

Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

The [EIA guidance notes](#) will help you complete this assessment.

If you need help or advice please contact Paul Harding. P.harding@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

Organisation prepared for

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Version

Draft 1

Date Completed

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Description of what proposed change or policy is being impact assessed

This report introduces the Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) Cultural Strategy. It includes a vision, three key themes and related objectives that build on the Council’s intention to ‘*support the enhancement of arts and culture provision within the District*’ as stated in the Council’s Corporate Strategy 2019- 2023.

This strategy further sets out that strategic commitment to shaping our District around a Creative Economy that includes harnessing the power of our Arts and Heritage and supporting local creative industries – with refocused objectives to respond to the economic and social recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Cultural Strategy does not describe the specific actions that need to take place nor who will carry them out – it acts as a ‘framework’ upon which an iterative delivery plan is being developed and implemented in partnership (predominantly envisaged as sector led delivery, supported by SWT in a leading and convening role).

Where the action plan and projects are developed to deliver against the cultural strategy, additional Equality Impact Assessments will be completed where relevant.

Evidence

What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups? Sources such as the [Office of National Statistics](#), [Somerset Intelligence Partnership](#), [Somerset’s Joint Strategic Needs Analysis \(JSNA\)](#), Staff and/ or [area profiles](#), should be detailed here

- Cultural resources audit undertaken in SWT area - assets identified and categorised
- Arts Council England (ACE) 10 year strategy ('Let's Create') and ACE Equality objectives, which are:
 - o *Improving access to the sector for disabled, neuro-divergent and D/deaf workers, audiences and participants*
 - o *Ensure funded organisations and projects improve and can demonstrate meaningful engagement with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic workers, audiences and participants*
 - o *Challenging racism and embedding anti-racism values across all of the Arts Council's policy and funding decisions*
 - o *Address specific disadvantages facing Children and Young People and Older People as a result of Covid-19*
 - o *Improving access to creative and cultural activities to those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.*
- Regional Active Lives data
- Regional Area Profiles
- Study commissioned by Somerset West and Taunton Council and CICCIC – to research creative demand, provision and opportunities for young people (also explores a demographic breakdown of the study, broken down by: gender, location, education status, ethnicity and disability)
- This strategy also builds on work undertaken in the development and approval of other 'live' strategies:
 - o SWT Corporate Strategy;
 - o Taunton Garden Town Vision;
 - o SWT Economic Development strategy;
 - o Improving Lives in Somerset (Health & Wellbeing) 2019-2028,
 - o Somerset Housing Strategy -2019-2023,
 - o Somerset Growth Plan 2017-2030

Each of which have been evidence-based using such sources as Office of National Statistics, Somerset Intelligence Partnership, Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA)

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

Consultation should happen in advance of the proposed service change or policy being submitted for decision. You should allow at least 2 weeks for those you have consulted with to provide their response. [This directory](#) provides contact details for groups who represent people with protected characteristics, to help you choose who to consult (you do not need to consult all of the groups but should make sure that those groups which have greatest likelihood of negative impact are covered).

The Strategy / Economic Development team within Somerset West and Taunton are responsible for drafting the Cultural Strategy.

The Council's **Cultural Forum** participated in several workshops and focus group discussions to help shape the Strategy. The Cultural Forum includes a wide variety of representatives from across the district (ie Taunton, as well as rural and coastal areas) and from different parts of the cultural and creative sectors. Organisations such as:

- **ActionTrack** - supports hard to reach vulnerable groups
- **Take Art** - delivers a diverse range of projects with a community, educational, health and well-being focus. *“A unique, life-changing organisation that doesn't live in an arts venue, dance studio or whacking great theatre but in the villages, towns and rural communities of Somerset. Every year we bring diverse, exciting and empowering arts experiences to thousands of people, no matter their age, inclination or background.*
- **Bridgwater and Taunton college, Richard Huish college, and the Tacchi Morris Centre** – all representing young people in the education sector
- **North Taunton Partnership**
- **Somerset Art Works** – *“is committed to equality, inclusion and creating better lives for all. We work to broaden opportunities within Somerset for everyone to experience arts and culture”*

The priorities and objectives arising from existing strategic plans (such as the Corporate Strategy, Taunton Garden Town Vision and countywide strategies for example the Health & Wellbeing Strategy) were subject to extensive public consultation prior to their approval.

