



Local Cultural Strategies

Draft Guidance for Local Authorities in England

June 1999

Local Cultural Strategies

Draft Guidance for Local Authorities in England

June 1999

Contents

3	Foreword by Chris Smith
4	Executive Summary
8	1: Introduction
12	2: Benefits
14	3: Principles
18	4: Context
18	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
19	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions
20	Modernising Local Government
22	Linkages with Other Plans & Strategies
26	5: Process
26	Forming a Team
26	Focusing on Strategic Matters
27	Strategy Development Process
33	Timescales
34	6: Content
35	Action Plan
37	Different Approaches
39	Style and Presentation
40	7: Monitoring and Review
40	Monitoring
43	Review
44	Appendix One: Bibliography
46	Appendix Two: Major Initiatives Affecting Local Government

Foreword by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport

Culture in its widest sense has so much to offer - giving pleasure to millions; educating, informing and widening horizons; releasing those impulses (creative, sporting and educative) which allow individuals to fulfil their potential - but most importantly they are about improving the quality of life for everyone.

Cultural services make a considerable contribution to the wider aims of both central and local government, whether tackling social exclusion; encouraging healthier lifestyles; providing opportunities for voluntary and community activity; sparking urban and rural regeneration; or stimulating a commitment to lifelong learning, as well as enriching people's lives.

I therefore believe that it is important for all local authorities, whether individually, or jointly with neighbours, to produce Local Cultural Strategies. By leading the way in developing them local authorities can ensure that cultural activities and industries become central to the lives of communities, the corporate objectives of each authority, and the many partners they work with at local and regional level.

This Guidance, prepared in partnership with the Local Government Association, the Chief Leisure Officers' Association and a wider steering group of professional associations and non-government agencies, aims to assist local authorities by setting out the benefits, principles and context for a Local Cultural Strategy and giving guidance on its scope and process of development. We recognise that all local authorities are different and the guidance is therefore flexible and capable of being adapted to local circumstances.

The excellent work which many authorities have already undertaken in preparing local strategies has helped in the preparation of this Guidance which, in turn, will help others to build on this work. It is draft Guidance and we are piloting it with fourteen local authorities. The close monitoring and evaluation which takes place will assist in producing the final Guidance in summer 2000.

I look forward to all local authorities having a Local Cultural Strategy in place by 2002 to enable cultural activities to be centre stage in the lives of communities and at the heart of policy making.



CHRIS SMITH

Executive Summary

Purpose of the Document

To set out the benefits, principles and context for Local Cultural Strategies, and to give guidance on their definition and scope, linkages with other plans, the process of development and the expected outputs.

Local authorities should note that, in the main, the guidance is not prescriptive either in terms of content or in terms of process - the process set out later should be viewed only as illustrative of good practice. It will need to be varied in the light of local circumstances, the extent and currency of individual service strategies, and, in particular, the resources of the local authority. The timing and co-ordination of the strategy will also need to take account of local planning timetables.

Scope

Culture has both a material and a value dimension and includes a wide range of activities including arts, media, sports, parks, museums, libraries, the built heritage, the countryside, playgrounds and tourism. Strategies are concerned with establishing the agenda, setting the direction, making key choices, allocating resources, and developing monitoring mechanisms. A Local Cultural Strategy should be guided by a vision of how the local area and its culture may develop over the life of the strategy. It will cover a wide span of cultural activities in a specific geographical area, taking into account the cultural activities of the voluntary and private sectors and other public agencies and making reference to those natural and man-made features which help to shape the cultural identity of the local authority area and localities within that area. It should help strengthen and develop links between services. Services should be viewed in a holistic manner.

Leadership role

Only local authorities can legitimately take the leadership role in preparing their Local Cultural Strategy because they are democratic and accountable, have regulatory and developmental authority, and are experienced at providing and enabling others to provide cultural services. The development of the strategy should, though, be undertaken through the active engagement and involvement of the community and public and private sectors.

Benefits

Local Cultural Strategies have many benefits. They:

- give a clear rationale for supporting activities
- advocate the benefits of cultural activities
- bring culture centre stage in the business of local authorities
- provide synergy with the work of central government and national and regional agencies
- help deliver Best Value
- promote partnerships
- set a framework for performance review
- can act as a lever for gaining funding from external agencies

Principles

The following principles underpin Local Cultural Strategies:

- are based on the needs of local communities
- address the full range of cultural needs and promote fair access for all
- involvement and consultation are central
- are for the area served by the local authority, not a strategy solely for the local authority's services
- geographical extent not necessarily defined by administrative boundary of the local authority
- a corporate, not a departmental, plan
- are based on cross-departmental and inter-agency working
- are overarching documents
- can be developed by single local authorities or by groups of authorities, for instance, County and District Councils working together and sharing resources and expertise across authorities
- take full account of the context and linkages referred to below

Context

Local Cultural Strategies should take on board the aim and objectives of the DCMS, and other relevant Government Departments such as DETR, the developments with the National Lottery, and the Best Value regime. The themes of quality, access, raising standards and cultural sector jobs should be central to these strategies which should also address the national 'cross-cutting' agendas of public health, community safety, social exclusion, environmental sustainability, regeneration, the 'Active Community' initiative and lifelong learning. They should also relate to the national and regional strategies of national agencies, the Regional Development Agency and the Regional Cultural Consortium. Local Cultural Strategies should also take account of the 'Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in England' which provides a framework for partnership between Government and the voluntary and community sector.

Linkages

Local Cultural Strategies should link with other plans and strategies including the local authority's Corporate Strategy and Best Value Performance Plan, the Local Development Plans and Regional Planning Guidance, the Annual Library Plan, and individual service plans and Best Value Reviews. No particular approach is advocated - what is important is that the links, relations, roles and functions of all plans are clear to all involved.

Process

General guidance is given about the process to be adopted in developing Local Cultural Strategies:

- they are better undertaken by a team, not an individual
- follow a clear strategy development process to maintain momentum
- there should be adequate preparation
- a realistic assessment of the available resources that the authority can put to the development of the Local Cultural Strategy should guide the detail and depth of the process
- consultation is fundamental, and there should be consultation with local people (including non-users of services); community organisations; voluntary, private and other public agency providers and agencies; users of facilities; and visitors (where appropriate)

Content

Guidance is given on the overall structure, content and presentation of Local Cultural Strategies. The advice given is not prescriptive. It identifies a number of core sections:

- advocating the benefits of cultural activities
- setting the strategic context
- setting the local context
- key cultural issues and strategic choices
- establishing broad cultural policies
- action plan

Action Plan

An Action Plan is particularly important, helping to focus the strategy and direct it towards its implementation; set the framework for monitoring; and help establish a review mechanism.

Approaches to Local Cultural Strategies

The two most common approaches to Local Cultural Strategies are service-specific (examining each service in turn) and thematic (tackling overarching themes such as social inclusion, regeneration, life-long learning, etc. and relating all services to these major themes). Given the inclusive nature of Local Cultural Strategies, the thematic approach is favoured. Best Value Reviews can also be carried out in service-specific or thematic approach. Clearly it will be more efficient to adopt the same approach to preparing the Local Cultural Strategy.

Style and Presentation

Local Cultural Strategies have two audiences. Its main function will be as a working management document for the local authority and its partners. Therefore its chief audience will be elected Members, council officers, officers and representatives from other agencies and local opinion formers. But a shorter Public Summary should also be prepared. This continues the process of consultation and ensures that the strategy is firmly in the public domain.

Monitoring

To be effective the Local Cultural Strategy must set out how its implementation is to be reviewed. The Local Cultural Strategy should set out which performance indicators and means of assessment - qualitative as well as quantitative - will be used and what targets will be set. In general, the guidance favours monitoring outputs and outcomes rather than inputs and throughputs. The action plan component of the strategy should be updated annually.

Review

For most local authorities, the Strategy itself will be current for five years and be reviewed after two to three years, with Action Plans reviewed and updated annually. However, the exact duration of the Strategy will be dependent on local choice and the need to conform to local timetables.

1: Introduction

1.1: The purpose of this Guidance is to strongly encourage local authorities to develop Local Cultural Strategies. It sets out:

- the benefits of such a strategy
- the broad principles underpinning the strategy
- the context to take account of in preparing the strategy

It gives guidance on:

- the scope of the strategy
- the linkages with other strategies and plans
- the process of developing the strategy
- the expected outputs of the strategy

1.2: This guidance has been developed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Chief Leisure Officers' Association (CLOA). A wider steering group, consisting of professional associations, non-government sponsored agencies and other key players, has been involved in considering the principles of Local Cultural Strategies and drafts of this Guidance.

1.3: This Guidance takes as its starting point the following statements from the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review and from the LGA's 'Enriching People's Lives':

"The Government places a high value on culture, media and sport. They are central to what it wants to do, whether on the economy, quality of life or tackling exclusion."

'Modern Public Services for Britain: Investing in Reform', TSO, 1998.

"This paper (Enriching People's Lives) demonstrates the relevance of local government's leisure, tourism and cultural services to the broad policy areas to which both central and local government are giving priority. These include: public health; community safety; social exclusion; environmental sustainability; regeneration; and life-long learning and the information society"

'Enriching People's Lives', LGA, 1998.

