

DECISION-MAKER:	Cabinet
SUBJECT:	Adopting the Southampton Festivals and Events Strategy 2022-2032
DATE OF DECISION:	7th February 2023
REPORT OF:	COUNCILLOR KAUR CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Title	Head of Culture & Tourism	
	Name:	Carolyn Abel	Tel:
	E-mail:	carolyn.abel@southampton.gov.uk	
Director	Title	Executive Director, Place	
	Name:	Adam Wilkinson	Tel:
	E-mail:	adam.wilkinson@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY							
None							
BRIEF SUMMARY							
<p>A new Southampton Festivals and Events Strategy 2022-2032 was commissioned and completed in 2022. Cabinet is asked to adopt the strategy as part of Southampton's UK City of Culture legacy and builds on the adopted Corporate Plan 2022-2030, Cultural Strategy 2021-2031, Destination Management Plan 2021-2031 and Economic Strategy 2021-2031. The strategy proposes a vision, objectives and priority actions, working collaboratively across the city and with wider partners to capitalise on the ambitions for Southampton's residents, businesses and visitors.</p>							
RECOMMENDATIONS:							
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>(i)</td> <td>That Cabinet adopts the proposed Festivals and Events Strategy 2022-2032</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(ii)</td> <td>That Cabinet supports the development of a prioritised action plan following the formation of a new Festival and Events Working Group</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(iii)</td> <td> That the Head of Culture & Tourism has delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make minor and consequential amendments to the strategy • any other ancillary decisions in order to give effect to the recommendations in this report and the strategy, including the working group formation and action plan prioritisation </td> </tr> </table>	(i)	That Cabinet adopts the proposed Festivals and Events Strategy 2022-2032	(ii)	That Cabinet supports the development of a prioritised action plan following the formation of a new Festival and Events Working Group	(iii)	That the Head of Culture & Tourism has delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make minor and consequential amendments to the strategy • any other ancillary decisions in order to give effect to the recommendations in this report and the strategy, including the working group formation and action plan prioritisation
(i)	That Cabinet adopts the proposed Festivals and Events Strategy 2022-2032						
(ii)	That Cabinet supports the development of a prioritised action plan following the formation of a new Festival and Events Working Group						
(iii)	That the Head of Culture & Tourism has delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make minor and consequential amendments to the strategy • any other ancillary decisions in order to give effect to the recommendations in this report and the strategy, including the working group formation and action plan prioritisation 						
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS							
1.	The Festivals and Events strategy supports and is an outcome of the adopted Cultural Strategy 2021-2031, Destination Management Plan 2021-2031, Economic Strategy 2021-2031 and the UK City of Culture 2025 consultation,						

