

A GOOD PLACE FOR MAKING PLANS

Creative Estuary A national cultural planning toolkit

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Section 2: Getting started

2.1 Paths to success

Informed by research into what has supported successful approaches to planning for, and securing, cultural infrastructure in other places this section sets out six critical components to delivering successful cultural planning and in enabling the real co-design of cultural projects.

These components are then explored in more detail in 2.02 Governance and in Section 3: Ways of working.

Six critical components for successful cultural planning

The points below aim to summarise the critical components, which are then explored in more detail throughout the different elements of the toolkit. Figure 1, below, sets out how the documents, boards and structure relate to and interact with one another within the cultural planning process

- 1. Valuing culture and cultural infrastructure is fundamental to successful place-making because it gives culture visibility** – this is particularly the case for the reimagining of city and town centres and major commercial and residential schemes. This visibly locates culture as a strategic priority in planning policy making and delivery.
- 2. Creating a robust cultural audit and Cultural Strategy** – a cultural audit is necessary to clearly identify strengths to be built upon, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, while the Strategy should succinctly identify cultural investment priorities to address gaps that have been identified. It should outline a culture investment programme and identify the role of the planning and development process in delivering this programme. This provides the evidence base for planning policy development and provides the essential justification for these planning policies. These documents are necessary because it is difficult to incorporate the specificity and detail required within an overall place vision and its coverage goes beyond what would normally be covered within a council Corporate Plan.
- 3. The right skills and partnerships.** This includes the development and reinforcement of a **cultural ecosystem or network**, that brings people from all sectors with an interest or stake in cultural heritage and infrastructure together through **place-based partnerships and boards**. Such a network should be developed as a fundamental part of the audit and Culture Plan process and co-ordinated by a **Cultural Infrastructure Investment Board**. The underpinning **Culture Investment Programme** then forms the basis of the cultural component of the **Local Plan Infrastructure Plan** and a clear route to the co-design of cultural infrastructure schemes. The Investment Board would provide clear governance and legitimacy and support essential follow-on activity such as business case development support and investor support.
- 4.** Points one to three, should then inform an **up-to-date Development Plan that sees culture and its role in place-making as one of its driving objectives and has a dedicated chapter / section on cultural infrastructure**. This dedicated chapter or section should include more contemporary, positive policies that go far beyond the basics. The Local Plan needs to be strengthened by the production of a detailed Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document that operationalises the Local Plan's cultural policies. More informal regeneration strategies, masterplans and area development briefs should be used to supplement the cultural policies of the Local Plan. This is because such documents are better placed to grasp emerging opportunities and reflect changing context due to the speed of their production, their flexibility and their ease of review and change.

