



Meeting: Council

Date: 25th September 2014

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Torbay's Cultural Strategy ENJOY, TALK, DO, BE...

Is the decision a key decision? Yes

When does the decision need to be implemented? September 2014

Executive Lead Contact Details: Cllr Dave Butt, Executive Lead for Culture
(dave.butt@torbay.gov.uk)

Supporting Officer Contact Details: Sue Cheriton Executive Head of Residents and Visitor Services (sue.cheriton@torbay.gov.uk)

1. Purpose and Introduction

- 1.1 The initial impetus for the cultural strategy was a requirement from Arts Council England for a strategic framework to underpin any future investment in Torbay's arts, museums and libraries sector and its contribution to economic and social development.
- 1.2 In response to this, Torbay Development Agency commissioned a consultancy funded by Arts Council to develop a framework to encompass the whole of the cultural sector in Torbay.
- 1.3 The overall aim of the strategy was to harness the value of culture and all the benefits it brings, within the context of positively addressing the post recession context and planning for a sustainable future.
- 1.4 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) defines culture and the cultural sector in the following ways:

Culture is an inclusive concept that embraces a wide variety of activities, places, values and beliefs that contribute to a sense of identity and well being for everyone in our communities. It is about our way of life and our quality of life. Cultural values include shared experiences and memories, our diverse backgrounds and what we consider valuable to pass on to future generations.

- 1.5 The cultural sector comprises:
 - the performing and visual arts, craft and fashion
 - media, film, television, video and language
 - museums, artefacts, archives and design

- libraries, literature, writing and publishing
- the built heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology
- sports participation, events, facilities and development
- parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water environment and countryside recreation
- children's play, playgrounds and play activities
- tourism, festivals and attractions
- informal leisure pursuits (eg walking, shopping, gardening)

1.6 Following a period of intense consultation with cultural practitioners from all sectors, key stakeholders, funding agencies and local community leaders, a high level strategic Cultural Strategy has been developed to meet the aspirations of Torbay over the next 10 years. The Strategy provides an overall framework, supporting and linking to individual cultural sector strategies (e.g. for arts, heritage, tourism, sport etc) and other key strategies (e.g. Torbay's Community Plan and Local Plan) in its focus on what can be achieved through joined-up working and collaboration.

2. Proposed Decision

- i) That the Council approve ENJOY, TALK, DO BE - A cultural strategy for Torbay and its communities 2014-2024 and adopt the strategy as part of the Council's Policy Framework.
- ii) authority be delegated to the Executive Lead for Culture and Arts for the development of a cultural sector led Culture Board which will act as a catalyst for partners to engage with the strategy across the sector and develop funding options for the implementation of the aims and objectives.

3. Reason for the Decision

- 3.1 Torbay Council in 2012 was identified by the Arts Council as a priority area for investment in the South West due to the low levels of engagement and infrastructure compared to other parts of the region. The Arts Council acknowledged Torbay was ambitious and committed to cultural activity however believed that a strategy was required to provide a framework to meet the desire to do more, innovate and be more inclusive of the community before further funding could be invested.
- 3.2 The Arts Council supported the model of an independent Culture Board to oversee delivery of the strategy, providing representative coverage of key areas eg culture, education, youth, business etc., and also attended by key stakeholders including regional cultural agencies. Strategic Funds held by the Arts Council have been ring fenced to Torbay till late 2015 to help develop programmes around the strategy delivery plan and for the development of the Torbay Culture Board.
- 3.3 To ensure that the Torbay Cultural sector can take advantage of this funding allocation, it is important that the strategy should be adopted and the Culture Board established as soon as possible.

4. Summary

4.1 The Strategy in summary:

ENJOY, TALK, DO, BE - a cultural strategy for Torbay and its communities 2014-2024
Vision

Torbay: a landscape of culture - *quality of life and opportunity enjoyed by all in a 21st century coastal location 400 million years in the making*

4.2 Context

While everyone recognises the developing range and richness of cultural experiences on offer in Torbay, there is also a desire to tackle some key challenges, including a lack of awareness of that offer; low expectations and aspirations affecting engagement and participation; and the need for better coordinated and effective marketing.

4.3 The strategy ambitions

Enjoy... enabling more people to take pleasure from cultural activities

Talk... encouraging positive exchange to share, reflect on and enhance our cultural offer

Do... inspiring more people to shape and make their own cultural experiences

Be... celebrating the uniqueness of Torbay's cultural past, present and future

4.4 The strategy principles

People first: residents, visitors, practitioners and businesses all benefitting from and contributing to a vibrant cultural life

Pride of place: caring for our buildings, neighbourhoods, town centres, coast and countryside in the unique environment of the English Riviera Global Geopark

Joined up working: connecting, complementing and collaborating on development and change for a sustainable future

4.5 The strategy aims and objectives

One: to increase engagement and participation in cultural opportunities in Torbay

- build from the community as well as bringing in new and diverse experiences
- support creative and cultural learning
- harness the health and wellbeing benefits of culture

Two: to maximise the distinctive natural and built cultural assets of Torbay:

- protect, enhance and utilise cultural places and spaces for culture

- develop a year-round season-based rhythm of cultural events
- contribute to safe and sustainable living, working and visiting

Three: to ensure cultural development is a key contributor to economic and social development in Torbay:

- strengthen support for the creative and cultural economy and the benefits it brings
- share knowledge, skills and resources to diversify and grow the income base
- make links to and culture proofing other policies, strategies and plans

4.6 How will this be delivered?

A new **Torbay Culture Board**, supported by an executive post, will oversee implementation of **Enjoy, talk, do, be** and the accompanying rolling **Three year Delivery Plan**. The **Delivery Plan** shows how the actions of the Culture Board and partners deliver the strategy aims. It will be reviewed and updated every year, ensuring the overarching strategy ambitions remain relevant in a changing world, not least as different delivery partners may emerge.

