Guide
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Creative Communities

Guidelines for developing and maintaining an arts and cultural policy

Creative Communities Network

The Creative Communities Network is comprised of Local Government cultural development workers and representatives of key, state wide arts organisations keen to support creative communities. CCN works to address cultural development and arts industry-related issues by networking, facilitating workshops, seminars, forums and conferences, and building partnerships with arts industry organisations. Members meet monthly. For current CCN contact details, phone the Community Arts Network of SA on (08) 8231 0900 or the Local Government Association of SA on (08) 8224 2000.

foreword

This kit highlighting the importance of an arts and cultural policy framework for local Councils and providing policy and project descriptions is a great example of what can be achieved through collaboration.

Involvement in the arts and culture provides unique opportunities to get people from a range of backgrounds working together.

Working directly with communities and involving them with shaping and producing artwork in their own backyards not only enriches their physical environment but can also give people a sense of pride and accomplishment.

The work that went into the creation of the Creating Communities Policy Guidelines is also an excellent example of the way local and state governments can work together.

Local Councils know their communities more intimately than any other level of government. State governments have great experience in arts projects and arts organisations themselves know what can be achieved.

Through the utilisation of the skills, knowledge and expertise of organisations and individuals involved in this publication, a real and practical set of tools has been produced.

I commend all those involved and look forward to the growth of a vibrant arts rich community across this state.
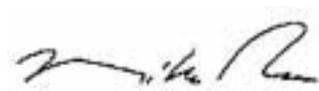
The Hon Mike Rann MP
Premier of South Australia
Minister for the Arts

I congratulate the Creative Communities Network (CCN) – a network of cultural development workers employed by SA Councils and State-level arts bodies – for initiating this project and bringing together the funding partners and other contributors.

Collectively, SA Councils invest $51m a year on libraries, galleries and other cultural activities, another $46m on parks, gardens and a further $60m on recreation.

The story sheets put a 'face' to this expenditure highlighting fantastic policy and project activity already supported or undertaken by Councils.

The guidelines provide a simple approach to developing or reviewing a sound cultural policy framework which we believe will ensure better integration and more effective outcomes from project activities.

I acknowledge the assistance provided to the project by CCN, the Local Government Research & Development Scheme; the Government of South Australia through Arts South Australia and Country Arts SA; and the Community Arts Network of SA.

Thanks also go to individual Councils which responded to surveys and provided other input and to the members of the project steering committee and reference groups.

The opportunity is now ahead of us to make the best use of these tools with the agencies and organisations so willing to help.

Mayor Johanna McLuskey
President
Local Government Association of South Australia

1

contents

introduction

These guidelines aim to help Councils develop arts and cultural policies. They are designed for people new to policy development, and also to act as a resource for those with more experience or for those reviewing a current policy. They are general in scope and simply indicate valuable processes and stages to follow.

The guidelines outline five key steps to developing an arts and cultural policy:
- establish an advisory group
- conduct an audit
- develop the policy
- establish a strategy to implement the policy
- evaluate the policy and strategy.

These guidelines were developed during the Creating Communities Project, a 12-month project undertaken in 2001–02 to develop an arts and cultural policy for the Local Government Association of SA (LGA) and supporting material for Local Government. Examples cited in these guidelines have been drawn from the project's audit survey of arts and cultural resources, finances and activities in South Australian Councils. As part of the audit, Councils were asked to nominate good practice examples of their work in arts and culture. A selection of these examples has been developed as 'good practice story sheets' and examples of policy in action have been developed as 'policy story sheets'.

The LGA, the peak body for South Australian Councils, adopted an interim arts and cultural policy in March 2002, with a succinct formal policy based on the interim policy being presented at its October annual general meeting for endorsement. The key principle statement in the proposed policy reflects the central role that the arts and culture can play in community life.