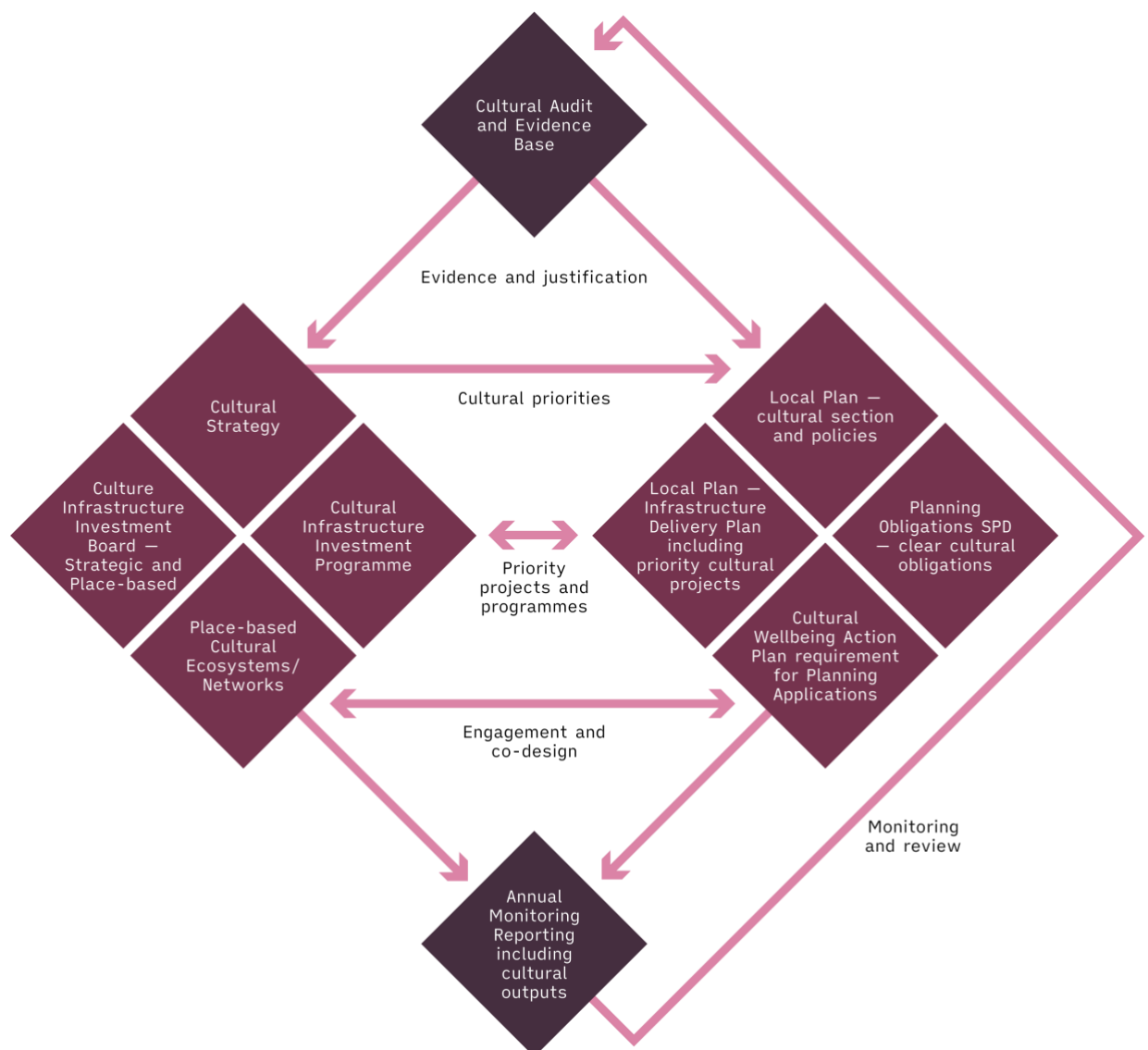


Figure 1: Cultural policy making and delivery – an overview

5. The Local Plan must also include a **policy that tasks developers, where relevant, to produce a Cultural Wellbeing Action Plan** – An example of a model policy requiring such a Plan is included in section four – see model policy one.

The Action Plan should indicate how developers will comply with the policies of the plan and be provided at planning application submission stage. Both the policy and subsequent Action Plans should require developers to liaise with the council or development corporation’s culture team, if one exists, as well as its planners and require developers to engage in co-design of their briefs and proposals with local culture groups early (ie at the preapplication stage). The Culture Investment Board and its associated ecosystem would provide the essential conduit for this process, requiring developers to involve local cultural and community organisations, groups and individuals.

- 6. The inclusion of priority cultural infrastructure investment projects as part of the Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan** - this delivery plan should be developed from the Cultural Infrastructure Investment Board's Culture Investment Programme. This not only joins up the process but also requires the local planning authority to monitor and report on the delivery of this programme on an annual basis – reporting to both the council or development corporations's Cabinet and national government but also to the Cultural Infrastructure Investment Board. This would therefore inject essential **governance, programme management and performance monitoring** into the system.

2.2 Governance

Putting the right governance structures in place is an important element of planning for and securing the cultural infrastructure that communities need. This chapter sets out a proposed model governance structure that is both strategic and place-based.

Developing suitable governance structures

In most areas there is no wider governance framework in which culture readily fits apart from the more traditional general governance framework within local authorities. This works for council-wide decisions, but it does not allow wider positive participation by cultural interest groups, individuals and communities, and it certainly does not reflect the fact that the market area for many cultural activities and the audiences involved are more subregional and cut across individual council or development corporation areas and boundaries.

