

Creative Cultures

**GUIDANCE ON INTEGRATING
CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY
STRATEGIES**

**Produced for DCMS
Local Government Team**

Consultation Draft

January 2004

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Please find attached a copy of the Consultative Draft of the Guidance on Integrating Cultural and Community Strategies.

We hope that you will find this of interest and we would like to invite your responses to the document.

We are especially keen to hear your views on whether the barriers, challenges and potential solutions to successful integration appear to be significant or relevant to the experience of local councils and their partners in creating and implementing both Cultural and Community Strategies.

Responses from LSPs and those officers or members in local councils with particular responsibility for the Community Strategy are very important to us, in addition to those made by the cultural services sector.

If you have comments and suggestions to make, please email or post these to us:

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We are also interested in receiving details of other case studies for potential inclusion in the final version of the guidance.

Please note: your responses need to reach us by 5 pm on Friday 27 February 2004.

Although we will read and note each response, it might not be possible for us to make an individual reply.

GUIDANCE ON INTEGRATING CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

1. SETTING THE SCENE

1.1 The DCMS commissioned this guidance on integration of Cultural and Community Strategies from Creative Cultures in autumn 2003. Its purpose is to carry out a detailed examination of underlying issues concerning the integration of cultural and community planning and to propose ways in which these might be successfully addressed.

It has been prompted by changes in the planning framework in the Local Government Act 2002 which, under provision for Freedoms and Flexibilities, mean that local councils are no longer required to produce Local Cultural Strategies but that these should be subsumed within Community Plans. It also builds on informal research carried out for presentations to the ALG and ILAM's Annual Conference in summer 2003 which indicated both strengths and weaknesses in aligning cultural and community objectives

1.2 The **guidance is organised** as follows:

- **Section 1** introduces the aims and purposes of the guidance and who the guidance has been produced for. It also briefly describes how the guidance has been developed
- **Section 2** establishes what we mean by culture, sets out why we should strive for integration, and examines the opportunities presented by the power of well-being
- **Section 3** describes the obstacles to effective integration, articulates the challenges to be addressed and proposes solutions illustrated by good practice case studies.

(We propose to include in the final version of the guidance a brief 'health check', so that local councils can carry out their own basic audit of current performance in integration and decide whether any further action is required on their part to make improvements.)

1.3 Purpose and aims of the guidance

This document seeks to **provide practical guidance** to aid the integration of planning for cultural development with community planning and the production of community plans or strategies. It draws directly on and will disseminate the experience and good practice of those working in this important and challenging area of integrated thinking and working.

The **aims of this guidance** are to:

- help local authorities and their partners achieve greater effectiveness in integrating cultural and community development needs for their areas
- strengthen community strategies through promoting the inclusion of cultural projects and activities

- help demonstrate the benefits of integrated approaches, particularly in showing how culture can support delivery of community priorities for improved quality of life and community well-being.

This guidance is about improvements across a range of aspects of performance in integration. It takes a pragmatic view and is not seeking to secure total integration in aligning processes in the development of both types of strategy. Indeed, there are elements in culture, for example supporting the highest levels of development of creative practice in artists or elite performance in sport, which can and perhaps should sit outside the aims and objectives of the community strategy.

The guidance aims at a broad-based approach to integration, in which it might prove more effective to retain a separate strategy for cultural development, so that focus and momentum for a wide range of cultural projects can be sustained. Indeed, a number of local councils are doing just that including Essex, Sheffield, Manchester, South Oxfordshire District for example.

1.4 Who it is for

The guidance is **written for everyone involved in cultural and community planning**. This will include: local authority officers with responsibility for cultural or community services and policy development; elected members, particularly portfolio holders for cultural and community sectors; community bodies and development agencies; and all members of Local Strategic Partnerships and their supporting sub-partnerships or fora.

It is also aimed at those in local government or its many partner organisations who are engaged in education, health, regeneration, environment, community safety and other sectors to which cultural activity can make a unique contribution.

1.5 Developing this draft guidance and how to respond to it

This **draft guidance has been produced** by Creative Cultures on behalf of the DCMS Local Government Unit. The consultants are working closely with local authority officers from a wide range of authorities throughout England and through consultation with those with 'hands on' responsibility for delivering both cultural and community development.

Background papers and a workshop have proposed, debated, defined and agreed the areas for consideration. A number of other bodies, including ODPM, Government Offices of the Regions, the LGA and IDeA, as well as the NDPBs, have also fed into the development process.

In order to obtain the views of the wider constituency, this draft will be discussed at three regional workshops early in 2004 and distributed for comment to those who have been involved in earlier discussions, as well as being posted on the DCMS website.

Details for **how to respond to the draft** are provided in the letter accompanying the guidance. It is anticipated that a final version will be completed soon after the consultation period and made available through the DCMS and other websites in early 2004.

1.6 Other key documents

This guidance should be read in conjunction with other key documents relating to cultural and community planning. These include

Creating Opportunities: Guidance for Local Authorities in England on Local Cultural Strategies (DCMS, December 2000)

Preparing Community Strategies: government guidance to local authorities (ODPM, December 2000).

Reference to other useful documents and links will be inserted into the guidance text and provided in an appendix for the final version.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE AND THE CASE FOR INTEGRATION

If we are to encourage and support improvements to the integration of cultural and community planning, we need to be clear on the 'what' and the 'why' in making our case.

2.1 What we understand by the term culture

Culture is an **inclusive concept** that embraces a wide variety of activities, places, values and beliefs that contribute to a sense of identity and well-being for everyone in our communities. It is about our way of life and our quality of life.

The guidance follows the established two-part **definition or understanding of culture** set out in '*Creating Opportunities*' (DCMS, 2000), the guidance for Local Cultural Strategies. Culture is seen as having a **material dimension** including:

- The performing and visual arts, craft and fashion
- Media, film, television, video and language
- Museums, artefacts, archives and design
- Libraries, literature, writing and publishing
- The built heritage, architecture, landscape and archaeology
- Sports events, facilities and development
- Parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water environment and countryside recreation
- Children's play, playgrounds and play activities
- Tourism, festival and attractions
- Informal leisure pursuits

Culture also has a **value dimension** and is about:

- Relationships
- Shared memories, experience and identity
- Diverse cultural, religious and historic backgrounds
- Standards
- What we consider valuable to pass on to future generations.

2.2 The case for integration

There are several reasons why it is beneficial to develop Cultural and Community Strategies as interlinked and mutually sustaining, for philosophical, operational and practical considerations. In broad terms:

- Both Strategies have at their core the intention to improve the quality of life of local people
- Both Strategies are based on an inclusive approach to improvements, actively seeking to broaden opportunities for all sections of the community
- The delivery of services for local communities will be through a rich mix of providers, whether from councils themselves or organisations in the voluntary or private sectors
- The aims and objectives of both strategies are intended to be shaped and determined by local needs and aspirations: at best they are greatly influenced by the grassroots

- They are both concerned with peoples' social relationships and how a sense of place and local identity can strengthen community pride and bonds between individuals and groups
- Cultural programmes can and frequently do deliver against the Shared Priorities¹, often creating additional spin-off benefits (enhanced employability from a programme which might be aiming at diverting young people from anti-social behaviour or wider community and democratic engagement in projects which improve the local environment, for instance)
- There can be operational benefits, through skills transfer, or 'widening the gene pool' in producing creative solutions to problems
- Financial benefits for culture derive from contributing to local regeneration initiatives, such as NRF programmes, in being able to access spending earmarked for community development.

An Annex to this guidance sets out a more detailed examination of the parallels and potential for linkages between Cultural and Community Strategies.

