

Somerset Cultural Strategy - Delivery Plan (DRAFT July 2024):

This Delivery Plan sets out how Somerset aims to deliver against the strategy. It aims to be clear and robust, but also adaptable and responsive to the changing needs over the next ten years.

It is a 'living' document and subject to change.

The initial activities prioritised for delivery by Somerset Council are:

- **Alternative Delivery Models / Strategic partnership working:**
 - Strengthen and expand the collaboration between the council and external partners to safeguard and enhance cultural services and assets for community (including devolution).
 - Improve the cultural offer in other Somerset Council sites i.e. Libraries are partnering with The Space to launch a Digital Culture initiative to broaden the reach of our culture offer into more rural/isolated areas to boost both consumption & creation of the arts in local communities.

- **Capital Projects for Cultural Outcomes:**
 - Secure government funding and other sources of investment for our cultural infrastructure, aligned with our Cultural Strategy including delivering DLUHC Levelling Up Funding for the East of Somerset.
 - Represent and advocate for the cultural sector in Somerset and ensure effective management and allocation of funds.

- **Delivering a Flagship Cultural Hub for Somerset:**
 - Deliver a flagship venue for arts and culture services in Somerset, in partnership with Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Arts Council England and Yeovil Town Council.
 - Oversee the project through the Octagon Theatre Redevelopment Project Board.

Culture for All				
Objectives/Goals	Categories	Actions	Owner <i>(for each specific action - cannot be confirmed until after leadership & governance model is agreed)</i>	Progress & timeline
<p>A county-wide offering of activity which is relevant and inclusive for all.</p> <p>Increased participation in cultural activity in respect of a higher volume of participants, a wider geographical reach, and new audiences.</p> <p>Higher levels of engagement for all but specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For our existing cultural assets and activity. • For our rural areas. • For children and young people. • For those experiencing social deprivation. 	Accessibility and outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make culture more accessible to residents through events and outreach activities, removing barriers particularly for those from deprived and rural areas i.e. NPO/rural touring initiatives. • Encouraging the community to be part of education and school activities i.e. reading in schools. • Outdoor venues - make greater use of outdoor venues, parks, greenspaces, and other areas to deliver cultural opportunities. 	TBC	In progress
	Inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure activities, events and opportunities are inclusive by working with diverse communities, with Libraries acting as a local cultural hub for the community. 	TBC	
	Children & Young People / Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative learning - work closely with local schools, colleges, neighbouring universities, youth hubs and services to develop a plan to deliver creative learning for all and to promote creative careers (following the model being developed for Economic Development and Gravity and embedding an industry into the National Curriculum.) • Focus on our expansion of travel training (this is being funded as part of reducing transport spend) and also creating Supported Internships in the creative industries. We are looking to create capacity here as well. Both of these are focused on children with SEND. 	TBC	Short/ Medium Term Plan In progress
	Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports & leisure – identifying the facilities we have and identifying how we can be more targeted i.e. speaking to people about why they may not be using facilities etc to improve inclusion and accessibility. • Work with community and public health organisations. 	TBC	Medium/ Long Term Plan

