

CABINET

DATE	16th March 2022
REPORT OF	Councillor Callum Procter, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Tourism
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Sharon Wroot, Executive Director Environment, Economy and Resources
SUBJECT	Creativity Strategy
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO.	CB 03/22/06

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIM

The Creativity Strategy will contribute to all the Council's Outcomes over the next 5 years. Specific focus on creativity will contribute to wider economic, health and social benefits, supporting business growth, nurturing skills, enhancing community interaction, and delivering better quality lives. Creativity will form a core part of transforming our town centres into vibrant, dynamic destinations for visitors, and where residents and businesses are proud of where they live and work, promoting pride in place and a sense of belonging

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Creativity Strategy has been developed in collaboration with local stakeholders including creative and heritage organisations, businesses, voluntary and community sectors and across the Council. This strategy outlines our aim to use creativity to share our stories in order to celebrate our past and help shape our future. The strategy outlines nine stories that belong to Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes, and the Wolds which will be at the heart of all creative activity that takes place in the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Adopts the Creativity Strategy 2022, as laid out in Appendix 1.
2. Delegates authority to the Executive Director Environment, Economy and Resources, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing and Tourism to publish, promote and implement such strategy.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The decision allows the Council to publicise its vision for creativity across the Borough

and establish a Creativity Board to develop an action plan to deliver the objectives of the Strategy. The decisions will ensure that creative activity is interwoven across a wide range of Council strategies and cement a strategic approach to culture and heritage activity across the wider place.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1. North East Lincolnshire (NEL) has made significant strides forward in culture and heritage activity in recent years which has included the award of a Cultural Development Fund (CDF) programme, a Towns Fund programme including heritage and culture as a key priority, Coastal Communities Fund, Cleethorpes Townscape Heritage programme and a Heritage Action Zone (HAZ). Much of this activity has been developed from a Cultural and Heritage Framework which was agreed by the Council in 2018 and the North East Lincolnshire Culture Strategy in 2017.
- 1.2. The Council appointed Beam, a cultural development organisation, to work with the Council and local people to shape a new vision for creativity across the borough.
- 1.3. North East Lincolnshire is an Area of Focus for National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) and a Priority Place for Arts Council England (ACE). This Creativity Strategy and actions that follow enable the Council and partners to work to collaboratively with NLHF and ACE to deliver our shared outcomes.

Aim

- 1.4. The aim of the strategy is to celebrate the stories that make Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds distinctive and special. Creativity is the way to tell these stories and in doing so achieve a number of objectives. The ultimate aim is for creativity - arts, crafts, culture and heritage - to play an important role in the lives of everyone in Grimsby, Immingham and Cleethorpes. By celebrating the stories that are important to the people and places of the area, this strategy aims to:
 - Bring creativity into the lives of everyone who lives in, works in, or visits the area
 - Build on previous cultural and heritage frameworks to make them relevant for today
 - Maximise the impact and legacy of current funding and secure more funding in the future
 - Increase the life opportunities of people, particularly younger people
 - Develop the local economy
 - Strengthen the creative sector and provide clear leadership
 - Celebrate and protect the heritage of the area - the buildings, places and the stories
 - Strengthen local pride and change perceptions of the area
 - Increase understanding of what creativity means and what it can achieve
 - Increase creative activity in a coordinated way to benefit all
 - Use creativity to celebrate the people, places and achievements of Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes, and the Wolds

- Provide a clear action plan of how the aims of the strategy can be achieved
- 1.5. Creativity and celebrating the stories of Grimsby, Immingham and Cleethorpes gives the chance to support change - shaping how the area looks, how people feel about it and how people live their lives. The time is right for the Council to support, strengthen, champion and increase the role of creativity in the area, both leading directly and supporting others to deliver. This strategy aims to highlight key opportunities and challenges in relation to creativity. It creates a framework for the next five years setting out a series of ambitions. Within this will be annual action plans, creating an element of the strategy that can evolve and adapt over time.

The Stories

- 1.6. There are many stories to be told about Grimsby, Immingham and Cleethorpes, stories of our people, our places, our buildings, our memories, our achievements, and our future.
- 1.7. These stories are important as they are about who we are as individuals, the place we grew up in, the buildings around us, where we live now, where we work and how we live our lives. They also help shape places, whether it is our local community, the town we live in or the wider area where our families are from. They are the stories, myths and memories that show how people and places have developed, changed, and grown. Stories are a way of looking back at where we have come from, but also a way of looking forward and talking about what we want our future to be.
- 1.8. We are talking about stories as they are at the heart of this creativity strategy, with creativity used as the tool to celebrate those stories and share them with others.
- 1.9. When you ask people about creativity, they have different views. It could be about: carnivals, events, galleries, exhibitions, historic buildings, classes, lessons, reading podcasts, television, crafts, food & drink, sport and many other things. For this strategy it is all these things and more. Creativity has the potential to be part of everyone's lives. It is not something that should be separate or different, but a part of how we live our lives, how we work, how we find enjoyment, , enhance wellbeing, find solutions to problems, look at our past, build a sense of community, tell our stories, interact with others, or grow as individuals.
- 1.10. The draft strategy highlights that the stories belonging to Grimsby, Immingham and Cleethorpes should be at the heart of all creative activity that takes place in the area. These creative activities should be delivered in a consistent, coordinated, and high-quality way that has the maximum impact to benefit the people of the area. Those stories are:
- The role Grimsby, Immingham, and Cleethorpes play in the world
 - The sea
 - The coast
 - Green spaces, ecology and biodiversity
 - Sustainable energy and environmental responsibility

- Welcoming visitors
- Food and drink
- Local people and achievements
- Historic character

1.11. Further details can be found in the attached draft strategy

Strategic Aims

1.12. This strategy creates a five year framework setting out the key ambitions we have over the next five years and beyond, they are grouped under three themes with a series of strategic aims under each one.

1.13. CREATIVITY FOR ALL

- Increase the amount and visibility of creativity: Build on existing creative activities in the area and create more opportunities to ensure that creativity is accessible and available to all throughout the area.
- Focus on equity, diversity & inclusion: Ensure everyone has access to creative activities regardless of where they live, how much money they have, their background or their previous experience of creativity.
- Involve and support young people: Place creativity at the centre of how young people learn, develop and express themselves, whether in school or outside.

1.14. CREATIVE ECONOMY

- Develop the next generation of creative people: Identify and support the next generation of freelancers, creative individuals and people leading creative organisations to help grow the creative sector in the area.
- Celebrate Grimsby, Immingham, and Cleethorpes' role in the world: Use creativity to show people, both within the area and beyond, the impact the people, places and achievements of Grimsby, Immingham and Cleethorpes have, and continue to have on the rest of the world.
- Secure funding: Take a coordinated approach to funding creative activity in the area that brings in money from a range of sources, in a range of ways across a long period.
- Support creative businesses and individuals: Ensure creative businesses are aware of the support available to them to develop and grow their businesses and creativity. Where there are gaps in the support needed then specialist support will be developed.

1.15. CREATIVE WORKING

- Embed creativity widely: Embed creativity in the work and lives of everyone. It will be part of the delivery of Council services, the approach organisations take to delivering their work, how the area promotes itself, how young people learn and how people live their lives. Being creative should be a natural part of everyone's lives, rather than an add on.
- Take advantage of digital technology: The opportunities of digital technology will be maximised, this will be both for creative purposes, but also a way in which people learn about creative activities, how they experience them or how they take part.
- Address our environmental responsibility: Considerations of environmental responsibility and impact will be at the heart for all creative activity. This includes

using creativity as a way of talking about issues such as climate change, but also how the negative environmental impact of any activities can be minimised.