- 1.4: Throughout this Guidance, culture has been taken to include such activities as arts, sports, libraries, museums, children’s play, parks, tourism, countryside recreation, etc. The geographical identity, local history and the character of an area also help shape its particular culture. Cultural activities, interests and places generate a vitality and increase the quality of life for both individuals and communities. Culture provides positive links between the present, past and future. It can bring communities together. It can also help to provide a focus for the needs of particular audiences, e.g. youth, black and ethnic minority populations, the elderly, people with disabilities, and helps ensure equity and access for everyone to cultural activities. The Local Cultural Strategy should value and encourage the imaginative cultural activities of all communities - it should not straight jacket them. Exhibit One illustrates the potential scope for culture.

EXHIBIT ONE: SCOPE OF CULTURE

Culture has a material dimension

- the performing and visual arts, craft, and fashion
- media, film television, video, and language
- museums, artifacts, 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, festivals and attractions
- informal recreation

Culture has a value dimension

- relationships
- shared memories, experiences and identity
- diverse cultural, religious and historic backgrounds
- standards
- what we consider valuable to pass on to future generations

Adapted from "A Cultural Strategy for Rotherham Metropolitan Borough"

1.5: A strategy is a plan that integrates the major goals, policies and action sequences of an organisation or partnership into a cohesive whole. Exhibit Two gives a working framework for a Local Cultural Strategy. Like all strategies, it should be viewed not as a firmly fixed plan, but as a continuing process. It should inform other plans, strategies and service reviews and, in turn, be informed and updated by them. Strategies, in this view, are not so much about establishing once-and-for-all optimal solutions, as about understanding, and acting upon, the unfolding and complex strategic relationships, opportunities and uncertain futures in which local authorities operate.

EXHIBIT TWO: FRAMEWORK FOR A LOCAL CULTURAL STRATEGY

This strategic document - and its subsequent implementation - should cover a wide span of cultural activities in a specific geographical area, taking into account and valuing the cultural activities of the voluntary and private sectors and other public agencies and making reference to those natural and man-made features which help to shape the cultural identity of that area and localities within it.

It should be the local authority's cultural strategy for its area and not solely a strategy for the cultural services it directly provides. It should be guided by a vision for how this local cultural identity can be supported and developed.

It should be led by, but not be exclusively for, the local authority and should promote integrated policies designed to strengthen the framework for the quality of life for the community. In some areas it may be more appropriate for the strategy to be undertaken

by a consortium of authorities, for instance, County and Districts. This will have the added advantage of sharing resources and expertise.

It should establish the agenda; set the direction and make key choices; define priorities; allocate overall resources and responsibilities; and develop monitoring and review mechanisms. It should provide a robust template for local authority officers to develop more detailed service-specific strategies and action plans. Where service strategies are already in place, it can be built on these existing strategies.

It should enable officers from other departments and from partner agencies and organisations to make clear links with their strategies and plans.

It should inform the public of the strategic choices and priorities the local authority will be making in the cultural arena and the rationale for these choices.

- 1.6: Although the development of a Local Cultural Strategy is not a statutory duty, the Department expects that all local authorities in England, whether individually or as part of joint or consortium arrangements, will prepare a Local Cultural Strategy for their area within the next three years. This expectation does not extend to parish and town councils, who should choose whether it is appropriate to their particular situation.
- 1.7: A Local Cultural Strategy should be a corporate plan of the authority rather than a strategy of one particular department or committee. It should express the commitment of the local authority to the importance of culture, in all its forms, in every day life.
- 1.8: Local authorities will be at different stages in developing their Local Cultural Strategy. Some will have already begun the process of strategy development or will have a number of service strategies in place. These authorities should follow this Guidance building on the work they have already undertaken and their experience to date.
- 1.9: The Department wishes to ensure that local authorities have undertaken a reasonable process of consideration of the cultural needs of their communities and how these could best be met. Guidance is given later in this document on how this process may be undertaken and the steps involved. This is not intended to constrain local authorities who should treat it flexibly, using their discretion and local knowledge and building on best practice nationally, and on local arrangements and structures already in place. They should take a pragmatic view about the resources that they can put to strategy development and work within those constraints. They should avoid duplication of information held in other plans wherever possible and aim for their strategy to complement their local authority planning and committee cycle.

2: Benefits

- 2.1: There are many powerful reasons why local authorities should take the initiative in developing a Local Cultural Strategy for their area. Local authorities will rarely directly provide the great majority of cultural services, activities and features which make up the specific local cultures of their area. But local authorities are best placed to take the 'leadership' role for this work. This is because they:
- are democratic and accountable
 - directly provide a range of cultural services
 - help voluntary organisations and other agencies provide a range of cultural services
 - have regulatory and developmental powers
 - have a wide range of formal and informal networks
- 2.2: It is important that in taking the lead in developing the Local Cultural Strategy the local authority actively engages the community, and develops partnerships with the public, voluntary and private agencies. The development of a strategy through this process will help to create a sustainable strategy and enduring partnerships between the authority and other sectors for its delivery.
- 2.3: There is also an expectation that local authorities will work within the framework urged by the Government. That is, they will:
- take a holistic, rather than a service or department, viewpoint
 - contribute to the national agendas of public health; community safety; social inclusion; environmental sustainability; regeneration; the 'Active Community' initiative and lifelong learning which can only be delivered on a local basis
- 2.4: The benefits of a Local Cultural Strategy are set out in Exhibit Three. In addition to the internal benefits to the local authority, it will have a particular importance for the Lottery Distributing Bodies in their prioritising and decision-making processes - though, of course, the presence of a strategy only assists in securing Lottery funding and is not an automatic guarantee. Further detailed strategy and planning work may be required.

EXHIBIT THREE: BENEFITS OF DEVELOPING A LOCAL CULTURAL STRATEGY

- Focuses on the cultural needs, demands and aspirations of the community and encapsulates the vision of the local authority
- Brings cultural activities centre stage in the business of the local authority
- Gives a clear rationale why certain activities and services are funded, managed, supported, encouraged or regulated
- Demonstrates that the cultural needs of the area are being met in an efficient, equitable and effective way
- Sets out the intrinsic and instrumental benefits of cultural activities, including the positive contribution cultural activities make towards the economic, social and environmental well-being of the local population
- Inspires local people and communities and promotes volunteering in cultural activities, which benefits individual volunteers, the area of activity which they devote their time to, and the local community as a whole
- Creates pathways for people to participate in different cultural activities throughout their lives, and helps to encourage lifelong learning
- Defines priorities within and between services and reconciles competing demands
- Informs the individual detailed service plans and the work of individual officers, departments and other agencies
- Acts as a framework for performance review
- Encourages innovation and partnership solutions to providing cultural services and identifies opportunities designed to meet local needs
- Sets a direction and priorities for the local authority and other agencies and organisations
- Provides links with other plans and strategies of the authority and its partners and promotes partnerships
- Acts as a lever and rationale for gaining funding from external agencies, including:
 - Regional funding
 - Funding from sponsored agencies
 - Lottery funding
 - SRB funding
 - European Union funding
 - Private sponsorship
- Links with Central Government agendas, with DCMS' aims, with Best Value, and with the strategies of national and regional agencies thus bringing synergy to the work of all the agencies involved and, in particular, informs and influences the Regional Cultural Strategies to be produced by the Regional Cultural Consortia

3: Principles

3.1: The following principles should underpin local authorities' Local Cultural Strategies.

- be based on the *needs, demands and aspirations* of the communities which the local authority serves;
- be *guided by a vision* for the culture of their area;
- *fair access* for all should be central to the Strategy;
- seek to *address the broad range of cultural needs* of the communities served;
- be for the *area served by the local authority*, and not be bounded by the responsibilities of a specific department or committee;
- be developed through *a cross-departmental and inter-agency approach*. The local authority should lead the process but work in partnership with other agencies from all sectors. This shares resources and expertise and helps to develop synergy between agencies;
- make *clear links with these other strategies and plans of the local authority*, setting out the roles of the different plans, and clarifying where the Local Cultural Strategy informs those other plans and where those other plans inform and direct the Local Cultural Strategy. Local authorities are preparing other strategies and plans, including their Land-Use Development Plan, Education Development Plans, Annual Library Plans, Agenda 21 Plans, and other current plans and future plans including the Best Value Performance Plan;

- *meaningful active consultation* with a wide range of organisations and local people is considered central to the strategy to ensure common ownership. Many cultural activities are managed by community organisations, others by the private sector or by other public agencies including parish and town councils. The activities of these organisations, particularly local voluntary groups, are often of great importance. The cultural arenas can be a relatively safe place in which individuals and communities can develop the management and decision making processes which can help make successful communities. Local authorities should consider at the outset how these organisations could be involved in the development of the Local Cultural Strategy.

