

CONSTITUTION, EUROPE, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

12th Meeting, 2023, Session 6

20 April 2023

Culture in Communities

1. The Scottish Government's [Culture Strategy](#) recognises the importance of taking a 'place-based' approach to culture, giving people a greater say in shaping the cultural life of their local communities. It also identifies the role that taking a place-based approach to culture can play in developing communities.
2. At its meeting on 26 January 2023, the Committee agreed to undertake an inquiry focused on this idea of a place-based approach to culture within communities in Scotland, with the aim of understanding good practice and barriers to place-based cultural policy.
3. Through this inquiry, the Committee is seeking to understand—
 - How do national and local layers of government, along with the third sector, complement each other to ensure that communities have opportunities to take part in cultural activities?
 - How is unmet cultural need determined? And who decides this?
 - What does good 'place-based' cultural policy look like in practice?
4. The [call for views](#) on this inquiry opened on Friday 17 February and closed on Friday 7 April. It received 57 submissions which are available to view [online](#).
5. At this meeting, the Committee will take evidence from—
 - Kirsty Cumming, Chief Executive, Community Leisure UK
 - Heather Stuart, Chief Executive, OnFife
 - Billy Garrett, Director of Culture, Tourism and Events, Glasgow Life
 - Katie Nicoll, Cultural Regeneration Lead Officer, Renfrewshire Council
 - Kim Slater, Sport and Culture Service Manager, Moray Council
 - Rebecca Coggins, Principal Officer, Arts and Museums, Dumfries and Galloway Council
6. This evidence session will give the Committee the opportunity to hear from local authority culture services and arms-length culture trusts on how they ensure that local communities have opportunities to participate in cultural activities.

7. In line with the themes of the inquiry, the roundtable will consider the following key themes—

- **Local and national government** – e.g., how local authorities and arms-length culture trusts work with national government, as well as third sector partners, to ensure that communities have opportunities to take part in cultural activities, including how they engage with national place-based initiatives at a local level;
- **Unmet cultural need** – e.g., how local authorities and culture trusts seek to determine unmet cultural need within communities and take steps to develop and support new and existing cultural activities;
- **Place-based cultural policy** – e.g., how local authorities and culture trusts are adopting a place-based approach to culture and the extent to which they are taking a strategic approach to adopting place-based cultural policy, including through community planning.

8. The following papers are attached—

- Annexe A: SPICe briefing
- Annexe B: Summary of the submissions received in the call for views
- Annexe C: Written submissions to the call for views from Community Leisure, Glasgow Life, Moray Council, and Dumfries and Galloway Council.

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Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

20 April 2023

Culture in communities

Introduction

The Committee has agreed to undertake an inquiry to explore how culture and participation in cultural activities can flourish in our local communities. The aims of the inquiry are to understand—

- how do national and local layers of government, along with the third sector, complement each other to ensure that communities have opportunities to take part in cultural activities?
- how is unmet cultural need determined? And who decides this?
- what does good ‘place-based’ cultural policy look like in practice

The Committee will be undertaking visits to local areas to explore how this works in practice. This session will be with representatives from local authorities and Arms’ Length External Organisations which have responsibility for Culture services.

Funding

This inquiry is not specifically about funding and the Committee has undertaken a significant amount of work looking at public sector funding for arts, culture and heritage.

As members will be aware, the longer term (e.g. over around a decade) trends of local government spend on culture are downwards, particularly in real terms. The IFS [recently reported](#) that local government spending on Culture fell by 29% in real terms between 2009–10 and 2019–20.

Local authorities' role

Local authorities [have a duty to ensure](#) that there is adequate provision of facilities for the inhabitants of its area for recreational, sporting, cultural and social activities. Local authorities have a duty to manage, regulate and control its libraries and museums or galleries – and these should be available free of charge. Section 163(2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 places a duty on local authorities to secure the provision of adequate library facilities for all persons in their area.

The role local authorities can take in supporting culture and arts in their areas can be quite extensive. For example, the City of Edinburgh's new [culture strategy](#) set out its role. It said that it is "responsible for providing political leadership and governance for a comprehensive range of services across the city. It functions as a collector and dispenser of public funds, a licensor, a guardian of public safety, a developer, a facilitator and an influencer. The Council has various roles, connections, and responsibilities across the cultural sector. In some cases, it is a venue owner and/or programmer...; in some cases, it is the landlord...; sometimes it is a financial supporter or advocate and sometimes it is a facilitator."

The quote above, while an extensive list of activities, will not be exhaustive. For example, local authorities also have responsibilities for education, community development and transport which in different ways will affect how individuals and communities are able to access cultural events and collections. Also, cultural services will impact (or have the potential to impact) on a range of other policy areas which a local authority will have an interest in, such as public health, tourism, community development etc.

A key issue the committee may wish to explore in this inquiry is how the range of local authority powers, policies and physical assets support new and existing cultural activities.

What is place-based policy?

The Committee is looking at how culture is supported in and by local communities. The current policy frame for this type of work is "placemaking" or "place-based policy". This language appears in Scottish Government and local government policy documents, including as a key pillar of the Culture Strategy for Scotland.

In [2019 the Scottish Government and COSLA agreed to adopt](#) a "Place Principle to help overcome organisational and sectoral boundaries, to encourage better collaboration and community involvement, and improve the impact of combined energy, resources and investment." Key to this principle is the consideration of the potential of people, physical and natural assets in a place and understanding how these interact and how policy can work within this existing framework to improve outcomes.

This is not a new idea. For example, the [Glasgow Eastern Area Renewal scheme](#) could be said to have taken a place-based approach in the 70's and 80's and there are several other examples.

The [Improvement Service published a report on a research project in 2016](#) looking at approaches taken by Scottish local authorities at the time and the wider literature on place-based policy. This noted that while there was no one agreed definition of a place-based approach, it found a number of common themes—

- Public services working in partnership with each other, the third and business sectors and communities to plan, design, resource, build and deliver services around people, families and communities in the most disadvantaged communities in order to support them to improve their life opportunities and outcomes.
- Making the most of assets / capabilities already available in local communities and continuing to develop the capacity of people, families and communities to support self-help and independence.
- Seeking to support people, families and communities to become more engaged, empowered, connected and resilient.
- Seeking to reduce the demand for services through early intervention and prevention approaches.
- Enabling public service agencies to become catalysts and facilitators rather than providers of services.

Culture strategy

The 2020 [Culture Strategy for Scotland](#) lists the consideration of place as “guiding principle” of the strategy. Members will be aware that the strategy is organised around three “ambitions”. The ambition of *Strengthening Culture* is largely concerned with how policy can support the creation of culture through funding or in-kind support to the sector, e.g. training, business support or bringing people together. The ambition of *Transforming through culture* is concerned largely with recognising the value culture can have to supporting outcomes in other policy areas – for example in supporting health and education outcomes or tourism. The ambition of *Empowering Through Culture* addresses participation and supporting culture at community levels.

Under the final ambition, *Empowering Through Culture*, the strategy says that the Government would “support Creative Scotland and the other national cultural organisations to realise the potential that culture has to achieve local outcomes.” It also said that the Government would work with local authorities, culture trusts and Community Planning Partnerships to seek to “share local knowledge, align resources and work in partnership so that the part that culture can and does play in delivering the priorities that are most important for local communities is visible and valued.” The Strategy stated—

“Places and people underpin culture and communities in and across Scotland and generate a distinct sense of place, identity and confidence. Adoption of the Place Principle can help realise our vision of an inclusive and extended view of culture which recognises and celebrates the value and importance of the emerging, the everyday and grassroots culture and creativity.

“A collaborative, place-based approach can help create the right conditions for culture to thrive and partnerships between local government, cultural and creative organisations, businesses and organisations in Scotland's most deprived communities can and do realise a wide range of outcomes for people including improved health and wellbeing, social cohesion and reducing inequality.”

The strategy also argued that including arts and culture into wider community planning would help deliver on a wide set out outcomes. It said, “arts and culture can contribute to many of the often deep-rooted and complex themes that Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) typically prioritise in their Local Outcomes Improvement Plans, such as around inclusive growth and improving employment prospects, positive physical and mental health, children's wellbeing and sustaining fragile communities.”

The extent to which local authorities refer to the Culture Strategy or use it to influence local plans or strategies is unclear. There are a number of actions in the Strategy which relate to local authorities. These include:

- Work with Creative Scotland to map local authority support for culture and to explore future models of collaboration between national and local bodies
- Launch a Creative Communities programme in partnership with Inspiring Scotland and with support from Creative Scotland - a new initiative to support and empower individuals and communities to further develop their own cultural activity
- Work in partnership with culture trusts and local authorities, including in Community Planning Partnerships local networks and CoSLA to realise local outcomes across Scotland
- Work with Culture Conveners from Scottish local government and culture trusts including through establishing a joint meeting of arts and culture conveners
- Work with national organisations to help them plan their community activities to ensure the widest possible reach across Scotland

Aside from the second bullet, it has not been reported how much progress has been made on these actions. Therefore, the extent to which local authorities have engaged with these actions is not clear.

The National Partnership for Culture was set up to take forward the Culture Strategy. Its remit was to “provide an overview of culture in Scotland, supporting more strategic and connected approaches across government, the sector and beyond, to

ensure that its transformative potential for everyone can be realised.” A representative from Fife Culture Trust sits on the NPC.

