

- Describe the power and impact of the cultural sector economically, environmentally and socially in the County currently;
- Provide leadership by setting County level strategic direction and priorities for investment; and
- Identify reasonable steps which can be taken to secure a thriving cultural sector.

3. East Sussex Cultural Strategy Task and Finish Group

The development of the Strategy has been overseen by a Task and Finish Group whose role has been to ensure that the Strategy is:

- Developed appropriately
- Dove tails with other existing and emerging County wide, district and borough strategies
- Involves other organisations beyond the County Council and the Cultural Sector
- Placed in the hands of a longer term appropriately constructed group beyond its publication

This group is made up of County Council officers across all departments, districts and boroughs, voluntary sector representatives, cultural leaders and businesses. It includes

Arts Council England, South East and representatives from the East Sussex Cultural Leaders Network.

4. Methodology

The strategy has been prepared based on the following sources of information:

- One to one and group discussions with stakeholders
- Desk based research of relevant publications, strategies, statistical data and data on Cultural and Creative Industries
- Review of East Sussex County Council “Have Your Say” research 2009 – 2012
- The emerging East Sussex Cultural Research projects

The consultation has helped us to secure some important partners including an endorsement from the Clinical Commissioning Groups.

5. Content

The Strategy details the current context; a vision and three priorities:

1. Create an environment where great cultural experiences are available to everyone to enhance their quality of life;
2. Create an environment which enables the cultural and creative economy to expand and enhances our ability to attract other businesses; and
3. Develop and promote well packaged cultural tourism offers which celebrate the identity of East Sussex, raise its profile and attract more visitors and businesses to the County.

Plans are set out for implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

The document has undergone an Equalities Impact Assessment, both at consultation stage and revisited when the final document was produced.

7. Next Steps

Actions will be identified through themed meetings in line with priorities. Likely to include:

- Devonshire Park Project Eastbourne
- A county wide training and networking event for small arts organisations
- Joint marketing campaigns between cultural organisations
- More commissioning of cultural activity to help address health and education outcomes
- Better use of web resources to provide useful information to support the cultural sector.

8. Approval

One of the most practical purposes for having a county wide cultural strategy is to provide a strategic rationale for attracting external investment. The draft strategy is already informing this advice. The East Sussex Strategic Partnership are asked to endorse the strategy in order to secure one overarching strategic framework for the growth of the cultural sector in East Sussex.