The actual governance structure will require much discussion and debate with the local authorities, development corporations and the cultural community. There is, however, a real need to build and reinforce this scaffolding and there are a number of key principles to guide this.

- It needs to have a subregional element to reflect the wider market and audience areas of many cultural activities and the fact that in many instances cultural activities cross local authority boundaries.
- It needs a strategic element – to be able to:
 - Determine wider cultural priorities and lead the development of a robust evidence base.
 - Provide an authoritative, credible and skilled gateway to potential funders – from government agencies and private sources – to bring projects and funders together.
 - Share and pool partner skills and resources some of which may be specialist skills, for example in audience development or viability.
 - Enable joint commissioning of schemes and support.
 - Provide shared support including in relation to developing the business case, evidence and data and monitoring etc.
 - Provide a fund to support the development of schemes.
 - Steer the development and management of a cultural ecosystem.
 - Have representation from the cultural sector, cultural champions, key funders and local government.
 - Lead on major projects of subregional importance.
 - Provide a lead and a conduit for exchange of exemplar ideas, schemes and marketing.
 - Provide a place for the strategic interaction with both county and borough councils or development corporations.
- While it needs to be sufficiently strategic, it also needs to have ‘place-based’ components as culture is a key element in local regeneration and city and town centre reimagination. This is to:
 - Enable local individuals, communities and cultural entrepreneurs to be positively involved, including through the co-design of local projects, and to help secure local buy-in.
 - Provide a conduit for cultural project ideas and schemes alongside input for the local cultural community into policy development, masterplanning and regeneration schemes.
 - Enable local prioritisation and then lead local project development and delivery

- Build an audience, capacity and activity from the bottom up and harness local creativity.
- Enable local cultural entrepreneurs to interact with key council politicians and officers, both from the cultural team if there is one and planners.
- Coordinate a local cultural network.
- Provide a conduit for the interaction between developers and local people in the co-design of their Cultural Wellbeing Action Plan and the schemes arising from them .
- Own and/or manage key facilities as required.
- Collect local monitoring and performance data.
- Provide direct interaction and partnership with councils and development corporations.

This place-based component can be at the city or town level, at borough level, or a combination of boroughs level. This depends upon the scale and nature of the geographic area, the cultural market and audience areas, and travel patterns.

This leads to a proto governance structure (see figure 2 below), which includes two major components.

1. A sub-regional **Cultural Infrastructure Investment Board** - this Board has the strategic role set out above and a clear 'manifesto' for cultural development and planning, and overseeing, promoting and coordinating the wider cultural ecosystem. It forms an authoritative body for culture in the sub-region with shared support and tools to enable local activity. A champion body for culture and nurturing the cultural ecosystem, it sets the strategy, but also convenes, coordinates, enables, facilitates and supports. It should also look to jointly commission schemes and undertake a promotional and marketing role.
2. **A network of place-based partnerships and boards** – the bodies within this network take the lead and coordinate a local cultural strategy and delivery programme, project delivery and provide a conduit to local co-design of cultural policy and schemes. In addition to this delivery role, they will engage, nurture and interact with wider cultural networks and may well be involved in managing local cultural facilities.



Figure 2: Model approach to a cultural planning governance framework and the wider cultural ecosystem

Building the governance infrastructure

In relation to planning for culture, the Thames Estuary area is fortunate with its governance infrastructure as it has Creative Estuary as the basis of the subregional element of this framework. This has the benefit of extensive skills and expertise in cultural activities and infrastructure alongside the added benefit of being neutral in the world of two-tier local government. It is already acting as the authoritative and trusted voice for culture in the subregion and already has some of the coordination and support components required for such a strategic board.