- Raise the bar: Everyone will strive for creative activity that should always be of the highest quality and looking to improve on what has taken place before. The aim should be to raise the aspirations of both creative individuals delivering activities and those experiencing them.
- Support North East Lincolnshire Council to be an enabler: The Council will support and encourage those in the creative sector, looking at how they can reduce barriers and obstacles that both prevent people delivering creative activities and people experiencing them. It will embed creativity and creative approaches at all levels of the organisation and its work.
- Work in a spirit of collaboration: Those in the creative sector will work together in a spirit of partnership and collaboration, openness and positivity, supporting each other. They will look at how they can work with other sectors to integrate creativity into the work and lives of others.
- Learn from others: The experiences of other places will be used to look to develop and deliver creative activities in the area, learning from the successes of others and how other approaches can be used locally.
- Celebrate the heritage of the area: Creativity will be used as a way of highlighting and sharing what makes the area special. It will be inspired by the stories, buildings and the people of the past, present and future to help shape how people see and feel about the area. The Heritage Fund definition of heritage as *“anything from the past that you value and want to pass on to future generations”* will be at the heart of local identity.

Delivery of the Strategy

- 1.16. A five-year action plan will be developed by October 2022 guided by the stories and creativity charter set out above. These are the big areas we want to change over the next five years. Our stories and how we tell them will be the way we make this change. There will be annual reviews of the action plans setting out the projects for each year as we make progress towards the five-year targets.
- 1.17. A Creativity Board will oversee the delivery of the Strategy. This board will be representative of NEL and include a range of interested stakeholders including creatives, education, the voluntary sector, businesses and young people. This will build upon, strengthen and broaden the engagement which was reinvigorated through the Grimsby Creates (Cultural Development Fund) programme and other initiatives in North East Lincolnshire. The Board will provide strategic leadership for creativity and work closely with the emerging Local Cultural Education Partnership, Heritage Network and other forums which support local creatives. The Board will work closely with, and report to, the Greater Grimsby Board to ensure that creativity is at the heart of North East Lincolnshire’s regeneration plans.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1. Following a risk impact assessment, the Creativity Strategy has been open to wide consultation through a general survey/questionnaire and focus groups invited from known networks and an open call via community groups, education,

business and sector representatives. Therefore, the respondents have been able to provide their views of what creativity means to them, what is needed here and what are the challenges to overcome. People have been candid and informative in their response which has led to an inclusive and robust strategy. One strand of the charter is related to 'creativity for all' covering activities that are accessible and available to all residents irrespective of where they live, how much money they have or their background, and that creative activity is representative of the local communities. This minimizes the potential risk of lack of access or under representation to creative activity.

- 2.2. Two of the stories to be told about the area relate to the environment, as green energy and sustainability are seen as opportunities to mitigate potential risks from environmental issues in the borough.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Do Nothing – To do nothing would mean that the Council would not have a relevant and up to date approach to creativity. This would have a negative impact and limit the Council's ability to support and deliver a range of creative projects.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1. An inclusive and clear message to residents and visitors that creativity is for all, where opportunities for working creatively is a positive and should lead to healthier and more fulfilling lives where creativity is a vital part in everyday activities.
- 4.2. A strong and understandable Creativity Strategy provides a clear rationale for investment in culture and heritage in North East Lincolnshire. Most importantly it provides a framework for how creativity plays an important role in many aspects of the Council's work. Recent examples include the enhancement of St James Square, with high quality artistic commissions, and the Holiday Activity Fund which enabled over 1,600 children to attend Cinderella at Grimsby Auditorium, giving many their first theatre experience.
- 4.3. It is a document that supports the local delivery of Arts Council England's Lets Create Strategy and the National Lottery Heritage Fund's Strategic Framework, which puts North East Lincolnshire in a strong position to prioritise activities and access additional funding.
- 4.4. The Creativity Strategy will be published online in a dynamic format to highlight our stories and how activities are taking place to deliver the strategy. Following the adoption of the Creativity Strategy we will commission artists and filmmakers to promote the strategy and encourage stakeholders and the public to engage in a conversation about what creativity means to them.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1. The Creativity Strategy and resulting action plan will be used to create an evidence base for funding opportunities including Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England. The approaches outlined in the strategy will also influence the development of a range of activities which the Council and partners deliver. For example, commissioning visual artists in the public realm projects, supporting Friends of Groups for parks and open spaces, or attracting funding to deliver volunteering programmes.

6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The draft Charter (see above) highlights the importance of creativity for all with a particular focus on children and young people. Many of the activities which will be developed in the action plans to follow will have direct benefit to children and young people by enhancing creativity in a range of settings. This is likely to include ensuring that festivals and events engage with children and young people, supporting schools to obtain Artsmark certification and ensuring that young people are encouraged to become creative leaders.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. Two of the stories that the strategy focuses on are green spaces, ecology, biodiversity, sustainable energy and environmental responsibility. These recognise the importance of environmental assets as heritage assets across the Borough and that there are synergies between the green and creative agendas in promoting a sustainable and low carbon future for North East Lincolnshire.

8. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

- 8.1. Tourism and Visitor Economy received an update regarding the development of the strategy at the meeting held 23rd September 2021. The draft strategy was considered at scrutiny on 10th March 2022.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. The Creativity Strategy supports the Council Plan and other strategies by providing an ambitious plan that will enhance the Borough. Specifically, the Creativity Strategy will support the Economic Strategy, which is aligned to the Council's adopted Financial Strategy. The Financial Strategy focuses on the achievement of long-term financial sustainability by embracing the area's economic potential by growing the local tax base. The Creativity Strategy will support funding through external funding applications to heritage and culture funders and enrich the delivery of projects across the Borough.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. The Creativity Strategy sits alongside other Council policies and strategies.
- 10.2. It provides a clear and achievable creative vision and guides the way the Borough and specifically the Council will enable creativity to take within a range of settings.
- 10.3. The strategy underpins and reinforces the Council's stated aims and objectives for the local area, bringing together a number of agendas (place making, natural asset management, green economy and tourism).

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. There are no direct HR implications contained within this report.

12. WARD IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. The Creativity Strategy covers all wards in North East Lincolnshire as the economic and social benefits are borough wide.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1. Briefing Paper regarding the Creativity Strategy from 23 September 2021.
[Tourism and Visitor Economy Scrutiny Panel | Democracy \(nelincs.gov.uk\)](#)

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**NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
CREATIVITY STRATEGY**

**CREATIVITY IS HERE:
SHARING OUR STORIES**

**GRIMSBY, IMMINGHAM, CLEETHORPES
& THE WOLDS**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our Ambition: Stories have the power to change, whether that is you as a person or the place you live in. Creativity can be central to uncovering these stories and expressing them in a way that others can connect with. Stories and identity help to promote the area beyond its borders to change perceptions, encourage visitors and attract investment. Our aim with this creativity strategy is to use creativity to prove the power of stories, to share our stories in order to celebrate our past and help shape our future.

These are our Stories: We believe that the stories belonging to Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds should be at the heart of all creative activity that takes place in the area. These are our stories - about our people, places, buildings, memories, achievements and future:

- **The role Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds play in the world:** A chance to highlight and celebrate the impact the area has had and continues to have - historically, economically, environmentally or through popular culture.
- **The sea:** The development of the area has been hugely influenced by the fact it is by the sea - from fishing and ports to tourism and sustainable energy.
- **The coast:** The beaches, the coastline and the views out to sea have been an inspiration for creative people for generations and will continue to be into the future.
- **Green spaces, The Wolds, ecology and biodiversity:** The rich natural environment - the saltmarsh, the wolds, the site of special scientific interest, the coastal sand dunes or ancient woodland - and how this can be both the inspiration for creative work and the place where it takes place.
- **Sustainable energy and environmental responsibility:** The area has become a focal point for the production of sustainable energy and is now known as the renewable energy capital of the United Kingdom. Creativity can be used to celebrate and share this as well as using it as a starting point to talk about climate change.
- **Welcoming visitors:** Cleethorpes has a long history as a tourist destination, whether for day trippers or longer holidays. There are opportunities to research and celebrate this history and the changes it brought to the area.
- **Food and drink:** The area is a UK leader for food and seafood processing. Food has and continues to play an important role not just for the area, but for people across the country having access to food.
- **Local people, industry, trades, innovations and achievements:** The area has been the birthplace of many creative individuals, entrepreneurs, actors, writers,

journalists, innovators and pioneers. There is the chance to celebrate these people and achievements, but to also research those less well known about.