Councils' commitment to arts and cultural development empowers people and engenders a sense of pride in their identity and community and plays an important role in creating social, educational and economic opportunities.
(Principle statement, proposed LGA Arts and Cultural Policy)

For the purpose of this project, the following definition was used to describe 'culture'.

Culture defines … who we are, what we do and what is around us. It reflects, challenges, adds value to and enhances our lifestyles. Culture includes the diverse sectors of our individual and collective community. Positive interaction with each other's culture extends to the creative forms of all personal and public expression.
(Creating Communities consultancy brief)

An arts and cultural policy gains strength from being integrated with other Council policies, particularly through Council's strategic management plans. Through its benefits for social wellbeing and for the local economy, it can underpin core Council business.

These guidelines represent informed advice on how to advance arts and cultural policy within Councils. However, a key feature characterising Local Government is that every Council is different. Each has a different history, community, assets, professional staff and needs. This guarantees that the entry point for Councils to arts and cultural development will also be different.

A community network, a passionate individual, a grant-funded project, the redesign of a public place, a management team looking for better ways to involve the community – each of these could be the entry point for a Council wanting to take a more strategic and long-term approach to arts and cultural development.

Why have an arts and cultural policy?

The following points summarise key reasons for adoption of an arts and cultural policy:

1 Arts and cultural development both benefits and depends upon a wide range of Council activities. The highest level of Council endorsement is therefore required to ensure a commitment to **integration and securing the best return on Council's investment.** Areas where integration is required include economic activities such as cultural tourism, festivals, events and local business activity, urban planning and design, and the management of local infrastructure assets.

2 Timely and effective **engagement with local communities** requires a strategic approach which should be endorsed by elected Councils.

3 Arts and cultural development is pivotal to Councils' role in improving **quality of life** of the community.

4 An arts and cultural policy acknowledges the **diverse cultures** and changing forms of creative expression within communities which make each Council different.

5 Having a policy and strategy assists Councils to make **the best use of resources** and prepares them to take advantage of one-off funding opportunities such as the recent Centenary of Federation.

6 A policy framework provides greater certainty and therefore **encourages other councils and other levels of governments** to engage and provide assistance.

Councils' arts and cultural activities and projects are no less important if they do not have a policy framework; however, with such a framework Councils are more likely to have better planned, sustainable programs of a higher quality which are more effectively integrated with core Council activities.

1 arts and cultural
policy in Local Government

In South Australia increasing importance is being placed on arts and cultural development at local and regional levels, as the Creative Communities Network (CCN), the Local Government Association, Councils, the State Government, and arts and cultural industry bodies work together to encourage recognition of the value of arts and cultural development. These networks are central to supporting local initiatives as well as providing access to wider arts and cultural experiences.

Councils have a strong tradition, through formal organisations, of working together with neighbouring Councils, across regions and at state and national levels. This also happens when officers who do similar work, talk, meet and exchange ideas (as occurs for example, through the CCN).

Arts and cultural activities include the visual, performing and literary arts, community events and activities, and educational activities. They lead to the development of:
- arts and cultural skills and knowledge
- festivals, celebrations and commemorative events
- the preservation of local heritage
- urban planning and design
- public art
- cultural planning.

These activities are supported through Councils' arts and cultural facilities, programs, services and staff, through which Councils aim to cater for all sections of the community.

The Creating Communities Project Audit

A Council might be explicitly committed to supporting the arts and cultural expression of its community with dedicated staff responsible for work in this area, or it may be yet to make such a commitment. Either way, it is likely to be investing some financial and in-kind resources in arts and culture.

The responses to the Creating Communities audit survey of arts and cultural expenditure by South Australian Councils in 2000–01 suggest that 37% of these funds was spent on libraries, 35% on parks and gardens and 27% on all other arts and cultural facilities and activities.
(Source: Creating Communities audit report)

The most common Council forms of involvements in arts and culture were commitments to libraries, public halls and regular celebrations such as holiday events. The audit also found Councils' strategic management plans are likely to make some reference to arts and cultural development; for example, in referring to matters such as community wellbeing, maintaining local heritage or supporting community groups.