- need to take into account the *wider central and regional government context*. Including the objectives of:
 - central government
 - Regional Development Agencies
 - Regional Cultural Consortia
 - sponsored agencies and their regional offices including Regional Arts Boards, Regional Offices of Sport England, Regional Tourist Boards, Area Museum Services, English Heritage, Countryside Agency, English Nature, Environment Agency and others

- consider how they can *contribute to central government's key objectives*- increasing sustainable growth and employment, promoting fairness and opportunity, and modernising public services. These include the cross-cutting agendas of: public health, community safety, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, regeneration, the 'Active Community' initiative and lifelong learning - including children's play, youth and community services, and adult education.

- be viewed as *overarching documents* covering all the individual cultural services provided or supported by the local authority. In turn these will have their own work/action plans and performance reviews, and where they are of sufficient importance, their own strategies. Local Cultural Strategies will be focused on:

- strategic choices
- priorities for resources and action
- forward planning
- mechanisms for implementation
- mechanisms for monitoring and review

3.2: The geographical extent of a Local Cultural Strategy need not be bounded by the administrative boundary of the local authority. This may bear little relation to the actual patterns of life of the community, while many cultural facilities and services, e.g. tourist attractions, have a wider significance. Local authorities should consider both the impact of outside regional/sub-regional cultural facilities on their locality and the wider impact of such facilities falling within their boundary.

3.3: While most local authorities will wish to produce their own Local Cultural Strategies, others may wish to produce their strategy either in association with similar strategies being produced by neighbouring authorities, or as a strategy prepared by a consortium of local authorities. For instance, it may be considered appropriate in some cases for a Local Cultural Strategy to be produced by District and County Councils working together. Such joint working would also have value in ensuring the links between, for example, culture and education. This is clearly a matter for individual authorities to consider locally. However, working together on a Local Cultural Strategy will help to avoid duplication and will enable resources and expertise to be shared. This may particularly help small rural District authorities whose resources are limited. (See Exhibit Four)

3.4: Where local authorities already have existing service strategies, the Local Cultural Strategy should build on these strategies and the experience of their implementation, rather than start from a completely blank sheet of paper. Also, where local authorities have a range of recently completed service strategies (e.g. arts, sports and parks and open spaces strategies), they may wish to develop their Local Cultural Strategy as these strategies are reviewed within the next three years.

EXHIBIT FOUR: NORTHAMPTONSHIRE AUTHORITIES

There are examples of local authorities working together in partnership at both the operational and policy level, for instance for tourism and arts strategies. In Northamptonshire, all seven District and Borough councils, urban and rural, and the County co-operate at both levels through the Northamptonshire Authorities' Leisure Officers Group. In 1997 they developed a 'Joint Strategy for Leisure and Recreation', which was subsequently endorsed by the Chairs of the appropriate committees of all authorities and published in 1998. As the Foreword to this Strategy notes:

"Networking allows the time-saving exchange of information and views on routine matters, questions on which the authorities are consulted, and on matters of common concern. This has helped the development of direct services, the support to the voluntary sector, and the drawing-in of benefits from regional and national agencies. A countywide co-ordinated strategy of sport was adopted

in 1994. A similar approach to the arts is under consideration"

More recently, the launch of the Northamptonshire Councils Association (NCA) in January 1997 has brought together all local councils and has opened the way for closer co-operation both amongst the councils themselves and with other bodies including the Health Authority, Police Authority, and the Northamptonshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise.

Building on these structures and on the existing strategies, the councils aim to work even more closely together, and to secure closer working with other agencies.

*'Joint Strategy for Leisure and Recreation',
Northamptonshire Authorities Leisure/Recreation
Committees, 1998.*

4: Context

4.1: Local Cultural Strategies should take into consideration the national and regional context, including both the objectives of the DCMS, and other relevant Government Departments, particularly, the DETR.

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

4.2 The Aim and Objectives of the DCMS are set out in Exhibit Five.

EXHIBIT FIVE: DEPARTMENT FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Aim

To improve the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities, and to strengthen the creative industries.

The Department will:

- work to bring quality and excellence in the fields of culture, media and sport;
- make these available to the many, not just the few;
- raise standards of cultural education and training; and
- help to develop the jobs of the future in the creative industries.

Objectives

The Department, in partnership with others, works to:

- create an efficient and competitive market by removing obstacles to growth and unnecessary regulation so as to promote Britain's success in the fields of culture, media, sport and tourism at home and abroad;
- broaden access for this and future generations to a rich and varied cultural and sporting life and to our distinctive built environment;

- develop the educational potential of all the nation's cultural and sporting resources; raise standards of cultural education and training; ensure an adequate skills supply for the creative industries and tourism; and encourage the take up of educational opportunities;
- ensure that everyone has the opportunity to achieve excellence in the areas of culture, media and sport and to develop talent, innovation and good design;
- maintain public support for the National Lottery and ensure that the money raised for good causes supports DCMS' and other national priorities; and
- promote the role of the Department's sectors in urban and rural regeneration, in pursuing sustainability and in combating social exclusion.

In carrying out these objectives the Department will seek maximum value for money in using its human and financial resources, through applying the principles of efficiency among and effectiveness in its sectors and in encouraging partnership with others.

DCMS Annual Report 1999

4.3: Local authorities should seek to ensure that their Local Cultural Strategy links positively to this national agenda. Different local authorities will wish to present the balance between aims differently, will have different priorities, and will be working to specific local issues and concerns. Nevertheless, the themes of quality, access, raising standards, and cultural sector jobs should be reflected in their strategy. This will bring synergy between local, regional and national agendas.

National Lottery

4.4: The Lottery Distributors now have strategic plans matching lottery funds to needs. The focus has shifted away from buildings towards people, towards reducing economic and social deprivation and towards a fairer distribution across the country. A local authority's Local Cultural Strategy will be a powerful tool in leveraging funds from the National Lottery to those projects which have a strategic value to their area.

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR)

4.5: DETR has policy responsibility for some important elements of cultural strategies, notably parks, open spaces and countryside recreation, waterways, landscape and wildlife conservation. The aims and objectives of DETR for this area are set out in Exhibit Six.

EXHIBIT SIX: DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND THE REGIONS

Aim

"To improve the quality of life by promoting sustainable development at home and abroad, fostering economic prosperity and supporting local democracy"

Objectives include:

- to protect and improve the environment and to integrate the environment with other policies across government and international fora;
- to enhance opportunity in rural areas, improve enjoyment of the countryside and conserve and manage wildlife resources;
- to create a fair and efficient land use planning system which respects regional differences and promotes development which is of high quality and sustainable;
- to promote a system of elected government in England which responds to the needs of communities;
- to enhance economic development and social cohesion throughout England through effective regional action and integrated local regeneration programmes.

Modernising Local Government

4.6: The most important of the Government's plans for local authorities are set out in 'Modern Local Government: In Touch with the People' (DETR, 1998) and the Local Government Act 1999. The Act proposes a major reform of local government, based on the principle of Best Value:

"The general duty. **3.** - (1) A best value authority must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness"

Local Government Bill.

4.7: Best Value will commence on 1 April 2000. Best Value authorities will be accountable to local people and have a responsibility to central government in its role as representative of the broader national interest. Authorities will set standards - covering both cost and quality - for all services for which they are responsible. They will need to deliver the outcomes that people want and deliver sustained improvement. Under Best Value people will be clear about the standard of service which they expect to receive, and better able to hold authorities to account for their record in meeting them.

4.8: Local authorities will need to establish priorities. These priorities will flow from an engagement with the community, and from the local authority's performance as an organisation and as a provider of services. Local authorities will have to work within a performance management framework which requires them to review their functions fundamentally over a five year cycle. The purpose of these Best Value Reviews will be to ensure continuous improvement. They will be at the heart of the Local Cultural Strategy.

4.9: The process of the Best Value Review:

- **challenges** why and how a service is being provided
- **compares** the service with the performance that others are achieving
- **consults** with local taxpayers, service users and the wider business community on how the service can be improved, and
- demonstrates the **competitiveness** of its performance

These '4 C's' will together help to ensure that the goal of continuous improvement - central to Best Value - is achieved.

- 4.10: To be effective, a local authority's Local Cultural Strategy must provide the framework for these Best Value reviews across the range of cultural services, both those directly provided by the local authority and those which are indirectly provided, e.g. through grant-aided voluntary organisations.
- 4.11: Challenging why services are provided and what services are provided is at the core both of the Local Cultural Strategy and of Best Value. It is fundamental to questions of how services are provided, how they are to be monitored and what standards they should achieve - the subject matter of the Best Value Reviews of individual services.
- 4.12: Consultation is also integral to both processes. The consultation processes of both can, and should, be combined as far as possible. This will be less burdensome to local authorities and will lessen the danger of 'consultation fatigue' among the local authority's partners, the business and voluntary sectors and the local public.
- 4.13: The White Paper, 'Modern Local Government', confirmed the Government's manifesto commitment to place on local authorities a new duty to promote the economic, environmental and social well-being of their areas. This proposed duty will provide an overarching framework for local government and enshrine in law the local authority's responsibility for the well-being and sustainable development of its area. This responsibility will be discharged by the development of a clear, understandable and comprehensive community strategy based on an analysis of the area's needs and priorities for future action.
- 4.14: Local Cultural Strategies will need to link with, and be informed by community planning. They will need to advocate the value and importance of culture to the community, and demonstrate the ways that it can deliver the main local agendas. Where the community and other stakeholders do not see culture as a central feature of their vision the Local Cultural Strategy will need to reflect and challenge this.

