# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Next steps for a Culture Strategy for Wales** |
| **DATE**  | **19 March 2024** |
| **BY** | **Dawn Bowden MS, Deputy Minister for Arts,** **Sport and Tourism** |

Developing a Culture Strategy for Wales is a key Programme for Government and Co-operation Agreement commitment within my portfolio, and I thank the Designated Member for her constructive engagement and support throughout this work.

Following an extensive engagement exercise in 2023, which included opportunities for discussion with over 400 sector stakeholders and community representatives, a draft strategy outlining long-term visions and ambitions was developed and tested with social partners and a limited number of delivery partners.

The work of scrutinising the development of the strategy has been undertaken by an independent Steering Group consisting of sector representatives including grassroots and freelance practitioners. Following the publication of the Welsh Government’s draft budget in December I met with the Designated Member and the co-chairs of the Steering Group, acknowledging the difficult decisions we have had to make in Government and the challenges the budget presents for the culture sector in Wales, but also reaffirming my commitment that the Welsh Government would progress a new strategy this year.

We agreed that we should pause and reflect on the impacts of the budget proposals on the sector, and the draft Strategy has been refined and streamlined accordingly over the last two months. I am pleased to confirm that the Steering Group, Designated Member and Cabinet colleagues agree with me that the Strategy is ready to be published for public consultation, which we are preparing for at present. The consultation will be launched in May and run for eight weeks.

I would encourage everyone with an interest in the future of culture in Wales to read the Strategy and participate in the consultation. I strongly believe this is the right Strategy for the current financial climate. It provides strategic direction for our cultural sectors, and clearly states our long-term ambitions, while setting out the flexible and scalable priorities we will focus on to achieve them.