

## **EXETER CITY COUNCIL**

### **SCRUTINY ECONOMY COMMITTEE 14 NOVEMBER 2013**

**EXECUTIVE 26 NOVEMBER 2013**

#### **EXETER CULTURAL ACTION PLAN NOVEMBER 2013 TO 2015**

### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present to Members the new two year Cultural Action Plan produced by Exeter Cultural Partnership in association with the City Council.

### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Exeter Cultural Partnership (ECP) represents the city's cultural organisations including libraries, museums, sport, arts, health, education, food and retail – organisations which touch the lives of thousands of people each year. ECP now has over 150 members across the city and sub region. It is an umbrella organisation, intended to draw together the efforts and interests of an extremely diverse sector which includes public, commercial, charity and independent representation.
- 2.2 ECP's mission as a partnership is to contribute to a city where a vibrant cultural life enriches the experience of everyone living in, working in and visiting Exeter.
- 2.3 For the last nine months, ECP has been working towards the creation of a Cultural Action Plan for Exeter. With support from the Arts Council of England and Exeter City Council, ECP was able to employ a consultant (Christina Dixon) to begin the first phase of work. This involved an in depth consultation with the city's cultural sector at the beginning of 2013, with key findings reported back to ECP and a summary presented to this Committee on 30 May 2013.

### **3 THE CULTURAL ACTION PLAN**

- 3.1 This Action Plan represents the next phase of work to be undertaken by the ECP Steering Group with facilitation support from the same consultant.

The Action Plan is shaped around four key goals:

1. To develop a vibrant cultural economy – Exeter as a cultural destination
2. To develop cultural opportunities and experiences
3. To enable wide and diverse engagement with the cultural sector
4. To build a stronger, more confident cultural sector

- 3.2 These goals are now underpinned by a series of actions designed to strengthen and develop the sector as well as enhance the role of culture in the city's economic, social and community life. The Action Plan is firmly intended as a living, growing document which responds to opportunity but also provides the solid foundation for the cultural ambition that will support the city's vision for its future.

The Cultural Action Plan will be presented at Scrutiny Committee by Dom Jinks, Chair of the Exeter Cultural Partnership and Jay Milling, Deputy Chair.

## **4 EARLY OUTCOMES OF THE ACTION PLAN**

- 4.1 The Action Plan has already provided the basis of a bid made by ECP to the national 'Cultural Destinations' Programme run by the Arts Council of England/Visit England for a programme of activities to improve the promotion and perception of the city as a cultural destination. The intention is to then create a cultural brand for the city and improve the presentation, promotion and accessibility of information on cultural activities through a broad range of media for the benefit of residents and to attract more visitors to the city. The submission date was 25 September and a decision is expected in January 2014. The funding, (application total: £305,000) is for a three year period commencing in April 2014.
- 4.2 If unsuccessful, the Action Plan and the bid content will be used to inform other applications to support similar objectives, for example Grants for the Arts, Heritage Lottery Funding.
- 4.3 The Action Plan, although not a full documented cultural strategy, sets out the way forward for making progress with developing the city's cultural sector in order that it can make a greater contribution to the life of those living, working in and visiting the city. From the City Council's point of view, the document could provide a framework for continuing the collaboration with the Cultural Partnership in its aim of developing culture in the city as a key contribution to its economic well-being alongside other priorities.

## **5 MONITORING PROGRESS**

- 5.1 Progress against actions will be regularly monitored by ECP's Steering Group, which includes City Council officers, and information will be shared with the wider ECP membership, funders and key partners.
- 5.2 The Action Plan recognises the critical support and collaboration with the City Council. ECP proposes that updates are provided to the Portfolio Holder on a six monthly basis with reports to this Committee annually or more frequently when appropriate.
- 5.3 In the intervening months ECP will hold regular meetings with key council Officers and Members to ensure that communication flow is good and emerging opportunities are identified and pursued.

## **6 RECOMMENDATIONS that**

1. Members comment on the report and the proposed Action Plan and consider its adoption as the City Council's framework document for planning, developing and supporting cultural activities in the city;
2. Members recognise and support the continuing work of the Exeter Cultural Partnership.

**CAMILLA HAMPSHIRE, MUSEUMS MANAGER & CULTURAL LEAD**

**ECONOMY DIRECTORATE**

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**  
**Background papers used in compiling this report:-**