

REPORT TO: ARTS & HERITAGE COMMITTEE - 18 SEPTEMBER 2000

REPORT ON: THE NATIONAL CULTURAL STRATEGY

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF ARTS AND HERITAGE

REPORT NO: 611-2000

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the National Cultural Strategy, a proposed response from the City Council, and proposals to develop a local cultural strategy for Dundee.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the publication of the National Cultural Strategy.
- 2.2 Agrees Dundee City Council's response as at Section 6.2 and remits the Director of Arts and Heritage to bring this to the attention of the Scottish Executive and the Scottish Arts Council.
- 2.3 Remits the Director of Arts and Heritage to work with the local Theatre community to develop a campaign supporting the proposed National Theatre's location in Dundee.
- 2.4 Agrees to the establishment of a short-life multi-departmental working group to develop a local cultural strategy as outlined at Section 6.3.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no additional financial implications.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Cultural Strategy for Dundee will emphasise continuing delivery of arts and cultural services in ways which will ensure that local needs are met locally, access is strengthened and increased, and that opportunities for culture, heritage, arts and recreation are readily available to all.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Cultural Strategy for Dundee will emphasise equality for all in access to the City's cultural services and require that third-party organisations, funded by the Council, in their cultural activities and services, do likewise.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

6.1 The National Cultural Strategy

The National Cultural Strategy for Scotland entitled "Creating Our Future - Minding Our Past" was published by the Scottish Executive on 16 August 2000. It identifies key areas of cultural activity as being: arts, including traditional arts and languages; heritage; libraries; sport; education; the built environment. Cutting across these areas are common themes of access and social justice, disability access, cultural diversity, international opportunities and cultural tourism, and the economic potential of the creative industries.

6.1.1 The National Strategy is the outcome of a process of consultation launched in August 1999. Consultation comprised public meetings, meetings with special interest groups, and written responses. Over 300 formal responses were received. The Strategy is intended to be a general framework of action which will underpin the development of Scotland's cultural life over the next 4 years, combined with several specific commitments. The Strategy's definition of culture is wide and inclusive. It has been guided by a broad definition in line with that adopted by the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Politics, 1982:-

"In its widest sense, culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a society or group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental right of human beings, value systems, traditions and beliefs".

6.1.2 The National Strategy identifies four Strategic Objectives and twelve key priorities:

- Promoting creativity, the arts and other cultural activity
 - Facilitating a climate supportive to those working in the cultural sector
 - Enhancing Scotland's creative industries
 - Celebrating excellence in the arts and other cultural activity
- Celebrating Scotland's cultural identity in its full diversity
 - To promote the languages spoken in Scotland as cultural expressions and as a means of accessing Scotland's culture
 - To conserve, present and promote interest in, and knowledge of, Scotland's history and cultural heritage
 - To promote international cultural exchange and dialogue
- Realising culture's potential contribution to education, promoting inclusion and enhancing people's lives
 - To promote and enhance education and lifelong learning in and through arts, culture and heritage
 - To develop wider opportunities for cultural access
 - To maximise the social benefits of culture
- Assuring an effective national support framework for culture
 - To develop a national framework of support for cultural provision appropriate to the 21st century
 - To improve the quality and management of cultural provision
 - To ensure that funding is targeted to achieve clear priorities

6.1.3 Each Key Priority has between four and eight identified Supporting Actions. There are sixty-four Supporting Actions in all. The following response concentrates on those which impinge upon local authorities.

6.2 Dundee City Council Response

Dundee City Council welcomes the publication of the National Cultural Strategy for Scotland. It is a unique document which recognises and reflects the crucial role which a strong cultural infrastructure plays in people's lives. The Strategy also recognises that Local authorities are key players in public sector cultural provision.

6.2.1 Strategic Objective 1: Dundee welcomes the commitment to promoting creativity, the arts and other cultural activity and would comment on the following specific action areas:-

- **Access to graduate and post-graduate training for workers in the cultural sector**

This has long been identified as a problematic area. A nationally co-ordinated response involving further and higher education is required if we are to fully exploit the significant talents of cultural sector graduates. Dundee produces high numbers of talented arts graduates (with courses at Dundee University and University of Abertay having a national and international reputation) but requires to further invest in training, business and other support. In addition, mainstream training programmes (eg New Deal) require tailoring for the cultural sector. The Satellite project in Dundee provides an excellent model of providing business skills and training for artists. It also provides a ladder from education into a commercial future in the cultural industries. In addition there is a need for Continuing Professional Development for those already working in the sector to ensure they remain up to date with current thinking and develop appropriate networks.

