

Highland Community Planning Partnership

Chief Officers' Group – 13 August 2015

Agenda Item	12.
Report No	COG 22/15

The Work of the Highland Culture Strategic Board

Report by Chief Executive of High Life Highland

Summary

This report provides information on the current work of the Highland Culture Strategic Board and asks COG to note that there will be an opportunity to comment in detail on the Board's future work-plan following a workshop to be held later in the year.

1. Background

1.1 The Highland Culture Strategic Board was established following the Year of Highland Culture in 2007 with the purpose of maintaining and developing the joint working that resulted from that year's activities. The membership of the Board is Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Creative Scotland, Event Scotland, The Scottish Government and High Life Highland. The current Chair is Councillor Drew Millar, Chair of the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee.

2. Highland Cultural Strategy

2.1 Following extensive consultation the Board published a strategy for cultural development in Highland, 2012-2019 called 'Highland Culture: take pride, take part'.

2.2 The strategy identified four key themes:

- Promoting talent and rewarding improvement in innovation and quality
- Expanding an enterprising and sustainable cultural economy
- Growing audiences from within and outside the Highland area, and increasing access and participation
- Encouraging custodianship and interpretation of our Place, our living heritage and our built environment

3. Current Activity

3.1 Growing Audiences project – The Board has offered the sector access to funding to support innovative ideas to grow audiences. Rather than a straightforward grant scheme, this funding has been offered on a partnership basis, where the sector was invited to propose outline ideas. A shortlisted group are being supported to work up these ideas in a way that helps deliver the objectives of the strategy, and in a way that will provide models of good practice for others to follow. A final decision on funding and support will be made in September 2015.

3.2 Culture led regeneration – a seminar for Highland agencies was held in May 2015 to explore the opportunities in Highland for a 'place based' approach to regeneration, with culture as a driver of change. Speakers were invited from Reykjavik, Dundee and Helmsdale, places where culture led regeneration is making a difference. The day established a potential way forward for Highland which the Board will be

exploring further at a workshop later in the year.

- 3.3 Community Planning – Following the decision to ask the Board to lead on cultural matters for the Community Planning Partnership, a workshop with Partners was held to review ‘Take pride, take part’ the Highland cultural strategy. This resulted in the suggestion that the strategy was still relevant, but lacked detail in terms of an action plan. It was also suggested that a focus on active participation among people disadvantaged from participating in arts and culture could have the most impact, and that this would fit well with the CPP priorities around prevention, reducing inequalities and engagement. A proposal was made that the Board should consider undertaking demonstration projects and a number of options on how these might be taken forward were detailed. The Board welcomed the results of the workshop and determined that the option of a place based approach, using SIMD and SEP index data, would best meet its aspirations. This will support the CPPs work in reducing inequalities.
- 3.4 Gallery, Museum and Library for Inverness and the Highlands – The Board acts as the parent body providing governance for the aspiration to develop a new gallery, museum and library in Inverness. This is closely linked to proposals to develop Inverness Castle as a tourist destination when the Court Service leaves the building.
- 3.5 Place Partnership – The formal agreement with Creative Scotland, the national agency for the arts, screen and creative industries, is in the form of a ‘Place Partnership’. This is crucial to the development of culture in Highland and although formally between The Highland Council (taken forward by High Life Highland on the Council’s behalf) and Creative Scotland, the Board provides an ideal vehicle for joint working. A practical example of this is the growing Audiences project detailed above.
- 3.6 Planning Workshop – The Board will be undertaking a planning workshop later in the year to determine the actions required to progress ‘Take pride, take part’ in the context of the CPP and the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA). It is proposed to recommend to The Board that all CPP members be invited to the workshop so that it identifies the role of culture and the cultural strategy in improving the range of outcomes in Highland.
- 3.7 The Board is also likely to be reviewing its membership to ensure that it reflects the current and future needs identified by the review being undertaken. For example, it is likely that UHI will be formally invited to join the Board as opposed to their current observer role, and the Board has recognised the need to better connect with the new Gaelic Development group of the CPP.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Chief Officer’s Group is asked to note the current work of the Highland Culture Strategic Board, and to note that there will be an opportunity to comment in detail on alignment between the work of the Culture Board and the CPP following the proposed workshop later in 2015.

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