The NPC [published a report in March 2022](#) with a number of recommendations for the Government. In relation to communities and place, the NPC recommendations included—

- National initiatives should be joined up and both inform and be influenced by local and regional initiatives; and
- Equity of access to culture should be prioritised at a national level to support local, grassroots delivery.

The Scottish Government [responded to the recommendations in September 2022](#).

National place-based initiatives

There are a range of nationally funded cultural place-based projects. One of the key questions of this inquiry is how “national and local layers of government, along with the third sector, complement each other to ensure that communities have opportunities to take part in cultural activities”.

The nature of cultural activities is that there will be a range of funders and local authorities will commonly add financial support bodies which receive national funding. Perhaps the key question for the current panel would be how local authorities identify gaps in provision and where appropriate attract national funding for activities which the local authority cannot undertake on its own.

Creative Communities

The Creative Communities Programme was launched in 2020 and is an identifiable output from the Culture Strategy for Scotland. Creative Communities is funded jointly by the Culture and Justice Directorates of the Scottish Government and managed by Inspiring Scotland.

This project aimed to support communities to develop new initiatives involving culture and creative arts. It focused support on people and places where social or geographical circumstances make engaging with cultural activities more challenging.

Between 2019-20 and 2021-22 the total Scottish Government spend to date on the Creative Communities programme is £2million; made up of £1.4million from the Culture portfolio and £600k from the Justice portfolio. There was no Scottish Government funding in 2022-23 and it is not yet clear if there will be funding in the current financial year.

Place Partnership Programme

Creative Scotland’s Place Partnership Programme aims to encourage and support local partners to work together with their creative communities and Creative Scotland. The programme supports local groups to come together to promote

collaborative working, build capacity and deliver creative activity. This programme is particularly aimed at area of Scotland where the cultural infrastructure is comparatively less well developed.

Culture Collective

Creative Scotland's Culture Collective programme is a network of 26 participatory arts projects, which are shaped by local communities alongside artists and creative organisations. The Culture Collective programme provides a network for those projects to share resources, learning and experiences.

Sistema

Sistema Scotland is a registered Scottish charity that runs the Big Noise programme. The Big Noise programme is currently operating in five communities – Raploch (Stirling), Govanhill (Glasgow), Torry (Aberdeen), Wester Hailes (Edinburgh) and Douglas (Dundee). In June 2021, Sistema Scotland announced its new project would begin in Spring 2022 in Wester Hailes, Edinburgh.

Sistema Scotland's 2020-21 strategy described its Big Noise programme—

“Big Noise is a high-quality music education and social change programme working intensively with children, young people and families. The model is place-based in targeted, geographically identified communities, based on early intervention and long-term commitment and providing a continuous pathway from birth to adulthood. The programme is immersive and follows a curriculum designed to encourage continued engagement alongside steady and continuous progress. Big Noise uses the symphony orchestra as a community through which children gain an invaluable range of life skills and experiences. They develop confidence, teamwork, resilience, pride and aspiration as well as the capacity to work hard, supporting them to reach their potential and lead successful and fulfilled lives.”

National funding programmes

Funding through national bodies such as Creative Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland and Museums Galleries Scotland will contribute to the cultural ecosystems across Scotland. The bodies, individuals and buildings that these funds support will be cultural assets in the communities in which they sit and/or work.

National Performing Companies

The National Performing Companies undertake a variety of work outside of the theatres and concert halls of Scotland's cities. This can include bringing the artform to smaller venues, such as Scottish Opera's [Opera Highlights](#) tour, or the Scottish [Chamber Orchestra's work in Craigmillar, Edinburgh](#), which aims to build on “the area's extraordinary history of Community Arts [and] re-energise creative, intergenerational activity with and for diverse groups, and to connect the community with a national cultural resource in the form of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.”

The Committee plans to hear from NPCs in a future meeting.

Local authorities and Community planning partnerships

CPPs are intended to enable public bodies to work together along with local communities to design and deliver better services. One might expect these forums to consider both how a range of services could impact on the availability of cultural activities across local communities and how cultural activities could contribute to a range of outcomes.

Each local authority area has a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan. The LOIP should be clearly based on active participation by communities and community bodies and on a good understanding of the needs of the communities in the local area. A key consideration of LOIPs is to reduce socio-economic inequalities.

Schedule 1 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 includes HES as a statutory partner in Community Planning. Creative Scotland is not included in that schedule.

SPICe has undertaken a speedy desktop exercise to see whether culture is explicitly mentioned in the LOIP of six local authority areas. Where there is also a clear arts or culture strategy in place, this is highlighted. These are detailed in the Annexe to this paper. The six areas were chosen to capture a range of different population sizes without reference to the current panel.

Of the six LOIPs examined, there was little or no mention of the role of culture and heritage in supporting better outcomes. However, several of the local authorities had separate culture strategies and representative cultural bodies. There were examples where more recent local culture strategies sought to influence community planning processes.

The Committee may wish to explore the level of community planning at which local authorities consider culture and the extent to which there is a joined-up strategic approach.

The [National Partnership for Culture's report in March 2022](#) recommended that local authorities "use culture as part of their delivery across wider local authority services." The report was aimed at Ministers and as such, the [Government's response \(published September 2022\)](#) did not address the recommendation directly. It said—

"We are working with partners to develop actions that support national and local organisations working together to support culture, which will be captured in the forthcoming Culture Strategy Action Plan. This work will complement meetings between Ministers and the Culture Conveners group, to identify ways to strengthen and review models of co-operation around the principals of recovery and renewal and through key workstreams such as education, health and wellbeing."

Participation

Like the concept of culture, concepts of participation can be very broad. Under a subheading of “A broad view of Culture” the [Culture Strategy for Scotland stated—](#)

“People engage in culture in a huge range of different ways: formal and informal; historic; traditional; and emerging and it is often through culture that social networks and relationships are formed. For many people in Scotland, culture is a self-determined part of everyday life, and it is often through local, community-led culture and heritage where the greatest transformations can occur. ...

“Cultural engagement and participation is currently measured relative to more formal and established forms of culture, many of which are free and accessible. However not everyone participates in these forms of cultural engagement. People engage in cultural activity in many different ways and how that is measured and reported must be reconsidered to better reflect the nature and breadth of cultural engagement.”

The [National Performance Framework’s culture outcome](#) is—

We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely

This has four indicators underneath it. Two of which are:

- Attendance at cultural events or places of culture
- Participation in a cultural activity

Progress on these indicators are based on the [Scottish Household Survey](#). This measures a wide [range of places/events](#) and [activities](#). The latest SHS was undertaken in 2020. It found—

“In 2020, 44 per cent of adults in Scotland had attended or visited a cultural event or place in the last 12 months. When trips to the cinema are excluded, the attendance figure was lower at 39 per cent. [...] the most common places that adults attended were historic places (18 per cent) and the cinema (17 per cent). There was a lower share of adults that visited the library (13 per cent), museums (12 per cent) and art galleries and theatres (8 per cent). 56 per cent of adults had not attended a cultural event or visited a place of culture in the last 12 months. This may in part reflect the impact of Covid-19 on opportunities for attending different cultural and heritage settings during 2020.”

And—

“In 2020, 83 per cent of adults in Scotland participated in a cultural activity. Reading was by far the most common cultural activity. When reading is excluded, participation was 62 per cent. The next most popular activity was viewing performances online (27 per cent), followed by crafts (23 per cent).

Less than one in five people (17 per cent) had not participated in any cultural activity in the last 12 months.”

The [National Partnership for Culture’s report in March 2022](#) recommended that the indicators be reviewed. It described the indicators as “relatively narrow quantitative indicators, which are being used to measure a largely qualitative outcome”.

The culture strategy highlighted that there can be particular barriers for certain groups of people. It said—

“We know that poverty, ageing, health, inequality, communication and disability can all impact individuals and communities’ ability to access and participate in culture and tackling this must be a priority for the culture sector in Scotland.”

These barriers are essentially push factors (or lack thereof). That is characteristics of the individual which may affect how likely they are to participate in cultural activities. There are pull factors too – for example how close or accessible the activities are or perhaps how attractive facilities are to users (see for example Understanding Everyday Participation Project paper on [The effect of place and space on patterns of participation in libraries and leisure centres](#)).

As noted above, local authorities have a duty to ensure adequate provision of facilities for the inhabitants of its area for recreational, sporting, cultural and social activities. Understanding participation would link to how one considers adequate provision. Local authorities understanding and measures of participation would likely impact on how they approach meeting this duty.

Rights based approaches

The Culture Strategy lists Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a “guiding principle”. Article 27 (i) says—

Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

Art. 27 of the UDHR was repeated and somewhat expanded on in Art. 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which is one of the instruments the Scottish Government plans to [incorporate into a future human rights bill](#).

Generally, in this paper the discussion is about access or participation in cultural activities by groups or in communities. A rights-based approach encompasses individuals in that everyone individually is a rights holder. The Human Rights Consortium Scotland produced a paper in March of this year discussing the [realisation of cultural rights](#).

Members may wish to explore local examples of how human rights obligations in relation to participation in culture are reflected in local policy and practice.