- **Development of the creative industries**

As one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy the Creative Industries provides a significant opportunity for Scotland. Dundee has significant strengths in this area and is well placed to capitalise. The Dundee Partnership has already established a Creative Industries Working Group chaired by the Director of Arts and Heritage. It is in the process of producing a strategy and action plan which will focus on business start-up opportunities for the city's many digital media graduates and the development of a Creative Campus. The Strategy also supports Scottish Screen in producing a Film Charter for Scotland. This may represent an opportunity for Scottish Screen, and, therefore, its client Regional Film Theatres, which includes Dundee Contemporary Arts' cinemas, to secure additional resources.

- **Take steps to develop a national theatre for Scotland**

Dundee City Council supports the establishment of a Scottish National Theatre Company and will argue that it be based in Dundee in recognition of the quality of work and facilities at Dundee Repertory Theatre, the City's long theatrical tradition, and the Council's ongoing support for it. In keeping with the Scottish Executive's commitment to devolution, if a fifth national arts company is to be established, it should be based in a viable centre other than the centres (Glasgow and Edinburgh) which presently host the other four national companies. The council will work with the local theatre community to campaign for the National Theatre to be based in Dundee. The National Theatre should be fully funded by the Scottish Executive's identification of new resources.

6.2.2 Strategic Objective 2: Dundee welcomes the celebration of Scotland's cultural heritage in its full diversity and would comment on specific action areas as follows:-

- **Museums audit and Review of the Existing Statutory Framework for Museums and Galleries**

The need to address the statutory framework and funding requirements of museums and galleries is welcomed. The opportunity to designate important collections around the country and ensure these are supported through funding from the Scottish Executive (£3.25 million has been allocated for this exercise) is also welcomed. McManus Galleries houses one of the most prestigious collections in Scotland and Dundee is keen to work with the Scottish Museums Council in taking the proposed audit forward. The early audit of industrial museums will also provide an opportunity to highlight the award winning contribution of Dundee Heritage Trust to this sector and the need for more secure long-term Government funding.

- **Development of Education Services in Museums, Galleries etc**

The Council welcomes this initiative to utilise better the resources invested in Museums, Galleries and Council-funded cultural organisations (eg collections at McManus, astronomy at Mills, local history at Broughty Castle, contemporary art at DCA) and provide access to this content in a format which is consistent with national curriculum key themes. The recognition of the contribution of cultural activities to promoting links with the community, promoting pupil achievement, knowledge and skills, self esteem, creativity and inclusion is supported. However, the opportunity to maximise the access of school children and the development of Education Services will only be achieved with additional Scottish Executive resources.

- **Development of Cultural Tourism**

The Strategy's commitment to the setting up of a Ministerial Task Force to promote cultural tourism is to be welcomed as this is still an under-exploited area. It will need also to consider how to ensure that Scotland can exploit its advantages to attract international events in all aspects of culture, including sport.

6.2.3 Strategic Objective 3: Dundee welcomes the commitment to realising culture's potential contribution to education, promoting inclusion and enhancing people's quality of life and would comment on the following specific action areas:-

- **The setting up of pilot posts in schools of cultural co-ordinators, and the fulfilment of the commitment to have sports co-ordinators in every secondary school by 2003**

In supporting the establishment of pilot cultural co-ordinators it is essential that local authorities and the Scottish Arts Council are fully involved in the definition of roles to ensure that they complement and access the existing infrastructure. For this initiative to fully succeed, a similar commitment to Educational Outreach Workers within Museums and Galleries to develop appropriate content which schools can access will be essential. Once in post it will be equally important that there is close co-operation between these co-ordinators and the city's cultural providers to help to make best use of the city's cultural assets, to the benefit of all pupils.

