

Ack by email
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Ian

From: Clare Gee [Clare.Gee@orkney.gov.uk]
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To: info
Subject: pan-sectoral consultation[Scanned]

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Orkney Islands
Council phase 2...

Hello,

Please find attached in Word format the response to the phase 2 pan-sectoral consultation from Orkney Islands Council.

For any further information, please contact Steve Callaghan, Head of Heritage Service, or myself, Clare Gee, Arts Development Officer.

Best wishes

Clare Gee
Arts Development Officer
Orkney Islands Council
School Place
Kirkwall
KW15 1NY

Tel. 01856 873535 ext. 2814

Cultural Commission
Stakeholder Consultation: Phase 2 – Pan-Sectoral Questions

Response from Orkney Islands Council

1. Cultural rights and entitlements should take in the needs of the individual and the community, whether enshrined jointly or separately within resulting guidelines/legislation. This is especially relevant for communities which are fragile due to geography, where a sense of shared and historic culture can underpin the community's sense of well-being and make a positive contribution to resisting unpalatable demographic change. Cultural rights/entitlements/responsibilities should definitely be used as a starting point for policy and benchmarking standards for provision/delivery.
2. Our understanding of a right is that it is already enshrined in law.
3. We are anxious that there should be reflection of local differences and needs rather than blanket national policy, as the central belt cities and urban areas are hugely different demographically from the Highlands and Islands and also communities of interest or of need vary. There needs to be full recognition of the role that cultural entitlement and its manifestation can play in delivering against aims and objectives relating to social inclusion, access and general well-being.
4. The Scottish Executive must take full responsibility for such guardianship, although logical delegation to agencies, quangos and local authorities must follow, whatever structure of agencies and quangos might result from this review. There is already an infrastructure in place through Audit Scotland, for monitoring purposes, and it would seem sensible to deploy this appropriately.
5. It would seem sensible to create a body to continue the work initiated by the Cultural Commission, with representation from whatever delegatory bodies result from this review. They would require a formal remit and an appropriate mechanism for feeding in to Scottish Executive decision-making.

6. A balanced Cultural Commission (see question 5) would achieve this, with the proviso that it should contain a better representation of the range of interests within Scottish culture than that achieved in the convening of the current Cultural Commission, e.g. appropriate representation of museums/galleries and built and cultural heritage.
7. The Scottish Executive has ultimate responsibility for leadership in Scotland *per se*, but see above for suggestions on a reformed Cultural Commission. This advisory/leadership body should have appropriate mechanisms open to it, to allow a two-way flow of guidance and influence.
8. The Scottish Executive should play a full and valuable role, through the reformed Cultural Commission described above championed by the figurehead of the relevant minister.
9. The relevant minister should appoint the Chair of the Commission. The Chair should perhaps prepare a suggested list of commissioners, for debate in the Scottish Parliament, leading to revisions and final appointments. The Cultural Commission should ultimately be answerable to the Scottish Executive.
10. The local authority is by definition the leader of its community, and must shape and implement local policy to reflect and operate within national legislation, policy and guidelines. We struggle to differentiate between the electorate, artists and citizens as implied in the question. Again, the question ignores museums and built and cultural heritage, assuming that culture equates to artists alone.
11. There should be academic representation on the Cultural Commission.
12. Potentially, the reformed Cultural Commission should contain one or two 'open' seats for this sector.
13. There must be a representative government body nationally for the artistic community (either the Scottish Arts Council or its successor following this review) which must

have representation on the reformed Cultural Commission. Part of the review of SAC/its successor must include a review of grassroots artistic representation within such a body itself. This might usefully include representation on the grants awards panels.

14. See question 13, the same should apply for other parts of the cultural sector including museums and built and cultural heritage.
15. The museums sector operates quite a good model, where there is a signed concordat, delegating responsibility from MLA (Museums, Libraries and Archives Council – a UK body) to Scottish Museums Council, as museums is a devolved function. Other UK cultural agencies should be encouraged to have Scottish specific representation on their governing bodies, e.g. Museums Association has a councillor for Scotland. The arts would need more thought given the current set-up.
16. This review will probably suggest a pan-sectoral government agency (a reformed Cultural Commission) to address this remit.
17. Following the review there should be a year within which such a body should be established. For level of authority see answer to questions 7-9.
18. See question 7-9 above.
19. The Cultural Commission, as suggested above, should guide and oversee the work of such agency/agencies as may replace Historic Scotland, Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Museums Council, should such major change replace the *status quo*.
20. The agencies highlighted in answer to question 19 should have community representation by geography and community of interest on their governing bodies. We again take the word 'artists' to include museums and built and cultural heritage.

