

Matthews B (Barry)

Acknowledged. 90
81275044 M304

From: Fiona Maher [Fiona.Maher@midlothian.gsx.gov.uk]
Sent: 29 March 2007 14:04
To: Cultural Bill Consultation
Subject: Midlothian Response



MidlothianDraftrespMidlothianLibrariesD
onse.doc (3... raftrepson...

This email has been received from an external party and
has been swept for the presence of computer viruses.

Hi Please see attached response from Midlothian Council .There is an additional document from our Library service.

Thank you <<MidlothianDraftresponse.doc>> <<MidlothianLibrariesDraftrepsonse.doc>>

Fiona Maher
Creative Links Officer
Education
Fairfield House
8 Lothian Road
Dalkeith
EH22 3ZG
0131 271 3749
www.midlothian.gov.uk

=====
The information contained in this message may be confidential or legally privileged and is intended for the addressee only.

If you have received this message in error or there are any problems please notify the originator immediately.

If you are not the intended recipient you should not use, disclose, distribute, copy, print, or rely on this e-mail.

All communication sent to or from Midlothian Council may be subject to recording and/or monitoring in accordance with relevant legislation.

Draft Culture Bill (Scotland) Response

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

Yes

In principle we feel that this is a positive development and that entitlements should be determined locally within a National framework. A model of this nature would ensure a sensitivity to local needs with linked to strategic priorities determined under the Community Planning process. In this way, cultural services will support other policy areas such as the anti-social behaviour, regeneration, health and well-being and curriculum for excellence and wider lifelong learning agendas.

The role of the local authority is crucial in this regard, to ensure that in developing entitlements

- the authority's statutory duties are met;
- citizen focus is central to the exercise, and entitlements should be people-centred rather than provider-led;
- accessibility and affordability are recognised as key considerations; and
- services delivered are valued by the public.

Increasing participation in cultural activities will depend on more than developing entitlements, however. Real partnerships must be built at local level between local authorities and their cultural stakeholders to convert entitlement into participation through:

- creating opportunities;
- training; for staff, creative practitioners and local councillors
- staff support;
- audience development strategies;
- sustainability.

Consideration might also be given to developing a continuum of life-long cultural entitlement, from early years provision to services for the elderly. In such an approach, access to cultural activity in schools is an important entitlement for young people. The role of Creative Links Officers and cultural co-ordinators might be enhanced to develop good partnerships across Council service areas, community groups and private sector interests and to use this model to assist in delivering cultural entitlements from cradle to grave.

However there are issues for small local authorities who do not have a distinct department which deals with cultural services and where transport and related costs are a significant factor in accessing provision. Building on existing provision and developing wider opportunities will stretch existing resources and staffing. Raised community expectations may also place an additional burden on councils. The document makes it unclear if additional funding/resources will be available to meet targets set, but there is undoubtedly a link between

evidence of the success of cultural entitlements and the case for additional investment.

2. If you believe further or alternative measures are necessary, what are they?

A local cultural strategy for each authority would assist greatly in addressing LA duties to deliver on Cultural entitlements .The provision of dedicated funding , say for an initial 3 years to kick start the process and assist in meeting costs in putting structures into place to develop, promote, monitor and evaluate local entitlements would be most welcome. The Bill also needs to acknowledge the distinct differences between, Urban, Rural and Semi-rural areas and the related issues that would affect delivery and uptake of cultural entitlements

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

The impact of cultural activity can affect many areas of local life, education, leisure, economic development, tourism, employment, etc and each local authority will address these according to local need. There is also a role here in developing and strengthening local identity. The influence and impact will be directly linked to quality and frequency of experience and equality of opportunity in accessing what is on offer. Initially this will offer a challenge , the actual influence and impact of cultural activity will need to be measured locally in terms of hard and soft outcomes within a National context.

SE and LA's can best utilise the influence and impact by identifying local and national agencies within the formal, informal and voluntary sectors and developing and strengthening partnerships which will assist in delivering on the cultural entitlement agenda.

It would be a measure of the impact to see councillors campaigning from 'cultural' platform.

4. Do you think the initial draft guidance under Part 1 of the Culture Bill is clear and helpful?

Yes

However the guidance makes little or no reference to resourcing or funding and whether local authorities will need to carry out these additional duties within existing staffing and funding.

Creative Scotland

Do you agree that there should be a single national cultural development body/

YES

The inclusion of support for the Creative industries within this body is a very positive one which we hope will assist in developments at a local as well as National level. The Creative industries are a growing force and offer new employment opportunities , we hope that Creative Scotland will promote and highlight routes and pathways into this sector and promote partnerships with agencies such as Cultural Enterprise which can assist in building local capacity of creative entrepreneurs and industries..

5. Do you agree with the remit proposed for Creative Scotland?

Yes

We would like to see the retention of the education department with an additional remit for supporting the Arts within Community settings. Much of the focus currently is on the formal education system and there is a wealth of activity supported through Community Learning and Development which is under recognised and resourced.

Clarification about the role of Creative Scotland is required, however, as there is some potential for a lack of understanding about responsibilities. So, while Creative Scotland is responsible for creative arts and industries, it should be made clearer that it is not the provider of advisory functions across the whole cultural sector. The Scottish Library & Information Council and the Scottish Museums Council are the advisory bodies with clear sectoral expertise and responsibility in their respective areas, and both enjoy wide support from their communities.

Specifically, Creative Scotland should not be given an overarching quality assurance role outwith its functions or expertise. Quality assurance should be in the hands of organisations that have a clear understanding of the sector, such as national advisory bodies and Audit Scotland.