There is strong justification for the strategies developing in tandem, and having mutually sustaining aims and objectives. The alternative is fragmentation and a potential loss of synergy and opportunities to work creatively on meeting the needs and aspirations of local communities for a better life.

2.3 Wellbeing - the opportunity for cultural development

Culture is key to our quality of life and to our mental and physical wellbeing. A recent report from Essex County Council, *'Creative Consequences'*, points out that **culture is already 'joined-up'**:

'It is joined up with our personal, community, regional and national identities. It is joined up with our diverse lifestyles and social environments. It is joined up with the way we live, work and play. It is increasingly joined up with our capacity for sustainable economic development, and attracting inward investment in a knowledge-based and creative economy. It is joined up with the ways in which we can make communities and places physically attractive, socially and economically dynamic and diverse. It is joined-up, ultimately, to our whole quality of life.' (Local Government Association, October 2003)

Local government now has the **power** to tackle **quality of life issues** through pursuing the **economic, social and environmental wellbeing of its community**. In its recent publication, *'Powering up: making the most of the power of well-being'*, the LGA sees the new power as a key way in which the modernisation agenda will become a reality as local authorities find ever more innovative and effective ways to implement community strategies and corporate improvement. The LGA argues that:

'The well-being power is a significant resource and freedom for authorities to use in order to improve public services, and encourages councils to look beyond their immediate service delivery responsibilities to the wider economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas.' (LGA, December 2003).

¹ Improvements in local services: raising standards in schools; improving the quality of life, of children, young people, families at risk and older people; promoting healthier communities; creating safer and stronger communities; transforming our local environment; meeting local transport needs; promoting the economic vitality of localities.

The LGA cites a number of examples of good practice and our case studies clearly show that many councils are doing this effectively already.

The most recent legislation gives further flexibility through providing powers to local authorities to charge for discretionary services and to trade more widely (Local Government Act 2003, Sections 93 – 96). Along with the **Freedoms and Flexibilities** that accompany high performance in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment process, the emphasis is increasingly on helping local councils to identify and respond to local needs and priorities.

The development of the CPA 2005 round is likely to bring an increase in the recognition of culture's contribution to community wellbeing as a core service. The CPA will focus more on the community leadership role of Councils and the activities that councils undertake over and above their service delivery roles. This focus is on work that seeks to bring about improvements in the quality of life and which can only be delivered through multi-agency working. Community strategies are seen as the 'natural vehicle' for this broader community leadership role and partnership working and CPA assessments will be shaped around them. (*CPA 2005 – the way ahead*, Audit Commission 2004)

In this the case for culture is being assisted by the **Audit Commission's** development of **voluntary Quality of Life indicators** which can be used to identify key objectives within community strategies and as a basis for establishing measures of the quality of life in a local area. (*Using Quality of Life Indicators*, Audit Commission).

Last year's **Statement of Shared Priorities** sets out central and local government's commitment to improving local services through investment and reform. Whilst cultural issues do not directly feature in these priorities, the emphasis is firmly on quality of life issues. The Shared Priorities' commitment to healthy, strong and safe communities, quality environments and improving the life opportunities, particularly of young as well as older people and those suffering exclusion, offer a path in for culture to make a substantial contribution. IDeA will shortly publish a set of some **fifty case studies of good practice** in using **culture as a means of delivering** on the Shared Priorities.

In many cases investigation of **local needs** will not only **confirm these Shared Priorities** but also **place a high priority on culture** and on issues to which culture can make a substantial contribution. A MORI presentation on Quality of Life indicators included Access to Culture, Sports and Leisure Facilities and Community Activities amongst key items which people think are important to making somewhere a good place to live. Facilities and activities for young people also scored high on the list of things that would make places even better. (MORI Social Research Institute, January 2002).

Other Government Departments are developing a clearer understanding of the role of culture in peoples' lives. The ODPM's survey of English Housing, for example, which lists aspects of their area that householders would like to see improved, revealed that 38% of those surveyed in 2001/02 wanted opportunities and facilities for children and young people - the highest percentage for any request.

A new measure of child poverty proposed by Department of Work and Pensions will include lack of access to leisure, hobbies, swimming and other cultural activities as an indicator of deprivation.

It appears that culture's contribution to improving wellbeing in local communities is gradually appearing on the radar, and this is good news. In all these policy initiatives and programmes, the recognition of a basic entitlement to opportunities for cultural expression and recreation is increasingly taken to be a significant part of the life of every individual.

3. BARRIERS, CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

This section will look at the **main barriers** which have been identified to securing effective integration, what **challenges** these present to local councils and their partners and examine a range of **solutions**, illustrated by **examples** which have worked in various locations in England (and one from the Isle of Man).

We also suggest a number of other **potential solutions**, for which models of good practice might or might not exist: we would hope to identify any such models during the consultation process. Overall, our intention is that for each 'barrier' local councils should be able to **identify** for themselves the **chief learning points** or models which might be most **helpful** to them in **improving their performance**.

3.1 What are the barriers?

The power of promoting wellbeing, aligned with the Statement of Shared Priorities, new freedoms and an emphasis on developing local initiatives and solutions, provides fertile ground for the innovative integration of cultural development with community planning. So why is it not happening equally effectively in all areas?

There is, of course, a number of local councils who are doing this very well, and our case studies are evidence of high performance, where integration is already part of the 'culture'. For some authorities, Freedoms and Flexibilities and the CPA process have actually encouraged a better recognition of culture's role: Croydon, Southend, Wigan and Leicester have all seized the opportunity to profile culture to greater advantage. For others, however, there are still obstacles to be tackled.

As a general observation, it appears that a potential (if not already actual) weakening of culture's position arises from the **removal** under Freedoms and Flexibilities of the **need for** local authorities to undertake **development of a Local Cultural Strategy** and of the Best Value Performance Indicator 114 which defined this requirement. To redress any potential weakness for culture in meeting community objectives, a more robust approach to embedding culture within a wider community planning framework is required.

The development process for this guidance has identified and focused on a number of commonly-agreed **obstacles facing effective integration of cultural and community planning**. This does not claim to be a comprehensive listing: each council area is unique and will have its own features and attributes. What is offered here, therefore, are those factors which are seen by the councils and other bodies involved in developing the guidance as most likely to determine success or failure in integration. They are:

Barrier 1:	Lack of understanding of culture and its potential contribution to local wellbeing
Barrier 2:	Lack of empirical data on cultural impacts
Barrier 3:	Dispersal and fragmentation of cultural services
Barrier 4:	Lack of effective leadership for culture
Barrier 5:	Translating strategic priorities into actions
Barrier 6:	Getting communities to express the value of culture
Barrier 7:	Making partnerships work for culture and community

Barrier 1: LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF CULTURE AND ITS POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL WELLBEING

The issues: despite the plethora of argument and evidence, those involved with cultural development frequently report a lack of understanding among colleagues, some elected members and within other agencies, of the contribution that culture can make. This lack of understanding is evident in:

- Terminology: people are still uncomfortable or uncertain about the word culture itself
- The narrow view of culture (seen as elitist, high arts, irrelevant)
- Disregarding its value, not taking it seriously or regarding it as a luxury
- Not making any or full use of cultural programmes to address Shared Priorities

Why this matters: if culture continues to be viewed as an irrelevance to the lives of local people, then opportunities will be missed to enhance their quality of life.

The challenges: if the importance of culture to wellbeing is to be properly acknowledged and services developed to meet local needs, councils and their partners need to:

- Tackle understanding and scoping of culture, through providing information, education and advocacy on behalf of culture
- Establish the wider benefits through piloting projects as action research and to test for good models
- Actively seek to learn from others
- Be prepared to stand up and champion the cause of culture and leisure

How some councils tackled this: case studies²

1.A Dorset County Council

With the introduction of 'Freedoms and Flexibilities' and changes to the planning framework, Dorset County Council wanted to ensure that the valuable work in developing the Cultural Strategy was effectively translated and taken up by the Community Plan. The Council also recognised that it needed to start a major awareness-raising campaign on the wider benefits of culture and decided to tackle this as follows.

