

Report of the AD Legal & Governance

Creative Industries Update

Summary

1. This paper provides Members with an introduction to the ongoing work of partner organisations across the city which will address some of the findings arising from the previously completed scrutiny review on the 'Impact of the Arts and Culture Sectors on the Economy of York'. The report proposes Members continue their consideration of the ongoing work at their next meeting in May 2018.

Background

2. In January 2018 this Committee concluded the 'Impact of the Arts and Culture Sectors on the Economy of York' scrutiny review, originally undertaken by the former Economic Development & Transport Policy & Scrutiny Committee.
3. As part of their work on the scrutiny review, the Scrutiny Task Group used the findings from an independent review of Creative Industries undertaken by Sir Peter Bazalgette (published in September 2017), to reflect on their findings.
4. The Bazalgette Review was commissioned by the Government's Business and Culture Secretaries as part of the activity projected by the Industrial Strategy Green Paper. In preparing the Review report, its author worked closely with the Creative Industries Federation (a large membership based advocacy body) and the smaller industry-led Creative Industries Council.
5. The recommendations arising from the Bazalgette Review formed part of ongoing Government policy, including 'Sector Deals' for specific areas of the economy, with a core recommendation that a £500m fund be used to support Creative Clusters as part of a Sector Deal, using the City Deal model currently employed in English regions.

6. The Review Report also referred to the existing Arts and Humanities Research Council Creative Clusters programme to invest £39m in industry-driven research and development activity.
7. The Bazalgette Review focussed on 47 creative clusters across the country previously identified within a similar report published by NESTA in September 2016 - 'The Geography of Creativity in the UK'. Those clusters had been identified based on 'travel to work areas' and using economic indicators.
8. The scrutiny review Task Group found that even though York was named in the report as an example of a location where there was significant creative activity, and that it had many of the same preconditions for success, it was not identified as one of the 47 creative clusters. The Task Group concluded that in part, this was due to the way the supporting data had been collected and that the city had not contributed the appropriate data at the appropriate time (the Creative and Digital Industries in the city have not been mapped in 9 years since the Burns Owen Partnership report in 2009).
9. When considering the draft final report, this Committee therefore questioned whether there was anything the Council could do to support the city's creative industry sector, particularly with regard to improving recognition of its strengths and raising the city's profile as a creative hub, and thereby improving its opportunities to access the available associated funding.

Update on York's Creative Sector

10. Since the conclusion of the 'Impact of the Arts and Culture Sectors on the Economy of York' scrutiny review, Science City York (SCY) have been mapping, surveying and consulting with the existing Creative and Digital businesses in the city, trying to understand the strengths and challenges those industries are facing and where most value can be added now and over the next 5 years. They have consulted with over 200 creative businesses, including 138 businesses in our survey, 15 one to one interviews, 4 workshops (average 15-20 people per workshop) and 3 creative dinners (20 per dinner).
11. Initial findings show 4 main areas for development:

- **Visibility** of the businesses at a local, regional and national level to encourage new businesses and freelancers, inward investment and increased opportunities for those businesses.
 - **Talent Pipeline** in a way that reflects the nature of the business needs. Traditional apprenticeships were seen as the least desirable way of introducing new talent into the industries.
 - **Business Development** including portfolio development, regularity of work, pricing and education of non-creative businesses in how to engage with the Creative Sector.
 - **Workspace** is paramount, and the preference is city centre, applying a 'hub and spoke' model of linking together the different 'creative camps'.
12. SCY are now developing a Creative Industries Strategy for the city with Actions in advance of a May Launch. They envisage a longer piece of work setting out the background, policy evidence and rationale, a shorter strategy document and a section on short, medium and long terms actions to be delivered by SCY, the Guild of Media Arts, the business community, the Universities and the Council where appropriate.
13. Workspace
Initial actions will be around identifying spaces for businesses to start, grow and thrive in the city and early conversations are underway with partner organisations across the city on a number of possible opportunities.
14. Business Development
Initial conversations with York St John University are underway to explore a Summer Business boot camp, to provide a comprehensive route for new businesses to learn and grow. Networking events and opportunities for businesses to meet new people and find shared opportunities has also been flagged as really important.
15. Talent Pipeline
Work is ongoing to explore (a) the alternatives to the apprenticeships route for creative and digital micro-businesses, with a particular focus around freelancers and flexible work based development of emerging creative and digital practitioners and (b) how to retain graduates and attract new, wealth generating individuals and businesses to set up and stay in the city.

16. Visibility

Suggestions include developing a new platform for sharing good news stories and successes, and new cutting edge content in a multimedia format. This is intended to reflect the 'Media Arts' nature of the businesses in York and will contain film, moving image, animation, podcasts, vlogs, blogs and images. The content could be generated by SCY, businesses and wider stakeholders. There is also a PR and Communications need to communicate the successful nature of the city's cutting edge businesses at a national and international level. A recent good example is the inclusion of a York Company 'Bright White Ltd' in the latest Digital Culture paper from the Cabinet office – see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/culture-is-digital/culture-is-digital>

Next Steps

17. Endorsement - The draft strategy will need to be endorsed by the city stakeholders i.e. CYC, the Universities, the large creative and cultural institutions and the businesses, to demonstrate it is the right direction of travel and that the city is committed to supporting the delivery of its action plan over the next 5 years. The Council's new Head of Economic Growth is currently in negotiations with SCY on the draft strategy and on the Council's role in supporting it.
18. Governance - The creation of a steering group which includes an officer representative from CYC, to help ensure the activities and recommendations are carried out over the next 5 years in the city.
19. Visibility - 100 creative digital stories will need producing in the first instance and a platform to house the content will need to be developed. SCY are committing some staff resource to this but will need help with funding this extra work.

Report Recommendation

20. It is proposed that the Council's new Head of Economic Growth be invited to attend the next meeting of this Committee to:
- i) Further explore the Council's role in supporting the city's new Creative Strategy

- ii) Provide a progress update on the priorities within the city's current Economic Strategy

Reason: To assist the committee in identifying items for its workplan for the coming municipal year.

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Specialist Implications Officer(s) N/A

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes: None

Abbreviations:

CYC – City of York Council

PR – Public Relations

SCY – Science City York