Ned Sharratt, Senior Researcher (Education, Culture), SPICe

14 April 2023

Note: Committee briefing papers are provided by SPICe for the use of Scottish Parliament committees and clerking staff. They provide focused information or respond to specific questions or areas of interest to committees and are not intended to offer comprehensive coverage of a subject area.

The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP www.parliament.scot

Annexe: Selected CPP plans and Local Culture Strategies

SPICe undertook a short desktop analysis of six local authorities. These local authorities were chosen randomly but ensuring that there is a spread of population-sizes.

The main question was whether culture, heritage and the arts were explicitly part of the Community Planning Partnerships' (CPPs) Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs). CPPs are intended to enable public bodies to work together along with local communities to design and deliver better services. One might expect these forums to consider both how a range of services could impact on the availability of cultural activities across local communities and how cultural activities could contribute to a range of outcomes. The LOIPs considered here generally do not explicitly include culture and heritage as means to support better outcomes.

A secondary question was whether local cultural strategies sought to influence the CPP process. Not every local authority has a culture strategy, neither would they necessarily be expected to. In contrast to the LOIPs, the more recent culture strategies looked at here are seeking to place cultural work within community planning processes more widely. The culture strategies themselves may be of interest. Several undertook surveys of the cultural assets in the local communities and strong place-based themes to their approaches. All have a focus on participation.

Orkney Islands

[Orkney's LOIP](#) covers 2023-2030. There are three priorities, which are: tackling cost of living; sustainable development and local equality.

There is no explicit mention of arts or culture underneath strategic aims of the plan. Although under Sustainable Development, there is an aim to adopt and implement Community Wealth Building.

Orkney has a separate [Arts Strategy](#) which was published in 2017. This was developed by the Orkney Arts Forum and has three themes: People, Place, and Participation. This strategy notes that there is evidence that cultural activities support wellbeing and infers that this should be part of the community planning process.

Argyll and Bute

[Argyll and Bute's LOIP](#) covers 2013-2023. This had six long term outcomes covering: the economy; infrastructure; education, skills and training; children and young people; people living active, healthier and independent lives; and safer and stronger communities.

Culture and heritage is mentioned under the first and sixth of these outcomes. Both as a means of supporting economic growth and in supporting communities. However, cultural outcomes were not included in the performance monitoring

measures nor in the actions identified in the most recent (2019) [published performance information on the LOIP](#).

There is a [Strategic Action Plan for Culture, Heritage and Arts in Argyll and Bute](#) which dates from 2014. This is fairly technical in nature and it is not clear whether it remains current. Argyll and Bute has a [Culture, Heritage and Arts Assembly](#) which is a network for the Culture, Heritage and Arts Sector in Argyll.

East Renfrewshire

East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust is a member of the CPP and East Renfrewshire's LOIP is contained within a [wider community plan](#) which covers 2018-2028. One of the actions under the LOIP is to ensure that communities are connected to "services, leisure opportunities and employment/training".

Angus

Angus' [LOIP](#) is organised under: the economy; people; and place. Under the third of these, the plan references monitoring the [Angus Culture Plan](#) which is described as "an exciting forward plan and additional support for Angus' local culture and heritage sector" as it emerges from the pandemic. The measures in the LOIP itself do not have a culture or heritage indicator.

The culture plan itself includes a cultural assets mapping exercise and includes aims such as, "Everyone in Angus has the opportunity to engage with, enjoy and benefit from its culture and heritage. An authentic and representative cultural programme is increasing participation and empowering young people to be active in cultural decision-making." This strategy also seeks to ensure that culture and heritage are considerations of the local CPP. Following the strategy, the local ALEO established Angus Culture and Heritage Consortium which is intended to support ensuring culture and heritage sectors are more closely involved across a range of policy areas.

Perth and Kinross

The [LOIP for Perth and Kinross](#) covers 2022 to 2032. It has five priorities: Reducing Poverty; Physical and Mental Wellbeing; Digital Participation; Learning and Development; and Employability. No mention is made of culture, arts or heritage in this LOIP.

Perth and Kinross has an ALEO delivering the local authority's culture services, Culture Perth & Kinross. CPK is not listed in the organisations involved in Community Planning. CPK has a [strategic plan](#) which covers 2022-2024 but is an operating plan for the organisation rather than a plan for the sectors in the local area.

Highland

The structure of [community planning in Highland](#) includes a number of policy-specific forums.

The Highland Culture Strategic Board was formed in 2007. It aims to provide “leadership and coordination in the planning of support for artists, the arts and cultural activity in Highland”.

Highland also has a cultural strategy called "Take Pride: Take Part". Unfortunately, at the time of writing, access to the relevant websites was down.

City of Edinburgh

[Edinburgh's LOIP](#) runs from 2022 - 2028 and has a focus on poverty and inequality. It has three workstreams: increasing household incomes; access to work, learning and training opportunities; and making communities good places to live in. The LOIP does not mention culture, the arts or heritage directly.

In December 2022 the City of Edinburgh [council agreed a culture strategy](#) which covers 2023-2030. This has three main aims: residents can easily access cultural experiences that they find meaningful in their local area, and everyone has the opportunity to contribute to shaping local cultural provision; that creative practitioners are welcomed and supported; and that the city remains a “world leading cultural capital” and is a host which is environmentally responsible and “the diversity of its residents is celebrated”. Under the first aim, the strategy says that the local authority will “ensure cultural provision is embedded in Council plans for 20-minute neighbourhoods and community planning.”

Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee

April 2023

Culture in communities, summary of themes of submissions

Introduction

The Committee undertook a call for views on its inquiry on culture in communities. The call for views was opened on 17 February and closed on 7 April.

Through its inquiry, the Committee is seeking to understand:

- how do national and local layers of government, along with the third sector, complement each other to ensure that communities have opportunities to take part in cultural activities?
- how is unmet cultural need determined? And who decides this?
- what does good 'place-based' cultural policy look like in practice?

The call for views asked respondents to give the committee details of the types of activities they participate in or organise and what is in place to support this or any barriers.

The Committee received 57 responses, a little under half were from individuals the remainder from organisations. The Committee asked respondents to provide the local authority in which they lived. The large majority of individuals were from largely rural local authorities. The majority of organisations, not including the national organisations such as Creative Scotland, were based in Edinburgh or Glasgow.

This paper is intended for members to highlight some of the themes of the responses. This paper is not an in-depth quantitative analysis of the responses.

This paper is in two substantive parts, reflecting the themes from submissions from individuals and organisations respectively.

Individuals

All of the individuals that responses to the Committee attended cultural events in their local area. Many of the individuals also organised cultural activities.

Types of cultural activities

Respondents were engaged in wide range of cultural activities. These included:

- cinema
- community events
- live pop concerts at large and small venues
- attending opera, theatre and classical music including national performing companies
- participating in traditional and classical music
- talks
- local festivals.

Barriers to organising or participating

Travel

Respondents noted that a lack of public transport is a barrier to accessing cultural events in rural areas. Others noted that travel to a large city to attend events, specifically Edinburgh, is not always reliable and convenient.

Lack of options

Some respondents from rural areas also highlighted a lack of options to participate and attend cultural activities.

A number of respondents highlighted particularly a lack of options for young people and young families.

One respondent from the Highlands noted that there were more events during the tourism season.

Accessibility for disabled people

Two respondents noted that disabled people's needs were not always catered for. Particularly in relation to events where standing is the norm.

Venues

The cost and availability of venues was a theme in these responses and both positive and negative examples were provided.

Respondents mentioned a wide range of venues where cultural activities take place. These include:

- Pub
- Community halls/centres
- Churches
- Schools
- Private homes
- Museums

One issue raised was the costs of hiring spaces for rehearsals – both positive and negative experiences were set out. For example, one respondent said—

“Hall hire over the years has become increasingly expensive and less available. The venue used by one of the orchestras has no source of ventilation since the church hall used hasn’t windows capable of opening, thus increasing infection risks... A door could be opened, but it is an external fire door which reduces the temperature and creates a risk of intruders. The acoustics in this hall are poor. The orchestra, however, has been unable to source a suitable alternative venue with cupboard space and which is affordable.”

A respondent described the costs of hire for a local school as “extortionate for a community activity”. Another said—

“The cost of hall hire for concerts is also prohibitive. Council run venues previously used became unaffordable when upgraded, and so less suitable and often smaller venues are [used].”

Other respondents described very good relationships with venues, one respondent said, “without the support of [...] churches in providing rehearsal space and hosting our concerts, it is unlikely that the organisation could continue to be as successful as it has been for the past 20+ years.” Another described the management of a community centre as “outstanding”.

Individuals’ contributions

Another key theme from these submissions was the value of committed volunteers in organising and maintaining the cultural scenes in their local communities. This is

both set out explicitly, where respondents thank individuals or implicitly through respondents describing the work that they do in their communities.

Many of the activities described were established and are continued by individuals and volunteers.

Funding

Some respondents also highlighted a lack of funds for activities. One said—

“It is the lack of funding from our local council and limited national funding available to supports our cultural organisations and creatives to develop and deliver these exceptional creative experiences, regularly in our rural communities that is the main barrier to access.”