Firstly, working through a joint approach in both tiers of councils: they focused on regular meetings of directors of service from the County with CEOs of boroughs and districts, to take every opportunity to raise the question of cultural collaboration and integration and how this would sit with LSPs.

Secondly, the county and its partners are actively looking for opportunities to promote culture through joint projects which address quality of life issues affecting local communities.

² IDeA will be publishing a series of around fifty case studies showing how culture delivers against the Shared Priorities on its website during early 2004. These are drawn from imaginative programmes from all types of authority and cover all the English regions.

Lesson: *where understanding of culture's role is inadequate, look to raise awareness and actively pursue projects which target improvements to local communities.*

1.B Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

For Bolton, living in harmony is at the core of a strong, safe and vibrant community. The borough comprises eight towns and many communities, each with distinctive characteristics. The strength of pride in the local area is a powerful asset and both Community and Cultural Strategies aim to take advantage of this for the benefit of Bolton as a whole.

'Clear Vision, Bright Future' (the Community Plan 2003-2012) has adopted 'Communities in Harmony' as one of its four cross-cutting themes. Culture and multi-cultural festivals have a special role to play, providing opportunities to celebrate the richness and diversity of local cultures, faiths and race. All communities see the need to develop social cohesion, which is grounded in mutual understanding and tolerance.

The borough's cultural strategy, *LIFE*, reflected the issue of identity and local wellbeing as central to community development and promoted the contribution made by culture to quality of life. It forms a major strand of the Community Plan, and is positioned as a key element in those sections which cover health, wellbeing, lifelong learning, as well as delivering on community cohesion through cultural programmes and events of all kinds.

Lesson: *culture, as a means of expressing values in diverse communities, serves to promote a wider understanding of the contribution made by all to the whole area, and can provide enjoyable opportunities to get to know and celebrate different ways of living.*

1.C Eastbourne Borough Council Social Inclusion through Disability Sport

In May 2001 Eastbourne Borough Council finalised an Action Plan to increase opportunities for local people with disabilities to participate in sport and appointed a Disability Sport Assistant to support the action plan. Today much of the Action Plan has been realised and each week up to 130 young people and adults with disabilities enjoy a wide range of sporting activities in Eastbourne. They are joined by a further 40 students from local mainstream schools and colleges.

The key to the success of the plans has been close links with the area's special schools and disability organisations, together with the involvement of students particularly from Park and Sussex Downs College who are working towards the Community Sports Leader Award.

The impact of the action plan has been profound on the quality of life, particularly for young disabled people in Eastbourne and the Council has tracked outcomes for groups and individuals.

Lesson: *cultural development can help tackle social inclusion and reach all sections of the community. In this example, there are health and community development spin-offs, in addition to individual rewards and the integration of young disabled people into the mainstream.*

1.D SOAR (Southey and Owlerton Area Regeneration), Sheffield Neighbourhood Strategies

Six neighbourhoods in the north of Sheffield have been working since 2001 on determining and developing strategies for improvements to their areas. In this work they have been supported by SOAR and the Owlerton/Southey Green Area Panel.

The SRB and Objective 1 funded programme started with informal walkabout sessions in the neighbourhoods, which enabled residents to tell Council officers and professional advisers about their concerns and aspirations. This and subsequent activities (including the use of artists to work with people on developing a vision for improvements) ensured that the plans to regenerate the north of Sheffield would be both based on the views of residents and strategic in impact. The consultation process was shortlisted for an ippr/The Guardian award for public involvement in 2002, commended for its direct engagement of local people in shaping their own environment.

The Neighbourhood Strategies identified a number of cultural strands to improvements, including the value of good design in changing the image and reality of the area. An ambitious Cultural Action Plan (Creative Futures) was also created, using culture to deliver benefits in health, wellbeing, training, employment and lifelong learning.

Lesson: *locally based projects which provide access for local people in taking strategic decisions and influencing both expenditure and outcomes, are a significant way to demonstrate the valuable role that cultural development can play and its contribution to longer-term benefits, including enhancing employability and health.*

1.E Forest of Dean District Council Promoting the vitality of localities *Lightshift* in the Forest of Dean

Lightshift was a week-long artists' illumination event run by the Forest of Dean Sculpture Trust (FDST) in October 2001, which was conceived as a way of raising morale in the Forest community in the aftermath of the Foot and Mouth epidemic. The Forest of Dean Sculpture Trail had been set up in 1986, with permanent art works commissioned in the woodland and the Trust had already begun a process of re-evaluation of its work when the epidemic struck.

Working in partnership with the Forestry Commission, Forest of Dean District Council and the Forest Regeneration Partnership, the idea was hatched of a large-scale and imaginative event with wide appeal that would raise local confidence and attract people back to the Forest.

The event proved more successful than any of the partners, organisers or artists could possibly have imagined. Over 40,000 people attended, 75 per cent of whom lived or worked locally. In late 2003, the Trust began working with the Digital Media Research Centre of the University of West of England and interested artists to explore ways of following up the lessons from *Lightshift*, in the Forest of Dean and elsewhere.

Lesson: *culture and art offer imaginative approaches to problem-solving – including major issues impacting on the community, and can include benefits for the local economy, as in this example. Such projects also have wider impacts in drawing in*

people who might well otherwise have little contact with either the arts or enjoyment of the local environment.

What else you might try:

- Study visits by elected members and officers to other areas, to witness successful projects
- Secondments or exchanges between senior officers or members in neighbouring authorities
- Seminars and workshops for LSPs and officers or members responsible for community strategies on what culture can do (perhaps led by an arts or sports professional)
- Twinning with other high performing council areas to exchange ideas on good practice
- Creating small-scale pilot projects to test impacts and benefits for local people

Barrier 2: LACK OF EMPIRICAL DATA ON CULTURAL IMPACTS

The issues: with Best Value, Comprehensive Performance Assessment and the overarching need for 'evidence-based policy', there is a strong feeling that 'if it can't be counted it won't be focussed on'.

Helpful new tools are emerging, including the Regional Cultural Data Framework, the mapping exercises on the creative industries published by the DCMS (DCMS, 1998, 2001) and the development of the concepts of social and cultural capital (see *Creative Consequences*, LGA 2003). It is still evident, however, that work both at the national and local level will be needed to secure a robust basis for capturing the complex ways in which culture contributes to our quality of life.

Hard outputs and outcomes are required by funding programmes which makes culture harder to justify, with its tendency to rely on the anecdotal and informal approach to evaluation. Impact and longitudinal studies are still in short supply (nationally, regionally and locally)

Why this matters: decisions on investment (of money and effort) from public and other bodies, are made on the basis on setting specific targets, with quantifiable inputs and outputs. Acceptable outcomes tend most frequently to be measurables (numbers of jobs created, new business startups), rather than events which result in changes to the life of a community or individual over time. Where this evidence has been neither collected nor analysed, the argument for cultural expenditure is weakened.

The challenges: local councils and their partners need some firm facts and figures to support them, and should be aspiring to:

- obtain locally significant data on which strategies and actions can be based or funding decisions taken
- understand and interpret data and translate these into strategic aims and objectives
- take a longer term view, so that trends, impacts and improvements over time can be tracked

How some areas have tackled this: case studies

2.A Essex County Council (with Nottingham Trent University) 'Creative Consequences', October 2003

The County Council, in setting out to understand (and demonstrate) more fully the benefits of arts and cultural activity, wanted to move beyond the purely economic model that typifies many arts impact studies. Collecting evidence of arts-induced social change, through active engagement with the arts is especially complex and meaningful or useful data is hard to come by. This can often lead to an over-reliance on anecdotal evidence or evaluation by case study.