Linkages with Other Plans & Strategies

4.15: The local authority's Local Cultural Strategy must link with its other plans and strategies as well as with the strategies of partner agencies. An illustration of one way of showing the linkages between the Local Cultural Strategy and these other plans and strategies is shown in Exhibit Seven. This is only one, out of a number of, possible ways of linking the different strategies. What is important is that the relationships between the strategies are clear and distinct. While there will be some variation between authorities, the most important linkages are likely to be with:

- the local authority's **Corporate Strategy and Best Value Performance Plan** - the Local Cultural Strategy should be set in the context of the authority's corporate objectives, priorities and performance indicators and targets. It should help the authority achieve these corporate objectives and targets. The Best Value Performance Plan will be the driver of the performance of the local authority as an organisation. Local authorities should view the Local Cultural Strategy as an integral part of the Best Value process, rather than an additional burden.
- the **Local Development Plans and Regional Development Agency Strategy** - these should support, and be supported by, the Local Cultural Strategy
- **individual service strategies and plans** for those services which come within the scope of the Local Cultural Strategy. The Local Cultural Strategy should provide a framework for these services. This will include the Best Value Reviews which will be required as part of the duty of Best Value.
- depending on the services of the local authority, it may also include the **Annual Library Plan**. While these are free-standing statutory strategies, they should dovetail with, but not duplicate, the Local Cultural Strategy.
- the **Regional Cultural Strategy** of the Regional Cultural Consortium. While the exact process and remit of these strategies have yet to be determined they will need to take account of Local Cultural Strategies, which themselves need to take account of the Regional Strategy. The DCMS representative in each Government Office will be able to provide more information on this topic.

- Depending on the individual local authority, linkages will also need to be made with plans such as the Education Development Plan and Health Improvement Programme. A list of the Government's proposed major initiatives is given in Appendix Two for information.

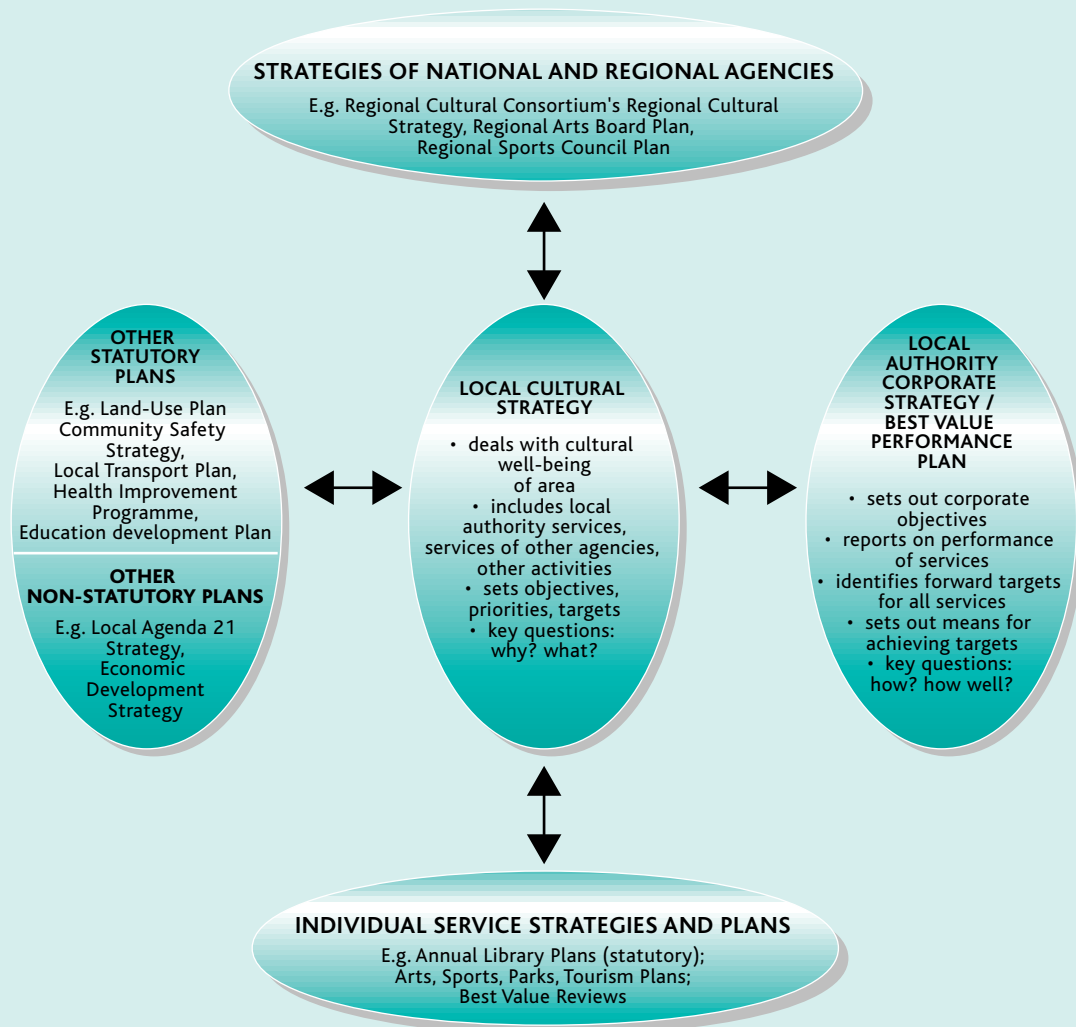
Local Development Plans

- 4.16: The statutory Local Development Plan (also known as the Unitary Development Plan or Whole District Local Plan) will impact on a local authority's Local Cultural Strategy both in a general sense and in a number of specific ways. Firstly, it plays the key role in terms of conservation and control of development. Secondly, it contains policies relating to leisure and recreational land uses, to the historic environment and nature conservation and to matters relating to tourism.
- 4.17: An independent report commissioned by the DETR, "The Effectiveness of Planning Policy Guidance on Sport and Recreation" (1998) stated that 'district sport and recreation strategies do not, as structured at present, provide many useful inputs to planning authorities in preparing their development plans'. Local Cultural Strategies must establish a much clearer link with the local authority's Development Plans.
- 4.18: Where Local Cultural Strategies impact on land use planning, they should take account of government and local planning authority policies and the plans themselves. In turn, the development of Local Cultural Strategies should inform revision of the Local Development Plan and County Structure Plans. They may be regarded as non-statutory documents offering support to development policies. Local authorities will also need to take into account the major environmental impacts, and the need for good architecture and urban design, of many of the cultural services, facilities and activities which come within the scope of the Local Cultural Strategy.
- 4.19: Cultural and other leisure needs are considered in a number of Planning Policy Guidance notes issued by the Department of the Environment (now the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions). Local Cultural Strategies give the opportunity to implement this guidance in accordance with the Local Development Plan but extending its implications to non-planning issues. Thus Local Development Plans and Local Cultural Strategies become mutually supportive in helping to define the role of the local authority in the provision of cultural services and in applying the principles of 'sustainable development' to a strategic approach to culture.

Service Strategies & Plans

- 4.20: Local Cultural Strategies should also link with the service strategies and plans for each of the cultural services provided by the authority. In some cases this will be relatively straightforward. In other cases this will be more complicated, for instance with a local authority's 'Tourism Strategy' which may be defined much more in terms of economic development, or with the authority's statutory 'Annual Library Plan', which is a free-standing strategic document with an annual Action Plan component.
- 4.21: The process is likely to be an iterative one, with existing service strategies and plans informing the Local Cultural Strategy and then the Local Cultural Strategy informing future updates and revisions of service strategies and plans. The approach favoured is one in which the Local Cultural Strategy focuses on strategic choices and sets overall performance measurements and assessments. Taking the vision, values, policies and strategic priorities of the Local Cultural Strategy as a framework, individual Service Strategies will develop these for their particular sector, while individual Service Plans will focus on operational matters, specific initiatives and detailed outputs, outcomes and targets.
- 4.22: At present, the individual Service Strategies and Plans of local authorities may have a number of sections in common, though on occasion these may have been researched by staff in different departments. Local Cultural Strategies will give local authorities the opportunity to avoid duplication.

EXHIBIT SEVEN: LINKAGES BETWEEN STRATEGIES AND PLANS



5: Process

Forming a Team

- 5.1: The development of a Local Cultural Strategy is better undertaken by a team rather than by a single officer. There can be no general rule about the size and composition of this team. A balance will need to be struck between the need to have officers from other departments and agencies in order to develop a shared ownership and vision, and the need to ensure that the process of developing the strategy does not become too bureaucratic and an end in itself. It is also important to involve elected Members throughout to ensure that the local authority has ownership of the strategy.
- 5.2: Whatever the size and composition of the team, there are a number of roles and functions which need to be performed. These include the roles of champion, co-ordinator/chair, researcher, strategic thinker and constructive critic as well as author. In particular, the local authority needs to identify who is going to ensure that the strategy is implemented. Roles should be considered and allocated early in the strategy.