Connecting Communities				
Objectives/Goals	Categories	Actions	Owner <i>(for each specific action - cannot be confirmed until after leadership & governance model is agreed)</i>	Progress & timeline
<p>A diverse cultural offer that celebrates the heritage of our communities.</p> <p>County-wide collaboration and co-production of activities and projects to produce the widest possible offering of community-led cultural opportunities.</p> <p>Increased collaboration in seeking external funding and pooling resources.</p> <p>Increased social prescribing to cultural activities, leading to reduced social isolation and loneliness within the community.</p>	Partnership Working (including devolution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Priority: Alternative Delivery Models/Devolution and strategic partnership working: Maintain, strengthen and develop partnerships between the council's key external partners to protect cultural services and assets for the communities. • Re-invigorate Cultural Forums and Networks across the County. • Establish, encourage and develop new and existing networks throughout Somerset with both internal and external partners to the Council. • Ensure that culture is on the agenda for all directorates within the Council to deliver Cultural outcomes. • Continue to develop a digital cultural offer in libraries through a partnership with The Space • Community engagement – ensure Culture is represented within the Council's wider community engagement. 	TBC	<p>In progress</p> <p>Short/Medium Term Plan</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p>
	Support the facilitation of creative opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support communities to develop their own creative opportunities, events and activities with business support/signposting, potential use of libraries and their resources, and team knowledge. • Signposting to external funding, communication to communities of available funding known to the Council. • Business support packages i.e. creation of learning and development programmes/economic development workshops. • Somerset Council taking a co-ordination role to ensure that cultural groups work together to increase the scale and scope of Somerset's Cultural offer. 	TBC	Short/Medium Term Plan

	Effective Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a communication and stakeholder plan. • Explore and grow methods of communication i.e. social media channels/website etc. 	TBC	Short Term Plan Short/Medium Term Plan
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Culture for Economic Prosperity				
Objectives/Goals	Categories	Actions	Owner <i>(for each specific action - cannot be confirmed until after leadership & governance model is agreed)</i>	Progress & timeline
<p>The creative sector continues to make a substantial contribution to Somerset's local and visitor economy.</p> <p>Somerset firmly established as a cultural destination, a place where more people live, stay, study, work, and visit.</p> <p>Increased commerce and a desirable place for businesses to locate.</p>	Preserve cultural assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster positive working relationships with external partners who can support and protect cultural assets 	TBC	In progress
	Growing and supporting creative industries / cultural sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise, support, and celebrate the value of creative industries. • Voices of the cultural community are listened to and represented locally and nationally. • Support Somerset's cultural sector - develop the economic benefits generated by the creative industries. • Work with partners to improve data capture and evaluation capabilities. • Support people into jobs with employment, skills and volunteering opportunities. 	TBC	Short /Medium Term Plan
	Economic Growth and Visitor Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage development – unlock opportunities for cultural tourism and experiences. • Promote Somerset as a destination to support the existing economy to enable regeneration and investment. • Explore further opportunities to ensure public events are supported, organised, managed, and promoted consistently and effectively across the county. 	TBC	Long Term Plan

<p>People decide to live and work in Somerset and choose careers in the creative sector.</p> <p>Culture will support employment and skills development to benefit the wider economy.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore unique experiences to drive growth/visitor economy e.g Knife Angel / Gaia / Museum of the Moon • Raise awareness of the extent and quality of Somerset’s cultural offer so everyone can see and benefit from what is available. • Work with colleagues to support the development of the Economic Development Strategy. • A detailed action plan will be developed as part of the Economic Strategy with many of the interventions likely to benefit the cultural and creative sector as well as the wider economy. • Collaborate with Local Visitor Economy Partnership's (LVEP's) to ensure that culture is embedded in any prospective destination management plans. • Complimenting Town Deal projects and existing funding. 		
	Commercialisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Priority: Grow a portfolio of capital government funded projects that deliver strategic cultural outcomes - Somerset Council will work with government departments and other funders to take a strategic approach to invest in our cultural infrastructure. We will act on behalf of the cultural sector to advocate for investment in Somerset. For government we will be the responsible body to manage funds ensuring that they are allocated within the priorities of our Cultural Strategy. • Work creatively to become a self-sustaining service. 	TBC	Long Term Plan