Clearly there are partnership opportunities, but links to agencies and local authorities, which are to develop and deliver entitlements are not clear. To achieve a more cohesive cultural sector, consideration might be given to local authority representation on the Creative Scotland Board, or some other mechanism for national cultural policy development inclusive of local authorities and appropriate national agencies.

Has it the right powers and functions?

YES

6. Do you agree that Creative Scotland should work in concert with the Scottish Executive to implement national cultural policy?

Yes

In essence this should strengthen the position of cultural activity and related issues and create a dialogue and dynamic which will assist in developing and maintaining culture as a vital part of community life in Scotland at many different levels.

Do you agree that the national Collections should remain as constitutionally separate centres of excellence?

Yes

Consideration might be given to including representation from the appropriate strategic advisory bodies on the boards of the national bodies.

Do you think the powers and functions proposed for the collections in the draft Bill are right?

NO

The National Collections have a key role in preserving Scotland's cultural assets, managing collections of national significance and promoting access to them. Providing advice to ministers and library authorities is an important aspect of that role in so far as that advice relates to collections of national significance. However, the proposed new statutory role for the National Library Board "to offer advice and assistance as it considers appropriate to other library and information service providers in Scotland" conflicts with the role of the strategic advisory body, SLIC, and might result in confusion and lack of clarity.

7. What do you think of the name 'National Record of Scotland'

We feel this title is misleading and does not reflect the role of this proposed body

The change of name could cause confusion with the National Archives.

8. Do you agree that the Faculty of Advocates should be able to contribute to the board of the National Library by having one representative?

9. Do you agree that the Collections have the appropriate powers to obtain, loan and dispose of objects for or from their collections? If not, what would you change?

Yes

10. Do you agree that an offence similar to that in the 2003 Act should be introduced in Scotland?

Yes

11. Do you agree local authorities should have a general power to broadcast information about their activities?

Yes

12. Do you think it is necessary to give authorities this power in this Bill, or should local authorities be left to rely on 'the power to advance well-being' in section 20 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003?

LA's should be given the power in this Bill

Midlothian Council Library Service

Response to the Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill and Guidance Consultation Documents

Overview

There needs to be clarity and understanding of how the powers in the Bill and Statutory Guidance will be applied by the Scottish Executive, and so it is imperative that the draft Guidance to local authorities and the draft Bill are adopted as an integrated package.

For over 150 years, public libraries have been contributing to the wealth of cultural provision across Scotland. They sit at the very heart of the nation's cultural life and identity providing services to a large percentage of the population.

School libraries have an important contribution to make, encouraging reading and links with cultural co-coordinators to ensure there are opportunities for participation in culture by young people.

The delivery of high quality information and library services to individuals and communities helps people to develop their skills, realise their aspirations and contribute to the economic growth and well being of the country. New technology and increasing collaboration and resource-sharing is enabling library and information services to play a pivotal role in providing access to culture. Services encourage the use of digital technologies by communities and individuals to contribute to cultural life and to share information and learn about culture.

Proposed Changes to Library Legislation

1. Statutory duty to provide public library services

This authority welcomes the Bill's retention of the statutory duty on local authorities to provide "adequate" library services. However, the Guidance needs to be further developed to provide clarity for service providers which ensures that services remain "adequate". This authority believes that it must have the right to manage and deliver services in the way most appropriate to local circumstances. Nevertheless, Midlothian Council would welcome support in the management of its public library services by the establishment of an underpinning benchmark to define "adequate" service provision. It believes that the Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix (PLQIM) provides such a mechanism.

2. Management of libraries, museums and art galleries

Midlothian Council has concerns regarding the operation of public libraries, museums and art galleries "through another person, for example, through a trust".

- the current wording of the Bill and the explanatory notes which accompany it do not protect the public interest and entitlement to an "adequate" public library service;
- it is acknowledged that there may be advantages to local authorities in managing public library services through charitable trusts: greater management flexibility and financial benefits may be realised. Nevertheless,

- there are no guarantees that savings achieved will be channeled back into cultural services. In other words, this route does not necessarily result in more effective or efficient library services to individuals and communities;
- the introduction of trust status as a management option should only be available once improved public library legislation or statutory guidance is produced, and once the PLQIM is fully operational nationally as the basis for the management of public libraries in Scotland.

Quality Assurance Framework

The proposed development of a strategic quality assurance framework based on EFQM is welcomed. EFQM is already well-established within the public sector and will provide a consistent base from which to measure the success and impact of cultural entitlements.

The development of the Public Library Quality Improvement Matrix will support the entitlements agenda in relation to library services and provide a robust method to define standards, develop evaluation criteria and facilitate library service planning. PLQIM will also support wider policies, such as health, regeneration and lifelong learning within the community planning framework.

The overarching Framework will have cost and capacity issues for the Scottish Executive and local authorities. The Scottish Executive needs to give further consideration how Ministers will deal with non compliance with the legalisation or reporting.

The reporting of performance and outcomes of cultural planning and entitlements are important to the transparency of service delivery to the public, and as such all reports and performance monitoring should be made public.

Education
Midlothian Council
Fairfield House
8 Lothian Road
Dalkeith
EH22 3ZG

Education

Director
Donald S Mackay

Midlothian

2 May 2007

Greig Chalmers
Scottish Executive
Education Department
Cultural Policy
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ



Dear Greig

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please find enclosed form with regards to permissions to make our response available to the public.

Yours sincerely

Fiona Maher
Creative Links Officer
fiona.maher@midlothian.gov.uk

Your Ref:
Our Ref:

Tel 0131 271 3749
Fax 0131 271 3751
www.midlothian.gov.uk