Organisations

The value of community and volunteer-led activities

The submission from Volunteer Scotland said, “when considering the availability and variety of cultural activities in local communities, it is important to acknowledge that the vast majority of such activity is dependent on the efforts of volunteers.” Creative Lives’ submission said—

“There is growing optimism in the volunteer-led, community based creative sector. 91% of creative groups from across a diverse range of artforms representing everything from visual arts and crafts through music, singing, drama and dance, to writing, photography and film have expressed their confidence in the sectors’ ability to deliver activities that promote greater connection with others in the community, that maintain or improve mental health and wellbeing, and boost learning or share skills. ...

“Governments should recognise the diversity and scale of culture in Scotland, by acknowledging that creativity extends far beyond the boundaries of the professional and publicly funded arts sector. Locally based, volunteer-led creative groups should be given equal consideration to other cultural bodies whenever culture in Scotland is being considered.”

The submission from Orkney Islands Council said—

“Most activity in Orkney is entirely grass roots, home grown and volunteer managed. There is a very pro-active approach to both very localised events and the bigger ones that folk volunteer to support, such as the St Magnus Festival and Folk Festival.”

Bill Macaulay from the Heart of Scotstoun Music Group explained how from very small beginnings he had set up a music group. He said—

“What’s needed basically is someone to take the reins, kick start it, enthuse others. Most organisations are happy to give you space if you reciprocate their help with entertaining their groups.”

Creative Scotland’s submission said—

“It is important that local and national government and national bodies recognise the individual needs and requirements of different communities and places, and of different artforms and creative practices. Cultural practices which do not necessarily take place in theatres or music venues, including Gaelic culture and Traditional Arts, are vital to the cultural life and heritage of communities. Supporting and trusting people, artists and communities to create their own artistic infrastructure and drive their own creative lives, without pre-determined expectations, would allow communities to explore unmet cultural needs. This may include, for example, funding for screen equipment for local community halls or to create festivals and performances.”

Place-making approaches

The Royal Town Planning Institute explained the approach to placemaking and culture’s place within this.

“Placemaking refers to the design and development of high-quality spaces that prioritise the health, happiness and well-being of individuals. The collaborative nature of town planning ensures a wide variety of actors are involved in creating and improving places over time. The role of culture is fundamental to successful town centres. The cultural value and heritage of a community can determine the design, function and use of public spaces and their infrastructure.”

The Stove Network described its approach as ‘Creative Placemaking’. It said, “supporting communities to grow their own culture inspires people from backgrounds not represented in culture to start on pathways to careers in culture and begins to build a critical mass for culture to be self-sustaining in communities.”

The Museums Association stated—

“Culture and heritage create a sense of belonging, encourage community engagement and support active participation in decision-making. It is our shared culture and heritage that makes our communities what they are.

“Good “place based” cultural policy involves empowering the local community to create a cultural offering that caters to their specific needs. It requires co-production, where cultural institutions and communities work together as equal partners, so that communities have ownership over the cultural offering. Place based cultural policy needs to be adequately resourced and funding needs to be consistent across local areas.”

Creative Scotland’s submission made a similar point to the Museum Association. It added—

“Policy and strategy development should be co-created – involving local people, local creative and cultural organisations and groups, as well as third sector, private and public organisations and local and national government. It is important that place-based cultural policy does not just exist in a silo, but embodies the Place Principle, and includes policy areas from health to planning. Place-based approaches should prioritise inclusion, ensuring that it is not only the loud voices which are heard, but that the culture and traditions of communities and places are valued alongside diverse voices and cultures, and proactively include marginalised groups.”

Creative Scotland also highlighted its Culture Collective programme, which is a network of 26 participatory arts projects, which are shaped by local communities alongside artists and creative organisations. Creative Scotland said that the Culture Collective provides a network for those projects “to share resources, learning and experiences”. It also sees the programme as an opportunity to demonstrate the “crucial importance of participatory arts projects for artists, for communities and for the future.”

Unmet demand

The Sport and Culture Service for the Moray Council said—

“There would most certainly be unmet demand in various communities but this would vary quite significantly across each locality area as it often comes down to facilities available within a locality area and the local community interests (willingness of volunteers to organise activities).”

A theme from a number of submissions was the need to map provision and participation (e.g. Festivals Edinburgh). Glasgow Life’s submission said that data it gathers on museum attendees allows it to “plan strategically in terms of prioritising those audiences who are currently under-represented in our visitor profiles at a service level and then at a venue level, and in turn monitor against city-wide statistics ... we can [also] compare the impact of our audience development activity.”

Collaborative approaches

The Stove Network suggested that one way to improve participatory and place-based approaches would be through improved local collaboration. Specifically, over the use of venues and “innovative ways of meeting aims and ambitions together”. The Stove Network suggested greater participation of the cultural sector in Community Planning Partnerships, health forums and Regional Economic Partnerships.

The Sport and Culture Service for the Moray Council agreed but said that this is “very difficult due to the diverse nature of what constitutes culture and the volume of organisations (both public, private and third sector) that organise cultural activities”. It continued—

“Culture covers a wide array of themes - music, dance, arts, libraries, museums, drama, theatre, festivals, galas, Highland Games, literacy,

expressive arts, tourism etc etc - the difficulty is how we can collaborate this from a place based perspective as all will attract different audiences, link to different local or national strategies or be driven by different communities of practice. [We are] encouraged to have a Culture Strategy for Scotland. Within our Local Authority, Cultural Development crosses over Sport & Culture and Economic Development.”

The submission from Orkney Islands Council also noted the importance of a coherent strategic vision. It said that “lots of small players are working very hard to make what motivates them happen - it is hard to marshal and often there is a concern that to come together might be detrimental to the individual projects and programmes.”

The Edinburgh Collective’s submission explained that it sees its role to solve the problem of “a combined lack of connectivity, collaboration, and support within the Edinburgh creative scene ... by developing our strong network of artists, engaging and growth our audience, and increasing our reputation as a leader in the Edinburgh creative ecosystem”.

Dumfries and Galloway Council said that it is currently working to establish a local Cultural Partnership which is intended to take forward the local authority area’s Culture Strategy. This submission also highlighted collaboration and connectivity within the creative scene and beyond as a theme of discussions with local stakeholders. It said—

“The region’s creativity, culture and heritage community requires support to improve how information is shared, leading to more effective planning, more awareness of what’s available, the development of new partnerships with other sectors, and the ability to influence policy makers.”

Creative Scotland’s submission highlighted the key role of local authorities (or ALEOs) in supporting their local cultural scene. However, it noted that budget pressures had impacted on the capacity of local authorities to take on this role which impacts on wider collaborative work. It said—

“The reduction in the Arts Development function of Local Authorities, creates barriers and a lack of consistent provision across Scotland. In some areas, creative networks and cultural organisations have capacity to provide the advice, funding, and connection to national opportunities for the creative sector in their area, however, the loss of Arts Development services in Local Authorities can result in significant challenges for national and local government, and national bodies, to work collaboratively for the benefit of communities.”

Museums Galleries Scotland stated that collaboration and a place-based approach is a priority within its new strategy. However, MGS also said a lack of resources and capacity in the museums and galleries sector impacts on the ability to collaborate and connect.

Creative Scotland’s submission highlighted its Place Partnership Programme. This aims to encourage and support local partners to work together with their creative

communities and Creative Scotland. The programme supports local groups to come together to promote collaborative working, build capacity and deliver creative activity. This programme is particularly aimed at area of Scotland where the cultural infrastructure is comparatively less well developed.

Venues

The Sport and Culture Service for the Moray Council said that a lack venue availability and unsuitable and older venues could be a barrier to supporting cultural activities. Community Leisure UK's submission noted that some venues had not been re-opened after the pandemic due to low demand or a need to upgrade the facilities. It said—

“A combination of escalating operating costs, and reduced investment and income levels creates an unsustainable landscape, which therefore poses significant barriers to growing local provision with uncertainty over spaces for cultural activities and everyday creativity to take place.

“Furthermore, across the local public culture sector, the age and condition of some cultural venues and facilities and associated maintenance costs also require consideration, with investment needed into these venues, particularly reflecting the role of the sector to support progress towards net zero. Where there are listed buildings, planning permission and investment for decarbonisation proves even more challenging.”

Creative Lives' submission also raised concerns about the affordability of local venues and the longer-term viability of venues run by local councils or arms-length culture and leisure trusts. It suggested that more partnership approaches should be pursued to support venues' continued use, saying—

“Local authorities and those in decision-making positions should look to ease the burden of bureaucracy on volunteer-led creative groups and take an enabling approach to working with their local creative organisations who may be able to help keep venues open or share the use and maintenance of assets.”

North Edinburgh Arts' submission noted that its facilities were brought into community ownership in 2022 and it is seeking to extend its facilities.

Also in Edinburgh, the submission from Stellar Quines said that there is “a lack of local cultural activity in Edinburgh, particularly at the grassroots, fringe level with a lack of live music spaces and the cost of making culture being pretty high”. Paul MacAlindin from the Glasgow Barons noted that in Govan—

“We have some derelict buildings which could be repurposed for community cultural use, but are being held by private owners. This is a barrier in the community's eyes.”

The Scottish Library and Information Council said—

“For many members of the public, local libraries are the first place they experience and engage in a range of cultural experiences. The success of the delivery of programmes depends on trained staff or ability to commission someone to deliver a programme. Many programmes which run in public libraries are free to access and may be delivered by a third party i.e., not library staff but the venue being used as a point of access for a third party.