	and supports the Council's Corporate Plan. It contributes to supporting the delivery of ambitious economic, social and environmental benefits for communities, visitors and businesses through collaboration, attracting inward investment and raising the profile of Southampton locally, nationally and internationally.
2.	The strategy seeks to capitalise on the benefits arising from Southampton's UK City of Culture 2025 bid and the formation of the new Southampton Culture Trust. This collaborative place-based partnership will focus on Culture, Destination and Festivals and Events, and the strategy and action plan will guide and underpin that work with and on behalf of the city.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
3.	Not adopting the strategy is rejected given the strategic and wide-ranging benefits it will bring to the city for multiple stakeholders, and the ambition to develop a sustainable and high-quality festival and events programme and sector that puts Southampton and the region on the map.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
4.	In 2022 FEIUK (specialists in transforming place through culture) were commissioned to develop a new festival and events strategy for Southampton. The need had been previously identified by multiple stakeholders (festivals and events sector, community groups, businesses), reinforced by the devastating impact of the pandemic on the sector and the findings of the extensive consultation undertaken during the UK City of Culture 2025 bidding process.
5.	<p>The strategy has been developed considering local strengths, opportunities, challenges, strategic ambitions and learning from best practice from other successful festival cities across the world (Belfast, Bristol, Glasgow, Rotterdam).</p> <p>It is built on an evidence base that was developed through the following activity, and was reviewed with a working group comprising representatives from across the sector (commercial, civic, community):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Context and Evidence Review – considering key strategic documents locally, regionally and nationally and analysing existing data • Mapping – primary research to identify existing festivals and events in Southampton and identify those with the potential to develop • Sector Survey – to understand more about the sector and its impact with 19 organisers providing detailed responses • Case Studies – research into four cities (Belfast, Bristol, Glasgow, Rotterdam) to understand best practice for festival and event development and delivery • Stakeholder Consultations – 1:1 discussion with 26 key stakeholders and representatives identified by the working group
6.	<p>The key findings from this research are summarised as follows with a detailed SWOT analysis in the main document (see Appendix A):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About Southampton - a well connected, young and multi-cultural port city with distinctive strengths • Portfolio - a small and polarised portfolio which needs support to grow • Audiences - mostly serving local and niche audiences and in need of a curated marketing and audience development strategy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector - a polarised sector but with huge potential to develop collaboratively through training and networking • Spaces - some excellent sites and spaces for events which require sensitive management and programming • Policy and Processes - efficient and valued practical expertise but with potential to increase quality and impact • Leadership and Delivery - strong partnership working but no formal leadership structure to support festivals and events across the city
7.	Furthermore, the development of this strategy revealed an ambitious, enterprising and creative festival and events sector with the potential to grow and deliver real impact for Southampton. The city has considerable assets and expertise which could be more effectively used, and a significant potential audience for festivals and events making the city attractive to both home-grown and visiting event organisers.
8.	The adopted Cultural Strategy, Destination Management Plan, Economic Strategy and Corporate Plan provides a framework for a holistic approach that harnesses the potential of festivals and events to meet identified social, cultural and economic priorities and help tell a more compelling narrative of place. There is a strong track-record of partnership working and enthusiasm to do more together to develop Southampton into a festival city and event destination.
9.	<p>The most successful places have a mixed portfolio of festivals and events covering a range of forms and functions which also have the capacity to host major events and sometimes a role in mega events. Five broad categories based on international industry standards adapted by FEIUK have been applied to categorise according to scale and the intent of organisers. These categories are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mega Events e.g. Olympics, World Cup • Major Events e.g. UK City of Culture, Ryder Cup • Signature Events e.g. Edinburgh Festival, Brighton Festival • Growth Events i.e. distinctive to the location with national potential • Local Events i.e. targeted at local audiences
10.	<p>Within a Southampton context therefore, the strategy sets out a vision and framework for curating and developing a rich and distinctive portfolio and puts forward an indicative set of action areas.</p> <p>The vision, themes, principles and priorities are detailed in the strategy and recognises that not all festivals and events will meet the identified priorities. However, the ambition should be that by 2030, there will be examples of good practice when the whole of the Southampton festivals and events portfolio is considered.</p>
11.	<p>The proposed vision is outlined below, supported by the principles of access and inclusion, environmental sustainability, wellbeing and financial sustainability:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>So Vibrant, So Distinctive, So Welcoming, So Southampton Festivals Southampton is a city with a distinctive and varied range of festivals and events that bring the City's unique identity to life and extends a warm welcome to all, whatever your interests and wherever you are from</i></p>
12.	<p>The priorities for festival and events in Southampton should:</p> <p>a) Be authentic, unique and of high quality to support the vision, focus and ambition of this strategy and put Southampton on the map.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Be relevant, maximising opportunities to develop audiences and partnerships on a local, regional and global scale. c) Drive cultural place-making through animating new and under-used places across the city, and revitalising the city-centre with an offer that is year-round and supports the night-time economy. d) Attract higher-spending visitors both domestic and overseas and encourage them to stay longer, come back and recommend Southampton to others. e) Foster emotional connection by engaging communities, supporting wellbeing, building civic pride and local capacity through opportunities for participation and volunteering, ensuring access for all. f) Actively contribute to addressing environmental sustainability challenges. g) Be creatively innovative and sustainable, by producing new work and testing new ideas and approaches within a clear sense of future direction. h) Strengthen the local and global connections of business, cultural and academic partnerships and networks. i) Support professional creative, technical and management talent development through employment, training and showcasing. j) Sustain and create higher value jobs and professions, including creating paid opportunities for creative freelancers.
13.	<p>The strategy recognises that different types of festivals and events will have different types of impact: mega and major events may have good economic impact but low social impact. Local events may have profound social good but comparatively low levels of economic benefit. Many festivals and events will contribute across multiple domains, helping to lever additional value for the area. A strong portfolio will have a mix of different types of festivals creating different types of impact.</p> <p>To support this, a standardised evaluation methodology and shared set of performance indicators has been developed to guide Southampton’s decision-making and provides a methodology for measuring the collective impact to tell the bigger story of the value of festivals and events in Southampton.</p> <p>Sensitively applied, this can be a useful planning tool to help design the festival and event to be as impactful as possible. The level of impact that can be achieved will be dependent on the capacity of the organiser and the resources they have at their disposal. These impact areas and measures centre on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural – quality, ambition, place-making, capacity, international profile and reach • Social – local engagement, wellbeing, skills, environmental sustainability • Economic – overseas and domestic audiences, financial leverage, employment and local suppliers/ spend • Organisational capacity – ability to deliver, suitability, risks, potential to grow
14.	<p>The strategy proposes actions to grow Southampton’s festival and events portfolio including: regional partnerships for hosting major events, the development of two to four signature events over the next five years, identify potential growth events and support organisers to develop three-year business plans, and in terms of local events improving support for organisers</p>

