

 Executive 12th February 2020		Agenda Item No. <h1 style="text-align: center;">11</h1>
Title	Warwick District Creative Framework 2020 - 2025	
For further information about this report please contact	David Guilding, Arts Manager david.guilding@warwickdc.gov.uk 01926 456230	
Wards of the District directly affected	All	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A	
Background Papers	N/A	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	Yes
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes (1,090)
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	Yes
No – there is no change to the Council’s service levels. EIAs will be undertaken for the various projects within the Framework as they arise.	

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	21/01/20	Andrew Jones
Head of Service	21/01/20	Rose Winship
CMT	21/01/20	Andrew Jones
Section 151 Officer	21/01/20	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	21/01/20	Andrew Jones
Finance	21/01/20	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	21/01/20	Clr Grainger
Consultation & Community Engagement		
As detailed in this report.		
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks Executive's feedback and endorsement of the Warwick District Creative Framework 2020 – 2025, a collaborative strategy for creative sector growth (**Appendix A**).

2. **Recommendation**

- 2.1 That Executive approve and endorse the Warwick District Creative Framework, 2020 – 2025.
- 2.2 That the Executive note the significant contribution that the creative sector makes in fulfilling the Council's economic and social goals.

3. **Reasons for the Recommendation**

- 3.1 A number of recommendations were previously presented to Executive Committee on 6th March 2019 (Item 8, Arts Service Framework) which were intended as a first step to allow the Council's Arts Section to become more strategic and outwardly focused. A key recommendation was to commission a specialist consultancy company to complete a comprehensive impact study of Warwick District's creative sector – with the aim of informing a new creative strategy or 'framework'. Executive approved the funds to resource an impact study of the District's creative sector.
- 3.2 After a short procurement exercise BOP Consulting were appointed to carry out the study on behalf of the Council. BOP is an established, international consultancy specialising in culture and the creative economy. BOP carried out the study between April and July 2019. As part of the study an online survey was sent to over 400 creative businesses in the District. BOP also facilitated workshops which were attended by representatives of various creative organisations, artists and stakeholder groups including Leamington BID, Warwick University, Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP), and Warwickshire County Council. Desktop research, analysis and local context was provided by Professor Jonathan Neelands and Professor Stephen Roper of Warwick Business School.
- 3.3 BOP Consulting's final report, 'Warwick District's Creative Sector: Analysis of Impact and Strategy for Growth' (**Appendix B**) concluded that the creative sector should be acknowledged as a priority for Warwick District Council as there are significant and unique benefits to residents and the local economy.
- 3.4 Warwick District's first ever Creative Framework has been largely based upon the findings of BOP's report. It is also the outcome of engagement with over 40 creative organisations over more than six months, which helped to further refine the findings of the impact study. It is intended to offer a collective vision for our creative communities to coalesce around and provide participative ways for them to shape and influence how the sector is defined in the future. It highlights how the sector contributes to the identity and prosperity of the district, identifies opportunities for collaboration and proposes ways in which stakeholders might support our creative industries to continue to grow.
- 3.5 Warwick District's creative sector is vibrant, varied and fundamental to the economy of the region. Our creative industries support the wellbeing, engagement and ambition of the district's residents. Our impressive cultural

assets and events programmes attract visitors to our towns and a strong creative infrastructure entices highly skilled people to relocate here to work.

- 3.6 The District is home to a significant amount of creative organisations and has many of the necessary elements to become a world class creative cluster. Yet this has never been pursued through a dedicated growth strategy. While we are entering an exciting period of opportunity for the creative sector of the district, there are also warning signs that its growth might be beginning to slip backwards.
- 3.7 Given the significant strengths of the district's creative sector and the range of unique opportunities arising in the West Midlands over the next few years now is the right time to launch this framework. A refreshed enthusiasm and momentum has been building in the region's creative communities for several years which is becoming increasingly energised as the opportunities presented by Coventry City of Culture in 2021 and the Commonwealth Games in 2022 approach.
- 3.8 It is recommended that Warwick District Council continue to play a part in the district's creative fabric and that through the Creative Framework it should embrace the sector's ambition and work with partners to unlock the potential of the creative industries.
- 3.9 As a first step towards delivering the objectives of this framework it is the intention to develop a creative sector 'compact' to provide strategic, visible leadership for the district's creative industries as a collective. The compact shall bring together local partners with the passion to 'make things happen' and a shared interest in maximising the growth of the sector who will champion the civic role of culture and creativity.
- 3.10 This leadership group will work together to create an action plan to resource and deliver the priorities of the framework. Compact partners will potentially include representatives from across the creative sector, business, universities, local authorities, voluntary sector and CWLEP who are stakeholders in delivering the vision of the Creative Framework:

"By 2025 Warwick District will have an established reputation as a thriving creative cluster of national significance and be known for its distinctive blend of rich cultural heritage and cutting edge creative companies.

Residents will feel pride in their local area and be inspired by shared cultural experiences which celebrate the dynamic, innovative character of the district.