- **Historic buildings, public spaces and landscapes:** The area has a wealth of significant heritage buildings, public space and landscapes. There is the chance to conserve, adapt, regenerate and celebrate this range of buildings and structures through creative activities, telling the story of change and renewal.

These stories are important as they are about who we are as individuals, the places we grew up in, the buildings, landscape & spaces around us, where we live now, where we work and how we live our lives. They also help shape places, whether it's our local community, the town we live in or the wider area where our families are from. They are the stories, myths and memories that show how people and places have developed, changed and grown. Stories are a way of looking back at where we have come from, but also a way of looking forward and talking about where we want our future to be.

We are talking about stories as they are at the heart of this creativity strategy. The strategy is focused on how creativity can be used as a way to learn about, understand and share our stories with others. Stories will be at the heart of all creative activity in the area, the consistent themes running through everything. They will be the driver for increasing the amount and quality of creative activity in the area, for increasing opportunities for people to be creative, for encouraging people to take part, for promoting the area, supporting the local economy and improving people's lives

When you ask people about creativity they have different views. It could be about: performances, carnivals, events, galleries, exhibitions, museums, historic buildings, workshops, classes, lessons, reading, writing, podcasts, filmmaking, television, crafts, food, drink, traditional skills or many other things. For this strategy it is all these things and more. Creativity has the potential to be part of everyone's lives. It isn't something that should be separate or different, but a part of how we live, how we approach our work, how we find enjoyment, earn a living, learn, express ourselves, enhance wellbeing, find solutions to problems, look at our past, build a sense of community, tell our stories, interact with others or grow as individuals.

Five Year Framework: This strategy creates a five year framework setting out the key ambitions we have over the next five years and beyond, they are grouped under three themes with a series of strategic aims under each one.

CREATIVITY FOR ALL

- **Increase the amount and visibility of creativity:** Build on existing creative activities in the area and enable more people to have more opportunities, ensuring that creativity is accessible to all throughout the area.
- **Focus on equity, diversity & inclusion:** Ensure everyone has access to creative activities regardless of where they live, how much money they have, their background or their previous experience of creativity.
- **Involve and support young people:** Place creativity at the centre of how young people learn, develop and express themselves on their own terms, whether in school or outside.
- **Bring generations together:** We should look for opportunities to bring generations together, particularly older people, to share their stories, learn from each other, take part in activities and work together.
- **Celebrate the heritage of the area:** Creativity will be used as a way of highlighting and sharing what makes the area special. It will be inspired by the stories, buildings and the people of the past, present and future to help shape how people see and feel about the area. The Heritage Fund definition of heritage as *“anything from the past that you value and want to pass on to future generations”* will be at the heart of this strategy.

CREATIVE ECONOMY

- **Develop the next generation of creative people:** Identify and support the next generation of freelancers, creative individuals and people leading creative organisations to help grow the creative sector in the area.
- **Celebrate Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds’ role in the world:** Use creativity to show people, both within the area and beyond, the impact that the people, places and achievements of Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds have had, and continue to have, on the rest of the world.
- **Secure funding:** Take a coordinated approach to funding creative activity in the area that brings in money from a range of sources, in a range of ways across a long period.
- **Support creative businesses and individuals:** Ensure creative businesses are aware of the support available to them to develop and grow their businesses and creativity. Where there are gaps in the support needed then specialist support will

be developed.

CREATIVE WORKING

- **Embed creativity widely:** Embed creativity in the work and lives of everyone. It will be part of the delivery of Council services, the approach organisations and businesses take to delivering their work, how the area promotes itself, how young people learn and how people live their lives. Being creative should be a natural part of everyone's lives, rather than an add on.
- **Take advantage of digital technology:** The opportunities of digital technology will be maximised, this will be both for creative purposes, but also a way in which people learn about creative activities, how they experience them or how they take part.
- **Address our environmental responsibility:** Considerations of environmental responsibility and impact will be at the heart for all creative activity. This includes using creativity as a way of talking about issues such as climate change, but also how the negative environmental impact of any activities can be minimised.
- **Raise the bar:** Everyone will strive for creative activity that should always be of the highest quality and looking to improve on what has taken place before. The aim should be to raise the aspirations of both creative individuals delivering activities and those experiencing them.
- **Support North East Lincolnshire Council to be an enabler:** The Council will support and encourage those in the creative sector, looking at how they can reduce barriers and obstacles that both prevent people delivering creative activities and people experiencing them. It will embed creativity and creative approaches at all levels of the organisation and its work.
- **Work in a spirit of collaboration:** Those in the creative sector will work together in a spirit of partnership and collaboration, openness and positivity, supporting each other. They will look at how they can work with other sectors to integrate creativity into the work and lives of others. There will also be a focus on how creativity can be brought into the work of businesses that aren't considered creative to look at how creativity can make them better businesses and strengthen the local economy.
- **Learn from others:** The experiences of other places will be used to look to develop and deliver creative activities in the area, learning from the successes of others and how other relevant approaches can be used locally.

Annual Action Plans: Each year there will be creativity action plans, running from January to December setting out the creative priorities for the year ahead. The annual plans will be developed by the Council, supported by the newly established Creativity Board, from September of each year, working with organisations and individuals across the area. They will plan for and feed into the year ahead, to ensure that the creativity strategy is always changing, adapting and growing whilst having overall strategic aims to achieve.

So where do we want to be five years from now? We want the area to be both a hub and beacon for creativity. As a hub, creativity will be an integral part of everyone's lives in Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds - how they live, work and learn. Creativity will be used to celebrate the positives about the area, help deal with any challenges and it will play a much more significant part in the local economy. As a beacon, the area will become recognised across the country for the way it has brought creativity into everything it does. By sharing the stories of what makes the area special, more people will visit the area, people will change their perceptions of the area, more people will want to study, work and move here. More businesses will look to be based here and more money will be invested in the area. Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds will be held up as an example of how to bring creativity into the lives of everyone, change how organisations work and transform what people think about an area.

The framework sets out the key things we want to change over the next five years and beyond, our stories and how we tell them will be the way we make this change.

Through this strategy we will have proved the power of stories.....our stories, to celebrate our past and create a new future.

I. THE STORIES TO BE TOLD

Stories are important and powerful. They are about who we are as individuals, the places we grew up in, the buildings around us, where we live now, where we work and how we live our lives. They also help shape places, whether it's our local community, the town we live in or the wider area we are from. They are the stories, myths and memories that show how people and places have developed, changed and grown. Stories are a way of looking back at where we have come from, but also a way of looking forward and talking about where we want our futures to be. Stories are our heritage - the Heritage Fund defines heritage as *"anything from the past that you value and want to pass on to future generations"*. This is at the very core of the stories to be told about the area, but also firmly looking to the present day stories that should be celebrated and passed on. The stories of today, that become the heritage of tomorrow.

Creativity can play a key role in uncovering these stories and sharing them with others. This Creativity Strategy will look at how stories can be used to help people develop new skills, bring new funding into the area, create new jobs, encourage people to work together, give more people reasons to visit the area and provide everyone with the chance to enjoy themselves. This document will explain how the stories will be used as a starting point to make this happen and how you can play your part - sharing your stories, listening to the stories of others or helping share the stories of Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds.

There are a huge range of stories, influential people and achievements linked to Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds. This ranges from the people writing internationally recognised songs, to areas of outstanding natural beauty, from Viking myths, to being the renewable energy capital of the United Kingdom. There is a richness and depth to the myths and legends dating back centuries, which are then complemented by the personal and individual stories throughout the eras, all the way to the present day and into the future.

Stories have the power to change, whether us as people or the place we live in. By bringing these stories into the open there is an opportunity for us to further develop pride in the area, but also to express our own stories, achievements and potential. Creativity can be central to uncovering these stories and expressing them in a way that others can connect with. Stories and identity can then, by turn, help with promoting the area beyond its borders to change perceptions, encourage visitors and attract investment.