“Libraries are trusted safe spaces in communities hence why they are ideally placed to host a range of cultural activity and programmes.”

Transport

As with the responses from individuals, good public transport was a theme of responses in supporting people to attend cultural activities.

Funding

Finn’s Place in Glasgow highlighted costs of supporting range of activities as a barrier to the work it does. Live Music Now Scotland, which organises cultural activities throughout Scotland said—

“The main barriers we face are due to constraints on funding. The demand for our work has never been greater, whether from our diverse range of audiences or from highly talented, exceptional young artists at the start of their careers. We would like to grow our work, both in volume and deepening of engagement, but lack of resource is the main barrier to this.”

Stellar Quines’ submission said that they were not able to get funding from the local authority and that Creative Scotland funding had been at a standstill since 2015 and that this funding is “no longer enough for us to deliver a meaningful artistic programme”. The submission from Cragnish Village Hall highlighted the challenges in managing a venue and seeking public funding with limited resources.

Cragnish Village Hall also noted that the annual cycle of funding from Creative Scotland is also a challenge. North Edinburgh Arts echoed this point.

The Stove Network suggested that community and participatory arts should have a distinct funding stream from purely performance art. Its submission suggested this could be analogous to funding for elite sport and funding for participation in sport. Creative Lives argued for “micro grants”

Creative Scotland’s submission highlighted the National Lottery Awards for All partnership between The National Lottery Community Fund Scotland, sportscotland and Creative Scotland. This provides grants between £300 and £10,000 to support “what matters to people and communities”. Creative Scotland stated—

“While funding for activity is important, it is also crucial to recognise the role of everyday culture in contributing to the lives of communities and to ensure that these activities are also supported, whether through access to spaces or providing advice on running voluntary or grassroots organisations. Small

grants can make a big difference for community led organisations. Reducing barriers to accessing spaces, including addressing high rental costs or supporting community asset transfers (with access to revenue funding, not only building costs) can ensure the sustainability of smaller communities and neighbourhoods.”

Festivals Edinburgh highlighted the Platforms for Creative Excellence programme fund, which is a “is a three-way long term funding partnership between the Scottish Government, the City of Edinburgh Council and the Edinburgh Festivals”. It said—

“The transformative benefit of the PlaCE programme has been the long-term commitment to funding over five years. This has enabled festivals to work together on a shared agenda, to create cultural activity in local communities, which is led by and informed by gauging community need and appetite.”

Ned Sharratt, Senior Researcher (Education, Culture), SPICe

April 2023

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The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP www.parliament.scot

Written submission from Community Leisure

Community Leisure Scotland is responding on behalf of our members who deliver public leisure, sport and culture services across the country. In Scotland, we currently have 25 members, which are all registered charities (with a public benefit asset lock), often working in partnership with local authorities.

15 of our 25 members deliver some form of public culture within their local communities, including libraries, museums, galleries, theatres and community halls.

We welcome the opportunity to submit written evidence to the Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee on this important topic, ahead of the opportunity to engage with the Committee in an oral evidence session.

1. The availability and variety of cultural activities and events in local communities

1.1. Role of culture trusts

Culture and leisure trusts are significant providers of opportunities, spaces and activities for local communities. There are a wide range of performing arts and library development programmes to support social interaction and encourage a sense of belonging, with different target audiences, including: Macmillan support services in libraries across Glasgow and other areas across Scotland, bookbug sessions, knit and natter groups, OnFife's book prescription service. There are also programmes supporting people living with dementia to access local venues for dementia friendly activities such as OnFife's Cultural Connections work funded by Life Changes Trust, and Live Border's Young Creatives programmes, supporting people aged 16-24 to engage in arts events in their own communities

Furthermore, as community focused charities, culture trusts have a key role to play in supporting the wider cultural and creative infrastructure within their local authority area. This includes providing spaces for activities for community groups, as well as engaging with local community groups delivering everyday creativity.

By working in partnership with local authorities, culture and leisure trusts can support local outcomes and play a key role in delivering quality public services for local communities. As an example, in Angus' Cultural Strategy partnership working across a range of stakeholders is important, with the recommendation for an Angus Culture and Heritage Consortium to steer the delivery of the plan.

1.2. Risks to the availability and variety of cultural activities and events

There are serious risks to the availability and variety of provision across Scotland, due to a combination of factors detailed further in section two. According to the latest Scottish Household Survey data, in 2020 86% of adults in Scotland were culturally engaged. This demonstrates the value of cultural facilities and services for communities, and our members report very positive feedback on the value of their services and activities as things have reopened following the pandemic.

We are undoubtedly facing a period of significant challenge, but how this is managed with strategic thinking and partnership approaches will be key to safeguarding the provision of cultural services over the next few years.

2. Barriers to growing cultural provision locally

2.1. Financial pressures

As of March 2023, 95% of members in Scotland are at risk. These range from those that are in crisis to those where there is likely to be changes and reductions in services. However, this is a fast-moving picture, with a fine line for many between being stable and tipping quickly into crisis. According to data collected in March 2023, the majority of members indicated that although 23/24 is an incredibly challenging year, the likelihood is that the next two years will be worse with indications of further reductions in local authority funding.

Importantly, there is limited time following confirmation of local authority budgets before the next budget rounds begin, with conversations starting on this around September. This doesn't allow time to fully embed changes from this year's budget and to think strategically and plan for the impact of likely further reductions in the next financial year.

Across our members, there is conviction that the trust model is the best model for delivery of services thanks to its charitable non-profit distributing foundation, which has been shown to be the case more than ever through the pandemic and the current crises. However, there is a need to review the model to ensure its sustainability and have open and realistic discussions with local authority partners around service level agreements and understanding that the existing provision is impossible in a financially challenging environment. Our members are acutely aware of the financial pressures and restraints being faced by local authorities and the funding gaps most are facing this financial year and next and would welcome the opportunity to have strategic planning conversations looking at provision over the next 2-3 years

A combination of escalating operating costs, and reduced investment and income levels creates an unsustainable landscape, which therefore poses significant barriers to growing local provision with uncertainty over spaces for cultural activities and everyday creativity to take place. Furthermore, across the local public culture sector, the age and condition of some cultural venues and facilities and associated maintenance costs also require consideration, with investment needed into these venues, particularly reflecting the role of the sector to support progress towards net zero. Where there are listed buildings, planning permission and investment for decarbonisation proves even more challenging.

The soaring prices of energy, gas, electric and biomass pose a significant threat to the viability of services. Across our members, 59% of members are responsible for the payment of utilities, with the remaining 41% paid by local authorities. However, the financial pressure is felt by whoever is paying the bills.

Energy rates are at unprecedented levels and despite projections of reducing bills over summer, members will still face far higher costs for energy as compared with previous

years. The costs of maintaining safe operation of many community and cultural facilities is equivalent to operating a mid-sized public pool. Energy costs are severely impacting on the ability to operate and many will face closure or restricted operations. The majority of cultural facilities are free at the point of delivery, and therefore have limited opportunity to secure additional income to mitigate additional costs imposed on the venue or service provider.

2.2. Pay awards

The most significant pressure reported by members are pay awards, with 91% of members indicating a challenge with the affordability of staff wages. For those that do not match CoSLA pay awards, many have offered tiered pay awards to ensure those on lower salary bands receive the greatest uplift.

Furthermore, the annual increases in National Living Wage present a challenge as the rate of pay for lower paid roles is increasing at a faster rate than the pay increases across organisations as a whole. The national living wage increase of 9.7% for 2023 is challenging as this level of pay award is not financially possible across the full workforce, thereby reducing the differentials between roles and impacting on retention and satisfaction rates within the workforce.

Our annual HR survey showed a doubling of staff budgets for members across the UK between 2021 and 2022, which was the result of increasing pay as a result of CoSLA agreements for local authority staff and a need to try to maintain differentials in order to retain staff.

In addition to financial pressures, there are significant problems of recruitment and retention of staff, with some roles, such as theatre technicians and front of house staff, incredibly difficult to recruit. The resulting shortage of staff increases the pressure across the workforce, as well as posing challenges to ensure consistent delivery of services.

2.3. Management fees

Management fees from local authority partners, where applicable, have been steadily decreasing over a number of years. For the 2023-24 year, 45% of members have received a reduced management fee (up to one third reduction) and the remainder have received flat fees, which represents a real terms reduction.

There appears to be a consistent message that culture will be required to contribute further savings, as local authorities are facing significant budgetary pressures. The reality is that tough decisions will need to be made as there is no more scope for efficiencies, and any reductions will now result in reductions in provision. It is important to recognise any funding into public culture as an investment, supporting the health and wellbeing of communities, and not a cost

2.4. Legacy of the Barclay Review

There are other challenges impacting on the financial landscape for members, including the impact of the Barclay Review around NDR. Specifically, the

reassessment of existing venues' rateable value being reassessed after refurbishment where this is deemed to be a higher rateable value. This impacts on the refurbishment and ability to provide new facilities for communities in the long-term, as well as concerns around developing and investing in facilities to support the move towards net zero. This is not the intention of the recommendations from the Barclay review, but there is a real risk of unintended consequences hampering the refurbishment and development of cultural venues.

3. Impact on provision

3.1. Reductions in provision

To date there have been some closures resulting from venues that did not reopen post-Covid, primarily as a result of low customer demand or a need to refurbish or upgrade venues before reopening, and some facilities that have not reopened as part of a gradual reopening process.