- **The role of cultural activity in youth work and informal education**

A range of opportunities exist to provide cultural involvement in youth work and informal education. The Council has lodged a Social Inclusion Partnership bid with the Scottish Arts Council which includes a specific focus on young people involved with Neighbourhood Resources Department networks and specifically targets young people who might otherwise be socially excluded and lacking in the self esteem and sense of citizenship which cultural involvement can contribute to. Increasing activities for and by Children and Young People is a key priority for Dundee. It is an area which requires greater emphasis in the Cultural Strategy. While routes via formal education are important there are many other routes to engage children and young people. The success of DCA family and children's workshop programmes, Young McManus and Changing Nature, provide strong evidence of this. This is an area which requires support and investment.

- **Recognise the power of popular music - making to engage young people in cultural activities**

For many young people this is the way into culture and must be capitalised upon. The city's Music Plus Initiative and Soundbase are excellent examples of what can be achieved, featuring past events at the Caird Hall and another major event scheduled for the Factory in October. We believe that this is a model which can be replicated across the Country, providing a route into cultural activity which helps break down traditional barriers. It must be recognised, however, that if we are to embrace a wider definition of culture which values, for example, contemporary pop music then traditional funding of music (through the Scottish Arts Council, for example) must respond with financial support.

6.2.4 Strategic Objective 4: Dundee supports the need to have, in place, an effective national support framework for culture and would comment on the following specific actions:-

- **Extending New Deal to a wider range of Cultural Development and Training**

There is a need to provide a wider range of cultural development and training opportunities. The existing New Deal, while providing a framework for support, also constrains the type of schemes which can be developed. Locally the Satellite project provides a positive example of the creative application of New Deal to provide structured training for Artists. Satellite provides a model, which can be both, built upon and replicated elsewhere. It could also be used as a basis for reflection on the current application of New Deal to the cultural sector and for ways to enhance this.

- **Work with COSLA and others to promote effective local partnerships between groups of local authorities and key local bodies to provide a wide range of local cultural activities in line with local priorities**

Dundee is strongly supportive of, and heavily committed to Partnership Working. The Dundee Partnership is a citywide economic and city development forum which includes standing groups focussing on the Creative Industries, Cultural Quarter and Cultural Tourism. This provides a model of cultural support which could be replicated elsewhere. Partnerships are also formed with other local authorities on specific projects, eg the series of Scottish art exhibitions "Expressions", with Aberdeen City Council. In addition, local tourism and marketing forums have been established bringing together all local cultural providers. Finally, our early commitment to producing a local cultural strategy has the potential to inform the development of best practice guidance.

- **Cultural strategies as part of community planning and community learning**

The Cultural Strategy for Dundee will address this process and how the role and potential of culture is corporately included in community planning.

- **Methods of collection and evaluation of the quantities and costs of funded cultural provision, and its effects**

Dundee is leading the development of best practice in this field. The Arts and Heritage Department is a member of the Arts and Best Value National Benchmarking Pilot, convened by COSLA/SAC. At its meeting of 19 June 2000, Committee approved the adoption of amended Performance Indicators which will help inform and are consistent with the national pilot.

6.3 Developing a Local Cultural Strategy

6.3.1 At its meeting of 15 May 2000, Committee gave its approval to the development of a Cultural Strategy for Dundee to replace the existing Arts Action Plan and Heritage Action Plan 1998-2000, upon their expiry, and in the light of the impending publication of the National Cultural Strategy for Scotland.

6.3.2 To progress the development of the Cultural Strategy for Dundee, and to give cross departmental consideration to the themes and issues raised in the National Cultural Strategy, Committee is requested to remit to the Director of Arts and Heritage the setting up of an inter-departmental short-life working group comprising representatives of Arts and Heritage, Neighbourhood Resources and Development, Education, Leisure and Parks, Economic Development, Social Work and Planning and Transportation. The group's remit would be to produce a draft Dundee Cultural Strategy framework which takes due cognisance of the national strategy agenda, local cultural needs, and the city's own cultural strategic objectives and key priorities.

6.3.3 The draft framework would form the basis of a consultation phase with other local, regional and national providers of cultural services. Consultation with representatives of the public would also be included.

6.3.4 Following consultation and revision, the draft document will be brought before Committee for approval following the expiry of the existing Arts Action Plan and Heritage Action Plan 1998-2000.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Support Services, Director of Finance, Director of Leisure and Parks, Director of Planning and Transportation, Director of Neighbourhood Resources, Director of Economic Development, Director of Education and Director of Social Work have been consulted on this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 The National Cultural Strategy 2000
(copies have been supplied to each Political Group and the independent member)

Director of Arts and Heritage _____ Date _____