



Chelmsford City Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee

20th November 2023

Presentation on Cultural Strategy

Report by:

Culture Services Manager

Officer Contact:

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Purpose:

A presentation by Claire Gevaux, CEO of Culture Chelmsford, to provide a summary overview of the first district-wide Cultural Strategy for Chelmsford. To explain the rationale for establishing a Cultural Compact and set out its strategic roadmap.

Highlighting options for Chelmsford City Councillors, across all parties, to monitor progress and ensure equitable, diverse and inclusive engagement and outcomes for all local residents and their communities.

Recommendations

- Chelmsford City Council continue its support for Chelmsford's Cultural Strategy and its recommendations, which was commissioned and published, on behalf of the entire district, by the independent charity Culture Chelmsford.

- Oversight and responsibility for reviewing the Cultural Strategy and the Council's ongoing strategic support, shifts to the Chelmsford Policy Board.
 - A cross party representation is nominated to sit on a 'Communities Working Group' set up by Culture Chelmsford to ensure consultation, engagement and investment is equitable, diverse and inclusive with outcomes for all local communities.
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1. Background or Introduction

1.1 Chelmsford Culture, an independent charitable trust, led the development of a new cultural strategy for the district of Chelmsford. Chelmsford City Council is a key stakeholder in its development, delivery, and evaluation. To support and scrutinise the development of the strategy, a task and finish group was established to:

- Support access to seldom-heard voices and often marginalized communities.
- Test assumptions and evidence of current provision in Chelmsford, including its strengths and weaknesses.
- Test and confirm the strategy vision, objectives, and support subsequent action planning and evaluation.
- Establish the contribution - social, economic, and environmental - that culture makes to community and individual wellbeing.

1.2 Feedback from the Task & Finish Group was provided at an Overview & Scrutiny meeting in July 2023. It was recommended that a cross-party Task and Finish group continues. The proposed objectives of the group were to ensure:

- The Arts & Culture is effectively engaged with and embedded across every service in the council.
- The council is ensuring that diversity and inclusion are taken seriously - geographically and demographically - and the commitment to support access to seldom-heard voices and often marginalized communities is maintained.
- The council is delivering on its commitments to embed culture in the Corporate and Local Plan.
- The Council is meeting and playing an active role in establishing a cultural compact - leading by example.

2. Conclusion

2.1 It was agreed that further work was required to establish terms of reference for the Task & Finish group to assess whether it was an appropriate mechanism for achieving these objectives and ongoing cross-party engagement.

2.2 Upon further review post-meeting, it is now recommended that oversight and responsibility for reviewing the Cultural Strategy and the Council's ongoing strategic support shifts to the Chelmsford Policy Board.

2.3 In addition, it is recommended that a cross party delegation is nominated to sit on a 'Communities Working Group' due to be set up by Culture Chelmsford in January 2024. The objective is to ensure consultation, engagement and investment is equitable, diverse and inclusive with outcomes for all local communities.

2.4 To aid decisions, a presentation by Claire Gevaux, CEO of Culture Chelmsford will provide a summary overview of the first district-wide Cultural Strategy for Chelmsford, explain the rationale for establishing a Cultural Compact and set out the strategic roadmap.

Consultees:

Membership of the Task & Finish Group was as follows:

- Cllr Jude Deakin
- Cllr Richard Shaw
- Cllr Jannetta Sosin
- Cllr Chris Shaw
- Cllr Andrew Thorpe Apps
- Cllr Mike Steel
- Cllr Keith Bentley

Background papers and Relevant Policies and Strategies:

- [Chelmsford's Cultural Strategy](#)