

Commission on Culture and Local Government

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Purpose

To bring national, regional and local actors in the publicly funded cultural realm together to explore and communicate:

- The unique role of council funded and supported culture in our recovery from COVID-19; and
- A vision for the future of council funded and supported culture in the context of place.

Our commissioners



Themes

1. **Resilient places.** Local publicly funded culture can promote civic pride and change perceptions about a place, contributing to improvements in wider social and economic outcomes.
2. **An inclusive economic recovery.** Local publicly funded culture is essential to our national economic recovery, particularly in relation to the growth of the wider commercial creative economy and in levelling up economic inequalities between regions.
3. **Social mobility.** Local publicly funded culture can help to address educational and skills inequalities and challenges around social mobility.
4. **Health inequalities.** Local publicly funded culture can challenge health inequalities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

SUSTAINABLE & INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC RECOVERY

ROUNDTABLE 1 OF THE COMMISSION



INVESTMENT IN CULTURAL REGENERATION CHANGES PERCEPTIONS ABOUT PLACE

EVIDENCE

1

CITY OF BRADFORD

NICOLA GREENAN
YEME ARCHITECTS
VITAL CULTURE/UK

Keep it up! Bradford people want culture.

- New small grants programme in the new street market
- Bradford Live
- UK City of Culture bid

It was all made possible because culture is our plan! is the Bradford council agenda

Strengthen music scenes in growing public spaces

Culture is our DNA

What stands out with us is a passion that can be shared. We look at facilities that are taking place, Bradford has an amazing number of opportunities going on. We learned of that one in Community App

79% COMMUNITY PROJECTS FROM ART-LED PROJECTS TO DATE

TEAM BRADFORD

2

THE BRITISH LIBRARY

ISABEL OSWELL

DEMOCRATISING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Give people from all walks of life an equal opportunity to create their own business, change their own future

Public libraries are spaces that are trusted, accessible and free for all

"Heineken effect": we've reached people other services haven't

- Libraries as engines of economic growth
- Go-to place for business and IP
- Supported over 20,000 people over 2020/21
- New businesses started: 35% women, 37% black, Asian and mixed ethnicity, 17% disabled entrepreneurs
- 97% still trading
- Patents, Trademarks, Copyrights
- Workshops, inspirational events
- Capitalising on the exciting capital of public libraries

BIPC network

3

LUTON HAT DISTRICT

MARIE KIRBYSHAW

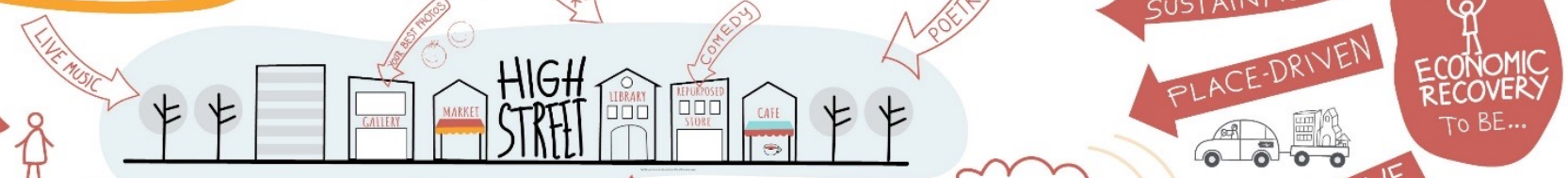
Best in Europe. We are the place to watch!

- Encourage creativity
- New sources of growth
- Putting back into the system
- Horizontal performance team
- Most steps over the last year
- Month: if you're not in it, you can't do it
- The future demands a new reputation
- Local growth fund £1.2m from SENLIP
- Finished projects purchased
- Engage with the industrial heritage of Luton, especially in the making tradition, in a forward looking way
- Free academic advice by experts if you can't
- Training programme

"CREATIVE HATS"



WHAT ARE THE KEY THEMES?



HOW CAN PUBLICALLY FUNDED CULTURE SUPPORT ECONOMIC RECOVERY TO BE...

COMBINED AUTHORITIES ROLE? LEADERSHIP?

BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF ARTS AND CULTURE

GET INVOLVED IN CONVERSATIONS EARLY

PROVIDE REAL DATA - DON'T COMPETE WORK TOGETHER.

SHARED AWARENESS ENHANCES EVERYONE'S EXPERIENCE

A Mayor or Leader can really help if they back and understand culture

Culture needs to be involved earlier in the conversation so that politicians who are only focused on economic recovery notice

To what extent does leadership come from the creative industries?

Close working relationship with councils

We need to learn that we should not compete with each other for funding by infusing the economic value of arts and culture.

INCLUSIVITY

ENABLING & ENCOURAGING COMMUNITIES TO FEEL INCLUDED

How can we translate these brilliant projects to make places really inclusive?

How can we achieve success in inclusivity?

How do you make economic growth inclusive?

EASY TO ACCESS INCLUSIVE PLACES

I have kept impressed with Bradford work spaces that are creative and add to the public and not in nice exclusive areas

REVEAL HIDDEN ASSETS

Anchoring locally can't be stated enough. Luton's hidden asset is now not hidden

We should love in England and that really doesn't work. Some councils don't quite get it but most now need to be an unique and thoughtful

How to involve new models for bringing development into the areas that are not in the centre?

DOES YOUR PLACE MAKE YOU PROUD?

How do you measure how local communities feel about their place?

UNIQUENESS IS IMPORTANT TO MOST PEOPLE

We all want to live somewhere unique that doesn't look like anything else

All places have some heritage that can be worked with

THE NEW HIGH ST.