21. The legislative and policy framework within which the Cultural Commission and the relevant agencies operate will be set by the Scottish Executive, including broad brush policies and resultant criteria on funding. This might for instance include a funding formula for Collections of Significance within museums, reflecting the national audit of museums collections and the evolving concept of a distributed national collection. It would then logically be up to the agency to disburse available funds appropriately.
22. Clearly the cultural sector requires additional funding, which would most usefully be administered centrally, with existing models (for better or for worse) including Championing Culture in Scottish Schools (Cultural Co-ordinators), Youth Music, Regional Development Challenge Fund, Strategic Challenge Fund etc. It will be important to have adequate sector consultation in advance of launching such schemes, to ensure appropriateness at a local level. Core funding is absolutely vital, however, and such sums might usefully be ring-fenced as an annual allocation to local authorities. Whilst one-off, project based schemes may usefully address social justice aims and issues, local cultural infrastructure is crumbling – e.g. artefact storage, documentation and cataloguing of museum collections, lack of accessible arts venues – and must be addressed using local allocations. The huge and impressive body of work on the national audit of museums collections should also lead to funding streams based on Collections of Significance. It is imperative that the dangerous approach of a *per capita* allocation does not prejudice fragile rural or remote communities, or communities where tourism is a major local economic factor.
23. The reformed Cultural Commission would, following consultation, make recommendations to the Scottish Executive. It would be up to the appropriate minister to fight for the sectoral allocation in the first instance.
24. Please see answer to questions 13 and 14
25. For a holistic and streamlined approach to sectoral funding for national companies/museums/galleries etc. it would make sense for the whole funding package to be

within the remit of the national agencies, such as SMC and SAC, or whatever these may turn into.

26. We assume this question refers to existing or new agencies with similar remits to those of SMC, Historic Scotland (HS) and SAC. They currently have a seed-corn funding role for easing staff into place, and a matched funding role for projects. This has led to a major influence on local authority spending decisions (often reactive). This can put undue medium- to long-term pressure on local authorities to continue with initiatives as such funding dries up, increasingly unpalatable given the state of local authority budgets. It would however be sensible for some central control over budgets for national initiatives, part-funded locally, if funding could be more long-term. It is seeming increasingly sensible, however, to offer 100% funding for less ambitious projects, with the local component comprising management and accommodation, rather than always requiring a local financial component from already overstretched budgets.
27. Non-national organisations which are of national significance because of their collections/buildings or their operations (such as St. Magnus Festival, Burns Cottage) should have access to national funding streams in this context, as part of their revenue support. This would seem a better alternative than devolving all funding of such organisations to a regional or local level, as it helps to preserve the national context.
28. National agencies and local authorities will have different aims and objectives/criteria, and should fund appropriately based on these, and based on an assessment of national importance (see question 27). It will be important to have joined-up thinking and delivery, with consultation between national agencies and relevant local authority officials (very much like the approach taken by HLF with their local authority notification/comment forms). The Local Arts Development Agency model in parts of England (e.g. Arts Council England, North East area), which involves effectively a three-way service level agreement between the local organisation, the local authority and the regional/national funder might be effective in this context.

29. A more rigorous approach to feasibility study assessment, especially focussing on the sensitivity of financial projections and other sustainability measures, is to be encouraged. More effort needs to go into communication channels between funders, to ensure a good fit with aims and objectives at a national and local level. Each local authority will have or be developing a cultural strategy, and given Scotland's size it is not unfeasible to consider these in combination, in a strategic way, when considering capital infrastructure. The museums sector, for instance, is starting to work in this way, through initiatives such as the Regional Development Challenge Fund and the Museums Association study "Collections for the Future".
30. Ring-fencing of funds for specific artforms/types of museum project e.g. the traditional and indigenous arts, should be seen as a minimum, with a significant percentage of funds available for allocation on the basis of the individual merit of a proposed scheme. This may involve supplementing ring-fenced sums, or funding projects which do not fit within the prescribed boundaries.
31. At a local level, the community planning process should be starting to improve the situation. A part-remit of national agencies, such as SMC/SAC, the reformed Cultural Commission, or their equivalents, should be advocacy and profile-raising within other sectors, whose funding may be relevant to the cultural sector.
32. In the current climate, the more medium- to long-term security the better for helping to ensure sustainability of projects and organisations. Current short-term project funding, linked to "innovation" and requiring undue local financial input, is leading to an unstable cultural sector, especially as such funding is often unavailable for core support, such as buildings maintenance, collections management, specialist staff and development/research. Endowment style funding is unlikely to be adequately resourced in the current climate, where there is a need for more resources on a daily basis, which would be compromised by tying up significant sums of money.

