

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> December 2014
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Macclesfield Heritage and Culture Strategy (Ref CE 14/15-35)
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor D Stockton, Housing and Jobs Councillor L Gilbert, Localism and Enforcement

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### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The 'Heritage & Culture Strategy' for Macclesfield is a response to a strategic theme identified in the 'Macclesfield Town Centre Vision'. It expresses an approach to Macclesfield's cultural landscape to 2024, providing an outline plan for delivery. The strategy draws on the 'story' of Macclesfield highlighting both the heritage and contemporary strands that make the town what it is today and that remain important to its future. A vibrant cultural scene has emerged in recent years that has the potential to support the town's broader regeneration. A number of projects are in development that will give a further lift to the town centre scene for both residents and visitors.
- 1.2 As it is developed from the 'Town Centre Vision' it supports the Council's community leadership role of 'Putting residents first' in meeting its stated outcomes. It was developed through consultation with Elected Members, key organisations and the people needed to realise the cultural vision, assist in its delivery and contribute to the regeneration of the town.
- 1.2 The strategy includes an assessment of 'what already exists' i.e. current facilities and provides an approach to facilitating further improvement over the next 10 years. It maps out a strategy for working towards this improvement, identifying methods of delivery and marketing for the vision. It sets the 'tone' and framework for culture led regeneration in the town-centre and provides a context for skills, creative industries, the cultural/visitor economy, project development, investment and funding applications.

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the adoption of the Heritage & Culture Strategy for Macclesfield town centre.
- 2.2 To endorse the management and delivery arrangements set out in the report.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 To provide a strategic framework for culture-led regeneration in the town-centre.
- 3.2 To provide a context for project development, funding and investment.
- 3.3 To contribute thematically to achieving the Vision for Macclesfield town centre.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 Macclesfield South, Macclesfield Central, Macclesfield East, Macclesfield Hurdsfield, Macclesfield Tytherington, Broken Cross and Upton, Macclesfield West and Ivy.

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 Cllr Damien Druce, Cllr Laura Jeuda, Cllr Janet Jackson, Cllr Ken Edwards, Cllr David Neilson, Cllr Gill Boston, Cllr Brendan Murphy, Cllr Lloyd Roberts, Cllr Louise Brown, Cllr Martin Hardy, Cllr Carolyn Andrew, Cllr Alift Harewood.

### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The measures outlined in this report will support the delivery of a thematic strand of the Macclesfield town centre vision.

### **7.0 Implications for Rural Communities**

- 7.1 None

### **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The strategy helps to deliver the overall aspirations of the Macclesfield town centre vision and does not have an additional cost associated with it. Existing programmes, including Macclesfield town centre capital improvements are already reflected in the medium term financial strategy. Any additional capital or revenue developments that arise from application of the strategy would be addressed through normal financial planning arrangements where these are of relevance to the Council. One intended outcome of the strategy is attraction and leverage of external funding for heritage and culture projects. There are no direct revenue implications.

### **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 It is noted that the strategy has been developed through consultation. Cabinet needs to ensure that it takes into account the views expressed in that consultation when making its decision.

## 10.0 Risk Management

- 10.1 Where any project implementation is to be managed through the Council, the normal TEG and EMB project management processes will be applied where relevant.
- 10.2 The approach contributes to the Council 3 year plan outcomes and the Macclesfield town centre vision. There is a risk that these outcomes would not be fully achieved without adopting this approach.

## 11.0 Background and Options

- 11.1 The Heritage & Culture Strategy for Macclesfield Town Centre seeks to identify key cultural and heritage strands, including arts, music, creative industries and past history. It was developed through consultation with heritage and cultural organisations and individuals and sets out an approach to taking forward the Strategy in the context of potential funding streams, including short, medium and longer term plans with funding and resource implementation strategies.
- 11.2 **Why heritage and culture?** It is recognised that Heritage and Culture can enrich our lives and can impact on achieving wider objectives such as economic wellbeing, health and education. This includes the influence of the arts or events in animating a place and of heritage in providing a narrative root for individuals and places. There is also an economic impact of heritage and culture in areas such as skills, employment, brand image and the direct value of the visitor economy.
- 11.3 **Why Macclesfield?** The 'story' of Macclesfield highlights both the heritage and contemporary strands that make the town what it is today and that have become important to both its fabric and its future: **Philanthropy , Industry and Technology , Art and Design , Built Heritage, Social History, Creativity**, and of course, **Silk**. A vibrant cultural scene has emerged in recent years and a number of projects are in development that will give a further lift to the town centre scene for both residents and visitors.
- 11.4 The heritage and culture of a place help it to stand out from the crowd. They become reasons why people choose to live in or associate with a place. They provide a measure of difference that mark a place out as vibrant, interesting and creative. They inform investment and location decisions or reasons to stay, developing a sense of belonging and pride. Heritage and culture are also important to visitors, giving reasons to come, reasons to stay and reasons to spend money. In that context the strategy aims to support regeneration and investment, helping to retain local talent, providing economic and cultural prosperity and promoting Macclesfield as a great place to live, visit, and work.
- 11.5 As it is in the wider context of the Town Centre Vision, the strategy takes account of other thematic aspects of the town's regeneration including retail & business, communities, accessibility and environment, (including public realm).