The Board will comprise independent members appointed through an open recruitment process and representing key areas and interests, with local and regional policy and funding agencies in attendance.

There will also be a **Torbay Culture Forum** – open to all with an interest and stake in cultural development in the Bay. This will meet regularly on key cross sector topics, as well as offering networking opportunities and ensuring that the strategy remains grounded, with the Board focused on its work.

Board and Forum members will nominate **Torbay Culture Ambassadors** – enthusiasts and advocates of culture, from taxi drivers to housing officers to local cultural celebrities – to champion culture with their colleagues, customers and communities.

4.7 The impact of the strategy

Members of the public being creators and organisers as well as consumers of culture...

Cultural practitioners and organisations thriving in a better connected, more mutually supportive environment, taking and making new opportunities...

Public service providers accomplishing the positive outcomes they need to achieve, from people's engagement and participation in culture...

Voluntary, community and social enterprises incorporating cultural activities in their work and signposting people to other cultural provision...

Businesses promoting the cultural offer to clients, providing space and sponsorship for cultural activity and advocating the value culture brings to prospective inward investors...

Regional agencies and funding bodies appreciating the wider context of Torbay's strategic approach to cultural development when making policy and funding decisions...

Investors gaining a range of returns being associated with a unique landscape of culture...

Supporting Information

5. Position

- 5.1 The funding of the cultural sector is under pressure more than ever before. With local authorities including Torbay finding that investment in discretionary services are severely under pressure, there is a need to look for other means of funding through the development of collaborative and cross sector partnerships.
- 5.2 It is acknowledged nationally that as well as the intrinsic value of cultural experience, engagement and participation in culture can contribute to community cohesion, reduce social exclusion and isolation, and make communities feel safer and stronger. It has other benefits such as employability through engagement and volunteering, and supports health and well being of the community at large.
- 5.3 Culture in Torbay particularly is also a key driver for the tourism economy, providing exciting things to do and experience. Torbay has a rich heritage and a wealth of cultural events that is one of the keys to attracting visitors back every year and to encourage new visitors to the resort.
- 5.4 Without adopting a new strategy, with an embedded governance and leadership then new funding will not be attracted to Torbay. There is a wealth of talent in Torbay which can be harnessed to work collaboratively to ensure culture remains a key part of the life of its residents and visitors.
- 5.5 The new strategy will ensure there is renewed focus on what makes Torbay special and will support the local community as well as the cultural sector in delivering an improved and exciting cultural offer across the bay.

6. Possibilities and Options

- 6.1 To adopt Enjoy, talk, do, be as Torbay's Cultural Strategy and support the development of Culture Board to oversee the co-ordination of partners, making existing activity sustainable, and drive new initiatives.
- 6.2 Not to adopt the Strategy which may lead to lack of additional funding being available to the cultural sector in the next few years.
- 6.3 The preferred option is to adopt the Enjoy, Talk, Do BeCultural Strategy to enable partners to develop a new Culture Board to take forward the next stage of the development and ensure funding is secured from the key agencies like Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund, and European Agencies.

7. Fair Decision Making

- 7.1 In drawing up this cultural strategy, there has been extensive consultation with 95 individuals representing a wide range of cultural sector organizations, community groups and stakeholders. This included:
- 46 face to face interviews (30 with set questions, 16 customised)
 - 23 interviews over the telephone (6 with set questions, 17 customised)
 - 10 people participating through invited emailed comments
 - 12 participants from the Torbay Open Space (October 2012) who agreed for their contact details to be shared answering a Survey Monkey questionnaire
 - Capturing specific comments as part of a presentation of the work in progress to the Torbay Council Senior Leadership Team (29 April 2014)
- 7.2 Also there was a 'work in progress' workshop held (6 May 2014) attended by 30 people where views were taken on the progress so far.
- 7.3. The consultants attended a range of cultural events and visited cultural venues in Torbay and have undertaken desk research (including prior consultations, evaluations, audience and other data, policy drivers and investment opportunities, other Torbay strategies, comparators etc) to formulate the detail in the strategy.
- 7.4. Information was also gathered on European funding opportunities at a Euclid seminar.
- 7.5 The consultation with individuals was undertaken on a confidential basis, with key and repeated 'celebrations, challenges and opportunities' drawn from conversations contributing significantly to the final strategy content.

8. Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

- 8.1 There are no procurement of services required as a result of the recommendations.

9. Risks

- 9.3. The main risks relate to two specific areas – funding and lack of participation by partners.
- 9.4. Since 2013 many organizations have seen their funding reduced from the authority and other key contributors and as a result the condition of the sector may be that of 'survival' rather than development. This may slow the progress of the strategy and limit the work needed to secure alternative funding. Consideration needs to be given in increasing capacity through the new Culture Board to help organizations participate to ensure their future is sustainable.
- 9.5. Arts Council England have allocated Torbay as a priority area till 2015, there is no guarantee that this status we remain after that time. It is important to ensure that they see Torbay as a place with a desire to do more, and to do things differently to ensure a sustainable future. A strategic Culture Board with the support of the Event Forum will give the right message to funders and ensure future commitment in Torbay will be maintained.

Appendices:

1. ENJOY, TALK, DO, BE - A cultural strategy for Torbay and its communities 2014 - 2024
2. ENJOY, TALK, DO, BE - Strategy summary
3. ENJOY, TALK, DO BE - Three year Delivery Plan 2014- 2017

Additional Information: None

Documents available in Members' Rooms:

ENJOY, TALK, DO, BE - Supporting Context and Evidence Report

Background Papers: None