South Australian Councils play an important and central role in the cultural life of their communities. Historically, Councils have made significant contributions to local arts and cultural activity. Halls, libraries, galleries, civic centres, museums, parks and public meeting places and facilities have been a focal point for community participation.
(LGA interim policy)

The audit also indicated that Councils support arts and cultural activities in many other ways besides directly allocating staff to arts and cultural programs. Many have a small grants fund for community activities, some with allocations specifically directed to arts and cultural activities. Many will have policies of contributing in-kind support that benefits arts and cultural activities; for example, road closures, the provision of meeting rooms, photocopying and assistance in preparing funding applications.

The Local Government Act

The *Local Government Act 1999* reinforces the role that Councils have in improving the quality of life of the community, their responsibilities for providing community and cultural services and facilities, and the importance of ensuring equitable access to these. The LGA's Future Directions statement (2001) also emphasises the importance of improving the quality of life and community building through arts and cultural programs.

Local Government is created by the community it serves, through the legislative framework established by the State Government. This framework is held in common by all Councils and provides some clear direction:

> *A council is ... established to provide for the government and management of its area at the local level and, in particular – (c) to encourage and develop initiatives within its community for improving the **quality of life of the community** ...*
> (Local Government Act 1999, section 6 [our emphasis])

> *The functions of a council include; (b) to provide services and facilities that benefit its area, its ratepayers and residents, and visitors to its area (including ... **cultural** or recreational services or facilities) ... (h) to establish or support organisations or programs that benefit people in its area or local government generally ...*
> (Local Government Act 1999, section 7 [our emphasis])

> *A council must, in the performance of its roles and functions – (f) seek to facilitate sustainable development and the protection of the environment and to ensure a proper balance within its community between economic, social, environmental and **cultural considerations** ...*
> (Local Government Act 1999, section 8 [our emphasis])

Further provisions of the Act (Section 122) require a Council to produce strategic management plans which identify objectives and the principal activities that aim to realise them. Councils must ensure an opportunity for public involvement in developing or amending plans, which can be reviewed or amended at any time.

A Council must also participate with other Councils and governments in setting public policy and give due weight in its plans, policies and activities to regional, state and national objectives and strategies.
(Local Government Act 1999, sections 8 & 122)

Arts and cultural policy in action

The work of four Councils (the Adelaide City Council, the Rural City of Murray Bridge, the City of Onkaparinga and the City of Prospect) provides examples of Council arts and cultural policies in the accompanying policy story sheets. Many other Councils referred to policies, plans and statements, links to strategic plans and budgets in the audit survey. These four Councils were chosen because their work reflects the different aspects of policy development and implementation found across the state.

Policy relating to arts and culture can be both quite specific and part of a broader strategy; for example, it is often closely related to Council responsibilities for the public realm, as expressed through public art. The **Adelaide City Council** (the Council for the central business area of Adelaide) recently developed its public art policy, *Watch this place: The City of Adelaide Public Art Policy*

2001–2006, a comprehensive document encompassing policy and implementation strategies. This Council makes provision for funding public artworks (including funding for administration) as a percentage of its capital works budget.

The Adelaide City Council is also in the process of reviewing and recasting its arts and cultural strategy.

The City of Adelaide has an endorsed City Arts Strategy that addresses festivals and events, placemaking, arts industry development and marketing and promotion … [it] provides the strategic framework for the Public Art Policy …
(City of Adelaide 2001)

In the **Rural City of Murray Bridge** (a regional city to the east of Adelaide), the initiative of several community members who wanted to develop a public art gallery led to the establishment of a Community Cultural Development Advisory Committee, a committee which now works strategically across council. This in turn led to a cultural audit and the development of a cultural plan. The city now has a regional art gallery and the cultural audit and cultural plan are considered in general social and economic planning matters.