In five years' time Warwick District will be experiencing the positive economic and social benefits of creative regeneration. Our thriving, interconnected creative sector will play a crucial role in the prosperity of the area and support the ambition of Warwick District being the first choice for people to live, work, and visit."

- 3.11 The role of the Council is to provide support to the creative sector by recognising its needs, connecting the various sub-sectors, enabling, and facilitating growth. The Council will also offer long term oversight of the framework which will ensure the survivability of its aims through changes of policy and management within the various creative organisations and stakeholders. Specifically, the Council shall:

- Increase opportunities for residents and visitors to be inspired by, experience and participate in high quality creative activities and events by continuing to invest in and develop its own cultural facilities, open spaces and events programmes
- Identify opportunities and challenges, assist with setting direction and maintaining oversight of progress towards goals by using the Framework
- Continue efforts to attract national and regional investment in the district's creative sector and support external fundraising for projects and initiatives
- Move forward with delivering strategic initiatives such as Leamington's Creative Quarter and the Commonwealth Games
- Provide a strong evidence base for what works, why and what impact is being achieved
- Advocate for the creative sector on a local, regional and national level and promote its benefits

3.12 The strategic priorities of the Framework are:

a) 'Engagement'

Improve the quality of life for all residents of Warwick District by diversifying the variety of cultural experiences and artistic programmes; to increase opportunities for people to participate in, and be inspired by, high quality creative activity.

b) 'Voice'

Raise the district's national and regional profile as a high quality 'creative cluster' and articulate the offer locally to residents, visitor's, investors and business - advocating how it contributes to health and wellbeing, society and the economy.

c) 'Pathfinding'

Improve co-ordination and awareness of opportunities by fostering a culture of collaboration and communication.

To support creative organisations to be sustainable and financially resilient and increase levels of inward investment.

To attract and nurture exceptional talent and to become a place where creative practitioners are welcomed and supported to build sustainable careers.

d) 'Place-making'

Incorporate culture and creativity into the way we design and use our public spaces and use the creative sector to revitalise and enhance our town centres; to protect, preserve and grow our historic architecture, heritage and cultural venues.

e) 'Innovation'

Attract innovative companies to the area and encourage existing innovators to use their skills and knowledge to introduce new ways of thinking and address challenges within the sector; to tangibly connect the 'digital' strength of the district with cultural organisations to create original ways of engaging with creativity.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)

The Council’s FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things, the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects. This report shows the way forward for implementing a significant part of one of the Council’s Key projects.

The FFF Strategy has three strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council’s FFF Strategy.

FFF Strands		
People	Services	Money
External		
Health, Homes, Communities	Green, Clean, Safe	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and sports activities Cohesive and active communities	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/ productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
Impacts of Proposal		
Impressive cultural offering which encourages an increase in community led activities and use. Creative outdoor activities lead to cohesive and active communities.	Safe and vibrant town centres with an active programme of cultural events where the community feel comfortable at all times	Contributes to a dynamic and diverse local economy Increases visits from day-trippers and tourists to the area. Increased income levels and footfall
Internal		
Effective Staff	Maintain or Improve Services	Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers’ needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities Seek best value for money

Impacts of Proposal		
Much of the actions identified in the Framework are incorporated into existing work streams of officers. The Framework provides strategic direction and guidance for these projects.	The recommendations are focused on continuous improvement and development	The recommendations will establish better uses for the council's arts resources and seek new income streams

4.2 **Supporting Strategies**

Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies and the relevant ones for this proposal are explained here:

4.3 **Local Plan**

The Vision for the District as supported by the Local Plan (paras 1.30-1.34) is to make Warwick District a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. Specifically, the Plan delivers a Spatial Strategy that, amongst other things, focusses employment, retail, leisure and cultural activities in town centres (1.34). Furthermore, para 5.75 recognises the "multifunctional benefits" offered by sport and recreational facilities noting that "they have a positive impact on people's quality of life, particularly in terms of their health and wellbeing". Clearly any activity that reinforces the usage of these facilities is in line with these paragraphs.

4.4 **Economic/Tourism Impact**

Cultural tourism in the region is expected to boom during the City of Culture year in 2021, as well as attracting tourists to events during the build-up years. In order to maximise the economic impact of this upon Warwick District the Council must intervene and use its thriving creative sector to ensure that there is a competitive offer.

4.5 The creative economy is recognised as being a unique strength for the District and the current success in the gaming industry can be widened to include the whole creative sector – which is interdependent.

4.6 The Creative Quarter will regenerate the south of Royal Leamington Spa and have a significant impact on the local economy.

4.3 **Changes to Existing Policies**

None

5. **Budgetary Framework**

5.1 The Arts team have been previously allocated additional resources with which to deliver its role within the Framework including the new, temporary post of Projects & Development Manager (Arts), a temporary increase in the working hours of the Arts Officer and pilot funding for a new Creative Forum. Therefore, no additional funding or resource is required at this time.

5.2 It is the aim of the Compact to identify funding opportunities with which to deliver the objectives of the Framework.

