



**West Midlands
Combined Authority**

WMCA Board

Date	11 January 2019
Report title	Refreshing our Approach to Culture
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Report has been considered by	Programme Board - 21 December 2018

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Authorise work to develop a Cultural Leadership Board in collaboration with the sector.
- (2) Approve a review of the current Culture Creative Industries and Tourism Advisory Group (CCTAG) to provide expert working group support to the new Cultural Leadership Board.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update the Board on developments around the creative industries, tourism and culture sectors in the region, and recommend revisions to CA advisory group arrangements for culture to respond to these opportunities.

2. Background

- 2.1 Developments around the Local Industrial Strategy and Growth Company are likely to change the way we work with creative and tourism sectors, and so it is appropriate to review our approach to these sectors and also to establish specific support to the cultural sector.
- 2.2 For the creative sector, the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) has identified the region's creative sector as key economic strength: internationally recognised, at the heart of pioneering new content production and platforms, and a world-leading gaming and artificial intelligence cluster. We propose a commitment to a pre-eminent national creative & media cluster anchored by institutions, world class facilities and networks driving innovation and collaborative approaches to Intellectual Property and business growth. We will develop arrangements to drive the creative element, futureproof the sector and work regionally to create competitive advantage, in line with LIS implementation approaches being taken across other sectors.
- 2.3 For tourism, the WM Growth Company business plan includes work to develop and maximise the economic contribution of the visitor economy. This will create a new umbrella approach to maximising the West Midlands regional tourism sector, including a regional partnership scheme for tourism linked businesses.
- 2.4 For the cultural sector, the award of City of Culture status to Coventry will unlock investments and productivity improvements in arts, culture, and visitor economy not just in Coventry but across the wider region, alongside other major visitor events such as the Commonwealth Games 2022. Coordinated operational planning is taking place, but would be enhanced by deeper strategic coordination across the region. **It is proposed to establish a Cultural Leadership Board to drive the development of this approach, with expert working group support from the re-scoped advisory group.**
- 2.5 The suggested revisions to the current advisory group arrangements respond to activity already underway around the creative industries and tourism, and propose an approach to culture that places the sector firmly in the lead, to help ensure maximum benefit from key visitor events such as the City of Culture and Commonwealth Games are derived for the whole region, whilst recognising the strong overlaps between these sectors.
- 2.6 The proposed new arrangements are applicable to the whole CA geography, recognise the civic role for local authorities in delivering cultural objectives, and are intended to support coordinated, sector-led activity across the region. The role for the CA is an enabling one: helping maximise the quantum and effectiveness of funding secured for and deployed in the region, and playing a supportive role in convening the cultural leadership of the region.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no additional financial implications as a result of the recommendations within this report. The Cultural Leadership Board secretariat function will be funded from existing internal resource whilst the Board develops and implements plans to place itself on a sustainable financial footing. This is considered to be an achievable aim as a significant function of the new Board will be to encourage greater external investment in the cultural sector of the region.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications in relation to this report.

5. Equalities Implications

- 5.1 An important role of the new Board will be to attract “hard to reach communities” to cultural activities. This may include those disadvantaged due to equalities issues.

6. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 6.1 An important role of the new Board will be to involve a broader range of people, including young people and “hard to reach communities” in the full range of cultural activities. This should support work to make cultural activities more inclusive.

7. Geographical Area of Report’s Implications

- 7.1 The whole CA footprint, including non-constituent authorities.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 None noted.

9. Schedule of Background Papers

- 9.1 WMCA Board 22 June 2018 item 8: Culture, Creative Industries and Tourism.