

# Report to Cabinet

<b>Report Title</b>	Thurrock Plan for Culture				
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday, 22 January 2025				
<b>Report Author</b>	Lisa Ricketts, Economic Development Manager – Creative and Culture				
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Claire Demmel, Executive Director Place				
<b>Lead Cabinet Member(s)</b>	Cabinet Member for Community Partnerships				
<b>Why is this a key decision?</b>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Expenditure over £500K</td> <td style="text-align: right;">no</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Significant impact on 2 or more wards</td> <td style="text-align: right;">no</td> </tr> </table>	1. Expenditure over £500K	no	2. Significant impact on 2 or more wards	no
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2. Significant impact on 2 or more wards	no				
<b>Wards Affected</b>	All Wards				
<b>Identify exempt information and exemption category</b>	Choose an item.				

<b>Is report Urgent?</b>	No
<b>Reasons for urgency (<u>only</u> where applicable)</b>	
<b>Appendices (if any)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thurrock Plan for Culture</li> <li>2. Thurrock Plan for Culture – Plan on a Page</li> <li>3. Community Equality Impact Assessment</li> </ol>

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out an ambition to work collaboratively with communities and partners to achieve positive outcomes through a shared approach to arts, heritage and cultural activity. It recognises the value that culture and creativity can have in strengthening communities by supporting health and wellbeing, education, social care, economic growth and regeneration.
- 1.2. This report sets out the role that the Thurrock Plan for Culture has in setting a shared vision, with a clear direction of travel and shared commitment to work together to ensure the benefits of culture and creativity are accessible to everyone.

1.3. The new Corporate Plan agreed by Council in July 2024 sets a new purpose and future direction for the council as it works with its partners and local communities to best serve the people of Thurrock. This new way of working – bringing together and engaging all who can make a contribution to supporting local people with their needs and to release opportunity – is fundamental to the principles of this new plan for culture.

1.4. This new plan for culture describes how, through co-operation, co-creation and a proactive approach, Thurrock has achieved benefits for communities and partners by attracting investment from national and regional stakeholders to support creative and cultural projects and programmes and can continue to do so in the future.

## **2. Recommendations**

For the reasons set out in this report, the Cabinet is recommended to:

**2.1. To approve the Thurrock Plan for Culture**

**2.2. To approve the Action Plan as the first phase of further collaboration with Thurrock's cultural stakeholders.**

## **3. Commissioner's Comments**

Commissioners have reviewed the content of this report and have no further comments.

## **4. Proposals – the rationale and evidence for the recommendations**

4.1. The Thurrock Plan for Culture creates a call to action and identifies priorities that define our collective commitment to deliver positive, culture focussed opportunities across Thurrock.

4.2. Thurrock's cultural partners, supported by the Council, have agreed to set a direction of travel which defines a clear route towards activating spaces and places with creative and cultural activity, celebrating our unique heritage and diverse cultural offer.

4.3. The plan articulates a shared commitment to work in partnership and embrace the values of co-creation and co-operation, drawing together different communities, organisations, ideas and resources to ensure that culture and creativity is valued widely, and the benefits are accessible to everyone.

4.4. Having a plan for culture will enable the Council and cultural partners to demonstrate to external funders the need for investment in culture and creativity to deliver positive outcomes for Thurrock.

4.5. There is ongoing commitment from Arts Council England to provide further engagement and investment in Thurrock. Arts Council England has acknowledged that historically Thurrock has drawn down limited funds for culture compared to other areas and designated Thurrock as one of 109

places outside London that have the opportunity to benefit from additional support and investment. In the Arts Council England announcement of National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) for 2023-2026, three organisations in Thurrock were successful in receiving funding to deliver creative and cultural engagement, activity, and outcomes across the borough; these are Kinetika People, Arts Outburst and CoDa Dance Company.

## **5. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

5.1. Arts Council England data confirms that cultural engagement levels are low in Thurrock, with 64% of local people not engaging frequently.

5.2. Whilst there is opportunity to participate in creativity and experience culture in Thurrock it has been recognised that lack of co-ordination can negatively affect the positive impact that cultural and creative activities can achieve. Potential opportunities for collaboration and participation may be missed due to a disjointed, uncoordinated approach and lack of awareness.