Through consultation we have identified a series of nine themes for the stories to be told about the area. These will be used as the inspiration for creative activity in the area. By focusing on these themes, there are opportunities to grow projects that are rooted in and inspired by the local area, those stories are:

- **The role Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds play in the world:** This is a theme that ties many of the other stories together - it is a way of highlighting and celebrating the impact the area has had and continues to have. This may be historically, economically, environmentally or through popular culture. It is about the electricity to light our houses, the food that we eat, the actors we see on television, the listed buildings at the dock, the things we buy coming through the port or the birds stopping in the area as part of their migratory route. It is time to celebrate the positive influence and impact the area has on others.
- **The sea:** The development of the area has been hugely influenced by the fact it is by the sea. From fishing and ports to tourism and sustainable energy - it has shaped a distinct economy, people and appearance.
- **The coast:** The beaches, the coastline and the views out to sea have been an inspiration for creative people for generations and will continue to be into the future. Living and working on the coast helps shape the character of people and place, with a sense of living at the edge of the country - with it being a starting point for journeys elsewhere and an arrival point for people coming to the area from other places. The coast is the reason that Cleethorpes is a seaside resort, attracting visitors from across the country.
- **Green spaces, the Wolds, ecology and biodiversity:** Whether it is the saltmarsh, the wolds, the site of special scientific interest, the coastal sand dunes or ancient woodland, the area has a rich natural environment. The landscape can be both the inspiration for creative work and the place where it takes place.
- **Sustainable energy and environmental responsibility:** The area has become a focal point for the production of sustainable energy, but also the development and maintenance of the infrastructure needed to generate and distribute it - whether that's offshore wind farms, the building and maintenance of turbines or the production of car charging points. Much of this is hidden - taking place offshore or in large sheds on the docks. The area is known as the renewable energy capital of the United Kingdom and creativity can be used to celebrate and share this. At the same time with climate change, energy consumption and other areas of focus there is the chance to look at how we minimise our environmental impact and think about our environmental responsibilities.
- **Welcoming visitors:** Cleethorpes has a long history as a tourist destination, whether for day trippers or longer holidays. There are opportunities to research and celebrate this history and the changes it brought to the area. There are also

opportunities to develop creative activities that encourage previous and new visitors to the area, linking in with the new and diverse approaches to tourism taking place within Cleethorpes.

- **Food and drink:** The area is a UK leader for food and seafood processing and, whilst the days of Grimsby docks being filled with fishing trawlers are no longer, the port still plays a key role in the distribution of caught fish. Food has and continues to play an important role not just for the area, but for people across the country having access to food. There are opportunities for festivals, street food and creative projects to share this impact and celebrate the area's strengths and in particular the special foods from the area that have protected geographical indication and food protected characteristics.
- **Local people, industry, trades, innovations and achievements:** The area has been the birthplace of many creative individuals, entrepreneurs, actors, writers, journalists, innovators and pioneers. This has resulted in a range of achievements and innovations linked to the area. There is the chance to celebrate these people and achievements, but to also research those less well known about, revealing some of the hidden stories, for example the role of women in the fishing industry and the long tradition of immigration and emigration linked to the area.
- **Historic buildings, public spaces and landscapes:** The area has a wealth of significant heritage buildings, public space and landscapes, some of them listed, others not. They illustrate the times of growth and change in the area, whether this is the docks, the tourist related buildings or the housing to accommodate the growing communities. There is the chance to conserve, adapt, regenerate and celebrate this range of buildings and structures through creative activities, telling the story of change and renewal.

2. THE AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

North East Lincolnshire (NEL) Council appointed Beam, a cultural development organisation, to work with local people to shape a new vision for creativity across the borough.

It was felt that the time was right to celebrate the stories that make Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds so distinctive and special. Creativity is the way to tell these stories and in doing so achieve a number of objectives. The ultimate aim is for creativity - arts, crafts, culture and heritage - to be at the heart of the lives of everyone in Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds. By celebrating the stories that are important to the people and places of the area and sharing them through creativity this strategy aims to:

- Bring creativity into the lives of everyone who lives in, works in or visits the area
- Build on previous cultural and heritage frameworks to make them relevant for today
- Maximise the impact and legacy of current funding and secure more funding in the future
- Increase the life opportunities of people, particularly younger people
- Develop the local economy
- Strengthen the creative sector and provide clear leadership
- Celebrate and protect the heritage of the area - the buildings, places and the stories
- Strengthen local pride and change perceptions of the area
- Increase understanding of what creativity means and what it can achieve
- Increase creative activity in a coordinated way to benefit all
- Use creativity to celebrate the people, places and achievements of Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds
- Provide a clear action plan of how the aims of the strategy can be achieved

Creativity and celebrating the stories of Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds gives the chance to support the change - shaping how the area looks, how people feel about it and how people live their lives. The time is right for the Council to support, strengthen, champion and increase the role of creativity in the area, both leading directly, and supporting others to deliver. This strategy aims to highlight key opportunities and challenges in relation to creativity. It creates a framework for the next five years setting out a series of ambitions. Within this will be annual action plans, creating an element of the strategy that can evolve and adapt over time.

3. WHAT WE MEAN BY CREATIVITY

The use of the word creativity for this strategy, rather than culture, arts, crafts or heritage is a deliberate choice. Many areas develop cultural strategies, but people often hear the word cultural and feel it “isn’t for them”. It can bring with it certain preconceived ideas, creating barriers from the start.

This strategy covers culture, art, crafts and heritage - in fact anything considered creative. This strategy aims to encourage people, businesses and organisations to think in the broadest sense about creativity and the role it does or could play in our lives, work and leisure.

Creativity is about how we find enjoyment, earn a living, learn, express ourselves, find solutions to problems, look at our past, build a sense of community or identity and it’s how we tell our stories. It can be the photographer taking a photo on Cleethorpes beach, it could be the person taking part in a drawing workshop in Immingham, the craftsperson restoring a historic building on Cleethorpes promenade, or it could be the engineer designing a wind turbine in Grimsby.

Creativity has the potential to be part of everyone’s lives. It isn’t something that should be separate or different, but a part of how we live our lives, how we approach our work, how we interact with others or how we learn and grow as people.

The Arts Council defines creativity as *“the process through which people apply their knowledge, skill and intuition to imagine, conceive, express or make something that wasn’t there before.”*

If this is then combined with the stories approach we are taking and the Heritage Fund definition of heritage as *“anything from the past that you value and want to pass on to future generations”* then it demonstrates how far ranging creativity can be.

What does this mean in reality? When asked as part of the consultation to develop this strategy local people suggested:

“Creativity means a reason to get up each day. The hope of spreading a little joy in a messed up world: to inspire, to teach, to involve”

“It’s letting out what only you have sat inside of you.”

*“Creativity allows us to view and solve problems more openly and with innovation.
Creativity opens the mind. “*

“It’s a reason for living, it’s the beat of your heart, it’s the words in your head and the clothes on your back. Creativity is all around, it’s overlooked and stared right at.”

“Creativity is an essential life skill for all, and is a way in which we can express thoughts that are difficult to express in words.”

“Creativity has the power to make a difference and bring about change.”

Creativity is part of all of our lives, even if you haven’t thought about it or weren’t aware of it. Part of the purpose of this strategy is to make everyone aware of how much creativity can play a role in our lives.

For the purposes of this strategy creativity is all encompassing, covering culture, art, crafts and heritage. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Performances, carnivals & creative events
- Gallery, exhibition & museum spaces
- The conservation of historic buildings, artefacts & vessels
- Workshops, classes and lessons
- Reading and writing
- Podcasts, filmmaking, television
- Crafts
- Food & drink
- Stories and memories
- Natural and environmental heritage

Creativity isn’t for other people, it is for all of us and it is right here in Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds.

4. THE CONTEXT

No strategy or area can operate in isolation and this creativity strategy has been developed in the context of local, regional and national policies, strategies and projects. It is important to show directly how creative activities in the area can contribute to wider objectives. This will help strengthen them as activities, but also help secure funding and support.