It also takes account of the functional & area based approach to the 'quarters' identified in the Town centre Vision.

- 11.6 The strategy, which builds on previous work, was commissioned by Cheshire East Council and undertaken by 'The Hamilton Project'. It was overseen by a Cheshire East Council/'Make it Macclesfield' steering group chaired by Cllr Livesley (as nominated by local members). The strategy was developed in consultation with Local and Cabinet Members (eg presentations in December 2013 and January 2014, attendance at consultation workshops and presentations), the Make it Macclesfield Forum and other key organisations, individuals and interest groups.

#### Strategic themes

- 11.7 A key strand of the strategy is identification of the 'story', identifying key themes to be developed to create a focus for the delivery of the strategy. 'Stories' examined as part of the consultation included 'creativity' and 'entrepreneurship/industry'. Another was 'silk', being a major strand of the 'story' of Macclesfield that supports delivery of many of the identified strategic themes of the strategy, including use of heritage buildings, synergies between Heritage and Culture and business and changing perceptions of Macclesfield:
- 11.8 Strategic themes and outcomes were devised and tested with community and creative groups and individuals in Macclesfield:
- **Promotion / Communication:** Macclesfield's culture and heritage should be more visible, giving Macclesfield a real sense of place that people want to visit, live and work in.
  - **Culture and heritage synthesis with business:** How can Macclesfield further promote and nurture the benefits of culture and heritage working with business, encouraging sponsorship and philanthropy?
  - **Digital Industries and Entrepreneurship:** Digital industries and engagement by the culture and heritage sector with digital technologies are part of the future of culture and industry in Macclesfield.
  - **Maximise Use of Heritage facilities:** The strategy will support exposing the value in what is currently available, and enable the process of looking at alternative uses for spaces or new economic uses for heritage buildings or spaces (ie sustainable commercial as well as cultural).
  - **Changing perception** –Macclesfield was once described as a "cultural desert" (10 yrs ago) and has come a long way since that Times article. There are more cultural facilities than 10 years ago. However there is still a challenge around changing perceptions, to both its own residents and to potential visitors.
  - **Sustain and Nurture:** It will be a main focus of the action plan, looking at options in terms of creating a sustainable and thriving Town Centre keeping a balance between an independent, organically grown Heritage and Culture sector and a more co-ordinated and corporate approach.
- 11.9 The strategy also identifies some of the buildings or assets already used and those with further potential. These include the Town Hall, Charles Roe House, Christ Church and the various buildings related to the Silk Heritage Trust.

Individual buildings are historically significant but their impact is increased because of their number and proximity to each other and their relationship to other aspects of the town.

### Management & delivery

- 11.10 The strategy identifies that Cheshire East Council is well placed to lead its development and to oversee its delivery in the first 3 yrs. However, the diverse nature and scope of the cultural and heritage sector is such that a range of other organisations will be central to ensuring that there is full engagement in the process.
- 11.11 From lessons learned during the consultation it is proposed to establish a core delivery group – the Heritage and Culture Partnership – supported and informed by a wider Heritage and Culture forum. Together, this creative alliance of organisations and individuals will take the strategy forward with CEC playing an important role in enabling, facilitating and supporting its delivery. The ‘Partnership’ will have a steering and coordinating role and provide updates for local Elected Members and Portfolio Holders along with the Make it Macclesfield Forum and other key stakeholders.
- 11.12 A ten year action plan has been developed to support the delivery of the strategy, although it is accepted that the partnership will need to keep this under review to reflect progress and changes in context. The strategic themes would be used as a framework for any future development of the action plan and delivery of heritage and cultural programming in Macclesfield to help achieve the strategic aims. A number of projects are already waiting on publication of the strategy to support funding applications. The Full strategy will be published online and available via the Cheshire east Council website and other relevant sites. If endorsed, the strategy would be progressed as part of the shared ‘Town Centre Vision’. An executive summary of the Strategy is attached as Appendix 1 and the current action plan is at Appendix 2.

## **12.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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