Although there were limitations to the approach used by Essex, the core message to emerge from the study was that there is a clear association between participation in the arts and positive outcomes for those involved.

900 Essex residents completed a participant questionnaire, with four main areas under examination:

- Human capital
- Social capital
- Attitudes towards the Essex arts sector
- Demographics of the participants

The County Council feels that it has considerably improved its understanding of how culture and the arts contribute to areas of personal, community and social life. They now have a base for translating data into information which has a direct bearing on the development of policy and services. The Council acknowledges, too that this work marks the start of a continuous process of refinement and widening of data gathering to cover the cultural economy as well as the other dimensions of sport, tourism and heritage, for example.

Essex is now looking to develop research and data collection through setting up a template which will integrate information with the Regional Cultural Data Framework (RCDF), aimed at enhancing and extending its own efforts in providing a wider strategic context.

Lesson: *good practice in moving away from more traditional approaches to local surveys (often based on user satisfaction models) and can lead to a more sophisticated outcome and understanding of the real importance of culture in people's lives. This in turn paves the way for using data to support policy development and, ultimately, delivery.*

2.B East Midlands Region 'Time for Measuring Culture'

The aim of the study, prepared for Culture East Midlands by Impact Research Ltd, is to promote consistent use of cultural indicators in the region. It is also an exercise to test the results of the Regional Cultural Data Framework (RCDF) in the East Midlands and an opportunity, in particular, to measure the indicators already proposed for the region. The RCDF, published in early 2003, set out four broad areas that can be measured:

- Labour Market data requirements

- Users and Audiences data requirements
- Economic performance data requirements
- Education and Training data requirements

'Time for Measuring Culture' is linked to the Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS), 'Time for Culture', and will enable the regional agencies and partners across the region (including local authorities) to measure the development of the cultural sector and evaluate the success of the regional strategy in delivering its objectives.

Testing is being carried out on establishing whether the key performance indicators are capable of being implemented and at present indicators are suggested rather than fully adopted.

Lesson: *data which shows the scope and scale of the cultural sector (whether locally or regionally captured) can be a useful starting point for building up support mechanisms for developing cultural enterprise. Data on users and audiences will help to measure participation trends and profiles over time, as a baseline for improving cultural planning.*

2.C Core Cities Group: Manchester, Newcastle and Nottingham³

The eight cities in the group (Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham and Sheffield) are the focus of a major Government initiative to drive up their performance and those of their regions, and to foster sustainable economic growth. For each city, culture and creativity are key attributes underpinning success and vitality and feature prominently in the Core Prospectus as well as their own corporate strategies.

Manchester, Newcastle and Nottingham are all actively working in partnership with their universities on the development of data to underpin investment in culture as both social capital and economic driver.

Manchester has a partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University and the Creative Industries Development Service (CIDS) to look at measurements relating to specific industry sectors and is creating a new post with responsibility for evaluation. The city also relies on the Regional Development Agency England's North West as a valuable source of information: benchmarking on employment in the CI sector, for example, is carried out by the Regional Intelligence Unit.

Nottingham, too, is drawing on the expertise of Nottingham Trent University, which is carrying out an impact study for the city on the cultural and creative sectors, showing employment, sector movements and economic benefits. The City Council is currently putting performance management systems in place, including floor targets for culture and, although they have measures of volume and costs for their own provision, there are no measures of longer-term impacts.

Newcastle/Gateshead's commitment to cultural development will be supported by a longitudinal study to be carried out by the Centre for Cultural Policy at the University of Northumbria. This will look at the benefits to the city of cultural investment in the Quayside area, including GDP growth, employment and some of the soft measures.

³ These cities are keen to share the results of impact and other studies in a wider forum. The guidance on integration, once set up on the DCMS website, will provide signposts to the emergence of information from these and other projects to improve data-gathering and its use in measuring performance in cultural and community strategies.

The latter, covering social capital and impacts on communities can only show results over an extended period.

Lesson: *all areas can benefit from researches on mapping cultural activity and its impacts. Much of this information can be useful in other areas, through identifying common concerns, generic effects and impacts, even if some major outputs are not necessarily in themselves directly transferable.*

What else you might try:

- Forming partnerships or consortia with neighbouring authorities or benchmarking groups (as for Best Value), to commission joint research, including impact studies
- Work with your local university on identifying and meeting local research needs
- Set up seminars or presentations on the results and implications of other research programmes which you feel are relevant to your local aims

Barrier 3: DISPERSAL AND FRAGMENTATION OF CULTURAL SERVICES

The issues: a number of structural and governance issues arise from the location of cultural services. A recent survey (*Cultural Exchange: the contribution of cultural services to modernised local government*, LGA, March 2002) identified that 74% of surveyed authorities has undergone a restructuring exercise within the preceding three years, with over half of these authorities changing the location of cultural services.

With the placing of cultural services within multi-disciplinary departments as a result of reorganisation, with some elements dispersed across different departments or contracted out, there can be barriers to effective co-ordination and communication across the wide range of cultural services and providers. When we add in the multiplicity of organisations outside the council which also have a role in delivery, it is evident that keeping a clear sense of direction and purpose does present real challenges.

The impacts of dispersal can include:

- Loss of strategic direction
- Some perceived negative effects on the status, influence and power of culture when located in the larger council departments such as Education (although a position within a Community Services or Regeneration directorate can be helpful)
- A potential loss of expertise and clout to the council through outsourcing
- A confused picture to external bodies
- Structural weaknesses in performance management
- Communication problems

Why this matters: in order to maintain profile and effectiveness, cultural services need to avoid any significant decline in momentum and focus. They need to present a clearly understood picture and structure (across the council itself and to its partners and stakeholders), or else face the prospect of appearing to be fragmented and perhaps incapable of coherent delivery.

The challenges: councils need to take a lead in tackling this by:

- Improving communication at all levels, externally as well as internally
- Establishing shared aims and objectives for itself and its partners
- Better co-ordination and joining up
- Assigning responsibility for doing this
- Striking the right balance between operational responsibility as day job and strategic overview

What some councils have done: case studies

3.A Manchester City Council

The value set by elected members on culture is reflected in senior officer leadership and the structures for supporting cultural development across the city. The Council's Chief Executive has lead responsibility for regeneration, much of which is based on cultural initiatives, and the Head of Cultural Strategy is a member of his senior management team. Remarkably, the City Council boasts of a cultural strategy team of thirteen officers, all of whom are charged with delivery of the strategy action plan, and who are located in key strategic posts across departments.

The Cultural Strategy team at the City Council also has its own research unit, currently working on mapping culture and setting targets and indicators to underpin the implementation of the strategy.

Lesson: *officers with strategic, rather than heavy operational workloads, can respond flexibly to new initiatives, can integrate across departments and be well placed to ensure that culture supports many aspects of service delivery and partnership working.*

3.B Birmingham City Council

The Council is taking a radical approach to the delivery of services across the city, by opting for a localisation process. This will create eleven constituencies (with local committees), each covering three or four wards on average. Services will change in a two-stage process, to further enable service and spending decisions to be taken at local level. Leisure and culture will face major changes, and the overall aim is to ensure that cultural development is directly influenced and determined by the constituencies.