At a national level this strategy aims to contribute towards the following:

NATIONALLY	
Organisation, policy or strategy	Further Details
Arts Council England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let's Create - A 10 year plan to ensure that the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish. https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/letscreate A High Street Renaissance - How arts and culture bring people and pride back to our high streets https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/A%20High%20Street%20Renaissance.pdf
National Lottery Heritage Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Funding Framework 2019–2024 https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/about/strategic-funding-framework-2019-2024
Historic England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic England Future Strategy 2021: Championing Heritage - Improving Lives https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/he-future-strategy-2021
Visit Britain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five Year Strategy - To make

	<p>tourism one of the most successful and productive sectors for the UK economy.</p> <p>https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/Documents-Library/documents/visitbritainvisiten gland_2020_strategy.pdf</p>
Crafts Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Power of Experiences - Bringing Craft Experiences to your Business: A Guide https://www.craftscouncil.org.uk/about/research-and-policy
British Film Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BFI2022 - a five-year plan designed to shape the BFI's next chapter for film, television and the moving image https://www.bfi.org.uk/strategy-policy/policy-statements/bfi2022
Sport England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Uniting the Movement - A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity. https://www.sportengland.org/why-were-here/uniting-the-movement
Central Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Towns Fund - Government Fund investing in the regeneration of towns https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/towns-fund ● Levelling Up Fund and White Paper - Investment in infrastructure to improve everyday lives https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-fund-prospectus ● Cultural Development Fund - DCMS funded and administered by the Arts Council, capital investment in place based creative and cultural initiatives.

At a local / regional level level this strategy aims to contribute towards the following:

LOCALLY AND REGIONALLY	
NEL Outcomes Framework	<p>The key strategic framework for the Council with the five outcomes that all people in North East Lincolnshire will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Benefit from a strong local economy ● Live in a safe environment, can have their say about things that are important to them and participate fully in their communities ● Enjoy good health and well being ● Benefit from a green economy and high quality environmentFulfil their potential through skills and learning
Grimsby Creates	<p>3 year cultural development fund programme https://www.grimsbycreates.co.uk</p>
Cultural Strategy 2017	Previous cultural strategy for the area
Cultural & Heritage Framework 2018	Framework for the development of the cultural and heritage sector, growing out of the Cultural Strategy
NELC Council Plan	The Council's strategic plan that sets out overarching aims and priorities that contribute to the Outcomes Framework
NELC Economic Strategy	The Council's economic development strategy for the area
NELC Plan	The Council's corporate plan to guide the future of the area
NELC Local Plan	<p>Planning policy that sets out the Council's vision and strategy for the Borough until 2032 https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/planning-and-</p>

	building-control/planning-policy/the-local-plan/
Grimsby Masterplan	The long term vision for the town as part of the Town Deal partnership https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/assets/uploads/2020/12/Grimsby-Masterplan-Report.pdf
Cleethorpes Masterplan	The long term vision for the town, to be adopted in 2022.
Cleethorpes Habitat Management Plan	The strategic document aims to enhance the designated area by improving biodiversity. A new version is due to be adopted in 2022. https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/assets/uploads/2020/09/Cleethorpes-Habitat-Management-Plan-2016-2021.pdf
NELC Carbon Roadmap	The Council's path to net zero and a better environment https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/north-east-lincolnshire-councils-path-to-net-zero-and-a-better-environment-set-out-in-new-reports/
NELC Natural Assets Plan	The Council's goals to improve the natural environment and increase biodiversity https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/north-east-lincolnshire-councils-path-to-net-zero-and-a-better-environment-set-out-in-new-reports/
NELC Resources Strategy	Referred to in a comment on the consultation draft - not able to source it
NELC and NHS North East Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group - Community Engagement Strategy	The strategy to understand better the different points of view of local people and work together to develop the best solutions to benefit everyone. https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/assets/uploads/2020/09/Cleethorpes-Habitat-Management-Plan-2016-2021.pdf

North East Lincolnshire - Key facts

(From the North East Lincolnshire Data Observatory - <https://www.nelincsdata.net>)

Population: 159,364

51% female / 49% male

Aged 0-15 19.5% above the national average of 19.2%

Aged 16-64 59.7% below the national average of 62.3%

Aged 65+ 20.9% above the national average of 18.5%

84.1% living in urban areas, above the national average of 76.4%

Nationality - UK 95.5% above the national average of 90.3%

Ethnicity - White 97.4% above the national average of 85.4%

Employment rate of 69.5%, below the national average of 74.7%

25.6% in part time employment, above the national average of 22.6%

7.1% self employed, below the national average of 9.6%

30.2% of the areas of NEL are in the most deprived areas of the country

31% of households have no car / van, above the national average of 25.8%

Area: 192km²

Industries: Manufacturing
Transport and logistics
Food processing
Construction
Wholesale
Tourism

Grimsby: The area was settled by the Danes, with the myths and legends surrounding the Danish fisherman Grim and the romance with Havelock helping with the naming of Grimsby. The East and West Marsh areas of Grimsby provide an indication of how the town grew to take over the drained Humber marshlands. The town was established as a fishing and trading port in the 12th Century, with the arrival of the railways in the 1840s leading to a massive growth in the fishing industry. By the 1950s Grimsby was considered to be the largest

fishing port in the world. The collapse of the fishing industry in the 1970s has left scars on the economy, the people and the physical environment of the area. Whilst the fishing industry no longer exists, Grimsby plays a massive role in food and fish processing with estimates suggesting 70% of the United Kingdom's fish processing is based in Grimsby. Recent years have seen Grimsby develop as a centre for renewable energy, both the manufacture and maintenance of wind turbines and the energy generation from the offshore wind farms. The historic dock buildings are ripe for regeneration to create clusters of creative activity with the growth of the renewables sector presenting huge opportunities for the future.

Immingham: Immingham was mentioned in the Domesday Book and has mediaeval origins with in the later mediaeval period links with the pilgrim fathers, with around 100 people using the port as a staging point to Holland and The Mayflower. The arrival of the railways led to the development of Immingham as a port in the early 1900s, with the port growing larger than the town itself. The Port of Immingham is now the United Kingdom's largest (by tonnage) port with approximately 46 million tons of cargo every year.

Cleethorpes: Cleethorpes also has its origins as a series of smaller fishing villages, but the arrival of the railways saw its transformation (economically and physically) as a visitor destination for holidays and the medicinal waters. It saw a pier, promenade and pleasure gardens all develop along with the accompanying hotels and tourist provisions. Cleethorpes remains a popular holiday resort with the town masterplan aiming to grow the number and type of visitors attracted to the area. This is not only to the traditional visitor attractions but to experience the wealth of biodiversity and greenspaces adjacent to the town.

North East Lincolnshire: North East Lincolnshire is in many ways an artificial creation, resulting as it does from local government reorganisation in 1996, following the abolition of Humberside. As such there is less a sense of identity for the area as a whole, more a case of local identities for Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the smaller villages within the wolds. For some it is part of Yorkshire and the Humber, for some it is part of Lincolnshire, for others it is an area by itself with a sense of independence. This in many ways could be seen as a positive, maximising the opportunities to be part of two regions.

The area is rich in history and heritage from Roman times to today, with a new identity being forged around green energy. The sea and coast has clearly been a defining feature of the area in terms of the economy, its physical appearance, how people perceive it and the

influence on the local character. It is an area with a history of global connections, acting as a gateway to the rest of the world in both directions. This extends to also being a gateway for nature, forming a key part of the East Atlantic Flyway for migrating birds. The area has a continuing focus on food processing, ports and tourism with an emerging focus on renewable energy, which provides an exciting opportunity from which to help forge a new identity. There are also opportunities to further grow the visitor economy of the area, not just Cleethorpes, but encouraging people to visit Grimsby, the inland areas and wolds as well.

It is an area that has made and continues to make a massive contribution to the country and the world. Whether this is the food that ends up on people's tables, the goods that come through the port or the green energy produced that supplies the rest of the country. Some people have dubbed it the renewable capital of the United Kingdom with wind turbines, solar power, biomass and landfill gas. It also has a history of people from the area making major contributions to the economy, entertainment and other areas including - the songwriter Rod Temperton, television presenter Guy Martin, the actor Patricia Hodge, the dancers Kevin and Joanne Clifton, the lyricist Bernie Taupin, the actor Sir John Hurt, the entrepreneur David Ross and singer Ella Henderson.