Focusing on Strategic Matters

- 5.3: Local authorities have been in the forefront of strategic development in the public sector and have achieved major gains both in efficiency and in effectiveness. However, strategies are still sometimes confused with operational matters. This can result in:
- additional unnecessary work in strategy preparation
 - too detailed strategy documents which are difficult to read
 - less clarity about strategic priorities
- 5.4: A strategy is a plan that integrates the major goals, policies and action sequences of an organisation or partnership of organisations into a cohesive whole. The term 'strategy' refers to both strategy development and its subsequent implementation. The guidance focuses on strategy development since strategy implementation will vary from authority to authority dependent on the scope, content, prioritisation, review and monitoring mechanisms, etc. of the particular strategy. It is important that the process of strategy development is adequately resourced.

5.5: The differences between strategic and operational issues are set out in Exhibit Eight.

EXHIBIT EIGHT: THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OPERATIONAL AND STRATEGIC ISSUES	
<p>Operational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine • Service/operational specific • Small scale change • Concerned with short term • Resource driven • Concerned with 'how to do this' • Often characterised by crisis 	<p>Strategic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex, non routine • Fundamental Organisation-wide • Significant change • Concerned with medium and long term • Needs & aspiration driven • Environment driven • Concerned with 'why are we doing this?' and 'what should we be doing?' • Characterised by 'reflection'

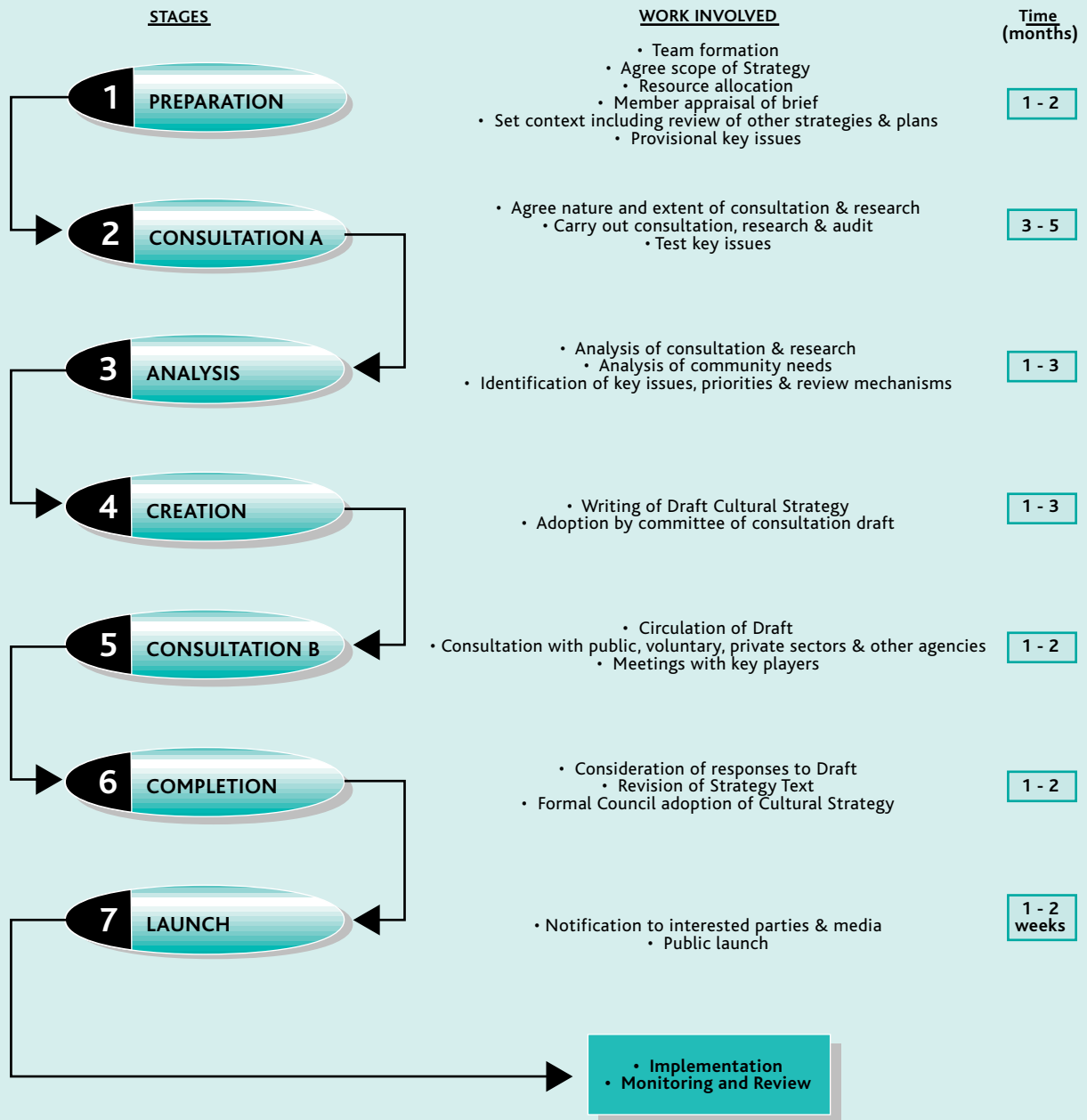
Strategy Development Process

5.6: Whilst the development of a Local Cultural Strategy may seem daunting, breaking the work down into planned stages helps to put the work in perspective. There are a number of different approaches: the following staged process is set out for consideration. (See Exhibit Nine). While the level of detail at each stage may differ, and the dividing lines between stages may become blurred, strategies benefit from having an agreed framework to follow. The advice assumes that the local authority developing the Strategy is at the beginning of the process. In reality, different local authorities will be at different stages, and have already undertaken some of the tasks outlined: these authorities should treat this guidance flexibly and build on their existing strategies and experience.

Stage One: Preparation (1 - 2 months)

5.7: This will involve decisions on the scope of the strategy and which officers and elected Members will be most directly involved in its development. Once a provisional team has been formed, the time and budgetary allocations will need to be decided. The appropriate council committee will then need to support the decision to proceed by approving the necessary budget and time allocations/secondments etc.

EXHIBIT NINE: SEVEN STAGE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



5.8: This period also includes setting the context for the strategy, including reviewing:

- national and regional strategies
- the legislative framework
- reviewing the local authority's, Corporate Strategy/Best Value Performance Plan, and other plans and relationship with Local Cultural Strategy
- demographic, social and economic information
- policies and practice of other agencies and providers
- provisional identification of key issues

5.9: In deciding the scope of the strategy, local authorities should start with an approach that aims to *include* rather than *exclude* and to create linkages. This inclusive approach and the creation of linkages refers not only *within* the authority but also outside its own services, embracing other activities and organisations which can contribute towards the wider goals outlined in the strategy.

5.10: In defining the scope and brief for the strategy, it is helpful to explore the existing and potential cross service links both between different cultural services, e.g. between arts and sport, and with services outside the traditional cultural services sector, including other council departments and other agencies, e.g. initiatives and programmes in health services, education and environmental improvement. This will help to demonstrate culture's contribution to the wider governmental agenda. It can also be supplemented by references to programmes and initiatives for targeted groups, e.g. children, youth, the elderly, black and ethnic minority populations, people with disabilities, and by policies and initiatives designed to ensure fair access.

5.11: When considering the scope of the strategy, local authorities should also consider the specifics of their area. For instance, in some areas language, in other areas the diversity of cultures of ethnic minorities, will be integral to the Local Cultural Strategy.

Stage Two: Consultation and Research (3 - 5 months)

5.12: This is the first, and the most important, consultation stage. Consultation is fundamental to the strategy process. It:

- helps identify and clarify the local agenda
- tests the provisional strategic cultural issues for the local authority
- helps establish the needs of the community
- helps to prioritise services, activities, etc., and
- gives an objective view of the present performance of services

5.13: The extent of consultation will depend to an extent on the local authority and its resources. Consideration should be given to consultation with:

- local people, including non users of services and facilities
- visitors to the local authority (where appropriate)
- users of major facilities (where appropriate)
- community organisations
- voluntary, private and other public agencies
- providers of cultural services
- other local agencies
- neighbouring authorities and other local authorities
- whose services impact on, or who are impacted on by,
- the Local Cultural Strategy
- regional and, where appropriate, national agencies

5.14: Consultation will help other agencies, voluntary sector providers and community groups gain ownership of the Local Cultural Strategy. It will help set a common agenda and objectives. There are many different ways of consulting, depending on the groups being consulted, the purpose of the consultation, the resources available to the local authority and the culture and approach of the authority. 'Guidance on Enhancing Public Participation' (DETR,1998) is a useful guide to this complex subject. Where possible, consultation for the Strategy should be combined with other consultation that the local authority is carrying out.