Such a governance framework for culture is currently being constructed in the Cheshire West and Chester area, for example. On the back of the successful Storyhouse cultural project (see section six for more details of the project itself), which helped create a strategic partnership covering the whole of this large single tier council area and place-based cultural partnerships for each city and town area. The key message from this exemplar is that establishing infrastructure should not be rushed and should be built from the bottom up. A key to progress in Cheshire West and Chester, was to foster discussion and debate, and the start for them was the formation and nurturing of the more place-based elements. This is somewhat different for Creative Estuary as the proto strategic partnership because the Creative Estuary already exists. Creative Estuary could, therefore, be the active enabler for this bottom-up debate.

The other message from the Cheshire West example was to not rush too quickly into building cultural buildings. The starting point in Chester was to build the local place-based partnership, Chester Performs, the local cultural network, sector and audience, and start with more easily achievable wins. In their case, this was Theatre in the Park and outdoor cinema and events programmes. Over time this grew into the £37m Storyhouse, a shared space multi-use cultural hub. The Theatre in the Park, outdoor cinema and the events programmes continue and together with the Storyhouse Hub the Chester cultural scene has dramatically changed and these are forming a fundamental plank to the reinvention of the City Centre. Once built the Storyhouse building was transferred to Storyhouse (Chester Performs), now a cultural charity, which manages and runs the facility.

2.3 Planning policy process

Successful cultural planning requires an alignment of planning policy, governance and investment. This section provides an overview of the planning policy process components from end to end, drawing on much of what has already been set out in this toolkit.

Planning policy process components (end to end)

Theme:	Component:	Detail:	Partnership:
A Cultural Policy 'Bedrock'	Cultural Evidence Base and Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Infrastructure Audit • Strengths / Opportunities to build upon • Weaknesses – Gaps to be filled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit on a subregional basis with local detail. • Digital mapping provides spatial dimension to the evidence base • Provides critical evidence and justification for Cultural Strategy, planning policy and Development Management.
	Cultural Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities for Policy from evidence base • Springboard for Planning & Land Use Policy Making • Provides specificity necessary for Planning Policy development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepared on a subregional footprint • Action orientated incorporating an action plan / delivery programme • Engagement with the cultural sector • LA Cultural Teams engage with Planning Officers – referencing the development / planning process as a critical delivery mechanism for the delivery of cultural infrastructure.
	Creating, coordinating and nurturing a creative / cultural ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurturing a network of creative organisations, individuals and entrepreneurs • Generates local engagement, enthusiasm, ideas and projects • The development of a Culture Investment Programme – linked to the Local Plan Infrastructure Investment Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes key influential council officers and members • Enable then support it becoming self-sustaining • Creates a creative and cultural entrepreneurial ecosystem and atmosphere – enabled and supported by the public sector • Establishing a Culture Investment Board – to develop and manage the Culture Investment Programme, manage the Culture Eco-system / network and provide a conduit to co-design of cultural infrastructure projects • Culture Investment Board provides an investor 'Welcome Mat' support mechanisms



<p>Development / Land Use Policy</p>	<p>Local Plan Strategic Vision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines Culture as a key plank of the Local Plan • Provides a joined-up spatial framework for culture – place-making, public realm, green and blue infrastructure, built and historic assets, cultural and key community assets and infrastructure • Provides a strategic spatial framework for culture and other policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning policy officers engaging with culture and arts teams • Joined up vision developed as a LA corporate approach – involving teams across the Council – public realm, leisure, transportation, community as well as culture and arts services.
	<p>Local Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinct Culture chapter / section • Contemporary culture policies that go further than the basics • Model Culture Policies • Identifies Cultural Clusters / Quarters • Identifies development / regeneration zones and cultural components of these • Requires developers to provide a 'Cultural Wellbeing Action Plan' (above a unit number / Sq. M threshold). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model Local Plan Policies to be developed at sub-regional level – for guidance and sharing resources and skills • Local tailoring and interpretation – through Evidence Base • Work with developers and community groups • Requirement for developers to work with both planners and cultural officers to produce the 'Cultural Wellbeing Action Plan' for larger developments • Requires developers to engage in co-design of the Cultural Wellbeing Action Plan and its cultural projects early in the preapplication process.
	<p>Local Infrastructure Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up-to-date • Part of the Local Plan • Incorporating priority cultural infrastructure projects • Indicating funding sources (private (as part of development), S106 requirement / planning gain, grant, etc). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Culture and Arts team, developers and community groups • Developed from the Culture Investment Board's Culture Investment Programme • Clear annual monitoring reporting mechanism.



