

# Report to Safer neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

17 January 2024

<b>Subject:</b>	Heritage Strategy Update
<b>Director:</b>	Director – Borough Economy Alice Davey
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Assistant Director: Libraries, Archives, Information Services, Tourism and Community Hubs – Dawn Winter Dawn_winter@sandwell.gov.uk

## 1 Recommendations



That the Safer Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board considers and comments upon the information contained in this report in relation to a Heritage Strategy

## 2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 A heritage strategy is only part of the wider cultural landscape in Sandwell and should form part of an overarching 'Cultural Strategy'.
- 2.2 The current Cultural Prospectus was developed in 2018 and much has changed since then, meaning the prospectus may no longer be fit for purpose.
- 2.3 A Cultural Development Officer has recently been appointed to the Borough, along with a replacement Business Manager for Museums, Arts and Archives. They can develop this work further.



### 3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p><b>Best start in life for children and young people</b> Culture supports education, language and literacy through the programme of events and activities</p>
	<p><b>People live well and age well</b> Culture supports residents' health and wellbeing through the programme of events and activities</p>
	<p><b>Strong resilient communities</b> Culture encourages and fosters a 'pride in place' for residents</p>

### 4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Since February 2023 when Scrutiny considered 'Towards a Heritage Strategy' report the cultural landscape has changed in Sandwell.
- 4.2 More funding streams are emerging to support culture, especially in an area like Sandwell, which is currently second from bottom Nationally for engagement in Arts and Culture.
- 4.3 The Cultural prospectus of 2018 may no longer be fit for purpose and whilst a heritage strategy would support a plan for the future of Sandwell's heritage assets, a Cultural Strategy would encompass more than this.
- 4.4 The appointment of a Cultural Development Officer for the Borough, along with a replacement Business Manager for Museums, Arts and Archives enables this work to be taken forward and bids for funding submitted to develop not only a Cultural Strategy for the Borough but enhance the cultural offer to residents.
- 4.5 Officers intend to use external funding to commission a Cultural Strategy and then develop a plan of action and bid for further funds to increase



the level of cultural activity and engagement across the Borough. The strategy would include not just Museums and Heritage, but Libraries, Archives and potentially other venues across the Borough.

## 5 Implications

<b>Resources:</b>	External funding will be required to support the development of culture and a cultural strategy.
<b>Legal and Governance:</b>	No specific legal and governance implications arising as a result of this report
<b>Risk:</b>	Buildings to deliver cultural engagement and activity are at risk of further decline
<b>Equality:</b>	No specific equality implications arising as a result of this report
<b>Health and Wellbeing:</b>	Increased cultural activity and engagement will support health and wellbeing
<b>Social Value:</b>	No specific social value implications arising as a result of this report
<b>Climate Change:</b>	No specific climate change implications arising as a result of this report
<b>Corporate Parenting:</b>	No specific corporate parenting implications arising as a result of this report

## 6 Appendices

None.

## 7. Background Papers

None.