We know from **consultation with young people** (a research survey in Spring 2020 targeted at 14-24 year olds achieved over 700 submissions) that the perception is that:

- creative provision is poor – a lack of perceived provision (only 36% thought there was enough creative ‘stuff’ to do), and key barriers being: “nowhere to do it”; lack of confidence or “nobody to go with”; travel and expense
- there is high demand (99% want to attend creative events), and opportunity for improved creative provision;
- opportunities for creative careers are low - 98% of respondents said they would consider a career in the art and culture sector, however respondents expressed a lack of confidence and understanding in getting a creative job.

The strategy has an objective focussed on ensuring that there are opportunities for young people to showcase their work and find employment or become self-employed in the arts & culture / creative sectors in the district.

This Strategy requires approval from Full Council, informed by recommendations from the Council's Executive Committee. These council meetings are open to members of the public and all papers are published on our website in advance of the relevant meetings to allow for public participation and challenge.

Analysis of impact on protected groups

The Vision statement in the Cultural Strategy states:

“We want to create a place where people of all ages and backgrounds can experience quality culture on their doorstep”, with specific objectives:

- *“To ensure equality of access to quality creative and cultural experiences for communities and audiences across Somerset West and Taunton”*
- *“Support our creative, arts and heritage sectors so they are able to provide quality cultural experiences for people of all ages and backgrounds”*
- *“Value health and wellbeing”, and “encourage healthy and active lives”*

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Age	<p>No negative impacts identified at this initial high-level stage.</p> <p>All members of the community, including this protected group, should benefit from the outcomes described in the Cultural Strategy.</p> <p>Care will of course be needed to ensure that delivery of the objectives does not unwittingly introduce unintended consequences for some groups and that change is effective for all target groups.</p> <p>The ‘Leadership and delivery’ objective to <i>“Cultivate sustainable working relationships with the creative industries and arts partners”,</i> and <i>“Model and promote joined up working across council and organisations”</i> is intended to enable the development of solutions which remove barriers to people (young and old), and encourage greater access to cultural and creative experiences across the district.</p>	☐	☐	☒
Disability	<p>No negative impacts identified at this initial high-level stage.</p> <p>All members of the community, including this protected group, should benefit from the outcomes described in the Cultural Strategy.</p>	☐	☐	☒

	<p>Care will of course be needed to ensure that delivery of the objectives does not unwittingly introduce unintended consequences for some groups and that change is effective for all target groups.</p> <p>The 'Leadership and delivery' objective to "Cultivate sustainable working relationships with the creative industries and arts partners", and "Model and promote joined up working across council and organisations" is intended to enable the development of solutions which remove barriers to people (including those with disabilities), and encourage greater access to cultural and creative experiences across the district.</p>			
Gender reassignment	<p>No negative impacts identified at this initial high-level stage.</p> <p>We do not have data ref gender reassignment and therefore have not been able to measure the impact that this strategy might have on the people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>It is recognised that this is an important group for this strategy as art can be gender neutral but can also allow for the portrayal of people of the opposite gender for entertainment purposes.</p>	☐	☒	☐
Marriage and civil partnership	<p>No negative impacts identified at this initial high-level stage.</p> <p>We do not have data ref marriage and civil partnerships and therefore have not been able to measure the impact that this strategy might have on the people with this protected characteristic</p>	☐	☒	☐
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>No negative impacts identified at this initial high-level stage.</p> <p>We do not have data ref pregnancy and maternity and therefore have not been able to measure the impact that this strategy might have on the people with this protected characteristic</p>	☐	☒	☐