33. Whilst greater and more appropriate financial autonomy is all very well, there should be greater significance attached at the outset of projects to the need to deliver promised outcomes against well-defined aims and objectives. There should be more rigorous monitoring and, if necessary, follow-up investigations leading to the distinct possibility of funding being clawed back. Project business planning and feasibility studies (as highlighted at question 29) need more specialist assessment. This need not preclude projects whose stated remit is to be a little more flexible/experimental/avant garde in approach, and whose monitoring regime reflects this approach.
34. There should be a sliding scale, based on the size and complexity of the funding (as with HLF/SAC Awards for All, where the bureaucracy has been simplified to reflect the scale of the funding). As highlighted at question 33 above, for larger revenue funding and for capital projects, the process, outputs and governance should be monitored more rigorously than seems the current norm.
35. See question 33 above
36. See question 33 above. Standards should be appropriate to the criteria imposed by the funding, but should then be rigorously monitored within their individual context.
37. The internal evaluation element of projects/operations should be overtly identified at the outset, within aims/outcomes and within the funding apportionments, i.e. appropriately resourced. External evaluation requires an adequate infrastructure of expertise and other resources, e.g. the HLF expert panels. This requires identification at an early stage of a percentage of central funding for this element. The reformed Cultural Commission may have a role in appointing such experts.
38. See question 33 above. The reformed Cultural Commission should perhaps have or delegate an arbitration remit in such circumstances. It will be desirable for an ethos to develop whereby funders and organisations seeking and in receipt of funding develop and monitor applications and projects as a team, hopefully reducing risks on both sides.

39. Extremely well designed and resourced website provision of helpdesk facilities, downloadable reports and guidelines, online forms and discussion forums should all have their part to play. An online "map" of key offices/individuals and their functions, with contact details, would help to guide users through the complexities of the sector. Video conferencing is a much under-used tool for accessible contact with remote and rural areas. (e.g. the infrastructure for this is now well in place throughout the Highlands and Islands).
40. There may be merit in further study in this area, however the current situation is complex and multi-agency, so would take some unravelling. There may be some scope for funding streams (capital and revenue) to follow identification of collections or buildings of national/international importance.
41. A reformed Cultural Commission could usefully take on various pan-sectoral responsibilities such as an overview of the sector, advocacy to the Scottish Executive and the Westminster parliament, links abroad etc. IT development does not immediately seem a useful pan-sectoral remit, except in the areas highlighted at question 39 above.
42. See question 41 above.
43. It is important to ensure a stable and sustainable infrastructure for collections management in museums, performance, participation and exhibition in the arts, and so on. Increasing activity, whilst eroding in real terms the underpinning infrastructure, would lead to a dangerous instability and lack of sustainability. It is therefore important to expand the public face/access/outreach functions, but to expand infrastructure in tandem as appropriate.
44. Each local authority should have a cultural strategy, together with a community planning forum on culture, leading to appropriate policy and action plans. Appropriate consultation should be built in to this process.

45. The term 'adequate provision' relating to culture needs defining. There are working groups from within the sector undertaking work to inform this definition (e.g. SMC). The community planning legislation is already in place, so local cultural strategies must develop within this context.
46. Parts of the sector already have national standards for provision e.g. museum registration. The SPI's for this sector are currently poor, however work is being done by sectoral working groups to address this (e.g. SMC). It would be dangerous, however, to develop any standards in financial terms e.g. *per capita* spend on culture, as this could result in a significant reduction in current provision for areas where culture is currently seen in terms of tourism provision as well as provision for residents.
47. As highlighted at question 46 this would need very careful management, as there is currently a huge disparity between local authorities in *per capita* spend on culture.
48. Scotland has always been treated as a region by London-based government agencies and quangos due to its population e.g. area museums, libraries and archives councils across England and regional offices of the Arts Council of England equalling roughly 10 in number for a population of roughly ten times that of Scotland. It is difficult to envisage a role for a devolved regional office with a sub-division of Scotland as its patch (e.g. Highlands and Islands, Central Belt and Borders, North-east). However a local base for Central Belt based organisations (e.g. HLF Highlands and Islands Officer, who is based in Inverness) might have a useful advice/support/advocacy role. It would be dangerous to start ring-fencing sums of money for disbursement at a regional level within Scotland, as this would stifle large projects and creativity. The exception to this might be the distributed national collection based on the audit of Scottish museums collections.
49. See answer to question 48, however should such bodies result, it would make sense for their constitution, government and management to be consistent across Scotland, as defined by the reformed Cultural Commission. It might make sense for them to be responsible to the

Cultural Commission, and for their Chairs to be appointed by this body. Other members should be nominated and selected at a regional level.