The content of those documents is called on frequently to substantiate the need for Council involvement in arts and culture and to enunciate the importance of cultural development as part of an integrated approach to economic and social development in Murray Bridge.
(Rural City of Murray Bridge policy response)

In 1997, the three Councils of Happy Valley, Noarlunga and Willunga amalgamated to form the **City of Onkaparinga** (now the state's largest Council) on the southern fringe of Adelaide. Each Council had different arts and cultural resources, which were combined under an arts and cultural development policy, placed under the lead policy of social development.

Considering the rich history and community participation rate in the arts, it was imperative that policy was formed to guide Council's approach and management of an Arts and Cultural Development Program.
The 'Arts and Cultural Development' policy has three Objectives:
1. To encourage a strategic planning approach to arts and cultural development;
2. To promote community involvement in the development and management of arts and cultural development opportunities; and
3. To create an awareness of Council's role in supporting the development of a range of quality arts and cultural development facilities, activities and programs, which contribute to the well being of the local community.
(City of Onkaparinga policy response)

The **City of Prospect** (a small metropolitan Council) has a long tradition of supporting community arts and cultural development. Since 1982 the community arts and cultural development components of Council functions have been consistently and fully funded by Council. They have been an integral part of the City of Prospect Strategic Plan since 1987.

The Community Arts Policy and Council's commitment to cultural development continues to enhance the quality of life of the residents of the City of Prospect and plays a major role in community building and participation. The heading on the website and the forthcoming new community magazine is the 'City of Prospect – the Creative Community'. This emphasises Council's commitment to arts and culture and our many regular events and activities are living proof of this policy.
(City of Prospect's audit survey response)

getting started

Each Council will take a different approach to developing and implementing new policy, and each will commit different resources to the process. Suggestions are provided below for deciding the most appropriate process for your Council.

It may be useful to talk to others in Local Government who have worked on developing arts and cultural policies. They can probably advise on how to persuade and encourage those unfamiliar with the benefits. It may also be prudent to use this time to seek advice from potential supporters in writing the policy, for example, Council staff with policy development responsibilities. The support of various individuals at this point may identify useful contributors to an arts and cultural advisory group.

Getting the new policy to the stage of gaining endorsement will require:
- a decision by Council to develop an arts and cultural policy with a commitment of appropriate resources
- consultations and negotiations at various levels of Council and with the community
- agreement on just how the policy's values, principles and objectives will be written.

At this stage, advocate the need for an arts and cultural policy and prepare a briefing or scoping paper on how these objectives could be best achieved.

Briefing paper

A briefing paper summarises the argument for a new arts and cultural policy, advocates for it and identifies the benefits for Council. It will support the subsequent development of a work plan or project management plan. This work will prove most valuable when preparing briefing papers for the arts and cultural advisory group. Use it to:
- frame the benefits of an arts and cultural policy for Council
- outline how the policy would be developed, implemented, evaluated and reviewed
- indicate how the policy would be integrated with other Council policies.

A briefing paper could include:
- an outline of the project
- definitions of arts and culture
- background to Council involvement in arts and culture
- related existing Council policies
- relationship to Council's strategic plan and vision or mission statement
- a proposed timeline
- relevance to current staff duties
- costings for consultations.

Identify what is already available. Look for local material to support the case, including Council's current budget allocations to arts and cultural facilities, services, activities and programs. Use the more than 70 good practice examples listed in the project's audit report.

Identify the best time to develop the briefing paper. There may be a regular time for reviewing all Council policies, for example, immediately following Local Government elections. Council may have an older policy related to community development or tourism that is due for review which could form the basis for an arts and cultural policy. A management restructure could result in changed resources and interests that would support the development of this new policy.