There are some venues that have temporarily closed, either due to staffing shortages or as a mitigation measure for increasing energy costs. Although there is a lack of certainty around future closures, depending on financial support and energy costs, there will almost certainly be significant closures across the country

There is a view across members that we do not yet understand the changes in behaviours resulting from the pandemic and it is therefore difficult to make long term decisions on provision. There have been reductions to opening hours across a range of venues, primarily driven by customer demand and staffing availability, with earlier closing or reduced weekend hours.

Libraries are the most common service to have reduced hours across our members, largely as a result of slow customer return rates and an increased appetite for digital engagement. One member stated that libraries are operating at approximately 60% of pre-Covid levels, but there is not enough demand to increase this.

There have been a few venues that have transferred to the community through the community asset transfer process, and members expressed an interest in further exploring and discussing the practicalities of this approach. However, one of the challenges to altering opening hours or closing facilities is political support. There continues to be a desire in some local authorities to maintain all services and facilities operating with no reductions. This adds a further layer of challenge to the landscape as there is no room to rationalise or innovate the service provision and no reduction in operating costs.

One positive area of growth is digital provision which continues to be an area of improvement, with one member creating a new role to lead on a new digital strategy for the organisation and drive the growth and development in this area.

3.2. Price increases

Reviews of pricing are ongoing for members, with many looking to increase prices, where there are chargeable activities, more than they would usually consider as a

result of the soaring operating costs. There is a balance to ensure that activities and services remain affordable and accessible for all within the community, whilst ensuring financial sustainability of the organisation. This is particularly challenging as many community groups and individuals who may use culture trust spaces for creative activities are facing the cost of living pressures and may be unable to afford higher rates or to, in turn, pass on costs to members of their groups.

4. Unmet cultural need

It is difficult to state what the unmet cultural need is across Scotland, however, there is a vast amount of evidence that shows that creativity and cultural engagement impacts on positive mental wellbeing and reducing social isolation. It is essential that, at local authority level, there continues to be investment into culture services and provision with sufficient staffing resource to ensure that meaningful community consultation can take place with appropriate provision and opportunities for people to engage and thrive

Moreover, national agencies play an important role in supporting the cultural sector, with Creative Scotland supporting a range of organisations. The proposed reduction of over 10% of Creative Scotland's budget raised alarm bells across the sector, as it indicated a lack of recognition of the impact of such a significant reduction, both for Creative Scotland and the wider sector. The opposition to this reduction, which was thankfully overturned, from both the sector and the wider public speaks to the value and importance of both Creative Scotland and the wider culture sector.

One thing that is clear is that the country's cultural heritage and community facilities are at risk like never before. If we allow the downward spiral of investment and value for local authority cultural services to continue, we face a disproportionate impact on communities' wellbeing now and in the future. Small reductions in funding have significant consequences for delivery and provision.

Written submission from Glasgow Life

Glasgow Life's mission is "to inspire people to become engaged and active in a city globally renowned for culture and sport. As a charity, we find innovative ways to make this happen across Glasgow's diverse communities. Whether that's co-locating libraries, museums and sport centres in places like Pollok and Kelvin Hall, or hosting the first UCI World Cycling Championships in 2023."

Glasgow Life is responding to the inquiry as an agency organising local cultural activities and operating venues where local cultural activities take place.

Glasgow Life directly delivers and enables a very broad range of cultural activities using a huge variety of artforms and platforms in Glasgow at community, neighbourhood, and city-wide levels. The scope and scale of these activities, programmes and venues is significant. Given this scale and scope it may be helpful for the Committee to refer to the following document for a detailed summary and overview: [Glasgow Life Annual Review 2021/22](#).

We would like to draw the committee's attention to three specific examples of place-based cultural activity and participation led by Glasgow Life:

- Artists in Communities
- Live Well Community Referral Programme
- Glasgow's Culture Strategy

Creative Communities

In 2017 Glasgow's City Government made a manifesto pledge to: "...launch a scheme, in partnership with local organisations, to commission an artist in residence for every community." The pledge was recognition from the City Government that:

- Glasgow's arts and cultural sector was world class and an asset to the city
- Access to arts and creative activity varies across the city with a lack of access in some areas.

Additionally, this commitment recognised the integral role creative activity plays in building a local sense of place, supporting regeneration programmes, and contributing positively to health and wellbeing in communities, particularly as a mechanism to support connections between people. Glasgow Life is implementing this manifesto commitment through the delivery of the Creative Communities programme. Creative Communities is an innovative interconnected programme which seeks to promote health and wellbeing, reduce social isolation, contribute to community regeneration, and provide local access to creative and cultural experiences. Underpinning all of this is investment in the strategic development of Glasgow's artists and arts sector. However, the programme lacks statutory funding and Glasgow Life must continually fundraise to secure its future. Creative Communities provides a means to meaningfully measure the impact of participation in community-based arts projects and interventions across the city through three key initiatives: Artists in Communities, a year-round Community Touring programme, and a Creative Intervention programme.

1. Artists in Communities

Artists in Communities is a new iteration of the Artists in Residence programme. Artists in Communities aims to transform lives through engagement and participation in creative and cultural activity in local communities and support, connect and inspire the artists that work across the city. Over three phases between 2019 and 2022 the programme was funded annually by Glasgow City Council, enabling Glasgow Life to engage around 200 artists across the city's 23 wards over three phases of activity which resulted in around 65,000 attendances in person and online through local participation and attendance at events and exhibitions. GCC withdrew funding for the programme in 2022/23 with the expectation that Glasgow Life would undertake fundraising to secure its future. This forced a reconfiguration of the programme which became Artists in Communities. Currently, 15 artists are working across the city building on their community connections and relationships to develop projects with communities in direct response to local needs.

The programme:

- builds and maintains connection, knowledge and cohesion through long term relationships between artists and communities
- responds to community need;
- works in partnership with other stakeholders both internally across the Council family and externally with local organisations

Building connections

Artists in Govan, The Glasgow Barons worked with Hazelwood School for people with complex learning needs and sensory deprivation. This is a challenging group of nine students who are very individual in their needs and personalities and mobility for some is very limited. They rarely do anything in groups and Artists and Communities has provided an opportunity for them to come together to enjoy creative activity and reducing their isolation. Lead artist with the Glasgow Barons Paul McAlinden said:

Govan does not want a parachuting professional to deliver short, high end projects, but rather someone to handle long term grind, sabotage and incompetence from various quarters and relentless, sustained belief in the people. They want someone who is fundamentally at odds with the ongoing narrative."

Responding to community need

Artist John Binnie working in the Calton ward of the city received this feedback in response to the creative programme they delivered: "This is just what the children need, after the year they have been through. Fun, games, drama, music, engaging with visiting artists, who are not teaching staff. We see children who might have been overlooked or have been struggling in a new light. These workshops are allowing these young people to flourish." Head teacher of St. Anne's Primary

Working in partnership

In the Canal Ward, Saffy Setohy worked with school children and the local community to develop artistic activities that can contribute to the local communities' positive engagement with Cowlairs, to regeneration plans, and to dialogues about the directions in which regeneration could go. The school children and local community led on the process to develop their own art manifesto for the area. Partnerships and

collaborations with NG Homes and local organisations and parents enabled cleaning and improvements to enable a public art project, led by the children.

“The project is supporting our children and our community to get their voices heard through art, to express what they can’t express through words. The children’s pride in where they live is being increased, and they are proud to show off their artwork too. Creativity can highlight other possibilities in a place, and we’re excited to be working with Saffy on this.” Hazel and Gemma, local parents

2. Live Well Community Referral

Live Well Community Referral (LWCR) is a service delivery and development model that Glasgow Life is piloting in the Eastend of Glasgow. It uses a 20-minute neighbourhood approach to support local people to access activities that can improve wellbeing. LWCR takes a holistic needs-based approach with participants linking them to cultural, physical and learning activities provided not just by Glasgow Life but by other local area organisations. Support is available at 3 levels – signposting, connecting and navigating. It is about Glasgow Life moving towards person-centred service provision.

Glasgow Life is uniquely placed to be both community referral prescriber and activity provider and has recognised wellbeing as one of four strategic priorities with LWCR being at the forefront of this strategy. Operating at the preventative end of the health and wellbeing field, LWCR has linked people experiencing health inequalities to cultural programmes.

Creative interventions include the development and delivery of Singing for Fun, a project piloted as part of LWCR.

In response to local demands, with financial support from Glasgow UNESCO City of Music and Clyde Gateway, and in partnership with Calton Learning & Heritage Centre, Glasgow Life have developed and are delivering a programme of singing with physical wellbeing and social outcomes. The programme is about to move into its 3rd cycle. Other creative interventions include Coffee and Culture a programme using Glasgow Life’s Museum objects in communities as a focus for storytelling, memory-making and addressing social isolation

"It [Singing for Fun] allows us to express that our voices matter. I love singing. I know how good it is for my health and my wellbeing. I've struggled to find my voice before now." Singing for Fun

LWCR has taken a place-based approach which means that participants are linked to activities in their immediate communities. The vast majority of activities are free and nearby. With more intense support (connecting and navigating) LWCR health and wellbeing advisers will meet participants in person and go with them to activities. The cost of teas and coffees, key in building strong trust-based relationships, are covered by LWCR

Initial findings suggest that 72% of LWCR participants supported across the city are in most deprived quintile. When the initial pilot area of Calton (Ward no.9) is considered,

this rises to 77%. Connecting and navigating levels of support are only available in this area as this is the most intense support. Where participants need maximising income advice, LWCR advisers can link people to qualified Glasgow Life colleagues (and others) providing this type of support. This provides a joined-up, seamless support helping to mitigate the cost of living crisis.

