

**REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER**  
**BIRMINGHAM CULTURAL STRATEGY**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The attached strategy, ***Imagination, Creativity & Enterprise***, sets a direction for the city's cultural and creative sector for the next three years. The new strategy attached to this report has been developed by the Cultural Strategy Group, chaired by Councillor Penny Holbrook (formerly Cabinet Member for Learning, Skills & Culture), as a partnership document for the city as a whole, not a Council strategy. The Cultural Strategy Group included cultural and creative sector businesses, individuals, businesses, higher education and public sector bodies, such as other cultural funders and commissioners of other services. This reflects the need for action from the wider constituency of interest in order to fulfil the shared ambition "**Birmingham is a non-stop city of culture<sup>1</sup>, with local roots and international reach – a capital of imagination, creativity and enterprise**".

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The Cultural Strategy (Appendix One) is a part of the corporate policy framework. The previous strategy (Big City Culture) was developed as part of the work to assemble Birmingham's bid for the UK City of Culture title in 2010 and expired in 2015.
- 2.2 In the intervening period, a series of related strategic documents, most notably the Heritage Strategy 2015-19 and the Public Art Strategy 2015-19 have been developed through partnership processes. The Cultural Strategy is consistent with the main actions in these strategies, and some of the headline actions are also included specifically.
- 2.3 Although the strategy is part of the Council's policy framework, in keeping with the new policy direction to be partnership (not Council) led, in 2015 the Cabinet Member for Skills, Learning & Culture invited five cultural leaders in the city to join a steering group and to chair the working groups which developed the document.
- 2.4 As the strategy is a partnership document, it is appropriate for a partnership to govern its delivery and a Partnership for Culture (PfC) is proposed for this purpose. The PfC will include the working group chairs, as well as representatives of organisations with an interest in the city's continued thriving and vibrant cultural life. It is intended that the partnership will develop Terms of Reference which enable joint and aligned commissioning of activities to progress actions in the strategy as necessary. Separate oversight of the Heritage and Public Art strategies is already in place.
- 2.5 Appendix Two sets out the responsibilities of the Council as part of this arrangement as agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 19 April 2016.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this strategy, "culture" means performing arts, visual art, craft, film, media (including digital media), combined arts, museums, heritage, libraries, public art, creative industries and tourism related activity.

### **3. Themes of the Strategy**

- 3.1 Culture on Our Doorstep - becoming a leader in cultural democracy where people come together to co-create, commission, lead and participate in a wide range of locally relevant, pluralistic and community driven cultural ventures.
- 3.2 Next Generation - ensuring that all children and young people have opportunities to engage with a diverse range of high quality arts and cultural experiences at every stage of their development and which they value as worth it.
- 3.3 A Creative City - supporting and enabling the growth of creative and cultural SMEs and micro-businesses and individuals through business support, skills and talent development and access to finance.
- 3.4 Our Cultural Capital - cementing Birmingham's role and reputation as a centre of imagination, innovation and enterprise, with local roots and international reach.
- 3.5 Our Cultural Future - adapting our business models to ensure they are capable of sustaining and growing the sector into the future through collaboration, diversification, rebalancing and devolution.

### **MOTION**

That the City Council adopts the attached partnership strategy for Culture, and undertakes to integrate its principles and actions into service planning for the period, leading the process where indicated.