To be well informed, the policy needs to be driven by community needs, so community consultation is essential. Ideally, consult the community through an arts and cultural audit. This requires plenty of preparation time and appropriate resourcing. If the Council policy development processes are primarily focused on in-house consultation, they will need to be adjusted to take community consultation into account.

When preparing the briefing paper consider the following issues:
- Council's policy development process: timing, protocols for endorsement and evaluation, links to strategic plans, budget allocations and current policies
- Council's relationships with advisory groups: would a working party or steering committee be best used in the early stages? When is the best time to formalise the arts and cultural advisory group? Who should be on it?
- What is involved in running an arts and cultural audit: what resources are needed? Could it be done as an arts project? When is the best time of the year for it to happen?
- Council's current involvement in arts and culture: what relationships and engagement does Council have with local arts and cultural facilities, programs, events and activities?

summary

A formal commitment to a process and outcomes is important. The commitment must include the expectation of extensive community involvement and consultation. The task ahead should be outlined in a written briefing/scoping paper.

3 establishing
an arts and cultural advisory group

This stage of developing a new policy involves establishing a permanent and formally constituted arts and cultural advisory group to act as the official advisory group to Council. It will function as the initiator, driver and advocate for Council's engagement with arts and culture.

A formally constituted arts and cultural advisory group can report to the whole of Council, rather than through one councillor, and will need the support of a staff member. Under the *Local Government Act* 1999 (Section 41) it can be established as a formal advisory committee of Council.

The importance of finding people who can act as key references, provide appropriate links to local arts and cultural groups and give weight to policy's the endorsement cannot be over-emphasised. These champions and advocates will support, endorse and drive the process. Observe the way in which other Council staff work with community and advisory groups and see what you can find out from professional networks such as the CCN.

People are far more likely to become involved if they feel the project has a good chance of success, so gaining high-level and highly visible expressions of support from your Council from the start is essential. Equally, in the context of community consultation, people are likely to lose interest if they feel their involvement is simply a matter of rubber-stamping Council's procedures. The champions, advocates and supporters of the arts and cultural policy need to have a sense of ownership.

The Committee plays a big role in educating the community (and Council!) about community cultural development and the social, artistic and economic benefits of embracing, celebrating and promoting culture.
(audit report, Rural City of Murray Bridge good practice example)

Going formal?

It is a matter for Council to decide whether the arts and cultural advisory group is formally constituted before or after the policy is developed.
- If the community's arts and cultural interests are fairly well known to Council, the group may be best formalised at the start of the policy development process. This would give its members a sense of ownership.
- If these interests are not so well known, it might be preferable initially, to use less formal working parties or steering committees. They can be deployed strategically while Council, community and staff establish relationships and commitments to arts and culture as a meaningful part of Council's responsibilities. An arts and cultural advisory group can be formally established at a later stage, possibly after information has been gathered through the arts and cultural audit. This should ensure appropriate representation of the community's arts and cultural interests, and well-defined terms of reference.

A working party or steering committee could include senior staff members, a key councillor, and several community representatives and would meet monthly. These groups need to be small to be effective; they need to include people with a keen interest in arts and culture and a strong commitment to achieving outcomes.

Consider, particularly in a small Council, whether an existing group could take on this role. For example, CCN took the role of the Advisory Group for the Creating Communities project, but has a broader function than that of supporting policy development. Since arts and cultural activities are widespread, some groups and individuals may already be experienced in using these strategies.

The Tolmer Park Project [which includes public art] is the culmination of a ten-year plan to upgrade the main street of Bordertown. A group of local people on the main street committee called 'Bordertown on the Move' drove the project. They cared about their community and were willing to do something to change it. They were able to work to a ten-year plan which they basically stuck to, and had varying successes along the way which ensured their enthusiasm was maintained.
(Tatiara District Council's audit survey response)

Whatever its make-up, the advisory group will need a formal briefing on its role and responsibilities, including a background paper on the Council's role in arts and culture extrapolated from the initial briefing paper (see section 2, p. 8). Consider the following:

- Membership of the advisory group may change as you move through the stages; for example, key people may change jobs and move away.
- Council may have a policy of advertising for members of formally constituted advisory committees.
- The role and function of the advisory group must be clearly identified from the outset.
- Areas of strong community interest and concern may be identified during the policy development process, and new stakeholders may need to be co-opted to the advisory group.