	e.g. online information about sites and guidance about how to organise events.
15.	There are key actions for the Council including, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of an Events Policy including charging • Payment of artists for event organisers in receipt of an events grant • Research into existing holding powers into key sites and investigate whether these are still relevant to the city's needs and ambitions • Development of detailed location profiles (see Appendix 1 of the strategy) for all event spaces in the city beginning with a pilot programme focusing on a small number of key sites, developed and iterated with the sector, partners and residents
16.	This festival and events strategy seeks to build upon the identified needs and opportunities that have been heightened by Southampton's ambitions to become UK City of Culture in 2025. Whilst the title went to another place, the city is eager to capitalise on the momentum and progress achieved to bring social, economic, cultural and environmental benefits to communities, business and visitors to Southampton and the wider region and this strategy is one element in that journey.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
17.	There are no direct additional revenue or capital financial implications to the Council in implementing the Southampton Festival and Events Strategy at this stage. If there are resource implications for the Council these will be considered in the context of essential spend criteria and business and financial planning. Partners will look to a range of funding sources to implement this strategy where required
18.	This is a city-wide strategy that sets out a framework for improving the range, quality and collaborations that will lever investment and bring direct economic and social benefits for the city and region. The Council and the Culture Trust will work with partners to realise that potential over the life-span of the strategy which includes giving consideration to incorporating improvements to event spaces as part of public realm regeneration as well as supporting the sustainability and viability of the festival and events industry.
19.	Existing resource within the Council's Events team and the Events Safety Advisory Group are a critical part of ensuring legal compliance and avoiding service failure, including supporting festival and event organisers to deliver their business and activity to benefit residents, businesses and stakeholders when implementing this strategy.
20.	As the Council is currently limiting expenditure to essential spend only, then the essential spend criteria will be carefully considered before committing resources in implementing this strategy.
<u>Property/Other</u>	
21.	This is about realising the potential as well as mitigating the impact of events on Council assets especially residential, green and open spaces. This is identified in the Service's Asset Strategy as part of the Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
22.	Section 1, Localism Act 2011 provides a 'general power of competence', giving local authorities the legal capacity to do anything that an individual can do that is not specifically prohibited.
23.	The advancement and implementation of certain elements within the strategy may require individual decision making at an appropriate time and will require compliance with all legal frameworks and requirements.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
24.	Comply with legal requirements around event safety including incoming legislation around Protect Duty.
25.	Comply with legal requirements around the use of Council land for events e.g. the Hampshire Act for Mayflower Park.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
26.	Risk – limited stakeholder buy-in/ or withdrawal of support Mitigation – shared development and ownership, relationship management, communication, governance
27.	Risk – key partners no longer part of the ecology Mitigation – provide business support/ advice if required, find alternative delivery partners
28.	Risk – insufficient resources to deliver strategy Mitigation – identify alternate/ additional resources/ partnerships
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
29.	Aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-2030, Cultural Strategy 2021-2031, Destination Management Plan 2021-2031, Economic Strategy 2021-2031

KEY DECISION?	N/A
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Southampton Festivals and Events Strategy 2022-2032
Documents In Members' Rooms	
1.	None
Equality Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	No
Data Protection Impact Assessment	

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.		No
Other Background Documents		
Other Background documents available for inspection at:		
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)	
1.	None	