

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MONDAY 22 JULY 2002 AT 2.00PM

Agenda Item No.

7

ENJOY! :A CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR HERTFORDSHIRE

Report of the Director of Community Information

Author: Annie Hawkins, County Cultural Officer Tel: 01992 556231

Executive Member:- Derrick Ashley

1. Purpose of report

To inform Cabinet of the process and timeframe for the development of a Cultural Strategy for Hertfordshire and to give Cabinet the opportunity to comment on the draft strategy.

2. Summary

This paper outlines the consultation process to date for the development of a Cultural Strategy for Hertfordshire and the timeframe leading up to it's launch in September 2002.

3. Conclusion

To recommend that Cabinet consider authorising the Director of Community Information, in consultation with the Executive Member, to approve the final document

1. Background

- 1.1** All local authorities have been advised by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to produce a Cultural Strategy by the end of 2002. The strategy will cover the following activities: the arts, children's play, the countryside, cultural heritage and archives, leisure, libraries, media, museums, sport and recreation and tourism.
- 1.2** It will take a thematic approach and will cover the following cross-cutting agendas: community safety, economic development, lifelong learning, quality of life, regeneration and social inclusion. Each district and borough council in Hertfordshire will also be producing individual Cultural Strategies. The county council is leading on the development of the Cultural Strategy for Hertfordshire. The County Cultural Officer who is supported by the County Arts Development Officer is leading this process.

2 Enjoy!

- 2.1** Enjoy! A Cultural Strategy for Hertfordshire is the joint work of the Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership, made up of the ten district councils and the county council. It has been developed through regular meetings of two key groups: the HCC Cultural Strategy Group and the District Cultural Officers Group, both led by the County Cultural Officer.
- 2.2** Officers from Adult Care Services, Children, Schools and Families, Environment and Community Information are all members of the Cultural Strategy Group

3 Messages

- 3.1** The groups' work to date has resulted in the development of the 'Enjoy!' branding for the cultural strategy and six key messages which it was felt encompass the cross-cutting themes. These are as follows:

To enhance the quality of life for the people of Hertfordshire by:

- i) Enabling all members of the community to have more and easier access to different cultural and leisure pursuits
- ii) Offering children, young people and adults the opportunity to reach their full potential through access to learning and information
- iii) Encouraging children and young people to access and enjoy cultural and leisure activities
- iv) Making Hertfordshire a more prosperous and attractive place to live and work
- v) Valuing and supporting the diverse range of cultural and leisure activities enjoyed across the county

- vi) Working in partnership with national, regional and local agencies to deliver a range of cultural and leisure activities effectively

3.2 These messages also provide a framework for Hertfordshire to take account of regional, national and other county developments which include Hertfordshire Together, the Hertfordshire Prosperity Forum Economic Development Strategy 2000-2005 and Local Strategic Partnerships. They can reinforce and support the priorities of these partnerships and the County Council Promises. At a more practical and local level they will help inform and support funding applications by the cultural community in Hertfordshire.

4 Economic Benefits

Hertfordshire has a flourishing film and tourism industry, both of which contribute greatly to the county's economy. To guarantee their future economic growth, Hertfordshire needs a strong cultural and creative industry sector. The county provides an attractive environment with good facilities, which offers good transport links and proximity to London. These combined with a highly skilled workforce and a good quality of life are factors which attract companies to operate and remain in the county.

A strong cultural sector is a key indicator of a high quality of life. Knowledge based companies relocating to Hertfordshire strengthen the county's economy making it less dependent on London for employment.

5 Partnership

A good project example of partnership and regeneration is the Trestle Theatre Company. Trestle is an internationally renowned, mask touring company. At the end of May this year they opened a permanent base offering training facilities and a resource centre in St Albans, Hertfordshire. The Trestle Arts Base, is in a restored derelict chapel at the old Cell Barnes Hospital site.

This £2 million project succeeded in securing Hertfordshire's largest Arts Council of England Capital Lottery Award (£1.5 million). The project involved a partnership between Trestle, Hertfordshire County Council, St Albans City and District Council, the Highfield Park Trust and the wider arts and business community in the county. It also had support from East England Arts, East of England Development Agency and The Sylvia Adams Trust.

6 Consultation

6.1 The messages formed the basis of the consultation leaflet, 'Enjoy! Making the Most of Living in Hertfordshire,' The survey asked the public to tell us what they enjoyed doing in their free time and to rank various statements in order of importance.

15,000 copies were distributed widely throughout the county during April and May of this year. 10,000 leaflets were placed in libraries and other public venues, 2,500 were given out to members of the public who were interested and had engaged with us at one of the 12 Road Shows held around the county. The Road Shows were supported by an eye catching Enjoy! Hertfordshire display and were staffed by officers from the districts and the county.

The remaining 2,500 leaflets were sent out using direct mail to individuals, community/voluntary groups and clubs and through established meetings. Particular targeted groups were young people and those aged sixty plus. Youth Service and Adult Care Services' colleagues helped reach the target audience. The leaflet could also be completed on www.HertsDirect.Org/Enjoy. Responses have informed and shaped the draft strategy. Press releases and the use of both district and county newsletters such as HertsNews and HertsDirect have supported the project.

6.2 The Hertfordshire Association of Cultural Officers formerly Hertfordshire Association of Leisure Officers {HALO} and other countywide cultural groups e.g. Hertfordshire Arts Partnership have all been involved in the consultation process. Regional agencies such as East England Arts and Sport England have also been kept informed of progress.

6.3 A total of 811 responses were received, which gives an overall return of 5.3 %. 25% of these returns were on line and 75% were returned using freepost. The age span of replies was as follows:

Age	
5 - 14 ~	7 %
15 - 19 ~	5%
20 - 29 ~	15%
30 - 45 ~	31%
46 - 65 ~	30 %
66 - 80 ~	7%
80 plus ~	2%

3% of the people who replied did not give their age

7 Next steps

7.1 12 July ~ 2 August 2002 ~ Draft strategy document circulated for comments to districts, county officers, Members and community groups/clubs etc. It will also be available on HertsDirect. This will be supported by press and in house coverage.

5 August to 9 August 2002 ~ Amend document / clear with Executive Member and Director of Community Information

11 August to 4 September 2002 ~ Print revised strategy

18 September 2002 ~ Launch of Cultural Strategy at Knebworth House.

19 September 2002 ~ Document circulated widely

7.2 The Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership will review the Cultural Strategy as part of a continuing and evolving process. It gives us an opportunity to showcase the best that Hertfordshire has to offer in this area and also shows the value cultural and leisure activities adds to our economy. It will influence

our planning for the next five years and inform other plans, such as community plans and service reviews, and in turn be informed and updated by them.

The partnership recognise that culture plays an important role across the county, it can help:

- preserve and build upon local community and county identity
- sustain communities and their environment
- improve the quality of life for our communities
- regenerate and attract investment into Hertfordshire
- provide the catalyst to instil a sense of Hertfordshire identity

7.3 The Cultural Strategy for Hertfordshire gives us an opportunity to celebrate the wealth of cultural diversity across the county and to build on and share the good practice that already exists, many examples of which are highlighted in the draft document.

8 Financial Implications

There are no additional direct financial implications as a result of the launch of this strategy.