Culture has been reshaped into two new strategic directorates:

- Local Services (including culture, community play, sport, leisure and parks, events)
- Learning and Culture (including education, museums and heritage, libraries, arts and arts events)

The Council believes that this will help connect a corporate overview and approach directly with local needs and that the balance between operational responsibilities and delivering strategic objectives will be better resolved through a separate focus. There should also be considerable potential through localisation to ensure that cultural development supports a wide range of community-based initiatives to improve the quality of life.

Links between the city centre and the constituencies will be strengthened in two ways. There will be a team of local arts development officers, to serve each area, preserving specialist expertise and playing a major role in developing partnerships

between city centre arts organisations and constituencies. This will be backed up by a championing scheme which is about to go live: each major arts organisation will champion arts in a constituency, in a range of ways, including arts in schools or support for development of creative industries - whatever is deemed appropriate locally.

Lesson: *arrangements for operational delivery of cultural services will vary considerably, what is key is to build in an effective strategic planning and communication mechanism for culture.*

What else you might try:

- Regular seminars to bring cultural providers, community organisations and partners together, to strengthen networks, share information and reaffirm common ground
- Freeing up officer time to focus on developing links between cultural and community planning
- Make use of the Internet or newsletters, to keep people informed on the delivery of strategies and their key achievements.

Barrier 4: LACK OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP FOR CULTURE

The issues: culture needs local champions. Leadership is key to success: places with a successful record of cultural development always have strong and effective leadership excited by and committed to culture. Elected members with key portfolios or chief executives are critical in providing this leadership. In addition, a lack of leadership can be a significant barrier to progress with multi-disciplinary departments, where local authorities can lack senior officers able to advocate culture's role.

It is notable that successful places, including some of our major regional cities, accord high status to cultural leadership. Other places may need to ensure higher status to cultural leaders, celebrating it and encouraging representation particularly by elected members on key regional cultural bodies. Some cities, too, have looked to a champion from the private sector, to lead on cultural ambition.

Where good leadership is in short supply, this can lead to:

- Negative impact on establishing a vision and an inability to set good examples
- Little clarity in defining standards or expectations
- Insufficient power to open doors and drive things forward
- No-one to speak up for culture in the council or LSP
- Difficulties in securing the resources, in competition with other demands on public funds
- No buy-in or commitment from either the council, its partners or stakeholders.

Why this matters: where there is a leadership deficit, efforts to secure a strong place for culture in its own right or as part of a Community Strategy and LSP programme, can rarely reach full potential. Culture can be marginalised and downgraded in favour of those services and programmes which are more readily championed (Education, Housing or Economic Development, for instance). The ODPM is taking the issue of leadership within the LSPs very seriously, and has just commissioned a three-year evaluation programme which considers the effectiveness of these bodies, and the capacity of community leadership.

The challenges: in order to be effective in securing the right sort of leadership for local conditions, local councils and their partners need to:

- Get the right people on board
- Avoid appointing partisans
- Create positive conditions for leadership to emerge, if there is no obvious candidate
- Provide incentives and a platform for leaders (adding value and status)
- Consider casting the net wider than the council or usual suspects: perhaps actively seek champions from elsewhere
- Support capacity-building to improve community leadership

What some councils have done: case studies

4.A Political leadership in Newcastle and Gateshead

Local government support for arts and culture has a long and honourable track record in North East England: local councils were the driving force behind setting up one of the earliest Regional Arts Associations, for example. Increasing cultural ambitions and a joint desire to redevelop the neglected riverside brought Newcastle and Gateshead together in the creation of a joint Cultural Strategy ('*Building Bridges*') and in the creation of the Capital of Culture bid.

The input of senior politicians and officers has been crucial to the success of Tyneside. Former and current leaders of Gateshead Council have strong commitment to culture and have overseen the drive towards regeneration. They have also been very active within the Regional Cultural Consortium (including charring) and the current leader is a member of the LGA cultural committee. For Newcastle, the input has come from an energetic cabinet member with responsibility for culture.

Both councils believe that nothing less than leadership from the top will do the job. They also stress that officers and elected members must also be integrated with and work closely alongside all other core services, otherwise culture will remain marginalised. This is essential in the integration of leisure and culture with community development as well as regeneration and economic development. Cultural services also have strong representation on strategic bodies, including the LSP.

Lesson: *real leadership does not often appear overnight. Commitment of senior members and officers is most effective when it is developed over a number of years and those who are powerful and active locally can help with a broader championing role that can reach out into the sub-region and beyond.*

4.B Manchester City Council

The renaissance of Manchester has been in progress for many years now and enabled the city and surrounding boroughs to be seen to great advantage on a global stage during the 2002 Commonwealth Games. This quite simply could not have been achieved without dynamic leadership from a major figure from the private sector, leading a partnership which also embraced key players from the public and voluntary domains.

Culture is firmly enshrined as one of the high level objectives for the City Council, and this is reflected in a number of ways. There is both a lead and deputy lead member with the cultural portfolio and the Council's deputy leader sits on the board of the Cultural Consortium England's Northwest. In addition, the lead member for culture is an active member of the Manchester Cultural Partnership, and the deputy leader is a member of Arts Council England North West. Thus Manchester's influence on and advocacy for culture is spread throughout the region, as well as being felt at a local level.

Lesson: *Leadership is all about vision and the confidence to take risks. In taking a strong lead from the input of senior figures from the cultural private sector (as in Manchester's case), positive signals can be sent about the wider ownership of cultural development.*

4.C North Somerset District Council

Leadership for culture does not always need to be found exclusively from within local councils. North Somerset is currently piloting the creation of a culture and community planning champions group for the South West region, drawing together outside bodies to work alongside the Council.

An invitation to attend the recent inaugural session in January 2004 was distributed to voluntary and private sector organisations across the district. A good sectoral mix of key organisations attended the first meeting, representing arts, sports, Play Forum, Performing Arts College, Youth Orchestra, tourism and heritage as well as individual arts practitioners.

The embryonic group showed considerable enthusiasm and commitment to helping culture move to a more central position in community development and has declared its clear commitment in being proactive. There is a firm intention that the champions group will not just be a talking shop, but a major vehicle for galvanising and inspiring stronger support for culture across the district. There is joint recognition between council officers and cultural organisations that culture in North Somerset needs more publicity and a higher profile.

The timing of setting up such a champions group is auspicious. The LSP is currently revising its structure and looking at partnerships, one of which is designated as responsible for the delivery of the Culture, Leisure and Recreation action plan within the Community Strategy. This could present an excellent opportunity for the cultural champions group to become directly involved in defining key priorities and objectives for the sector.

These are early days for the North Somerset initiative and it should be possible to track its development as a case study through progress reports from the guidance on the DCMS website.

Lesson: *championing culture can also come from groups and local councils can benefit from casting the net widely to secure active ownership of cultural priorities. Lobbying and advocacy that spring from an external source can greatly strengthen the case for culture.*

4.D Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council

Wigan's Local Strategic Partnership is made up of the Leader's Forum and seven strategic partnerships. From the outset one of those partnerships has been the

Cultural Partnership. This partnership was established as the guiding body for *Northern Soul – Wigan's Cultural Strategy*, and is led by a strong voluntary sector voice.

The Cultural Strategy fed the development of Wigan's interim Community Plan, where one of the key objectives is "*Improving the Borough's Lifestyle, Play and Culture*". As work is currently being undertaken to finalise Wigan's Community Plan, the quality of life agenda and, critically, the role of culture in delivering on this, is emerging as one of the key themes.

Lesson: *grassroots support for culture, emanating from the voluntary sector, can be a most effective way to boost wider ownership in partnerships.*

What else you might try:

- Grooming community leaders as champions for culture
- Offer training (media or presentation skills), capacity-building and small incentives (payment of expenses, for example) for greater involvement
- Make sure that any taskload for a leader is limited and focused on the main role of leadership

Barrier 5: TRANSLATING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES INTO ACTIONS

The issues: there need to be robust links between setting high level strategic aims and action planning: strategic priorities which remain paper priorities are of little or no use. Any attempt at integration of cultural and community planning needs to ensure that partnership priorities are translated into the 'day job' and get properly embedded into work programmes and performance management systems.