6. Risks

- 6.1 The primary risk for Warwick District Council is that local audiences for cultural events in the District and cultural tourists are attracted to the City of Culture programme in Coventry to the detriment of those cultural organisations and venues operating in the District.
- 6.2 A second risk is that without increased support the creative organisations based in Warwick District could potentially relocate their businesses outside of the District leaving its creative infrastructure considerably weaker.
- 6.3 It is also foreseeable that new and existing talent will be attracted to competing 'creative clusters' because of the investment and expansion of the creative industries, leaving shortages in the surrounding region.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

- 7.1 No alternative options have been considered.

8. Background

- 8.1 In 2018 Warwick District Council's Arts Section successfully bid to be the subject of a Cultural Peer Challenge. The resulting report was extremely positive about the Council's Arts provision and made a number of practical recommendations.
- 8.2 The Peer Challenge team identified that Warwick District Council is excellent at delivering services directly from its own cultural facilities and that significant advances had been made in recent years. However, despite the District having an exceptionally strong creative economy, including one of the most significant digital clusters nationally, there was an apparent lack of wider strategic planning and collaboration with key partners (within the Council itself and externally) which could maximise the impact of that creative sector upon Warwick District for the benefit of residents and the local economy.
- 8.3 In response to this, a number of recommendations were presented to Executive on 6th March 2019 (Item 8, Arts Service Framework) which were intended as a first step to allow the Arts Section to become more strategic and outwardly focused.
- 8.4 One of the key recommendations was to commission a specialist consultancy company to complete a comprehensive impact study on Warwick District's creative sector – with an aim of informing a new creative strategy or framework.
- 8.5 The Council's Arts team commissioned BOP Consulting to carry out an impact study that would result in a comprehensive report that would identify the current profile and impact of the District's creative sector, identify particular strengths and opportunities for growth and reflect on areas of weakness, recommending a reasonable course of action to address them.
- 8.6 BOP concluded that for a local authority area of its type and scale, Warwick District's creative sector 'punches above its weight'. The District's creative economy is high quality and varied and is therefore worthy of a dedicated growth strategy.

- 8.7 BOP concluded that the creative sector should be acknowledged as a priority for Warwick District Council as there are significant and unique benefits to residents and the local economy, in particular:
- Warwick District Council's creative sector has much to celebrate – with particular strengths in performing arts, visual arts and cultural festivals – all of which tangibly enhance quality of life and attract people to the area to live, work and visit.
 - The creative sector makes a significant contribution to the local economy. Gross Value Added (GVA) from Warwick District's creative sector is just under £500 million.
 - Creative employment contribution is significantly larger than other key sectors in the District including retail, accommodation and manufacturing. (Estimated at 12,975 jobs)
 - The District's cultural offering is an important driver for the local Visitor Economy. (Tourism brings over 3.8 million people annually to the District each year with a combined spend of over £282.6 million, sustaining 6.3% of local employment)
 - The creative and digital community combined with excellent transport connections to the capital are a key driver for inward investment to the District
 - Creative occupations feed directly into wider economy and 70% of those in creative occupations work outside the creative industries (for example – graphics designers working for Jaguar Land Rover in the car manufacturing industry)
- 8.8 BOP also identified that within the context of the District's creative landscape the Council's own cultural facilities are flourishing and have significant impact - having one of the largest reaches in the area – welcoming over 563,000 people through their doors in in 2018/19.
- 8.9 On the whole the impact study found that the creative sector is thriving. However, it was also found that there is also significant risk and that the District's creative sector is beginning to slip backwards. The main reasons for this are:
- A lack of suitable space is a major barrier for majority of creative businesses – with many already outgrowing the space available and actively looking to relocate out of the District
 - Many creative businesses are struggling to attract suitable talent to the area – in an increasingly competitive market. The District's profile is not as prominent or attractive to creative talent as it should be.
- 8.10 The recommendations of the impact study were:
- For the District Council to develop and implement a growth strategy for its creative sector
 - To consider the development of a Creative Sector Compact for Warwick District
 - To move ahead with the Creative Quarter
 - To utilise Creative Sector Compact and Creative Quarter to support collaboration
- 8.11 The Council is uniquely placed to take action to help mitigate these risks and take action to grow the sector. The results of the impact study fed directly into the formation of the strategic objectives of the Creative Framework. It also identified issues across sub-sectors where Warwick District Council could

potentially make strategic interventions and take a proactive approach in supporting the sector to grow.

- 8.12 It became clear as part of the consultation carried out with local creative organisations that the Council required an outward facing strategy or 'Creative Framework'. There was evidently a great deal of frustration about Warwick District Council's fragmented approach to the creative sector and a perceived lack of support.
- 8.13 The framework was created in partnership with key arts organisations in District and clarifies Warwick District Council's role as an influencer, key funder, collaborator and coordinator within the sector. It is intended to prioritise and resource emerging opportunities and link those opportunities to the Council's strategic objectives across services. It also clearly identifies the benefits and value of the various creative sub-sectors, and how the Arts Section could better help to deliver the Council's priorities.