Grimsby is on the verge of great change with significant amounts of investment secured for the area and long term planning through masterplans for Grimsby and Cleethorpes. Through the Towns Fund it has secured £21 million for regeneration projects in Grimsby town centre. In 2018 Grimsby was one of five towns to be supported through the Cultural Development Fund, with the area receiving £3.2 million of funding. Grimsby Creates will see a range of festivals, events, business support, public art and a new creative hub. The area has been an Area of Focus for the National Lottery Heritage Fund since 2016 and a Priority Place for Arts Council England since 2021. They have both recognised the potential of the area, but at the same time realised extra support and investment (time and money) is required to fulfil that potential. Greater Grimsby Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) was established by Historic England in 2018 in recognition of the importance of the historic port, docks and town centre, supporting the plans of the Council and Associated British Ports to regenerate the area. A map of the HAZ can be found on the English Heritage website [HERE](#). The National Lottery Heritage Fund awarded Cleethorpes £1.9m in 2018 to develop a Townscape Heritage project to preserve and regenerate some of the distinctive frontages along Alexandra Road and Sea View Street, together with public realm improvements in both areas.

The Council also has strategic plans for economic development, the visitor economy, greenspaces, low carbon and masterplans (Grimsby and Cleethorpes) meaning there is a level of coordination to support and develop the investment at present and into the future. The Council itself is undergoing change, looking at new ways of working to reflect more restricted budgets, the pandemic and future opportunities. Creativity provides the opportunity to support the people and place through its time of change, sharing with people how and why change is happening.

5. WHAT THE RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION SHOWS

A range of consultation and conversations took place as part of the development of this strategy. This included reviewing a range of documents and policies, one to one stakeholder discussions, online forums, workshops with Council staff and an online questionnaire. These were built around a series of questions:

- **CREATIVITY:** What does creativity mean to you? What role does creativity play in your area of work and/ or in your own life?
- **THE PLACE:** What makes NEL unique and distinctive as a place?
- **EXAMPLES OF CREATIVITY:** What do you think are good or bad examples of creative activity in NEL?
- **WHAT IS MISSING?** What do you think is missing in NEL in relation to creativity?
- **THE DIFFERENCE CREATIVITY CAN MAKE:** What is the role of creativity in helping NEL prepare for the future?

This research and consultation highlighted a number of key opportunities and challenges that have helped shape the action plan of this strategy.

IDENTITY: There is an overriding sense that North East Lincolnshire doesn't have a clear identity, it is more about the individual identities of Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes, the smaller villages and how they relate to each other. It is about the stories and opportunities of each place, but does that build to something bigger than the sum of its parts as North East Lincolnshire. As a "brand" North East Lincolnshire isn't particularly meaningful and recognisable to people.

WORKING TOGETHER: There is very little tradition of partnership working, people supporting each other and collaboration within the creative sector in the area. There is a greater sense of competition for any funding than there is of collaboration, with infighting, arguments and hostility between people, particularly in the arts sector. There is a stronger sense of collaboration within the heritage sector, as has been shown by the recently established heritage network supported through a Heritage Fund Area of Focus grant. Without resolving these tensions and working together it will hold the development of creativity back in the area, with missed opportunities and lost funding. There are indications, particularly with younger creative people of an enthusiasm to work together to break down the barriers that have grown.

FUNDING: The increased funding (from a relatively low base) coming into the area is welcomed and seen as an opportunity to bring about change. Some people question how funding decisions are made and how the money is spent. There is also concern though about what happens when the money ends. How can the impact be maximised now and used as a platform for the future, to strengthen creativity and make it sustainable beyond the current funding and to avoid a “cliff edge”? The status as an Area of Focus for the Heritage Fund has enabled the delivery of a Heritage Starter Fund which is on track to provide grant support to over 15 organisations, developing scalable projects supported by Heritage Lincolnshire. The Priority Place designation from Arts Council England will provide renewed focus and support for the area which led to the development of an action plan in 2022.

LEARNING FROM OTHERS: Perhaps as a result of the location, the transport links or the character of the area there is a limited sense of looking elsewhere to learn about the approach others take to creativity. For some this is something they are fully aware of, for others they are perhaps unaware that they tend to look inwards. There are opportunities to look outside the area to see what has worked elsewhere, the lessons to be learned, how it could be adapted for the area or how partnerships could be established with others.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION: There are a number of elements to this, people say they don't know where to find out about creative events and activities, or that they find out too late. For others there is a lack of being able to share information and awareness of which other creative people and organisations there are in the area. For some there is a complaint of decision making regarding funding, projects or opportunities not being transparent or fully explained. Some of the latter may relate to tensions within the creative sector.

MAKING CONNECTIONS: In many other councils that have had, or still have, an arts or cultural development officer then connections, partnerships and links can be made by that officer. They work at a grassroots level, introducing people, spotting the links, supporting others to deliver their work, providing direct links with the Council across a range of services. In North East Lincolnshire, with the arts development function sitting outside the Council then this has the potential for reducing the opportunities for the Council to take a direct role to support others, make connections and encourage more activities. As there is no direct arts development function within the Council it may mean that creativity is not as easily embedded across the services the Council operates.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF CREATIVITY AND RAISING THE

BAR: Amongst those organisations that aren't primarily creatively focused, there is a considerable lack of understanding of what creativity can bring to people's lives or how it can support the work that organisations do. Where creative activities are carried out there are opportunities to take approaches that more closely involve experienced creative individuals. There are many missed opportunities such as artists not being commissioned to produce work to be integrated into new buildings, creative activities not being used to reach hard to reach groups or a lack of valuing the role of creativity by not paying artists to exhibit their work. There are huge opportunities to raise the bar - to do more creative activity and activity that is of a higher standard and to maximise the opportunities for artists and creatives to play a key role in the future and regeneration of the area.

THE LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE: For some the lack of dedicated physical spaces for the display of art, museum collections or other materials is critical. Some of this is practical such as not being able to show work which they have produced. This lack of an outlet for creativity or to display items of historic importance also removes that focal point for pride and being able to share what makes the area special. This lack of physical infrastructure isn't something that is easy to resolve. For others the concern is the lack of networks to be able to connect with each other - this is perhaps linked to the sense of not working together as there are fewer opportunities to connect. Others feel there is a lack of support to help them develop as creative individuals, businesses or organisations.

CELEBRATING WHAT MAKES THE AREA SPECIAL: There is a clear sense of pride in the area: the achievements, the stories, the people, the buildings, the landscape, the environment and how it plays its part in the world. There is a sense however that many people (local and beyond) are not aware of what makes the area so special. This could be because these achievements aren't widely known, aren't shared or there are limited opportunities to share them.

SOMETHING ALWAYS HAPPENING: There should be the chance for people to experience and take part in creativity throughout the year. One off events have a positive impact but there should be more opportunities for people to experience creativity on a weekly basis and for art and culture to be visible in people's everyday lives. It then becomes a habit and barriers are reduced. Are low participation levels in the area due to fewer opportunities rather than a lack of willingness to take part? New creative initiatives and activities will provide the opportunity to test and answer this.

NPO STATUS: The potential benefits of an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) within the area were a source of much discussion. For many there is the feeling that an NPO is an indicator of status or progress of the creative sector within the area. For others, it is a case of developing their organisations further, with NPO status being the next point in their progress and sustainability. The process of securing NPO status is not easy, with significant competition and large amounts of work required. The question remains is it the right time, what difference might having an NPO in the area make and how can this help further support the sector?

EVENTS FOCUS: Many of the discussions have focussed on events, without thinking further about the wider opportunities for workshops, performances, exhibitions, films or other creative activities and opportunities for artists and creatives to play a role. Whilst the area has held a number of successful, high profile events it would be beneficial to have a greater shared understanding about other non-events based creative activities, that can be embedded into the lives of people in the area.

6. FIVE YEAR FRAMEWORK AND ANNUAL ACTION PLANS

We believe that the stories belonging to Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds should be at the heart of all creative activity that takes place in the area. These creative activities should be delivered in a consistent, coordinated and high quality way that has the maximum impact to benefit the people of the area. They will use the stories set out in Section 1 as the starting point to provide background and focus to what the creative activities are, who they are aimed at, what they aim to achieve and how they are delivered. The ultimate aim is for Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds to be recognised as a creative area, using creativity to celebrate the stories that make the area so special and bring creativity into the lives of everyone.