In making the link between strategic priorities and action, performance management will be vital. Developing performance management systems for culture, the picture will almost inevitably be particularly complex. There are a number of reasons for this:

- A lack of clear, unambiguous and widely agreed measurements and indicators on culture on which to build effective performance management
- The fragmentation of delivery across sectors and cultural areas adds to the complexity and difficulty, especially where activity is located across council departments, other providers and partnerships
- The attendant difficulty of lines of accountability in multi-level, multi-sectoral provision
- Existing performance management systems in operation for Best Value, departmental service delivery plans, CPA and other service level agreement arrangements.

Why this matters: successful delivery of effective services and the ability to implement fully a wide-ranging set of strategic aims and objectives for culture, is improved by the creation of a workable and efficient approach to performance management. A Local Cultural Strategy, which sets out a set of actions against local priorities (corporate or community), provides a base on which to build appropriate tasks and targets, as well as a means of defining service standards. It can also present 'hooks' or links into the Community Strategy.

If culture is to be able to move out beyond the boundaries into the wider agenda in strategic terms, it must set its sights high and be recognised in a council's top level target-setting. The recognition of culture's strategic contribution can be underlined by

its inclusion in a council's PSA. Creating stretch targets for culture gives an important boost to its status within a local area and creates the link between key priority and delivery on the ground.

The challenges: local councils and their partners will need to ensure that they:

- Are clear in defining the strategic aims, objectives and outputs for cultural development, in a way which addresses key priorities for the local area
- Are able to translate strategic aims and objectives into action programmes which drill down into everyday activities, without loss of focus
- Provide management information which is clear and useful for all partners and stakeholders
- Strive, where feasible, to integrate or harmonise performance management for both the cultural and community strategies
- Aim at the inclusion of stretch targets for culture in the PSA.

What some councils have done: case studies

5.A London Borough of Croydon Cultural Services Performance Management Framework

Croydon's Cultural Services Department has an exemplary performance management framework which derives its indicators from those determined by the CPA, its LPSA (including the stretch target for culture), Best Value PIs and other local cultural indicators. This enables a clear and seamless link between the key corporate priorities and the delivery of cultural as a significant means of achieving community benefits. The Cultural Strategy has helped to determine themes for the Borough's Community Strategy and has grounded the Department's agenda for service provision within the wider authority context.

The Performance Plan sets out an integrated and iterative process that involves:

- Performance management which informs Best Value, service planning and improvement
- All staff engaged in the approach to performance management and development of indicators
- A balanced set of SMART performance targets based around the needs of users, residents, employees and stakeholders
- Effective performance management systems developed to allow for the capture of relevant data (the indicators, which are reviewed quarterly against targets)
- Departmental performance communicated through all levels of staff
- Regular consultation with the local community and stakeholders on departmental performance
- Production of an annual report to review and analyse performance, inform on trends, make comparisons and detail future improvements, as well as measuring service delivery

Lesson: *effective performance management results from joining up the best of tried and tested approaches and streamlining links between top down and grassroots priorities. Combining indicators and targets ties culture tightly in to corporate aims and makes it easier to demonstrate the effects of culture on community well-being.*

5.B Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council

The Cultural Partnership, in common with the other partnerships that make up the LSP, will produce, manage and monitor a strategy that will demonstrate how culture will contribute and help to drive the Community Plan objectives. The strategy will be supported by the development of a common performance management framework using the innovative software Performance Plus™ that Wigan Council has developed with its partners.

As Wigan has now outsourced delivery of cultural development to the Wigan Cultural and Leisure Trust (WCLT), it is essential that its performance management system ensures that the objectives for both the cultural and community strategies can be effectively monitored. This will be done by appraising the Trust's contribution to these strategies, as well as to the Council's LPSA targets and Best Value obligations. So that all performance information provides a robust audit trail, the Performance Plus™ will also be used in monitoring the Trust, and to feed data upwards to the LSP in its overview of delivery of the Community Plan.

Lesson: *establishing a common performance management framework for a LSP, a cultural partnership and any outsourced body with significant responsibility for delivery (such as a trust), will enable priorities, objectives, targets and indicators to be more closely defined and aligned.*

5.C Southend Borough Council

With strong community and political support for culture evident in the creation of its Local Cultural Strategy, the Council wanted to boost the position of culture through its PSA. And, as the development of the Community and Cultural Strategies were running in tandem, both reflected the same main priorities for delivery. Culture sits as one of the key themes in the Community Strategy and there is a robust cultural strategic partnership.

The Council proposed two cultural targets for the PSA (from an overall total of twelve). These were located under the banner of Improving Skills and were to:

'Improve prospects for socially excluded young people through arts and cultural opportunities'

'Use libraries to improve homework support for young people'.

The Council is trying to provide data in project monitoring and build on this as part of the performance management required for the PSA and its delivery of stretch targets. They are working with Arts Council England East to look at impacts, and to develop appropriate outcome indicators.

Lesson: *the LPSA presents a great opportunity for adopting specific cultural programmes and activities to deliver against community and corporate aims and objectives.*

5.D Leicester City Council Improving community wellbeing

The Council saw that PSAs were an excellent way of ensuring that culture was able to make its contribution to improving life in the city. With the support of the Cultural Strategy Partnership and the Leicester Partnership, there was strong determination to try for a cultural target within the Leicester PSA.

Target 10 is on: *'Improving social and personal well-being being and enhancing social cohesion by increasing cultural participation.'* It covers activities in sports, arts, museums and libraries, with another indicator for increasing the total number of library ICT accesses in the city.

By including this target in the PSA, the Council sought to recognize the importance of cultural diversity and community cohesion in Leicester. They linked the Cultural Strategy directly with the concept of access to cultural opportunity and freedom of cultural expression as a fundamental human right. The target derives from two of the key aims of the Cultural Strategy, **Diverse City**, which is driving the development and delivery of all cultural activity in the city for the next five years.

Lesson: *the inclusion of culture within a LPSA makes a positive statement to local communities about shared values, in acknowledging diversity and underpinning social cohesion, for example.*

Where help is at hand: keep in touch with new approaches which are currently in development. These include:

- DCMS current commission: A Performance Management Framework for Cultural Services (Angela Watson & Associates)
- Guidance on CPA 2005, Audit Commission, and now out to consultation

Barrier 6: GETTING COMMUNITIES TO EXPRESS THE VALUE OF CULTURE

The issues: support from local people for their quality of life is a strong starting point for arguing for the important contribution of cultural services. This is frequently already recognised by the high rating usually accorded to cultural services like libraries and leisure provision. When local people are consulted on quality of life issues, the concern over offering more opportunities for participation by young people often emerges as a top priority. This is comparatively rarely linked subsequently to funding for cultural activities or provision. The lack of floor targets involving culture is also cited as an example of how culture is not being 'joined-up' by central government.

It is widely believed by many in local government that culture is not valued by local communities, whom they assume accord it a low ranking in any prioritisation. Some of this belief stems from a fundamental failure to recognise the links between pride of place, identity and self-esteem in local communities and how these add value to peoples' lives.

Why this matters: the whole modernising agenda is a move towards local definition of services to meet local needs. Where the directive, top-down approach persists in consultation, the full range of community concerns is effectively prevented from emerging or can be manipulated by pitting culture against core services such as health, housing or employment. There has always, however, been a very significant level of public support for arts and culture, not least evidenced in a number of surveys carried out by the Arts Council of England and Sport England which demonstrate support even from those who do not consider themselves as 'consumers'.

