

Matthews B (Barry)

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Subject: Culture Bill Consultation



Response to
Culture Bill 22030...

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Please see attached a response to the Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill on behalf of both the Dundee Partnership and Dundee City Council. We are happy for the response to be made public, for this to be shared with other policy teams within the Scottish Executive and to be contacted for further discussions on this if required. Bill Findlay Corporate Planning Officer Dundee City Council
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DUNDEE PARTNERSHIP AND DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

RESPONSE TO DRAFT CULTURE (SCOTLAND) BILL

1 INTRODUCTION

The Dundee Partnership and Dundee City Council welcome the opportunity to comment on the Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill. It views the Bill as an important landmark and opportunity in this key sector of Scottish public life. It is of significance for our citizens and our communities, as well as for our partners.

Comments focus on issues relating to local cultural entitlements and cultural planning, although reference will also be made to the role of Creative Scotland, and the National Collections.

From the time the Cultural Commission Report was published and the Draft Bill was prepared, it would appear that there was a shift in emphasis from outcomes and benefits of culture to a more limited focus on cultural services.

The work of the Cultural Commission concentrated on the issue of cultural rights and how these might be enshrined in legislation, and there were distinctions made between cultural rights and local cultural entitlements. However, this distinction is unclear in the Bill. The guidance, however, makes reference to the endorsement of the United Nations' Resolution on Cultural Rights by the Forum of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion for Agenda 21 for Culture.

Although, the statement that "*The Scottish Ministers recognise that cultural rights are an integral part of human rights, as is the cultural freedom of individuals and communities*" is very positive, this is not as clearly articulated in the Bill as would have been anticipated following the publication of the Cultural Review.

2 SPECIFIC RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

- **Question 1 - Do you think that developing local cultural entitlements will help to increase participation in cultural activities?**

Our response to this is "yes", although without "entitlement" being clearly defined, it will be difficult to measure impact.

The identification of cultural entitlements will have to be based on agreed strategic priorities, as an understanding of local aspirations for the development of culture is key to its success. Only if local expertise, consultation, planning, marketing and investment are prioritised by the local authorities, working with the national agencies, funding bodies, and other cultural providers, will this agenda be taken forward. Sound audience development strategies and commitment from trained staff will also be necessary. Cultural services can contribute broadly across a wide range of policy areas, including anti-social behaviour, regeneration, health and well-being, and wider lifelong learning agendas. Extensive work has already been undertaken to target the hard-to-reach sections of our community, however a more cohesive approach across Scotland needs to be introduced to increase impact and maximise cost-effectiveness.

Implementing entitlements will present many challenges.

Some citizens will face barriers due to economic circumstance, lack of access to transport, due to disability, or a combination of these factors. Others will be unaware of the cultural offerings already available.

Some of these barriers can be addressed through straightforward interventions such as discounts, however more complex issues arise from this agenda requiring creative engagement and careful design of services

- **Question 2 - If you believe further or alternative measures are necessary, what are they?**

Resources - particularly focused on supporting engagement and participation.

As outlined in the Draft Bill, linking cultural activity to key agendas and community planning activity will create synergies and economies which, in turn, will enable resources to be released. For this to be successful, it will take time and funding will have to be made available to initiate this process.

The pressures on local authority expenditure over recent years means there is little scope for redirecting resources within local authority cultural provision.

The Pathfinders Projects will form a sound basis for the future, but there is a need for on-going funding to enable the experience gained through the projects to be rolled out across the country. It is anticipated that the Dundee Pathfinder will demonstrate a methodology for delivering entitlements, but leave unanswered the questions of how a city like Dundee can resource this approach.

The model used for improving library services - "Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix" - where funding has been linked to the attainment of quality standards and used as an incentive for authorities to improve, has been effective. Although this is short term (funding has been allocated for two years) it does provide a model to help develop thinking and provide support for those taking forward cultural entitlements.

- **Question 3 - How do you think the Scottish Executive and local authorities can best utilise the influence and impact of cultural activity?**

The most recent Dundee Partnership Forum graphically illustrated the richness and diversity of the Cultural Sector in the City. Dundee's image in Scotland, and much further afield, has been changed as a result of its cultural activity. One of the challenges for the City and the Scottish Executive is the relationship between local funding for local provision, and access to national funding for work which is of regional and national significance.

The introduction of cultural planning into the existing community planning framework will require further consideration. Although there are already many short-term projects with a cultural focus being undertaken through community planning, there will be a need to move this activity onto a more stable and sustained business in order to establish it as a core activity.

- **Question 4 - Do you think the initial draft guidance under this Part of the Culture Bill is clear and helpful? Is there anything else it should contain?**

In general terms, the guidance is helpful. The collaborative approach which involved COSLA and VOCAL has contributed positively to the outcome.

- **Question 5 - Do you agree that there should be a single national cultural development body?**

In general terms, the remit outlined for Creative Scotland is reasonable. However Creative Scotland cannot represent all of the sectors taking forward the cultural agenda. For example, the Scottish Museums Council and the Scottish Library and Information Council will still have a significant part to play.

The test of effectiveness is likely to be the relationship between the new body, the Scottish Executive, and local community planning/cultural planning arrangements. If it can function as a partner and can add support, resource, expertise and value to the local delivery, it will be broadly welcomed.

- **Question 6 - Do you agree with the remit proposed for Creative Scotland? Has it the right powers and functions?**

Clarification regarding the role of local authorities, Scottish Enterprise and Creative Scotland is required.

The original support to creative industries provided by Scottish Enterprise has been missing over the recent past, not least because of Scottish Enterprise Tayside's financial difficulties. It is essential for the economy of Dundee and the development of the Cultural Sector that this role is taken forward clearly and adequately funded.

- **Question 7 - Do you agree that Creative Scotland should work in concert with the Scottish Executive to implement national cultural policy?**

Creative Scotland will require to work in concert with the Scottish Executive and local authorities in supporting and promoting the arts across Scotland. A strong partnership with the local authorities will be essential in order that the experience and wide range of skills which will increase participation in cultural opportunities will be fully optimised.

- **Question 8 - Do you agree that the National Collections should remain as constitutionally separate centres of excellence?**

Yes.

- **Question 9 - Do you think the powers and functions proposed for the Collections in the draft Bill are right? If not, how would you improve them?**

The powers proposed would appear to be appropriate. The contribution made by the national institutions in preserving and providing access to Scotland's heritage is significant. There is a clear role for them to work more closely to develop collections across Scotland with other key stakeholders. There is the need for clarity however, on what is meant by "offering advice and assistance to local museums, libraries and galleries". For example, whilst the National Gallery can develop policies for inter-lending and resource-sharing between local authority libraries, they can have no location in identifying the priorities and objectives for local authority library services.

- **Question 10 - What do you think of the name "National Record of Scotland"?**

The name does not adequately reflect the function.