FIVE YEAR FRAMEWORK

We have created this Creativity Strategy to cover a five year period (2022-2027), but a great deal can change in those five years. This includes the economy, how people live their lives, funding, the organisations in the area and the opportunities that arise. Therefore there needs to be flexibility in the approach we take, whilst also providing clear aims and objectives. We have established three key themes, these are the big things we want to change over the next five years and beyond. Our stories and how we tell them will be the way we make this change. These themes are:

- **Creativity for all:** help creativity play a part in everyone's lives and increase the amount of creativity activities taking place in the area
- **Creative economy:** use creativity to create more jobs, generate income for people, increase the number of visitors, provide activities on the High Street, increase investment in the area and support creative individuals and businesses
- **Creative working:** encourage the creative sector to work better together and develop new ways of working

The five year framework set out below focuses on the overall aims, the difference we hope the strategy will make and how we will measure the difference. It provides overall targets against which all creative activity should look to contribute towards. Each year we will then produce annual action plans setting out priorities for the year ahead.

CREATIVITY FOR ALL		
Strategic Aim	The difference it will make	How that difference will be measured
<p>A. Increase the amount and visibility of creativity</p> <p>Build on existing creative activities in the area and create more opportunities to ensure that creativity is accessible and available to all throughout the area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be more events and activities for local people to take part in • There will be more events and activities that specifically attract visitors to the area • There will be an increased awareness and dialogue about what creativity means 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records will be kept of the number of events and activities that take place each year and the number of people that take part • Audience surveys will be carried out to understand how people feel about the events and activities and the wider impact on wellbeing
<p>B. Focus on equity, diversity & inclusion</p> <p>Ensure everyone has access to creative activities regardless of where they live, how much money they have, their background or their previous experience of creativity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in creative activities will increase • People will have access to creative activities and feel able to take part regardless of where they live, how much money they have, their background or their previous experience of creativity • Those leading on and delivering activities will be from a diverse range of backgrounds • The creative activities taking place will be diverse and inclusive, representing all the communities of the area • Creativity will be used as a way of bringing people together, sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys will be carried out with those taking part in creative activities to understand who is participating and feed that into future plans • Creativity Action Plans will be reviewed each year to look at how inclusive they have been, both in how they have been delivered and who has taken part

	experiences and learning about each other	
<p>C. Involve and support young people</p> <p>Place creativity at the centre of how young people learn, develop and express themselves, whether in school or outside</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative opportunities in schools will be encouraged with the aim of increasing creative activities within schools • Young people will have increased access to creative activities in their own homes and within easy reach of where they live 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual reviews of creativity in schools will be carried out to show the type and amount of creative activities. • A record will be kept of creative activities and who is taking part • Engagement will be carried out with young people to ensure that activities are designed and developed by young people, for young people
<p>D. Bring generations together</p> <p>We should look for opportunities to bring generations together, particularly older people, to share their stories, learn from each other, take part in activities and work together</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities will be sought to bring generations together, particularly older people, to share their stories, learn from each other, take part in activities and work together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A record will be kept of creative activities and who is taking part • Evaluation of activities will be able to show how people work together and the benefits of intergenerational creative activities
<p>E. Celebrate the heritage of the area</p> <p>Creativity will be used as a way of highlighting and sharing what makes the area special. It will be inspired by the stories, buildings and the people of the past, present and future to help shape what and how people see</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local people will have a much greater sense of pride in the area they are from • The historic buildings and spaces of the area will be better understood and protected • Creativity will have helped increase awareness and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident surveys will show a greater awareness of the stories of the area and feel positive about living there • Visitor numbers to the area will have increased as a result of learning more about the stories of the area • The listed buildings and

and feel about the area. The Heritage Fund definition of heritage as <i>“anything from the past that you value and want to pass on to future generations”</i> will be at the heart of local identity.	understanding of the area to those outside the area	conservation area will have increased protection and be better preserved and used
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CREATIVE ECONOMY

Strategic Aim	The difference it will make	How that difference will be measured
<p>F. Develop the next generation of creative people</p> <p>Identify and support the next generation of freelancers, creative individuals and people leading creative organisations to help grow and strengthen the creative sector in the area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be an increase in the number of local people developing creative projects and organisations • There will be increased funding secured for creative activities in the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular reviews of the number and types of creative organisations will be carried out
<p>G. Celebrate Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds’ role in the world</p> <p>Use creativity to show people, both within the area and beyond, the impact the people, places and achievements of Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds have, and continue to have on the rest of the world</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More local people will be aware of the achievements of the area, increasing their local pride • Awareness will be raised in the rest of the country and beyond of what makes the area so special increasing recognition of the area, investment and numbers of visitors • Perceptions of the area will be changed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident surveys and consultation will show an increased awareness of the stories of the area, with increased pride in the area they are from or live in • Visitor surveys will show an increased (and positive) awareness of the stories of the area, with visitor numbers increasing • There will be an increase

		in positive news coverage of the area, specifically relating to creative activities
<p>H. Secure funding</p> <p>Take a coordinated approach to funding creative activity in the area that brings in money from a range of sources, in a range of ways across a long period</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be more funding secured and invested in the area over a long period, from a wider range of sources • There will be greater coordination of funding bids to avoid duplication or competition and to identify sources of funding not previously looked at • More individuals and organisations will have the skills and confidence to develop funding bids, ensuring funding is spread across a wider range of people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of funding applications submitted in the area will be monitored including the source, amount of funding secured and who secures it
<p>I. Support creative businesses and individuals</p> <p>Ensure creative businesses are aware of the support available to them to develop and grow their businesses and creativity. Where there are gaps in the support needed then specialist support will need to be identified and developed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be more creative businesses established • Existing creative businesses will have grown, with increased staffing and funding • There will be more self employed people working in the creative sector • Creative businesses and individuals will be generating more income over longer periods • There will be a stronger creative sector, with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of business start up data and self employment will show changes in capacity of creative businesses in the area

	businesses clusters that support and work with each other	
CREATIVE WORKING		
Strategic Aim	The difference it will make	How that difference will be measured
<p>J. Embed creativity widely</p> <p>Embed creativity in the work and lives of everyone. It will be part of the delivery of Council services, the approach organisations take to delivering their work, how the area promotes itself, how young people learn and how people live their lives. Being creative should be a natural part of everyone's lives, rather than an add on.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity will be a key part of the way the Council and its partners delivers its services • More organisations will include creativity as part of the way they work within the place based strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council will regularly review how it works and the level of creative activity - both direct creative led activity and those to support other activities • Surveys will be carried out with organisations to understand how they deliver their work
<p>K. Take advantage of digital technology</p> <p>The opportunities of digital technology will be maximised, this will be both for creative purposes but also a way in which people learn about creative activities, how they are delivered, how they experience them or how they take part</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be an increased use of digital technology to enable people to access creative activities • There will be increased use of digital technology to deliver creative activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people will be accessing creative activities remotely, feeling comfortable to do so • More activities will take place that have a digital element

<p>L. Address our environmental responsibility</p> <p>Considerations of environmental responsibility and impact will be at the heart of all creative activity. This includes using creativity as a way of talking about issues such as climate change, but also how the negative environmental impact of any activities can be minimised.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The environmental impact of creative activities will be considered from the outset and at all stages, with approaches adopted to reduce or remove where possible negative impacts ● Creative activities will be used to share and discuss issues of environmental responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The environmental impact of creative activities will be minimised or reduced where possible. ● Activities will have a target of Net-Zero for carbon emitting activities, in line with the target dates set out in NELC's Carbon Roadmap ● Activities taking place in the natural environment will be carried out in line with NELC's Natural Asset Plan and the Cleethorpes Habitat Management Plan ● There will be increased discussion about and awareness of environmental issues
<p>M. Raise the bar</p> <p>Everyone will strive for creative activity that should always be of the highest quality and looking to improve on what has taken place before. The aim should be to raise the aspirations and expectations of both creative individuals delivering activities and those experiencing them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There will be an increase in the quality of creative activities delivered at all levels ● Experienced creative individuals will be involved in more creative activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participant surveys will show their satisfaction levels with creative activities ● Evaluation of individual creative activities will show the impact of the approaches taken