A PLACE FOR DESIGNED EXPERIENCES

We've got a clear picture of the connect between past and future.

We need to make sure that libraries are part of the 'New High Street'

SUSTAINABILITY

REUSE OF EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Sustainability may go beyond climate change and be about accessibility

Digital still hasn't broken the barriers of accessibility

BARRIERS STILL EXIST

The information we get or gives is a really good insight. Visibility you can expose people to things they weren't searching for

The app is trying to enable people to connect to their community in ways they haven't before

I can see lots of potential for an App. How can it be more useful in connecting with the creative industries?

CONSTANT CLIMATE CHANGE

DATA GATHERING

LIBRARIES

NON-THREATENING TRUSTED INCREDIBLY INCLUSIVE PLACES

LIBRARIES ARE SUPERHEROES

LIBRARIES ARE ESSENTIAL FOR INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC RECOVERY

WHAT IS YOUR TOWN'S HERITAGE?

WHERE? HERE NOT HERE

NEED TO TALK ABOUT WHERE WE NEED TO HELP MOST

We haven't discussed places that haven't had any success. We are not assessing this in the right way, we need to talk about where we need to help most.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

We need to be cautious about data given on economic value. Economic value is very important but many people are sceptical about SROI methodology.

Different communities have different measures for what is a successful outcome.

WHAT IS A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME FOR YOU?

FUNDING & LEVELLING-UP

THE RIGHT RESOURCES TO THE RIGHT PLACES

WORKSHOPS IN SCHOOLS

Career progression is very important to us and we mention it in all workshops in schools.

There's no good checking money at small groups without advice and support. The level up agenda of work in progress, and we are instead to use these before.

We have identified it, it's there, it's not a solution and we need to look into alternative solutions. The Shared Prosperity Fund could be an opportunity for culture but we need to make a case.

MAKING SURE FUNDING GOES TO DIFFERENT PLACES

Funding seems to always go to the same places, and levelling up should be able to change that.

MEASURES OF VALUE

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Arts and culture play an important role in economic recovery, but we need to also understand what is not measured in monetary value.

How can we make this argument better?

Some parts of sector may be better at showing economic returns.

The British Library has been very savvy at using the techniques from public economics to measure the wider social and economic returns from their investment.

WE UNDERVALUE CULTURE BECAUSE SO MUCH OF IT IS FREE AT THE POINT OF DELIVERY. IF WE TREAT CULTURE AS CAPITAL WE CAN REVALUATE ITS VALUE

Findings

- Culture has a vital role to play in supporting local recovery.
- Councils are key in making this happen, but...
- significant challenges remain.

Challenges

- Funding
- Local structural capacity
- Barriers to access (financial, physical, geographical, digital, perception)
- Diversity of representation in leadership
- Local and national policy alignment
- Data and evidence

Recommendations: Cornerstones of Culture

To deliver against the potential of culture, we need four ‘cornerstones of culture’ in places:

Capacity: A levelling up of capacity for culture within place, targeting regional inequalities and enabling councils to develop and deliver meaningful place-led strategies for culture.

Leadership: A power shift towards place-led approaches that enable a greater diversity of communities, cultural providers and practitioners to shape local decision making.

Funding: A coherent and transparent approach to funding culture in a place that supports the delivery of place-led strategies and addresses the immediate financial fragility of the sector triggered by the pandemic and cost of living crisis.

Evidence: A coordinated approach to developing an effective evidence base for culture and place in order to measure value and shape future investment.

Recommendations (cultural education)

The Commission called for local government, regional bodies, cultural arms-length bodies and national government to work together with cultural organisations and communities to deliver:

***Cultural education and pathways to creative employment.** Access for all in all places to a high-quality cultural education and routes into the burgeoning creative industries from schools through to Further and Higher Education and employment. Specifically:*

- Include local creative skills pathways in economic development plans
- Involve partners from education in the development of local place-led strategies for culture
- Work with Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPs) to support the future sustainability of these partnerships at a local level.
- Engage employers early in education to ensure that all children are able to understand the careers available and the skills needed for success in the cultural sector and creative industries.
- Government departments including DfE, DLUHC and DCMS to work together to ensure the new Cultural Education Plan is fully aligned with the Creative Industries Sector Vision and wider approaches to devolution and levelling up.

What next?

As part of next steps on the Commission, the LGA is interested in exploring the following areas:

1. Continued **partnership working**, including further regional events
2. **Leadership, capacity and governance**: how can we build better capacity for culture across the country at a local level? What role can combined authorities play?
3. **Data and evidence**. What data does the cultural sector and local government need to ensure better access to culture? Where are the gaps? How can we work together to close them?
4. **Levelling up**. What can councils do to support local economic growth in relation to culture and the creative industries? What would help them in this role?
5. **Community voice**. How can councils and their partners support greater involvement from young people and communities in cultural decision making? What governance structures for culture best support this?

Further information

Read the full report <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/culture-tourism-leisure-and-sport/cornerstones-culture>

Case study resource: <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/culture-tourism-leisure-and-sport/commission-culture-and-local-government/commission-culture>

Other useful LGA resources

LGA Reports and briefings:

- [Creative Places: supporting your local creative economy](#)
- [Combined authorities and the creative industries: case study report](#)
- [Cultural Strategy in a Box: guide to writing a cultural strategy](#)
- [Culture-led Regeneration: achieving inclusive and sustainable growth](#)
- [The LGA submission to the DCMS Select Committee inquiry into cultural placemaking and levelling up](#)

The LGA offer

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