Celebrating Place				
Objectives/Goals	Categories	Actions	Owner <i>(for each specific action - cannot be confirmed until after leadership & governance model is agreed)</i>	Progress and timeline
<p>The cultural character of Somerset is recognised and admired on a national and international level.</p> <p>Residents feel an increased sense of pride in where they live.</p> <p>Our distinctive natural and cultural assets are celebrated and protected.</p> <p>Champion creative involvement in place-making and regeneration schemes.</p>	Planning and Place-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage high-quality, sustainably designed buildings and open spaces, create distinctive neighbourhoods, and host cultural events and activities. Somerset Council is also committed to using school capital funding to make educational establishments more accessible to communities. Have an environment that supports healthier lifestyles including access to leisure facilities, open spaces, cultural experiences, libraries and their resources, and social opportunities. Support the sensitive and sustainable development of our waterways and wetlands. Ensure our National Landscapes, country parks, woodlands, Levels and Moors and coastline are celebrated and accessible. Ensure that planning policy considers culture and evolve this to seek external funding i.e. S106. 	TBC	<p>Medium /Long Term Plan</p> <p>Long Term Plan</p> <p>Long Term</p> <p>Long Term</p> <p>Medium-Long Term</p>
	Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the careful management of our heritage sites, artefacts, and wider cultural assets - we will preserve and celebrate them. Support Heritage at Risk projects i.e. Tonedale Mill/Tone Works 	TBC	<p>Med/Long Term</p> <p>Long Term</p>
	Regeneration and Major Special Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that culture is embedded into regeneration and major special projects and that links are made with Public Art/Place-Making/Public Realm/S106 funding. Key Priority: Delivering a Flagship Cultural Hub for Somerset <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a flagship venue for arts and culture services in Somerset, in partnership with Department for Digital, 	TBC	In progress

		<p>Culture, Media and Sport, Arts Council England and Yeovil Town Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Oversee the project through the Octagon Theatre Redevelopment Project Board. 		
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General Delivery				
	Categories	Action	Owner <i>(for each specific action - cannot be confirmed until after leadership & governance model is agreed)</i>	Progress and timeline
	Governance and leadership	Identify and agree a preferred leadership approach and governance model in delivery of the Cultural Strategy.	Somerset Council	In progress
	Advocacy and regional and civic leadership	Somerset Council has a role to play in advocating for the arts and the cultural industries locally, regionally and nationally. We have a responsibility to inform and promote Somerset's needs and successes to the wider local authority network, national governing bodies, CLOA (Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association), Events Industry Forum, HSE (Health and Safety Executive), Arts Council England, local and national business.	TBC	Long Term Plan
	Investment and Funding	Work to attract collaborative funding for large scale investment for Somerset e.g. Central Government, the Arts Council, and commercial business partnerships.	TBC	Long Term Plan

How will we deliver outcomes and support culture:

Leverage Existing Assets

- Utilise the skills and passion of internal and external partners.
- Attract, retain and reward talent.

- Promote cross-functional collaboration and knowledge sharing.
- Identify existing knowledge of cultural assets.
- Continue to develop community-led cultural offer in public libraries.

Community Engagement:

- Participatory Approach: Involve community members, artists, and local organisations in co-creating cultural experiences.
- Volunteer Networks: Mobilise volunteers who are passionate about culture and can contribute time and skills.

Digital Platforms:

- Online Presence: Use social media, websites, and virtual events to showcase cultural content to a wider audience.
- Crowdsourcing: Encourage the community to participate in content creation and share their stories and culture.

Collaborations and Partnerships:

- Work with other cultural institutions, non-profits, or businesses to pool resources and achieve common goals.
- Utilise existing spaces (libraries, community centres etc) for cultural events and activities.

Creative Fundraising:

- Micro-Donations: Encourage small donations from community members. Crowdfunding campaigns can support specific cultural projects.
- Sponsorships: Seek partnerships with local businesses or philanthropic organisations.

Innovation and Experimentation:

- Pilot Programs: Try new ideas on a small scale and learn from successes, failures, and feedback.
- Low-Cost Events: Organise free or low-cost cultural events, workshops, or exhibitions that focus on impact rather than extravagance.

The key to delivery is to build strong, collaborative, and innovative partnerships that have proven to be vital for delivering outcomes.