5.15: Research should also be conducted into existing services, facilities, voluntary clubs and societies and practitioners. A full-scale ‘audit’ of present provision and activities including the voluntary and private sectors can be time-consuming and may be beyond the resources of some local authorities. It is important that the Strategy is informed by the nature, pattern and spread of present activity: this helps to define key issues and concerns, as well as mapping present activities and gaps. But it is also important to be pragmatic about what can be achieved and not to aim for perfection or to be diverted into information-gathering for its own sake. A more detailed mapping exercise may be undertaken as part of the development of service-specific strategies.

Stage Three: Analysis (1 - 3 months)

5.16: Once the consultation period is over, the responses must be analysed. Whilst the quantitative data will be useful (e.g. what percentage of the population take part in cultural activities, what are the most popular activities etc), often it is the qualitative findings which prove most significant in clarifying key issues and informing strategic priorities (e.g. perceptions of the cultural sector and what the gaps and barriers are).

5.17: The identification of key issues, community needs and strategic priorities will help in the identification of Review/Monitoring mechanisms. Preliminary identification of appropriate performance measures, indicators and proxies (both quantitative and qualitative) should be undertaken at this stage. These will later be refined, targets set and mechanisms for achieving these targets, in the appropriate Service Plans.

Stage Four: Creation (1 - 3 months)

5.18: A draft is written based on the findings from the consultation and the strategic issues and priorities. Whilst there may be contributions from several sources within the authority, it will usually make sense for one officer to be responsible for drawing it all together and producing the first draft.

5.19: While this is not the finished strategy, but only a consultation draft, it should receive the endorsement of elected Members before being circulated more widely. This does not mean that the council has finalised its view, but it secures elected Member support for the overall approach outlined in the draft.

Stage Five: Consultation B (1- 3 months)

5.20: The second consultation stage is designed to encourage feedback and comments on the draft strategy, in order to refine and improve it. It is also an opportunity to discover if there are any significant gaps or errors.

5.21: Decisions must be taken on how widely to circulate the draft. If practical, all organisations that responded formally at the initial consultation stage should receive a copy. It is more difficult to consult on a draft document with individual members of the public. It is better to make sure that the existence of the draft is widely publicised, so that those interested in responding in detail are able to do so. There should also be meetings with the key players to discuss the consultation draft and, through this dialogue, amend and refine the draft.

Stage Six: Completion (1 - 2 months)

5.22: The responses to the consultation draft need to be collated and analysed. Specific factual errors are relatively simple to deal with; the substantive comments on key policies and the overall approach will need more time and care in handling.

5.23: Once these decisions have been taken, the original draft will need to be re-written (this is more likely to involve re-editing and amendment, rather than wholesale revision) and the final version presented to Council members for formal adoption. An executive summary should also be produced.

Stage Seven: Launch (1 - 2 weeks)

5.24: Once the local authority has formally adopted the Local Cultural Strategy, it should be launched publicly. A strategy is much more than merely words on paper. If the strategy is to be successfully implemented it will need the cooperation and enthusiasm of a wide range of individuals and organisations throughout the community. A high profile launch will help to start the process.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

5.25: Once the strategy development has been completed, the strategy needs to be implemented, and monitoring mechanisms need to be in place to ensure that the Strategy remains on course. Similarly, a date will need to be set when the Strategy will be reviewed.

Timescales

- 5.26: The production of a Local Cultural Strategy using this framework should take from eight months to 18 months. If it takes longer than 18 months, then it is in danger of losing momentum. Furthermore, the additional time this allows for consultation and drafting does not always mean that a better strategy is produced. This timescale assumes that the local authority is starting from the very beginning of the process. If there is an existing strategy which is being reviewed, or if the local authority has already embarked on strategy development, then the process will be correspondingly shorter.
- 5.27: The timescale for the Strategy should be reviewed against the local authority committee cycle. The original document approving budget and time allocations (Stage One), the consultation draft (Stage Four) and the final Strategy document (Stage Six) must all be planned to take account of the committee cycle.

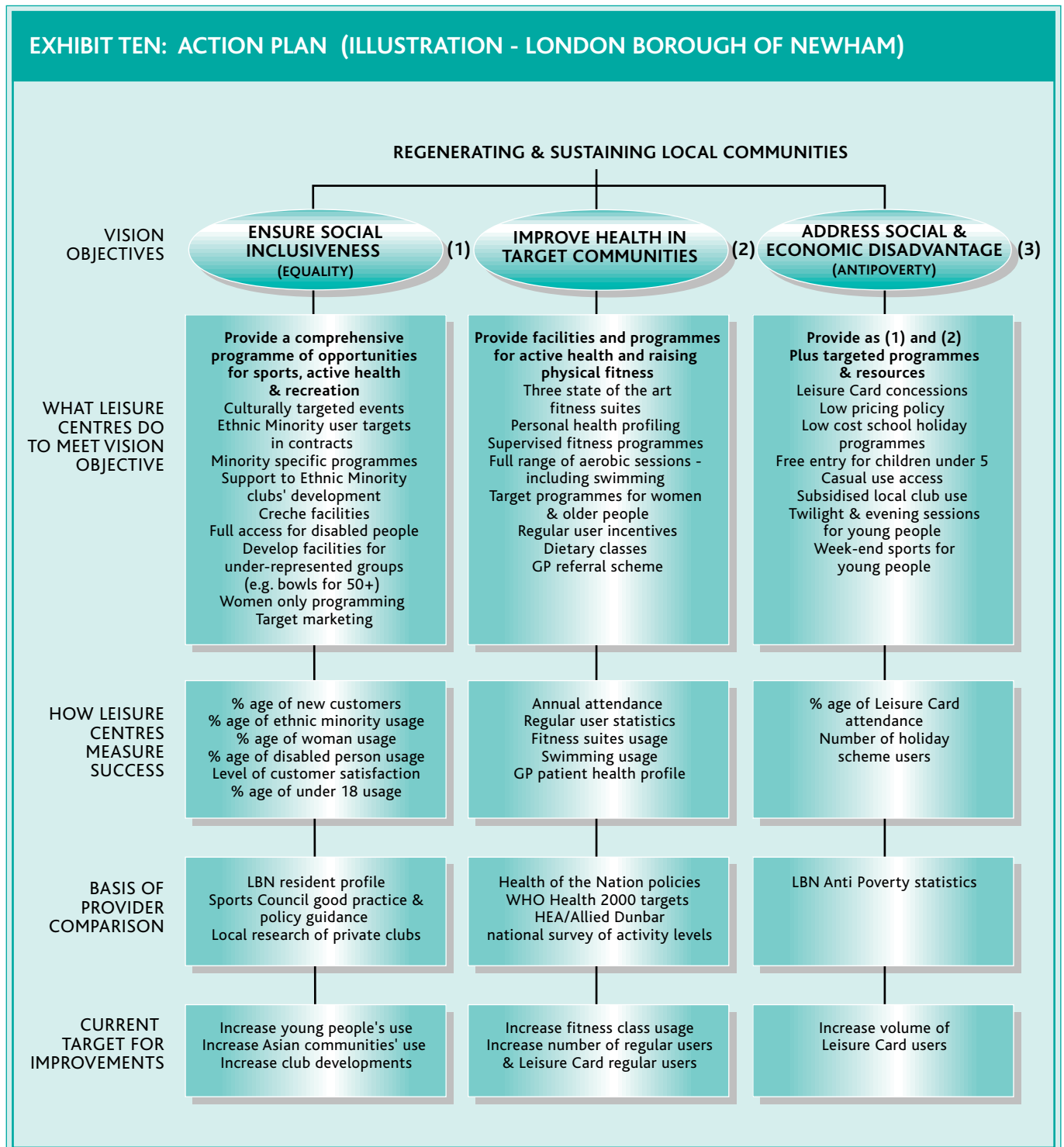
6: Content

- 6.1: This section provides guidance on the overall structure and content of Local Cultural Strategies. *It is not prescriptive but follows a number of principles which have been adopted by those local authorities which have already successfully produced local leisure or cultural strategies.* Whilst those strategies which do exist tend to be presented in different ways and are of varying lengths and styles, there are a number of aspects which are common to nearly all of them. The common core sections are:
- 6.2: **Advocating the Benefits of Cultural Activities** This sets out the overall rationale. This is likely to advocate the inherent benefits of cultural activities to the individual and to the community. Most authorities will also wish to take the opportunity to explain how such activities can contribute to the achievement of wider social and political objectives, as set out earlier in this guidance.
- 6.3: **Setting the Strategic Context** This section covers the wider context in the cultural sphere - relevant regional and national strategies, policies and legislation and the trends which will impact on the demand for and provision of cultural facilities and services.
- 6.4: **Setting the Local Context** This covers the size and make-up of the local authority population, outlining specific characteristics relating to age structure, socio-economic profile, ethnicity, local economy and employment etc. This section also covers the current levels of provision for, and participation in, cultural activities.
- 6.5: **Key Cultural Issues** This sets out the most important themes and concerns which have emerged from the various consultations and discussions, and the strategic choices which have to be made. Key cultural issues will vary from area to area and authority to authority.
- 6.6: **Establishing Broad Cultural Policies** This section explains what the strategy is aiming to achieve. A clear statement of key policies will help harness widespread community support and ensure that the strategy has a currency for a number of years. There are alternative ways of presenting these policies, the two main distinctions being between a 'thematic approach' and a 'service-specific approach' (See 'Different Approaches' and Exhibit Eleven).