Glasgow Life aspires to up-scaling this programme in across communities in Glasgow to become an integral component of the wider public sector preventative health agenda. Our LWCR model provides a new way of working across the organisation, identifies a strategic approach to partnership working, reduces duplication and develops a clear corporate knowledge base around health and wellbeing. However this approach requires funding support to maintain and develop.

3. Glasgow's Culture Strategy

Glasgow Life is developing Glasgow's Culture Strategy in collaboration with the sector, building on the work on a previous strategy which was paused in 2020. The strategy will respond to the dramatic contextual change in which Glasgow's cultural and creative sectors operate over the past three years and will lead to the development of a plan to support the city's cultural ecology and frame future direction. The approach to the development of the strategy underlines Glasgow Life's intrinsic position in Glasgow's cultural ecology and the co-production approach that runs through all our work.

Other activities delivering or enabling cultural participation, which we would like to draw the Committee's attention to include:

- recurring festivals and events such as Celtic Connections, Glasgow International and Aye Write with associated activities which are designed to engage with local communities to promote cultural participation
- major national and international events held in Glasgow, such as the forthcoming UCI 2023 cycling event, which include associated cultural (and sport) programmes designed to engage local communities to promote cultural participation (and/or engagement with sport and physical activity)

The scale and reach of these events often involve leading the coordination of funding, organisation, and delivery amongst many partners including Glasgow City Council, Scottish Government, Glasgow Life and national and local cultural (and sporting) organisations. Because of its function and track record, Glasgow Life is often in a lead delivery role for these kinds of events and programmes and has a lead role in delivering legacy benefits and outcomes related to increases in cultural participation.

Glasgow Life is also responsible for the delivery of several Glasgow City Council strategies and city plans which have a direct relationship with, or indirectly contribute to:

- promotion of local cultural participation
- delivery of cultural activities at neighbourhood and community level
- delivery of cultural activities which coordinate and integrate local cultural participation between and across city neighbourhoods

These strategies and plans include:

- Glasgow's Tourism and Visitor Plan
- UNESCO City of Music
- Glasgow's Events Strategy
- Glasgow's Culture Strategy (detailed above)
- Vision for Glasgow Libraries
- Glasgow's Community Learning and Development Plan

As noted above, GCC initially provided funding support for Artists in Residence between 2019 and 2022. Other support on which these programmes depend are:

- commissioned community engagement opportunities created by national and international city events such as 2023 Cycling and Merchant City Festival
- Glasgow Life's critical place in the city's cultural ecology. Our Arts Producers and creative learning teams are strongly networked, facilitating opportunity, support and connections for artists through local knowledge and contacts
- a strong network of third sector venues and organisations, including Glasgow Life operated libraries and community centres.

All elements of support previously available to our programmes are either reducing or are under threat. The above noted programmes in Glasgow are almost entirely reliant on non-statutory city resource which is reducing and therefore not sustainable. While we regularly engage in positive relationships with national agencies such as the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland, this tends to be on a project by project basis. In our view it is now more critical than that this support is joined up and coordinated between local and national levels.

We would like to draw the attention of the committee to the following points for consideration which, based on our experience and the evidence provided, are urgently required to address barriers to creating sustainable place-based programmes of cultural activity.

1. A more joined up approach between local and national agencies (see above)
2. Support for thriving grass roots third sector: enabling local, creative experiences is dependent on partnerships with agencies who do ongoing work with people in communities and can work with us to respond to their needs to inform programmes. The third sector needs a strategic, joined up approach to funding to ensure a sustainable future
3. Support for innovation. Our LWCR programme represents a new approach to the delivery of creative activity in communities and with investment, has the potential to transform physical and mental health in our communities
4. Support for local venues and spaces: so that activities designed to bring people together can take place in a way that is accessible. Even within local communities, people are telling us that transport costs are a barrier to

participation which strengthens the argument for support for the twenty minute neighbourhood

5. Long-term, dedicated funding for culture: both in recognition of the vital contribution culture makes to our communities and to enable deeper more engaged work that is not stop/start

Glasgow Life operates a wide range of venues which enable cultural activities to take place. These include:

- the network of 31 community libraries and The Mitchell Complex operate cultural programmes including reading groups, arts and craft and music
- network of 8 museums including Kelvingrove, Burrell and Riverside with programmed activities and outreach targeting communities of place and need, and interest
- Arts, music and cultural venues including flagship venues such as City Halls, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall and Tramway. A number of these venues also host national cultural organisations such as RSNO and Scottish Ballet

Again, for more detail information on the scope and scale of activities it may be helpful for the Committee to refer to the following document for a detailed overview: [Glasgow Life Annual Review 2021/22](#).

The following examples demonstrate: the importance of place-based spaces to accessing cultural activity at Glasgow Libraries; ways in which Glasgow Museums work to understand local audiences; and in the case of Tramway, the crucial role that Glasgow Life venues play in creative and community ecologies. They also demonstrate how a healthy and thriving local venue sector is crucial to providing a range of activity in community venues in the context of shrinking local government budgets.

Glasgow Libraries

We know that in some communities, the public library or community centre is the main or only space where citizens can access culture locally and deliver a range of programmes. Libraries are places where individuals and communities can connect and participate in creative experiences that help inspire imagination and understanding through the exploration of the experiences of others. Libraries are a provider of a cultural and creative offer for all ages including music art, arts and crafts, history and heritage, language and literature, exhibition spaces and maker space. This includes reading for pleasure and purpose, diverse and inclusive reading collections and collections that support literacy development, e-lending, author talks, book groups and festivals, writers in residence, access to special collections, and family and local history

In recognition of this, Glasgow Libraries has also committed to:

- continue to invest in our physical and digital books and reading material ensuring they are at the heart of all service delivery and programming;

- continue to increase access to our unique collections and resources of cultural significance that help us tell our stories, the city's stories, and the nation's stories;
- develop the role of libraries as gateways to the widest possible range of inclusive cultural experiences and opportunities across the city;
- encourage local cultural participation that is relevant, empowering and accessible in the heart of local communities;
- ensure our online and digital content complements the local library offer and connects customers between the two;
- continue to develop resources and programmes that support the delivery of local history and heritage activities within local libraries.

Cultural participation analysis in Scotland shows reading is the number one participatory experience that Scottish residents engage in with 69% reading and 82% of this audience reading once a week. One in 5 people attends their local library once a week (Creative Scotland Research Summary – Cultural Engagement). Library use has direct correlation to wider cultural engagement and is a key route to connect people with broader arts experiences to enrich their daily lives. 95% of Aye Write attendees confirmed they were likely to attend another cultural event as a result of engagement with content. Libraries are enablers of cultural capital for users and the significant difference this can make in social mobility for disadvantaged areas / literacy hotspots in the city to support improved health and wellbeing, literacy development and cultural connections, is well evidenced. As such, Glasgow Life's libraries and community facilities represent a crucial part of the cultural ecology of the city.

Glasgow Museums

Glasgow Museums Visitor Study is one of the tools we use to a) understand the audience we're reaching and b) take a placed based approach to how we develop our audiences. All Glasgow Museums are free to attend.

Since 2015-16, Glasgow Life Museums has undertaken a large-scale quantitative survey across our sites to help us better understand and evidence who we are engaging with. This survey takes place at 3 year intervals and has enabled us to establish a baseline for our audience profile, with follow-up surveys supporting us in tracking the impact of audience development activity and continuing to build a robust picture of our audiences. A visitor survey has been running since June 2022 (it was delayed for a year due to the pandemic) and is currently underway, due to conclude in April 2023. The most recent complete visitor survey ran from 2018-19 and showed high representation from local audiences, with 20% of our visitors from Glasgow City. Our museums also reach audiences who live in the two most deprived quintiles in the country, with postcode mapping showing that 46% of visitors to Glasgow Life Museums resided in SIMD Quintiles 1 and 2. In terms of more nuanced detail, audience profiles in terms of age and ethnicity show the former as being broadly in line with the age of those living in the city, and 9% of visitors stating that they are from a minority ethnic background. Repeat visitors account for around one-fifth of all visitors to Glasgow Museums, and of all museum visitors surveyed, 69% agreed that their visit made them feel more connected to the city, a key indicator for wellbeing

The data we gather lets us plan strategically in terms of prioritising those audiences who are currently under-represented in our visitor profiles at a service level and then at a venue level, and in turn monitor against city-wide stats e.g., Glasgow Neighbourhood Statistics GCC Ward Factsheets. As we have gathered robust data over a sustained period, we can then compare the impact of our audience development activity.