<p>Detailed Delivery Tools</p>	<p>Planning Obligations SPD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up-to-date and in-line with Local Plan • Clearly identifies cultural infrastructure requirements to be provided • Include scale of development triggers • Commuted Sum payment levels • Outlines the possibility for pooling commuted sum contributions to achieve larger scale facilities • Requires developers to provide a Cultural Wellbeing Action Plan (above a unit number / Sqm thresholds) • Include monies for cultural venue start-up and maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement for developers to work with both planners and cultural officers to produce the Cultural Wellbeing Plan • To be developed with LA Finance team • Model policy can be developed on a subregional / partnership basis then tailored to local policy circumstances.
	<p>Development / Regeneration Area Masterplan SPDs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly sets out cultural and place-making aspects of the Masterplan and the ultimate development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed with cultural / community groups • Clearly sets out those public sector and cultural / community groups to be engaged in the development process
	<p>Culture Orientated SPDs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centres • Creative Enterprise Zones • Cultural Quarters • Cultural Clusters • Specific cultural themes, e.g., Artists' Studios, Public Art, Public Realm Design Guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed with cultural / community groups • Clearly sets out those public sector and cultural / community groups to be engaged in the development process
	<p>Informal Planning Guidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development briefs • Masterplans • Supplementary Planning Guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More flexible planning policy documents • Relatively easy to produce and amend when circumstances change / opportunities arise • Can be worked up in partnership with developers and cultural / community groups.



Governance and Leadership	Cultural Investment Board and place-based Cultural Partnerships/Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides essential governance • Develops a Cultural Investment programme and 'owns' it and manages / monitors delivery • Establishes and oversees the essential business planning and investment support mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At subregional level • Coordinates the culture ecosystem / network • Provides a conduit for early engagement in projects and co-design • Brings together cultural actors and joins up funding with funders
Business Planning and Investment Marketing and Support	Cultural Infrastructure Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A targeted programme of priority transformational priority projects, and • Quick wins • Links with Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major and minor LA enabled projects • Entrepreneurial / community projects • Exemplar projects • Includes potential funding sources incl. private / developer funded • Bring together as a sub-regional programme to discuss with funding agencies • Programme managed at sub-regional level with local project management and delivery • A coordinated programme developed in readiness for external funding support – not developed for any specific funding programme.
	Cultural Investment Prospectus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A marketing document that outlines potential cultural investment opportunities and the mechanisms to support potential investors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare on a sub-regional basis in partnership
	Feasibility Study Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare feasibility studies for priority projects in programme and emerging projects – in readiness for funding bids or to firm up and test project ideas – seed-corn support • Includes impact outputs and outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables projects to move from the ideas / concept stage to being more oven-ready • Requires a sub-regional Feasibility Study funding pot • Supports LAs and other organisations who lack this resource • Unblocks / enables good cultural project ideas which otherwise would not progress. • Enables early discussion with potential funders
	Development of strategic and detailed Business Cases for Public Sector / Community Cultural Infrastructure Projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential for LA Capital Programme and / or funding bids • Use standard LA / Funding organisation business case templates and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full engagement with funders and end users • Puts projects in best position for funding bid making.
	Use of Public Sector Land ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ownership can be the key to successful delivery • Use development contracts / Joint Ventures, etc • For both underused buildings and land, and • Large scale development areas in public ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate and political leadership required • Multidisciplinary approach and project team required • Key to delivering multifunctional colocation.
	A Welcome Mat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support for potential investors • Create certainty for cultural infrastructure investments and their enabling developments • Set out and communicate the investor welcome mat arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a multidisciplinary LA lead and team to manage investors and their projects through their regulatory and obligation processes • Establish Planning Performance Agreement systems in LAs for major cultural infrastructure projects and their enabling developments. • Establishing a Development Team approach incorporating cultural officers/experts

