

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report To:** Executive – 10 March 2010  
**Subject:** Manchester's Cultural Ambition  
**Report of:** Chief Executive

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**Summary**

Introduces the Cultural Ambition proposition which was commissioned by the Cultural Partnership and refreshes the City's cultural strategy and sets out how culture can contribute towards the objectives of the Community Strategy and Greater Manchester Strategy. Proposes establishing a Cultural Commissioning Fund for innovation, skills and talent development.

**Recommendations**

- (1) To endorse the Cultural Ambition as a framework for future cultural development in the City, to be taken forward through the Cultural Partnership in support of delivery of the Community Strategy.
  - (2) To approve in principle the establishment of a public/private sector commissioning fund for innovation, skills and talent development and to request Officers to bring forward a detailed Business Plan for its operation following consultation with national, regional and local stakeholders.
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**Wards Affected: All**

<b>Community Strategy Spine</b>	<b>Summary of the contribution to the strategy</b>
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	Promotes development of a world class cultural offer to distinguish the city as a destination for visitors and to open up employment opportunities in the cultural and creative industries for Manchester residents
Reaching full potential in education and employment	Investment in skills and capacity building to enable Manchester residents to access employment and training opportunities in culture and the wider economy
Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	Promotes active participation in sports, heritage and arts which leads to increased individual aspiration, achievement and brings people together

Neighbourhoods of Choice	Supports cultural development in neighbourhoods to create a sense of place and support social cohesion through opportunities for active participation and cultural and heritage aspects of the public realm
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**Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:**

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

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### **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

Manchester City Council with public funding agencies and private sector partners to identify how existing resources and external funding can be channelled towards a cultural commissioning fund which would support the delivery of the community strategy objectives.

### **Financial Consequences – Capital**

None directly from this report.

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### **Background documents (available for public inspection):**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

“Reframing Manchester’s Cultural Ambition”      Final Draft, February 2010

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 In 2009, Manchester City Council and the Cultural Partnership commissioned a 'refresh' of the City's Cultural Strategy in order to identify how the City could derive best value from the significant capital and revenue investment that has been made in culture and to generate a vision for future innovation. This will support the City's ambition for a world class cultural offer and contribute to the delivery of the Community Strategy.
- 1.2 The work was supported by an Advisory Group made up of strategic agencies including the Commission for the New Economy, Marketing Manchester, Arts About Manchester, Manchester Knowledge Capital, Arts Council England, Manchester University and a nominee from the cultural sector.
- 1.3 This report introduces the themes and objectives outlined in the resulting report 'Reframing Manchester's Cultural Ambition' and the headline implementations recommended in order to achieve this ambition.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Manchester's Cultural Strategy was published in 2002 with the aim of capitalising on the success of the Commonwealth Games and the investment in new cultural infrastructure that had taken place in sports, arts, libraries and heritage facilities. The objectives of the strategy were to develop the regional centre as a visitor and tourism destination and to expand opportunities for active participation in sports and arts through education and neighbourhood services. These objectives have been fully achieved and are exemplified by the programme of international sports events and Sport City; the Manchester International Festival which has positioned Manchester internationally as a cultural destination and by the extensive range of activities available for residents through Manchester Leisure, Manchester Libraries, Manchester City Galleries, the teams of cultural regeneration and sports development officers and ongoing development of significant cultural organisations across the city.
- 2.2 There is now an opportunity to build on these achievements by investing in innovation to ensure a year round world class cultural offer which will attract international visitors and profile and which will link cultural investment more effectively with key priorities. This has particular potential in relation to worklessness, by raising aspiration, investing in skills development and building the capacity of residents to participate in cultural and other employment opportunities in the knowledge economy; and by supporting early years development and family learning.
- 2.3 Manchester has the largest creative and digital economy in the UK outside London and is recognised in the Greater Manchester Strategy as a key driver of the knowledge economy. It is a sector that continues to expand during a period of economic downturn and which affords significant future employment opportunity for residents. The realisation of plans for the Sharp factory into an innovative centre for digital business, ambitions for high speed broadband access in the city centre with a focus on the Corridor and links with

Mediacity:uk, offers a huge opportunity to expand digital creative practice and contribute to economic growth.

### **3.0 Themes**

The Cultural Ambition is organised around five themes which take forward the three spines of the Community Strategy. They are designed to generate a vision of future success and to be a call to action to other partners such as the key cultural funding agencies to share these priorities and target their investment towards these common objectives.