50. See answer to question 48, however should such bodies result, remits/responsibilities could be two-fold in benefits to the region, namely (a) economies of scale as compared with the local areas, e.g. running theatres/companies/touring/museums infrastructure such as conservation, documentation and training, where the large catchment area leads to appropriate investment, and (b) being more in touch with the region than a national body given that each region has its unique geography, communities, problems and opportunities. Responsibilities should be transferred from national agencies and local authorities to reflect these dual roles.
51. The cost of such bodies could only be justified if their creation was managed carefully enough, so that they accurately reflected regional needs and did not duplicate any national or local provision.
52. The national companies should be national in attitude and operation (such as the thinking behind the delivery of a non-buildings based National Theatre), with a requirement for equable delivery across the country, rather than a requirement for a tokenistic, bolt-on outreach programme. This should also apply to the national museums, building on the excellent start made to the National Partnership Scheme led by NMS, and other national institutions such as galleries, libraries and archives.
53. The word privilege seems a little strange in this context. It is reasonable to assume that national companies, museums, galleries, libraries and archives should be adequately resourced to support their role as a showcase for Scotland and for its people, however see question 52 above.
54. We are assuming that national companies also includes national museums, galleries, libraries and archives. The reformed Cultural Commission has a role here, including senior appointments of officers and trustees. The responsibility for measuring their performance logically lies

with Audit Scotland, which would require a revisiting of SPI's and the agreement of a new set of indicators for national bodies. Aspects of their professional performance would need to be brought within the accreditation systems administered by Scottish Museums Council, Scottish Arts Council etc. or whatever replaces them.

55. To justify national status and ring-fenced national funding, the artistic standard should be the best in Scotland as an aspiration. Their role should be to interpret Scotland to the world, and the world to Scotland, leading to a balanced programme in this regard. This approach should also apply to national museums, galleries, libraries and archives.
56. For national museums, galleries, libraries, archives and artistic companies/agencies the relationship must of necessity be one of partnership to maximise benefits to all participants, be they the organisations involved or audiences/visitors/participants. Strenuous efforts must be put in to avoid duplication of effort or provision. Within museums, it would be important to ensure complimentary collecting policies.
57. See answer to question 54, whereby it seems logical that an overview of national agencies is maintained by the reformed Cultural Commission, with a sensible new SPI framework assessed by Audit Scotland.
58. The reformed Cultural Commission (or equivalent) should have a major role in maintaining a strategic overview of the various national cultural agencies – National Museums, National Galleries, National Libraries, National Archive, Historic Scotland, Scottish Museums Council and Scottish Arts Council. There seems little to be gained from a full merger of these organisations to its logical conclusion of shared senior staff, shared IT provision/website, shared premises etc, as significant “glass walls” would need to be preserved in any case. Clearly there would be some financial gains resulting from merger(s), however this should be balanced against the major and possibly unnecessary upheaval required.

59. The reformed Cultural Commission will have a major advocacy role here. It will be important to maintain channels of communication with the equivalent organisations in other sectors and with the Scottish Executive, championed by the relevant minister. Clearly cultural provision has a major role to play in assisting other sectors in delivery of their outcomes, based on their aims and objectives.

60. Confusion has crept in nationally, regarding whether sport is considered part of culture, as it was when the National Cultural Strategy was outlined, but seems to have dropped off the list within the remit of the Cultural Commission. This requires clarification. There are links operationally and strategically, such as dance within schools (Active Schools Programme) and local sport being very much part of the local culture across Scotland – team allegiance, sport history, shinty, the Ba' (in Orkney) etc.

61. The reformed Cultural Commission will have a role in promoting Scottish culture at all levels. It would seem logical for each of the national agencies to have dedicated officers for such promotion, who might usefully come together as a working group on a regular basis. Good channels of communication will be needed to the relevant Scottish minister, as they will be the champion abroad, and to VisitScotland.

62. There should be a working group established nationally comprising representatives of VisitScotland, the reformed Cultural Commission, the national museums, galleries, libraries and archives and the national cultural agencies, whose agenda would include marketing, promotion and customer management. Clearly there is enormous tourism potential arising from aspects of culture such as festivals, Scottish film-making and television, major exhibitions and productions, literature, genealogy, place name evidence and other history, archaeology and visitor attractions.