Tramway

Tramway Beyond Walls is a programme delivered outside the venue in the neighbouring community. It developed out of necessity during lockdown restrictions, providing a platform to share modest theatre presentations with audiences outdoors during the summer months. In response to its ongoing success, the programme has evolved into an integral part of Tramway's programme. Activities span artforms and combine outdoor performances, live art interventions and small-scale public art commissioning such as artist designed benches or planters for urban realm spaces and parks. Due to the rich variety and nature of the activity, Tramway Beyond Walls encourages deeper engagement with local audiences including community groups, schools, and community anchor organisations.

By working with local partners Tramway is creating a cyclical process that listens to and works alongside our stakeholders and partners thereby embedding Tramway locally as a cultural asset. Since summer 2021 over 1,300 attendances have been recorded as part of the TBW programme.

In demonstrating the barriers and advocating for the importance of Glasgow Life's role in providing cultural programmes in communities, we would like to draw the attention of the committee to Glasgow Life's funding model.

77% of Glasgow Life's operating budget next year will come from Glasgow City Council, therefore the health of local government finances has a direct impact on the funding available for the services that Glasgow Life provides.

What is clear is that the pressure on local government finances will continue for at least the next two years. The following quote from Audit Scotland in January of this year provides a helpful summary.

"Councils face the most difficult budget-setting context seen for many years with the ongoing impacts of Covid-19, inflation and the cost-of-living crisis. They will need to continue to make recurring savings and also make increasingly difficult choices with their spending prioritieselected members will need to make increasingly difficult choices, which could include having to consider service reductions." Audit Scotland, January 2023

The Local Government funding issues that we at Glasgow Life need to be aware of as we plan for a sustainable future include:

- The Scottish Government is currently projecting flat funding for local government until 25/26.

- 23% of total revenue funding to local government in 2021/22 is ring-fenced or directed to support delivery of key Scottish Government policies.
- National priorities are health, social care, criminal justice and education, with a focus on the attainment gap.
- And over the past 10 years across local government in Scotland there has been a 24% reduction in culture and leisure spending at a national level

The challenges this situation creates is well summarised in the following quote from the Improvement Service:

“Over the longer term, we expect that relative reductions will continue in non-statutory services such as culture and leisure,and tourism, in order to provide balance to statutory and ringfenced commitments elsewhere. Councils are left with little flexibility and have no option but to prioritise statutory services and those areas where Scottish Government have allocated additional monies for specific purposes.”

Glasgow Life would like to take this opportunity to urge the Committee to understand the increasingly impossible tasks of balancing the cost of running venues alongside the costs of providing cultural programmes. The current funding context must be addressed at national and local levels to provide strategic, sustainable place-based cultural activity.

Written submission from Moray Council Sport and Culture Service

Question 10. If you attend cultural activities in your local area as an audience member and/or participant: Please tell us about your attendance or participation in cultural activities in your local area.

For example: What supports you to attend or participate in cultural activities? What barriers have you faced? Do you think there is a good variety and availability of cultural activities to participate in? Or do you think there is a currently unmet need for this in your community, and if so, what is missing?

Excellent variety of activities available in Moray through community events, music performances, cultural festivals, arts events, sporting events. What supports attendance - access to car (public transport may not enable attendance for some events due to rurality), available finance to buy tickets to the event to attend, awareness that the quality of the event will be excellent and therefore an enjoyable experience, area of interest personally or within family/friend circle

What barriers have you faced - activities may clash with other events, lack of knowledge of activity (learn about it afterwards), cost to attend some events. There would most certainly be unmet demand in various communities but this would vary quite significantly across each locality area as it often comes down to facilities available within a locality area and the local community interests (willingness of volunteers to organise activities).

Question 11. If you organise cultural activities in your local area: Please tell us about the cultural activities that you organise in your local area.

For example: What support has there been in place to develop and grow cultural activities or events in your local area? What barriers have you faced? Is there anything you would like to deliver but don't have the means to? What needs to be in place to enable or to support a variety of cultural activities or events being organised and delivered in your local area?

What support - utilisation of existing budget, support from local families/communities (volunteering), some grant aid options to explore. Barriers - additional funding, weather for outdoor events, venue availability, suitable condition of facility (many are old and no longer fit for purpose, lack digital technology for activity type), time limited funding so cannot plan ahead (often annually based funding). Needs to be put in place - more co-ordinated approach to cultural activities but very difficult due to the diverse nature of what constitutes culture and the volume of organisations (both public, private and third sector) that organise cultural activities, greater youth voice in regards to cultural development locally, need to be able to calculate the socio-economic and economic impact of these activities to reflect the importance for people and locality areas.

Question 12. If you run a centre or premises where cultural activities take place: Please tell us about the premises that you run and the cultural activities that it hosts.

For example: What are the key things that support cultural activities to take place on your premises? What support has there been in place to grow cultural activities or events in your local area? What barriers have you faced in trying to host cultural activities?

11 libraries in Moray that deliver a range of activities as a Service and also provide facility space for organisations to deliver cultural activities/events - book clubs, digital clubs, art exhibitions, music activities, photography groups etc Open spaces - events for outdoor activities such as music festivals, Highland Games, Gala's/Fetes. Sport, Leisure and Community facilities - provide facility space for organisations to deliver cultural activities/events. Also deliver activities as a Service such as dance classes, drama etc Key things that support activities - staffing resource, suitable facilities that are fit for purpose, interest from local community, support from local companies or funders (example wind farms) Grow activities - limited growth in recent years since Covid - lack of volunteers, lack of finance, difficult even maintaining activities due to rising costs Barriers to host cultural activities - unsuitable facilities, lack of budget, lack of staffing/volunteering resource

Question 13. If you chose the 'other' option: Please tell us about your views on the availability and variety of cultural activities and events in local communities, what barriers there are to growing cultural provision locally, and what needs to be in place to enable or to support a variety of local cultural activities or events.

Culture covers a wide array of themes - music, dance, arts, libraries, museums, drama, theatre, festivals, galas, Highland Games, literacy, expressive arts, tourism etc - the difficulty is how we can collaborate this from a place based perspective as all will attract different audiences, link to different local or national strategies or be driven by different communities of practice. Encouraged to have a Culture Strategy for Scotland. Within our Local Authority Cultural Development crosses over Sport & Culture and Economic Development

Written submission from Dumfries and Galloway Council

Dumfries and Galloway Council directly delivers cultural activity through its thirteen museums and galleries, the Robert Burns Centre Film Theatre and the Ryan Centre theatre/cinema. It also supports cultural activities across the region through support for regional arts network DG Unlimited, and funds cultural events through our Events Strategy and Regional Arts Fund. The Council facilitated the development of the region's Cultural Strategy 2022-2030 (agreed by Committee in March 2022) and is currently working with stakeholders to establish a Cultural Partnership, which will take a joint approach to delivering the Cultural Strategy outcomes.

When engaging with the creative and cultural sector and other stakeholders across our region to develop our cultural strategy we asked very similar questions and there were many issues raised, which we found could be summarised as follows:

- Capacity – the region's creativity, culture and heritage community requires support so that people have the skills and resources they need to create and share what they do for public benefit.
- Connectivity – the region's creativity, culture and heritage community needs support to become better connected, making it easier for people to get involved, collaborate and achieve shared goals.
- Communication – the region's creativity, culture and heritage community requires support to improve how information is shared, leading to more effective planning, more awareness of what's available, the development of new partnerships with other sectors, and the ability to influence policy makers

The full engagement report is available here:

<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/19244/Consultation-on-a-Cultural-Strategy-for-Dumfries-and-Galloway>

The Cultural Strategy is available here: <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/media/26878/DG-Cultural-Strategy-2022-2030/pdf/DG-Cultural-Strategy-Draft-Approved-22.3.2022.pdf?m=63803501032650000#:~:t>

The Council's services fed into the engagement we did in preparation for our Cultural Strategy. The full engagement report is available here:

<https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/19244/Consultation-on-a-Cultural-Strategy-for-Dumfries-and-Galloway>

Our own services have benefitted from being part of the Council - our staff have good terms and conditions and there is a supportive environment in which to provide valued services to the public. While some of our venues are in need of investment for which there are inadequate capital resources, we have benefitted from investment in others, for example the flagship Kirkcudbright Galleries, which opened in 2018. Looking ahead

however, as semi-statutory services we may face reductions in service delivery as a result of the requirement to deliver local authority budget savings.

As cited above, we engaged with our creative and cultural community and other stakeholders to develop our Cultural Strategy and details are available here: <https://www.dumgal.gov.uk/article/19244/Consultation-on-a-Cultural-Strategy-for-Dumfries-and-Galloway> The publication version of the Cultural Strategy is being finalised but it includes a number of case studies demonstrating some of the best practice in our region. These are as follows:

- Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival www.dgartsfestival.org.uk
- Big Burns Supper www.bigburnssupper.com
- Whithorn Trust, Whithorn ReBuild www.facebook.com/whithornrebuild/
- The Stove Network, What We Do Now www.whatwedonow.scot
- Dumfries and Galloway Council Library and Heritage Services, StoryTrails Dumfries – StoryTrails (story-trails.com)
- The Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership
- Upland, Spring Fling www.weareupland.com
- Wigtown Book Festival www.wigtownbookfestival.com
- DG Unlimited, Creatives Unlimited www.dgunlimited.com/
- Outpost Arts/Creative Wellbeing Network www.outpostarts.co.uk
- Kirkcudbright Galleries www.kirkcudbrightgalleries.org.uk
- Paragon www.paragon-music.org