The challenges: there should be a genuine effort on the part of local councils and their partners to:

- establish the real value set on culture by people and communities
- recognise that communities are shaped by and responsive to local environment, traditions and characteristics
- enable local people to engage in creative activities that encourage self-expression and value diversity
- provide opportunities for community engagement in the process of developing cultural objectives and themes for both types of strategy

What some councils have done: case studies

6.A Isle of Man Quality of Life Survey, 2002

In early 1990s Gallup was commissioned by the Isle of Man Government to carry out a Quality of Life Survey for the island. Work started with a qualitative approach: a number of focus groups were brought together to discuss what they liked or did not like about life on the Isle of Man.

These discussions raised issues of importance for residents, giving strong indicators on values and attributes for local communities. A household survey, based on identified issues, was produced and piloted before being conducted on a sample of 860 residents. All departments of the IOM Government were able to contribute to shaping the final version, including the Tourism and Leisure division.

What emerged in 1991 formed the baseline for the 2002 survey (now administered by MORI). Local communities value their quality of life for a number of reasons and cultural dimensions score highly as contributing to their overall satisfaction:

- Beautiful countryside
- Facilities for leisure, sport and spare time activities
- Entertainment and nightlife
- Townscape and street scene

The views of local people feed directly into the work of the Government and its partners in planning and delivering cultural opportunities for the Isle of Man.

Lesson: *when consulting with people on their quality of life, start with an open mind. This will be more revealing of local priorities than asking them to rank existing services in a competitive way. Cultural matters often surface as a top concern.*

6.B Southend Borough Council

Another of the original fourteen pilot areas for the Local Cultural Strategy, Southend has taken great pains to align and harmonise cultural and community priorities, based on what local people have identified as important issues. The Community Conference in 2003 saw Southend residents giving a strong push to the recognition of identity and local pride as key contributors to the wellbeing and prosperity of the area.

This event, which brought together some 200 residents and representatives of Southend organisations, gave a strongly unified message to local leaders that

improving the image of the borough was the highest priority for their vision in seeking improvements in creativity, the economy and the environment. They feel that there must be a more positive expression of local identity than they have at present. And, as Southend is now home to an increasingly diverse community (including Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Chinese residents), it is essential that its identity for the 21st century properly reflects and celebrates a wider cultural heritage.

There is a clear understanding that culture and tourism are major economic drivers and that a poor image does not help Southend to sell itself to its own residents or visitors. The issue of image and identity will be tackled through the Community Strategy and actions that form part of the Cultural Strategy.

Lesson: *setting up a local community conference and asking people directly for their views on how to improve the area, will encourage important issues like identity and local distinctiveness to surface.*

6.C London Borough of Newham Consultation on cultural and community priorities

Consultation for both strategies has taken place in the context of a well-publicised and widely acknowledged vision for Newham of making the borough a place where people choose to live and work by 2010.

For the Cultural Strategy (*'Reasons to be Cheerful'*), Newham was chosen as one of the fourteen DCMS national pilots. It devoted considerable effort over an extended period to draw in the views of local people about culture. The consultation programme included:

- A conference for regional and borough level players
- Neighbourhood meetings
- A website aimed at young people
- A listening day, with senior politicians and officers walking the streets to hear public views
- Focus group discussions for under-represented or hard to reach groups
- A questionnaire carried out in public venues: community advice centre, local hospital waiting area, community college, a fun day in a local park and Stratford central bus station.

A total of over 2,000 local people took part in one of these activities. Results were analysed for age, gender and ethnic origin as well as for the percentage of people with disabilities. The Council also mapped responses against housing benefits data and was confident that a fair representation of the views of Newham residents was achieved.

Residents' views were fed in to the drafting of the Cultural Strategy and have given it strong roots in the community, including the creation of local area strategies and action plans for cultural development.

As part of the process to develop the Community Strategy and define the role and responsibilities of the LSP, the Council has again turned its listening ear to local people. In 2003, the Newham LSP conducted its largest ever community consultation, to find out from residents how they think the borough could be improved and where public money should be spent. Over 25,000 individuals have helped to

ensure that Culture and Social Regeneration have emerged as one of the six agreed priorities for the Community Strategy.

Lesson: *using a variety of approaches with different groups and going out to where people already gather for other purposes, makes consultation more accessible, user-friendly and is likely to ensure that the varied ways in which culture is important are identified.*

What else you might try:

- Being more creative in your consultation techniques (video diaries or using arts in planning for real activities)
- Offering small incentives (refreshments, expenses or prizes)
- Being clear on giving people feedback and explaining what will happen after consultation
- Getting consultation with hard-to-reach groups carried out or facilitated by members of the peer group or trusted community leaders

Barrier 7: MAKING PARTNERSHIPS WORK FOR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

The issues: culture extends across all three sectors. It can be sited in a range of local authority departments, it includes a substantial part of the community sector, such as sports clubs and a major input comes from the private sector.

It is essential to find an effective way to involve this varied cultural sector in strategic issues. Its wide and disparate nature and the barriers to participation in partnership activities and strategic planning, including time, by the community and private sectors, need to be overcome by finding ways to share a common vision and language and effective ways to address strategic issues.

Why this matters: bringing a common vision and a degree of integration to cultural players is a substantial challenge, as is ensuring that they can play an effective role in Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and other fora concerned with cultural planning.

All bodies involved in cultural provision, from whatever sector, will necessarily have their own sectoral needs and the needs of their customers or users in the forefront of their minds. In addition private sector providers will have their own corporate priorities and responsibilities to shareholders.

The challenge, therefore, is to find *overarching issues* which concern all cultural providers and to focus on these and demonstrate the benefit from doing so. This should help to strengthen cultural partnerships, so that they are capable of forming a dynamic and coherent structure to represent cultural interests in a local area. The *precise form* that a partnership for culture takes may be less important than finding the locally effective way of focussing on these overarching and strategic issues.

The challenges: in finding the right structure for linking cultural and community development, councils and their partners will have to:

- Ensure that they have addressed the vision and leadership issues for culture
- Explore pragmatically what is the best way to provide culture with an effective and representative role at the 'top table'.

What some councils have done: case studies

7.A Herefordshire County Council

In 1999 the County Council established the Herefordshire Partnership and produced its first Cultural Strategy. As a result of the Partnership working and the fortuitous timing, culture was rapidly identified as a key part of community development and led to the formation of a Herefordshire Cultural Consortium, one of the ten 'ambition groups' in the LSP.

The recommendations of the Cultural Strategy were adopted as the action plan for the Cultural Consortium, bringing culture into the heart of the wider community agenda. Each of the Consortium members (from private, public or voluntary sector bodies) also brought additional skills and strategic links.

There are many opportunities for cross-fertilisation between the ambition groups: all chairs and facilitators come together regularly, and it has been possible to 'sell' the contribution of culture at a high, strategic level. The county and its partners also feel that the strength of collaboration is stimulated by Herefordshire's status as a rural area in a region dominated by an urban-focused agenda for culture.

The Partnership is now working on development of impact measurement and reviewing its themes and actions plans. The review of the Cultural Strategy will feed in to this process and should enable cultural ambitions to be more tightly linked in to key community priorities.

Lesson: *A clear strategic starting point and 'feel' for common key issues provides the ground for establishing a strong cultural grouping, for ensuring that its voice is heard and that it adds value to the community planning process.*

7.B Dorset County Council

The council has agreed to create a resource to engage directly with LSPs and the county-wide Strategic Partnership has provided funding to establish a post for six months. The main emphasis of the post is to provide information, guidance, advocacy and support for LSPs in developing local cultural ambitions which deliver against important community priorities.