Action Plan

- 6.7: It is vital that the Strategy includes an Action Plan setting out the implementation of overall policies and specific objectives. An Action Plan:
- helps to ensure that the strategy is focused
 - directs the strategy towards its implementation, both for direct services and - through funding and partnership agreements - with grant-aided organisations and other agencies
 - gives a clear direction to the more detailed service plans
 - sets the framework for monitoring through setting local performance indicators and targets, including specific and general outputs and outcomes
 - enables elected members, officers, other agencies and the general public to review the strategy in future years and see clearly what difference it has actually made
 - links directly to Best Value Reviews and Best Value Performance Plans for the services
- 6.8: The Action Plan is often put in a table format, setting out the objectives, initiatives, timescales, responsible officers/partners, funding, performance indicators (PI's) and targets. This relates specific initiatives and actions to the objectives of the Strategy. In turn, funding, deadline(s), and officers/partners responsible for implementation are detailed for each initiative. Next, appropriate PI's and the targets for these PI's are set. These will be reviewed through a specific monitoring mechanism, e.g. by regular performance reports to the elected member structures, where the targets will be compared with the actual achievement of the initiative.
- 6.9: Clearly, the detailed programmes which cascade from the overall objectives and priorities of the Strategy will not be determined in complete detail within the Strategy document itself. These will be developed in the Action or Work Plans which are more likely to be drafted and monitored on an annual cycle.

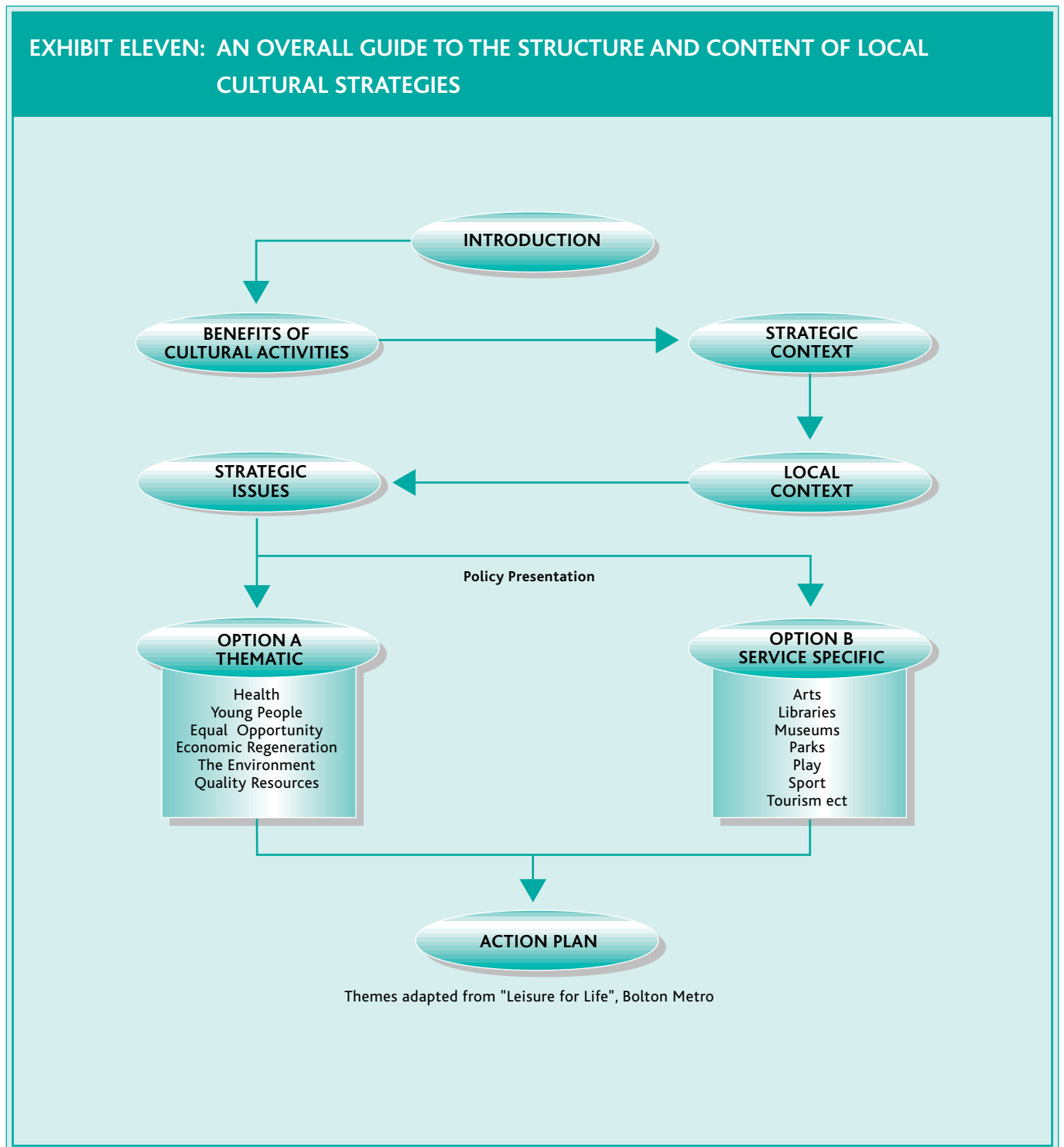
6.10: An illustration of one page of a (draft) Action Plan being developed under Best Value is also given (Exhibit Ten). This focuses on one theme (Regeneration) and one service (Leisure Management), but the principles can be applied to all themes and services. This shows how the outputs and outcomes of specific initiatives relate to the overall objectives and priorities of the Strategy.



Different Approaches

- 6.11: Although there are other approaches, the two main approaches to developing a Local Cultural Strategy are the ‘service-specific’ approach and the integrated or ‘thematic’ approach.
- 6.12: The service-specific approach takes each service sector, such as art, parks, sport, tourism, etc. and examines in turn how each of them can contribute to wider community and corporate objectives. The end result is a series of service by service objectives and targets.
- 6.13: The thematic route first sets out the overarching themes such as tackling social exclusion, regeneration, etc. Then those aspects of the area’s cultural services and activities which impact on each theme are brought forward. In this case the end result is a series of theme related policies and objectives, drawing in contributions from across the cultural sector and initiatives from other departments and agencies. The different methods are illustrated in Exhibit Eleven. This also draws together the common core elements from above to present an overall guide to cultural strategy content.
- 6.14: Given the inclusive nature of a Local Cultural Strategy, the need to foster linkages and partnerships, and the need to advocate the contribution of cultural activities to the wider community agenda, the Department favours the thematic approach. Best Value Reviews can also be carried out in a service-specific or thematic approach or even a combination of the two. Clearly, it will be more efficient to adopt the same approach to preparing the Local Cultural Strategy.
- 6.15: The thematic and service-specific approaches can often complement each other. They can also be supplemented by adding a geographical dimension, i.e. a consideration of issues and services on an area by area basis, e.g. by localities, major towns, wards. This may be particularly appropriate in areas where there are major differences in provision of cultural services in different areas, where the community needs are significantly different between areas, and/or where localities have a distinct cultural identity.

6.16: Other local authorities may also wish to supplement their approach with reference to policies, programmes and initiatives covering specific target groups, e.g. children, youth, the elderly, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities. *In the final analysis, however, it will be up to the local authority which approach it feels is best suited to its particular situation and resources.*



Style and Presentation

- 6.17: The style and form of presentation of the Local Cultural Strategy will be governed to a great extent by its intended audience. Given that the Strategy's main function will be as a working management document for the local authority and other partners, its chief audience will be elected Members, council officers from different departments, officers and representatives from other agencies and local opinion formers and decision-makers generally. The style of the Strategy will also be determined by the general approach the local authority takes to the public presentation of its documents. Some authorities will wish to produce documents which feature high production and design values; others will prefer a more low-key approach.
- 6.18: Local authorities should also produce a summary for the general public - this not only continues the process of consultation and dialogue, it sets out publicly the overall strategic choices and priorities, and the quantitative and qualitative means that will be used to monitor the strategy's implementation.
- 6.19: The strategy should be written in a clear and non-technical style, with jargon kept to a minimum and including a Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations (listing unavoidable initials and technical terms). It should be succinct and focused. The Public Summary should be in brochure or leaflet size and form.
- 6.20: The Strategy will be a long-term document which will be reviewed periodically, with updates on policy and records of achievement to date. Given this, the format of the Strategy should be reasonably flexible.

