

# **Report to Stronger Communities Select Committee**

**Date of meeting: 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020**



**Portfolio: Community and Partnership Services – Councillor N Bedford**

**Subject: Epping Forest District Council Cultural Strategy (2020-2025)**

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## **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

For Members to note the introduction of a Cultural Strategy for the Epping Forest District 2020 - 2025.

## **Report:**

1. A Cultural Strategy has been developed for the Epping Forest District to identify programmes of work which support the role culture plays in the Council's corporate objectives of Stronger Communities, Stronger Place & Stronger Council, as well as those of key external partners.
2. In developing this strategy, consultation was undertaken with a representative range of cultural organisations across the district and this included an online survey undertaken by residents and visitors to the district and face to face and with community, culture & wellbeing partners.

Key findings of this survey were:

- The core age group of respondents were from the BeWell target market (working age adult market set out within EFDC's Health & Wellbeing Strategy)
  - 82% of respondents had visited a museum or art gallery in the last six months
  - Over half also visited a library
  - Most people undertake cultural activities with family, friends or alone
  - Over 91% of respondents want to find out more about heritage based activities
  - 99% think culture is important
  - 98% think culture plays a part in individual and community wellbeing
3. The strategy provides a framework for partnership working in arts, heritage, tourism, regeneration, community health & wellbeing, education, planning and events, to secure a cultural and creative landscape for generations to come and supports the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) directive that, *'Everyone should be able to access and participate in the arts, heritage and sport no matter what their background or where they come from'*
  4. The Strategy strengthens the key role that the Council has in leadership to strengthen the existing cultural provision within the district, through the work undertaken with a range of partners and stakeholders. It also outlines a vision to build a resilient cultural offer within the district which supports quality of life including lifelong learning, leisure, health and wellbeing for our residents

5. The strategy will assist EFDC in developing bids to key funding organisations such as Arts Council England and the National Heritage Lottery Fund to support the cultural offer within the district.
6. In addition, investment in culture through supporting museums, libraries and other cultural resources has been shown to have positive economic outcomes for tourism and local businesses. The tourism and day-visitor potential of the district has not yet been realised and so increasing visitors and their economic spend to the district is one of the strategy's priorities

**Resource implications** Within existing budgets as outlined within work plans and external funding for major projects will be sought

**Legal and Governance Implications:** None

**Consultation Undertaken:** consultation was undertaken with a representative range of cultural organisations across the district and this included an online survey undertaken by residents and visitors to the district and face to face and with our community, culture & wellbeing partners.

**Background Papers:**

What Works – Cultural Strategy Content Checklist

**Impact Assessments:** None

**Risk Management** None

**Equality:** N/A