

REPORT TO: Local Economy Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 17 November 2025

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director Environment and Regeneration

PORTFOLIO: Employment Learning, Skills and Community

SUBJECT: Culture and Culture 26; Made In Halton

WARD(S) Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 A presentation will be provided to the board on Culture including alignment to visitor economy, destination marketing and introducing Culture 26; Made In Halton.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) the report be noted.**
- 2) The board receives the presentation.**
- 3) The Board endorses the approach to Culture.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Halton has a legacy of cultural and visitor activity with borough of culture programmes and visitor destination initiatives providing platforms to grow Halton's cultural and visitor offer.
- 3.2 Halton benefits from a local formally organised cultural organisation, Cultivate Halton. This has strengthened with development support and resources into a constituted collective partnership. They are a network facilitated by a Steering Group, who support and encourage creativity and cultural activity in the borough and have approximately 60 members including freelance artists, community organisations, education and service providers who use Culture in their practice and co-authored the Crucible of Culture strategy along with Norton Priory. Appendix 1.
- 3.3 Halton will be delivering borough of Culture in 2026 titled Culture 26; Made In Halton; this is being developed in partnership with Cultivate Halton. Cultivate hosted two consultation events in February and March to help shape the programme of Culture 26 with key outcomes being the desire for more festivals, exhibitions and workshops.

3.4 For the purposes of Culture 26; Made In Halton, Culture is defined as the following:

- Literature – poetry, storytelling, spoken word, or creative writing.
- Music – performance, composition, or recording across any genre.
- Theatre and Performance – plays, monologues, interpretive dance or live performances
- Visual Arts – painting, drawing, sculpture, or photography
- Dance – all styles and forms, from contemporary to community-based.
- Digital media - digital art, graphic design, animation and film

Activities that explore, celebrate or encourage access to other cultural experiences such as **heritage**, **science**, **nature** and **environment** through the above are also included.

3.5 The branding Culture 26; Made In Halton is a reflection of the aim to shine a spotlight on the cultural assets and activity already happening in Halton and to make sure those engaging in the arts and creative sectors have a voice and the opportunity to take part, to create work and develop as professionals. Cultivate Halton will deliver a training programme to reflect the needs of those currently delivering or wanting to deliver cultural activity in the borough. The logo is made up of local cultural icons and the colours reflect places within the borough, the purpose to embed this programme in the unique environment of Halton.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Culture 26 supports delivery of the Council's Crucible of Culture Strategy.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 £200k funding to support Halton's Borough of Culture year will be received from Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, £100k in 2025 and a further £100k in 2026.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

Culture and cultural activity have a role in promoting individual and community wellbeing thus improving health and wellbeing outcomes.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

Culture, heritage and arts have a significant contribution to the local economy through visitor destinations and attractive public open spaces. It promotes the assets and pride in place and is appealing

to business investment and growth.

The Reconnecting Runcorn programme has delivered Hazelhurst Studios, a collective space for artists from a mixture of forms enabling entrepreneurs to become established and activities to be accessible at grass roots.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

Culture is universal however, targeted approaches to ensure access to all are a key element of the 2026 work programme. Community led grass roots will promote involvement of children, young people and families and seek to support emerging interests and talents and educate and celebrate Halton's heritage.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

It is imperative access to culture is open to all; Culture HQ and the current temporary library have proven accessible footfall locations enable diverse access to amenities and activities. The borough of culture focusses on grass roots delivery and accessibility.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

Part of the programme will include an Eco Fest, an opportunity for the Council to share and promote green initiatives and the Climate Action Plan via cultural activity and for organisations within the borough to celebrate the work and message of a greener future.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

Culture 26 is the perfect project for valuing and appreciating Halton and our community. Made In Halton will be the message all the way through. There will be an opportunity to revisit past projects to Artworks created will be with a view to raising aspiration 'See it, to be it' and spreading a civic pride and a 'Love Halton' message.

7.0 Risk Analysis

7.1 Halton has significant cultural heritage and a vibrant sector to contribute to the city region and be celebrated. Halton needs to ensure it is well placed to optimise on funding and initiatives that cement the borough as a visitor destination attracting visitors whilst facilitating accessible art, culture and heritage to local residents to be proud of, champion and build civic pride.

7.2 A lack of resources in Halton will hinder the boroughs opportunity to build on the positive work programme and ensure a share of resources are utilised in the Borough.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Halton's cultural offer is accessible to all.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None to report.

**10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

10.1 Executive Board April 2023.