5.3. The plan for culture, which articulates a collective vision, mission, values and principles for culture, will seek to address this uncoordinated approach by strengthening the cultural sector in Thurrock, anchoring a shared direction of travel which will maximise opportunities to collaborate, attract new investment and increase participation in creative and cultural events and activities, supporting individuals, groups and partners to apply for investment to deliver creative and cultural outcomes in Thurrock.

## **6. Alternative options considered**

6.1. The alternative to agreeing this plan for culture is maintaining status quo, collectively the Council, cultural sector partners and stakeholders agree that this is not in the best interests of our communities, businesses and key stakeholders.

## **7. Consultation**

7.1. series of engagements and discussions with stakeholders, the creative and cultural sector and communities has been undertaken. They have been crucial to the development of this plan. A diverse range of people who live, work and are educated in Thurrock have shared their views on what is important now and for the future.

7.2. The outcome of these engagements and discussions has helped to inform the Thurrock Plan for Culture.

7.3. Further engagement and consultation will be undertaken following the launch of the plan to support the development of an implementation plan – which is collaborative, co-designed and embraced by key cultural stakeholders who will be instrumental in delivering positive, community focused outcomes for residents and the creative sector in Thurrock. This engagement will be achieved through a variety of channels, including the establishment of a cultural leaders group, workshops and discussions with key stakeholders.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1. The main aim of the Thurrock Plan for Culture is to have the cultural sector in Thurrock lead on the deliverables of the Plan, with no financial support from the Local Authority. The Council will act as an enabler and facilitator of the Plan, rather than a commissioner or direct deliverer, and working with partners to shape future actions that will realise delivery of the Plan.
- 8.2. The Council has committed to supporting the coordination of creative and cultural opportunities, utilising all grant funding and inward investment, including funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 8.3. As there will be no costs to the Local Authority, there are no direct implications arising from this report.

Implications Verified by Jo Freeman  
Head of Financial Business Partnering (Place and Corporate)

Date 14 November 2024

## 9. Risk Implications

- 9.1. There are no corporate risks highlighted within this report. An equalities impact assessment has been carried out to mitigate any risks. There are also no operational risks highlighted within this report, however these will be monitored should any arise.

Implications Verified by K Mcmillan  
Chief Risk Advisor

Date 25 November 2024

## 10. Legal and Governance Implications

- 10.1. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (the general power of competence) provides a local authority with a power to do anything that an individual generally may do, and my exercise this power in any way, including for the benefit of residents, and so can implement the Plan for Culture outlined in this report and attached.

- 10.2. In relation to any of the grants or seed funding mentioned in the Plan, separate advice should be taken in relation to grant funding agreements and subsidy control.

Implications Verified by Helen Nicol  
Assistant Director Legal & Governance

Date 29 November 2024

## 11. Equality and Diversity Implications (including the public sector equality duty)

11.1. Working in collaboration with communities and partners to develop a shared cultural vision will support Thurrock's ambitions to improve health and wellbeing, cultivate closer connections, create pride in place and celebrate our diverse cultural heritage and creativity.

11.2. The plan has been subject of a Community Equality Impact Assessment and identifies means for achieving positive outcomes including accessible programmes and activities for all regardless of their protected characteristics.

Implications Verified by      Rebecca Lee  
Team Manager – Community Development and  
Equalities

Date                              14 November 2024

## **12. Other Relevant Implications**

None

## **13. Background Documents**

- 13.1. Thurrock Plan for Culture
- 13.2. Thurrock Plan for Culture – Plan on a Page
- 13.3. Community Equality Impact Assessment

**Relevance Check****Budget Reduction/Service Area:****Service Lead****Date:**

In what ways does this Budget reduction have an impact on an outward facing service? How will the service feel different to your customers or potential customers?

N/A

If not, how does it impact on staff e.g. redundancies, pay grades, working conditions? Why are you confident that these staff changes will not affect the service that you provide?

N/A

Is a Customer Impact Assessment needed? No