- 3.1 **Culturally Distinctive:** to create a strong sense of place through a more innovative, ambitious and distinctive cultural sector. This would include securing national cultural institutions (such as the National Football Museum, National Cycling Centre and Royal Opera House Manchester), capital investment in existing facilities as well as support for cutting edge programming and signature events and festivals which nurture artistic innovation and bring international profile and visitors. The outcome would be for Manchester to raise its game in relation to international benchmarked cities.
- 3.2 **Community Inspired:** building on innovative work to date developing the cultural offer and sense of place in neighbourhoods and embedding cultural practice in strategies for improving health, educational attainment and social cohesion. The outcome would be a positive contribution to people's self esteem, aspiration and well being.
- 3.3 **Creative Investor:** informed by the Manchester Independent Economic Review, to grasp the opportunity of Manchester's digital and creative economy to expand the business base by attracting highly skilled people to work and live in the city and enable international cultural and business networks. The outcome would be transformation in the performance and profile of the creative economy, underpinning the already buoyant knowledge economy
- 3.4 **Talent City:** open up pathways to employment in the creative economy and develop a partnership across all tiers of education and employers which will develop aspiration, skills and achievement through sport and culture. The outcome would be a global reputation for nurturing creative talent and offering new employment opportunities for Manchester residents
- 3.5 **Culturally Connected:** to tell the stories that made Manchester in a more compelling way, including the radical history and industrial heritage of the city, and to encourage cultural institutions to work together proactively to promote their offer to residents and visitors. This would improve the visitor experience for both tourists and Manchester citizens.

### **4.0 Implementation**

- 4.1 It will require a concerted effort on behalf of the City Council, regional cultural agencies, cultural organisations and private sector partners to achieve this

exciting and challenging ambition. Feedback during the consultation process demonstrates that there is a collective will to work together, to find new ways of delivering cultural activities which will drive best value from existing investment and generate new funding opportunities

- 4.2 The regional cultural agencies including the Arts Council England, Museums and Libraries Association, English Heritage and Sport England, have agreed to work with the City Council and Marketing Manchester in delivering this vision through a new Cultural Partnership structure.

## **5.0 Cultural Commissioning Fund**

- 5.1 A major proposal in the Cultural Ambition document is to establish a new Cultural Commissioning Fund as a mechanism to generate investment in order to realise key delivery initiatives and to align existing spending priorities of stakeholders. This would be initiated by the City Council with the support of private sector sponsors, regional and national funding bodies and with the participation of major cultural organisations in the City including the Manchester International Festival. This Fund would support delivery across the five themes of the Cultural Ambition framework with a specific focus on innovation, skills and talent.
- 5.2 The Fund would identify potential for innovation and will seed fund projects and ideas which will invigorate cultural institutions through international collaboration and new approaches to community engagement and which will support emerging cultural leaders in realising their potential. Another focus of the Fund will also be on the integration of the artistic direction of individual cultural institutions to ensure the wider ambitions of the City can be met.
- 5.3 The Fund would bring together a coalition of education partners including schools, further and higher education to create pathways for the development of creative talent, build skills and community capacity to become active participants in the economy and help to generate the cultural and civic leaders of the future.

## **6.0 Contributing to the Community Strategy**

### **(a) Performance of the economy of the region and sub region**

- 6.1 Promotes the development of a world class cultural offer to distinguish the city as a destination for visitors and to attract skilled workers. Opens up pathways to employment in the creative and cultural economy, a key sector in the knowledge economy and which is showing resilience in a period of economic recession. It will also create opportunities for participation that develop capacity in communication, social skills and creative thinking which are fundamental assets in the knowledge economy.

### **(b) Reaching full potential in education and employment**

- 6.2 Investment in skills and capacity building to enable Manchester residents to

access employment and training opportunities in culture and the wider economy. The creative economy employs a very high number of graduates. This strategy aims to increase the number of young people taking up higher and further education opportunities and to create alternative routes for entry into employment in the sector.

**(c) Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect**

- 6.3 Promotes active participation in sports and arts which leads to increased individual aspiration, achievement and brings people together. Offers opportunities for informal and family learning from early years through to older people's activities which enable more active lifestyles which improve both physical and mental health and contribute to resilience.

**(d) Neighbourhoods of Choice**

- 6.4 Supports cultural development in neighbourhoods to create a sense of place and support social cohesion through opportunities for active participation and cultural aspects of the public realm

**7. Key Policies and Considerations**

**(a) Equal Opportunities**

- 7.1 The strategy aims to increase employment opportunities for Manchester residents and to contribute to increased social cohesion by bringing together people of different ethnic origin, age, gender, ability and sexual orientation to participate in sports and cultural activities and to ensure that these opportunities are accessible to all residents and visitors.

**(b) Risk Management**

- 7.2 Delivery of the strategy will be scrutinised by the Cultural Partnership operating within the framework of the Public Service Board which includes a robust risk management procedure and will be managed through the Culture Directorate.

**(c) Legal Considerations**

- 7.3 None associated with this report. The terms of reference and procedures for the Commissioning Fund will be developed in line with guidance from the City Solicitor