7: Monitoring and Review

Monitoring

- 7.1: To be effective a strategy must set out how its implementation will be monitored. An effective monitoring regime will assess whether the objectives of the strategy have in fact been achieved. Local authorities will need to consider the following factors when developing their monitoring regime:
- **When** is the monitoring going to take place i.e. how often and at what specific times of the year?
 - **Who** is going to carry it out?
 - **What** measures or indicators are going to be used to judge success?
 - **How** is the monitoring going to be carried out i.e. what techniques are going to be used to collect the required information?
- 7.2: The extent and frequency of monitoring work will be governed by the local authority's own financial planning and corporate management framework and the resources available to the authority. Where possible, monitoring of the Local Cultural Strategy should be dovetailed with the requirements of Best Value including the adoption of the Best Value Performance Plan and Best Value Reviews. For library authorities, it should also complement, and not duplicate, the Annual Library Plan.
- 7.3: Local authorities must also consider within their Local Cultural Strategy whether there is a need to separate the roles of monitoring and implementation, and the resources that will be available for monitoring.
- 7.4: The work of monitoring the Strategy should be viewed as part of the normal work-load of local authority officers. This, in turn, means that sufficient importance must be given to this work, and sufficient time allowed for it to be undertaken properly. Monitoring will include many different tasks, depending on the PIs and means of assessment chosen. It will include, for instance:

- records of numbers of participants at various activities audits of arts, sports, environmental, play and other voluntary organisations
- summary financial analysis of services and activities

It may also include more resource intensive assessment means, e.g.:

- determining user profiles at various facilities and events through market research
- comparing these with the demographic profile of the catchment area to establish whether the facility is accessed equally by all
- commissioning user and household surveys to help establish whether local people believe the service has a greater or lesser community benefit
- working with regional or national agencies, such as Sport England or the Regional Arts Board, to help establish the quality standards of specific services
- working with local groups to establish a system of self-assessment

7.5: While officers will monitor the implementation of the Strategy as part of their normal work-load, for instance through Action Plans as noted previously, the implementation and achievements of the Strategy should be monitored on a regular basis, usually annually, through a report to the appropriate committee(s). These reports should be publicly available and the headline information published through the local authority's newsletter, advertisements in the local media or other means.

7.6: The Local Cultural Strategy should also set out the performance indicators (PIs) and other means of assessment which will be used. It gives local authorities the opportunity to develop the most appropriate PIs and other means of assessment for their local situation and across all cultural services. PIs should not focus on exclusively quantitative measures; PIs which help assess qualitative factors such as user satisfaction, social impact and community benefit should also be used. Targets should then be set for these PIs and these compared with the actual performance of the services being monitored.

7.7: The following framework may help to devise appropriate measures for each aspect of the strategy:

Input measures: What was required to make the initiative work

Activity (or throughput) measures: What has been done?

Output measures: (results) What has been achieved?

Outcome measures: (impacts) What difference has it made?

Geddes and Martin, quoted in "Guidance on Enhancing Public Participation" p 27

7.8: Input measures are useful when benchmarking against other authorities or organisations providing similar services. They can establish whether the services are being provided economically. In general, though, local authorities should focus on output and outcome indicators. These can establish the effectiveness of the Strategy and its impact in terms of the well being of the community and the area.

7.9: Performance assessments should be made both on a quantitative and a qualitative basis. The latter can be assessed through the professional judgements of experts from other agencies, through peer assessment, through self assessment and through user satisfaction surveys. Continuing dialogue with local organisations and local people will also help to establish the contribution the Strategy - and cultural services generally - is making to the bigger picture of quality of life, social inclusion, community safety and so on.

7.10: The PIs and means of assessment chosen should complement and dovetail with those required for other tasks, e.g. Best Value, Annual Library Plans. Together they should be able to determine whether local authority services are achieving the Best Value goal of continuous improvement.

Review

- 7.11: Most Local Cultural Strategies will have a lifespan of five years. They will be reviewed - when the policies, rationale, priorities and issues are reconsidered and, if need be, the Strategy, re-positioned - after two to three years. However, local choice and the need to dovetail in with local timetables will mean that some Local Cultural Strategies will have a longer or shorter lifespan. Local authorities will need to decide what is best for them, given their particular situation, their approach to their Best Value Performance Plan, the Annual Library Plan, Best Value Reviews, etc.
- 7.12: Most local authorities will wish to review their Action Plan - and the specific, detailed Service Plans which flow from this - on an annual basis, with the achievements of the previous year compared with the targets set, and new targets for the coming year set in the light of progress to date. However, some local authorities may wish to update and review their Action Plans on a more frequent basis, e.g. every six months, while others will review these on a less frequent basis, e.g. once every two years. These should link in with - and, where possible, form the basis of - the authority's Best Value Performance Plans.

Appendix One: Bibliography

General

- 'A New Cultural Framework', DCMS, 1999.
- 'Modern Public Services for Britain: Investing in reform' The Stationery Office, 1998.
- 'Guidance on Enhancing Public Participation', DETR, 1998.
- 'Community Leadership and Community Planning - developing a comprehensive strategy to promote the well-being of the area', LGA, 1998.
- 'Enriching People's Lives' - an advocacy paper for leisure and tourism, LGA, 1998.
- 'The Introduction of a statutory local leisure plan for all United Kingdom local authorities - National Consultation Paper', CLOA, 1997.
- 'Local Leisure Plans: Policy Position Statement - Consultative Paper', ILAM.

Best Value

- 'Modern Local Government: In Touch with the People', DETR, 1998
- The Local Government Bill (Best Value and Capping) and Explanatory Notes.
- 'Better by far, preparing for best value', Audit Commission, 1998.

Arts

- 'Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts', Francois Matarasso, Comedia, 1997.
- 'The Art of Regeneration - Urban Renewal through Cultural Activity', Charles Landry, Lesley Greene, Francois Matarasso, Franco Bianchini, Comedia, 1996.
- 'Evaluation of local authority arts policies' - Arts Council Research Report No.16

Countryside

- 'A new Focus for England's Woodlands', Forestry Commission

Heritage and Conservation

- 'Sustaining the historic environment: new perspectives on the future', An English Heritage discussion document, 1997.
- 'Conservation Issues in Local Plans', Countryside Commission, English Heritage and English Nature, 1996.
- 'Ideas into Action for Local Agenda 21, Conservation Initiatives in the Local Environment', Countryside Commission, English Nature and English Heritage.
- 'Conservation-led regeneration - The work of English Heritage', English Heritage, 1998.

Libraries

- 'Annual Library Plans: Guidelines', DCMS, 1998.
- 'Model Statement of Standards for Public Library Services', Library Association, 1995.

Museums

- 'New Visions for Museums in the 21st Century', Victor T C Middleton, Association of Independent Museums, 1998
- 'Museums Services Following Local Government Reorganisation - Guidelines for Local Authorities', Museums and Galleries Commission, 1995.

Sport

- 'Planning across boundaries: A revised guide to sport and recreation strategies', Sport England (in progress - due for publication 1999).
- 'England, the sporting nation: a strategy', Sport England (1997).
- 'Facilities Planning Model: A planning tool for developing sports facilities', Sport England (1998).

Lottery

- National Strategies for each of the Lottery Distribution Agencies to be published in 1999.

Parks

- 'People, Parks and Cities, A guide to current good practice in urban parks', Comedia for DoE, 1996.

Play

- 'Playlink: Guidance on Play Policies', Children's Play Policy Forum, 1998. (draft)

Tourism

- 'Planning for Tourism; report of the NPF working group', National Planning Forum (1998).
- 'Tomorrow's Tourism' DCMS 1999

Regeneration

- 'The New Commitment to Regeneration', LGA, 1998.

Planning

- 'Planning Policy Guidance' Department of Environment

Most significant for Local Cultural Strategies are PPG17 'Sport and Recreation', PPG21 'Tourism'.

- 'Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice', DETR, 1998.

Appendix Two: Major Initiatives Affecting Local Government

Service	Plan	Lead Dept.
CULTURE	Local Cultural Strategies Sports and Recreation Strategies Annual Library Plans	DCMS Sport England DCMS
EDUCATION	Education Development Plans School Development Plans Asset Management Plans Early Years Development Plans Education Action Zone Plans ICT Development Plan	DfEE DfEE DfEE DfEE DfEE DfEE
ENVIRONMENT	LA21 Strategy Biodiversity Action Plan Air Quality Management Plan Renewal Areas Strategies Area Housing Strategies	DETR DETR DETR DETR DETR
HOUSING	Housing Annual Plan Strategy Document	DETR DETR
LAW & ORDER	Youth Justice Plans Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategies (Community Safety plans) Community Legal Service Plans Police Policy Plan Drugs Strategy	Home Office Home Office Lord Chancellors Dept Home Office Cabinet Office
PLANNING	Development Plans Nature Conservation Strategy Town Centre Strategy	DETR DETR DETR
SOCIAL SERVICES	Community Care Plans Childrens Service Plans Health Improvement Programmes Health Action Zones	Dept. of Health Dept of Health Dept of Health Dept of Health
TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION	Local Transport Plans	DETR
OTHERS	Corporate Plan Best Value Performance Plans Neighbourhood Plans Active Community Initiative	Individual local authorities DETR Individual local authorities Home Office

(Summary of major initiatives only as of May 1999.)