<p>N. Support North East Lincolnshire Council to be an enabler</p> <p>The Council will support and encourage those in the creative sector, looking at how they can reduce barriers and obstacles that both prevent people delivering creative activities and people experiencing them. It will embed creativity and creative approaches at all levels of the organisation and its work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Council will recognise where it could remove barriers in the way of people delivering or taking part in creative activities and look what it can do to remove them ● The Council will introduce new support, training, advice and guidance to help others deliver creative activity ● Organisations and individuals across the area will directly lead on projects that may have previously been led by the Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Council will regularly review the way it delivers its service, show how it has changed its approach and support training to provide staff with an awareness of creative opportunities ● More projects and activities will be delivered across the area that are not directly led by the Council or require minimal level of support from the Council
<p>O. Learn from others</p> <p>The experiences of other places will be used to look to develop and deliver creative activities in the area, learning from the successes of others and how other approaches can be used locally</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creative activities that have taken place elsewhere will be adapted for the local area alongside home-grown activities. ● There will be links with areas, organisations and individuals across the country, creating the chance to learn from each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The number of creative activities taking place in the area will have increased and this can be measured ● The number of meetings with, visits and connections made with other creative projects and networks across the country will be measured
<p>P. Work in a spirit of collaboration</p> <p>Those in the creative sector will work together in a spirit of partnership, generosity,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creative organisations and individuals in the area will work together rather than in competition with each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The number of partnership projects can be counted and the understanding of partnership working (and its opportunities)

<p>collaboration, openness and positivity, supporting each other. They will look at how they can work with other sectors to integrate creativity into the work and lives of others.</p>		<p>widened</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The increased funding for partnership projects can be measured ● Surveys will show a greater level of joint working, shared learning and sense of cooperation
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ANNUAL ACTION PLANS

Each year there will be Creativity Action Plans, running from January to December, setting out the creative priorities for that year. The annual plans will be developed by the Council with support from the newly established Creativity Board from September of each year, working with organisations and individuals across the area. They will plan for and feed into the year ahead, to ensure that the creativity strategy is always changing, adapting and growing whilst having overall strategic aims to achieve.

These annual action plans will focus on:

- **Looking back:** Reviewing the previous year, the successes, the lessons learned, and the emerging opportunities, to feed into this year's plan
- **What:** Setting out the key projects and activities for the year ahead, what stories and aims they are contributing to and the difference they will make
- **Why:** Explaining why these projects and activities have been developed and the need for them
- **Who:** Setting out who the projects and activities are for and who will be leading on them
- **When:** When the project will take place in the year ahead.
- **How:** How the project will be managed, delivered and funded, including risks and opportunities.

The starting point for the development of the annual creativity action plan could take the form of an annual creativity day or weekend taking place across Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds. Creative based activities and events could be used as a way of

talking to people, gaining their feedback and fully understanding what is needed for the year ahead. This day or weekend can also be an annual celebration of creativity in the area, showcasing what the area has to offer, testing new ideas, encouraging people to take part in new activities and finding out what people would like to see more of.

This action plan is intended to provide a summary of the year ahead as an easy to read overview of what is planned. Sitting behind this will be more detailed project plans for each individual project and activity. The five year framework and the annual plans will be published on the Council's website, when they are produced and widely shared so that people have the chance to see what progress has been made and contribute their own ideas for what else is needed.

EVALUATION

It is important that the impact of this creativity strategy is measured and assessed to show that it is meeting its objectives, and if it isn't, then how it can be adjusted to make sure it does. It is also important that funders, people taking part and all residents of the area know that the right type of activities are taking place, are having maximum impact and are providing value for money. Therefore alongside this strategy a consistent approach to evaluation - to measure the impact of taking a creativity focused approach - should be developed. It is recommended that a specific creative evaluation strategy and programme is commissioned that follows the basic principles of:

- **Tell the story:** The evaluation will clearly show the links between activities, outputs and outcomes of the project. There will be no assumptions that outcomes have been delivered just because the outputs have.
- **Choose indicators that matter:** There will be an evidence base to show how the conclusions have been arrived at, this will include the methods used, details of the data and any limitations. There will be a mix of qualitative and quantitative data, from a range of sources set within a broader context.
- **Go beyond counting:** The data collected will be analysed and explanations provided as to how the conclusions have been arrived at, including any assumptions, limitations and a commentary. There will be a baseline against which to gauge progress.
- **Avoid bias:** The evaluation will be objective and not biased, there will be an honesty from all those involved accepting any failings as well as successes and an

acknowledgement that failure is an important ground for learning and development.

- **Structure:** The results of the evaluation will be clearly set out and easy to understand. This will include the selective use of tables and charts to illustrate points combined with analysis and context.
- **Improve not just prove:** The conclusions and recommendations will be clear, showing lessons and learning that can be applied elsewhere. They will be publicly shared.

7. HOW THE AMBITIONS WILL BE ACHIEVED

So far in this strategy we have set out how the research behind it has helped create the broad objectives for the role creativity can play in the lives and work of people, organisations and businesses in the area. It can celebrate what makes the area special, promote the area to others, change lives and secure future funding. What does this mean in reality though? What actually could happen and how do we achieve the ambitions set out?

A key part of this strategy is the establishment in 2022 of the Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and The Wolds Creativity Board. This will be made up of representatives from a range of backgrounds and sectors who will meet on a regular basis. They will act as an advisory board to guide the Council and our partners to help shape future priorities for the creative sector. They will be central in the development and review of the annual action plans and they will monitor and guide progress against the five year framework. They will support the Council in furthering the aims of the Creativity Strategy, providing a critical friend role to support the creativity of Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds by supporting the development of the first annual action plan by October 2022.

As part of the further shaping of creativity in the area and raising awareness of this Strategy, a series of creative commissions will be delivered in 2022 as a way for local communities to engage with the strategy and in particular its key themes and ideas. The commissions will also be a way of testing some of the suggested approaches to demonstrate the impact creativity can have. They will be focused on creatively engaging local people in creativity in North East Lincolnshire - raising awareness of the developing Creativity Strategy. They will also draw out the voices and opinions of the communities to feed into a collaborative film.

In Section 6 we set out the framework into which projects can fit, working over five years towards the overall aims, supported by annual action plans that include the priority projects for the forthcoming year. These annual action plans will change and develop over time, based on the lessons learned from the previous year and consultation with local people.

8. FIVE YEARS FROM NOW

We hope that this document provides a clear idea of the ambition for creativity in Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds. We believe creativity and the sharing of all our stories, big and small, is a central part of the future of the area. Our stories are a chance to talk about who we are, to learn from each other and to share what makes the area so special with others.

So where do we want to be five years from now? We want the area to be both a hub and beacon for creativity.

As a hub, creativity will be an integral part of everyone's lives in Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds - how they live, work and learn. Creativity will be used to celebrate the positives about the area, help deal with any challenges and it will play a much more significant part in the local economy. The creative sector will work together with each other in a positive and supportive way, it will have clear and positive leadership, strong networks and a clear sense of ambition. There will be more funding invested in creativity in the area, from a broader range of sources, to a broader range of individuals and organisations on a longer term basis. We will value the heritage of the area, protecting the historic buildings and places and celebrating our stories. More people will be earning a living through creativity, with more people staying in the area to live and work rather than looking to move or travel elsewhere. More people will have the chance to participate in creativity in the many forms it can take.

As a beacon, the area will become recognised across the country for the way it has brought creativity into everything it does. By sharing the stories of what makes the area special, more people will visit the area, people will change their perceptions of the area, more people will want to study, work and move here. More businesses will look to be based here and more money will be invested in the area. Grimsby, Immingham, Cleethorpes and the Wolds will be held up as an example of how to bring creativity into the lives of everyone, change how organisations work and transform what people think about an area. The framework sets out the key things we want to change over the next five years and beyond, our stories and how we tell them will be the way we make this change.

Through this strategy we will have proved the power of stories.....our stories, to celebrate our past and create a new future.