The post-holder will set up a series of events and planning away-days across the county. Another key role will be in supporting LSPs directly, including helping them access funding. This proactive approach is strongly commended by Culture South West, the Government Office of the South West and ACE SW, who are looking to mainstream the successful outcomes across the region.

In addition, a powerful external advocacy body for one part of culture already exists in the joint, county-wide Dorset Arts Advisory Group, which includes members and officers, meeting several times a year to co-ordinate working, and chaired by a West Dorset elected member. This Group will have considerable input into the working of the new post.

Lesson: *A key support post, even provided for a limited time, may be the key to start a process of effective partnership working which can respond to the opportunities in your area and to the complexities that need to be negotiated in a two-tier context.*

7.C Leeds City Council and the Leeds Initiative

Leeds has taken an approach to cultural and community planning that aimed to involve all of the relevant partners, to provide a suitable mixed economy of services that ultimately matched the mixed social and cultural needs of local communities.

The approval in June 2002 by Leeds Initiative Executive of the first Cultural Strategy for Leeds, marked an important step for the city, Leeds Initiative and its partners.

The Executive approved the establishment of its seventh and newest strategic partnership - Leeds Cultural Partnership - to drive the strategy forward and the LCP reports directly to the Executive and Board. Its tasks are to:

- focus the development of cultural policy in the city
- promote a co-ordinated approach to the development of cultural facilities, activities, services and events
- bring culture to the centre stage of policy and decision-making in Leeds
- encourage better understanding and stewardship of the city's cultural resources
- support the efforts and aspirations of people who want to work in the cultural industries.

The council and its partners have undertaken extensive consultation on Vision II (the Community Strategy) and culture is featuring prominently as an issue of importance to the city's future development. As the Leeds Initiative is responsible both for the implementation of the Cultural Strategy and for Vision II, it has been a comparatively smooth process to ensure that the two documents feed into each other at strategic, operational and delivery levels.

Lesson: *An ambitious and clear focus is a great help and in many cases, the best chance of successfully embedding culture at a high level within the workings of the LSP will come from the creation of a partnership with a specific brief for the delivery of cultural opportunities.*

What else you might try:

- Use your consultation process to identify and encourage individuals who may be potential partners.
- Discuss with those who may play a key role in a cultural partnership what their interests are, and issues like availability of time – this may help you address what form of partnership will be most practical and effective.

ANNEXE**COMPARISON OF CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY STRATEGIES GUIDANCE****A: PREPARING COMMUNITY STRATEGIES: GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

1 Statutory or other basis for strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duty to prepare a community strategy, by virtue of Section 1(a) of the Local Government Act 2000 Local authorities to prepare community strategies with due regard to guidance, which is also for the benefit of local strategic partnerships
2 Which authorities it applies to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All types, all tiers Pay due attention to neighbouring authorities
3 Scoping of activities and spheres of influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those services which cover promotion and improvement of economic, social and environmental well-being of the area and its inhabitants Enhancements to quality of life through sustainable development Public, private, voluntary and community sectors
4 Background aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To deliver services to the public which are responsive to needs and concerns of communities To strive for continuous improvement in same To engage and actively involve community in local decisions To work with other bodies/providers in pursuit of delivery To promote equal opportunities and good relations between different racial and social groups
5 Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow local communities to articulate needs and aspirations Co-ordinate action at local level, within broad partnerships with public, private, voluntary and community sectors Focus joint action to meet community needs Contribute to sustainable development locally and connect with regional/national aims and priorities Focus on social inclusion
6 Partners to be involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Framework/structure for delivery is the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Locally determined composition of LSP to meet specific local needs and aspirations LSP also to provide an umbrella partnership, under which others can operate In deprived neighbourhoods, LSP will have close relationship with NRF Wide range of partners including: health authorities/PCGs; police authorities; education; Employment Service; Benefits Agency; regional bodies such as Government Offices, RDAs, LSCs, RCCs, NHS Regional Executives, Regional Chambers of Commerce, English Nature, Countryside Agency, Environment Agency; also CVS networks, Rural Community Councils; Town and Parish Councils; voluntary and community bodies
7 Geographic or administrative area covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic/administrative area not specified Cross-boundary working and partnerships encouraged Must encompass all tiers of local government in each area and very important that Counties + Districts work closely together and integrate efforts Some issues (transport, environment, for example) require sub-regional, regional collaboration

<p>8 Process and organisational framework</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community strategy must be based on an integrated approach, not separate elements for economic, social and environmental well-being • Process is acknowledged as important as strategy itself • Local ownership is required, and a bottom up (not top down) approach to planning • Successful delivery will be on basis of effective, cross-sectoral partnership working and community involvement • Process is regarded as a beginning rather than conclusion and there is no prescribed timescale. Expectation that there will be continuous evolution and refinement of strategy and delivery • Active involvement of elected members is expected • Strategy must establish a vision for the area and back this with action plans, which link with other local and regional strategies to improve quality of life • Culture and leisure are mentioned as dimensions of quality of life (paras. 61 and 85)
<p>9 Links with other strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (DETR 2000) • Our Towns and Cities: the Future. Delivering an urban renaissance (DETR 2000) • Sustainable local communities for the 21st Century (DETR 1998) • PAT 10 and 17 (DETR 2000) • Creating Opportunities (guidance on Local Cultural Strategies): DCMS 2000 • Plus strategies covering health, lifelong learning, Best Value, LA 21, economic development etc • Statement of Shared Priorities (ODPM 2003)
<p>10 Performance management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing must include active involvement of local authorities, partners and the wider community • Monitoring to be carried out against specified outcomes in action plan and to draw on national and local PIs (including Audit Commission's Quality of Life and Cross-Cutting Indicators; NRF Floor Targets; floor targets in LPSAs etc) • Need to identify appropriate body/bodies with responsibility for data collection • Monitoring and reviewing should also signpost PIs in other linked strategies and plans • Review timescale should be fixed to provide interim information within a 3-5 strategy lifetime • Need to provide local communities with information on progress and achievements in the strategy

**B: ASSESSMENT OF GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE
LOCAL CULTURAL STRATEGIES**

<p>1 Statutory or other basis for strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA s 'strongly encouraged to develop and implement'. • BV114 established and later strengthened to set out requirements on coverage, consultation etc. • LA s to take 'leadership role because they are democratic and accountable'.
<p>2 Which authorities it applies to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All. • Can work in consortia in two-tier areas, or with neighbours.
<p>3 Scoping of activities and spheres of influence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key cultural sectors but also cultural industries, visitor economy, informal leisure may be part of some strategies. • For the region/area, not just LA services/departments

4 Background aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be inclusive and reflect the local community' overall way of life. • Promote the cultural well-being of the area. • Provide a basis for the LA contribution to cultural well-being. • Link with and support wider central and regional government context, DCMS objectives etc.
5 Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate, implement and monitor the major cultural goals, policies and actions.
6 Partners to be involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should include all sectors. • LA s will need to consider partnership arrangement for developing and implementing.
7 Geographic or administrative area covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need not be bounded by LA boundary – should consider impact of regional/sub-regional facilities in and outside their area.
8 Process and organisational framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory process including extensive consultation (now part of BV114 requirement). • Requirement for Action Plan.
9 Links with other strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closely linked with delivery of Best Value by LA. • 'Principles, components and development process .. broadly similar' between LCS and community strategies. • Should link between regional, sectoral, local service strategies and plans.
10 Performance management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should dovetail where possible with BV requirements. • PI s should be output and outcome based. • Professional judgement, peer and self-assessment also possible. • Maximum rec. period of 5 years, review of Action Plan (every 6 months to 2 years)