<p>Race and ethnicity</p>	<p>No negative impacts identified at this initial high-level stage.</p> <p>All members of the community, including this protected group, should benefit from the outcomes described in the Cultural Strategy.</p> <p>Care will of course be needed to ensure that delivery of the objectives does not unwittingly introduce unintended consequences for some groups and that change is effective for all target groups.</p> <p>The ‘Leadership and delivery’ objective to “Cultivate sustainable working relationships with the creative industries and arts partners”, and “Model and promote joined up working across council and organisations” is intended to enable the development of solutions which remove barriers to people (including ethnically diverse communities), and encourage greater access to cultural and creative experiences across the district.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Religion or belief</p>	<p>No negative impacts identified at this initial high-level stage.</p> <p>We do not have data ref religion or belief and therefore have not been able to measure the impact that this strategy might have on the people with this protected characteristic</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Sex</p>	<p>No negative impacts identified at this initial high-level stage.</p> <p>The ‘Point’ youth research was close to an equal split between male (46%) and female (50%) and 4% other or preferred not to say. The research into creative participation identified some substantive gender differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - women engage in more varied activities - males are more likely to learn from friends, females from lessons and classes - males are more likely to participate in creativity outside, and females more likely to engage at school/college 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - females are less confident resulting in poor engagement in creative activity and creative job acquisition - statistically significant gender differences in career aspiration <p>All members of the community, including this protected group, should benefit from the outcomes described in the Cultural Strategy.</p> <p>Care will of course be needed to ensure that delivery of the objectives does not unwittingly introduce unintended consequences for some groups and that change is effective for all target groups.</p>			
Sexual orientation	<p>No negative impacts identified at this initial high-level stage.</p> <p>We do not have data ref sexual orientation and therefore have not been able to measure the impact that this strategy might have on the people with this protected characteristic</p>	□	⊗	□
Other: Low income and Rurality/isolation	<p>No negative impacts identified at this initial high-level stage.</p> <p>All members of the community, including these protected groups, should benefit from the outcomes described in the Cultural Strategy.</p> <p>Care will of course be needed to ensure that delivery of the objectives does not unwittingly introduce unintended consequences for some groups and that change is effective for all target groups.</p> <p>Our data identifies people who do not have access to vehicles (likely to be due to affordability) - SWT residents have the lowest number of households with access to a car or van in Somerset.</p> <p>The objective to work with partners and service providers to “ensure equality of access to quality creative and cultural experiences for communities and audiences across Somerset West and Taunton” should have a positive impact on those on low incomes and/or</p>	□	□	⊗

	<p>experiencing rural isolation (eg support for Rural Touring programme providers/promoters, such as 'Take Art' described in a previous section above).</p> <p>The 'Leadership and delivery' objective to "Cultivate sustainable working relationships with the creative industries and arts partners", and "Model and promote joined up working across council and organisations" is intended to enable the development of solutions which remove barriers to people (including rural communities), and encourage greater access to cultural and creative experiences across the district.</p>			
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Negative outcomes action plan

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Although no negative outcomes have been identified, it is recognised that further work would be beneficial to understand and explore this in more detail – actions are therefore recommended below.

Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
Share the strategy with a disability forum (ie Compass, or other groups representing protected characteristics through the Somerset Equality Officer Group).	Qtr 2 (2021/22)	D. Webb	Part of Ec Dev operation plan monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ask the Cultural Forum to brainstorm any potential impacts positive or negative on each protected group – especially as the delivery plan develops / projects are proposed	Qtr 2 (2021/22)	D. Webb	Part of Ec Dev operation plan monitoring	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continue to identify appropriate data, for example from research / studies being used to inform other local, regional and national policies and strategies	On-going / ad-hoc	D. Webb	Business Intelligence service, and cross-directorate liaison	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>
	Select date			<input type="checkbox"/>

If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.

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Completed by:	Dan Webb
Date	6 May 2021
Signed off by:	
Date	
Equality Lead/Manager sign off date:	
To be reviewed by: (officer name)	
Review date:	