The Community Cultural Development Advisory Committee (CCDAC) has 13 community members (including one councillor) representing local groups with interests in music, literature, visual and performing arts, history, heritage and cultural diversity ... Establishing the CCDAC relied on good timing politically and in 'getting the ear' of an appropriate person within the Council's administration.
(audit report, Rural City of Murray Bridge good practice example)

summary

Advisory groups, formal or informal, need committed people and proper support. Council will need to consider when to make a group a formal committee of Council.

4 undertaking
an arts and cultural audit of local activity and resources

An arts and cultural audit will give credibility and relevance to the final policy document and its supporting strategy.

An arts and cultural audit does not simply aim to build a list of community groups and relevant Council facilities, programs and services. It is both a survey of current local arts and cultural interests and an identification of community needs and aspirations. It aims to find out:

- the range of arts and cultural activities in which the community is engaged
- how Council is currently engaged in arts and culture
- what is missing and in particular what the community's priorities are
- existing resources and opportunities
- the resources that might be needed to develop arts and cultural activities
- how Council can support the community in this area.

Establish the audit as you would a project: secure the resources, write a brief, manage the project and take the outcomes further within Council. The advisory group should act as a steering committee for the audit.

An arts and cultural audit uses community consultation techniques: forums, workshops, surveys and key interviews to gather information, impressions and ideas. This information will assist in formulating the policy's objectives and principles, and will clearly inform the strategy. It will also help in identifying where key Council activity areas could be better integrated/co-ordinated to support a strategy and achieve better outcomes.

All responses to the audit must be documented. This information gives meaning to the statistics and, in being a clear depiction of what the community wants, is a great resource for funding submissions.

Consultation

While the focus of the audit is on gathering a rich resource of information, the community consultation process can also be used to:

- develop and test draft statements that could function as the policy's statement of key principles
- get a clearly expressed sense of priorities and objectives that will directly inform the final policy document and the subsequent strategy.

The purpose of the Rural City of Murray Bridge Cultural Audit was to analyse the existing culture, cultural assets and cultural aspirations of the community in order to establish a strategic framework for the preparation of a cultural plan and cultural policy for the city.
(*Wanting to wake up*, a cultural audit of the Rural City of Murray Bridge)

The audit may lead directly to the development of an arts and cultural plan which indicates priorities for Council activity. (In the Rural City of Murray Bridge example, the audit and plan were produced a few months apart by the same consultants. Both were funded by the same partners, Country Arts SA and Council.) It may be appropriate to start building on these priorities while memories of the consultation are still fresh. This can refresh the advisory group's motivation, attract Council attention and further support the policy's development.

They [the Cultural Audit and Cultural Plan] are well written and properly researched documents that clearly state what people thought at the time. As a 'social study' they lend themselves to being replicated in the future to see what's changed.
(audit report, Rural City of Murray Bridge good practice example)

Consider bringing in facilitators with experience in negotiating a wide range of cultural values and working in a broad spectrum of arts and cultural fields to manage the community consultation process. Also consider what might, or might not be, considered under the phrase 'arts and culture'.

- The brief for the audit may need to specify the parameters of the consultation to ensure it includes all cultures.
- Some reference may need to be made to the audit's relationship with sport and recreation.
- It is best to focus on elements relevant to Local Government.

While culture has a very broad interpretation, the definition of culture used in the audit survey for the Creating Communities project was to encompass: *arts and cultural activities, facilities and services [and] could include community events, festivals, urban design, townscape, art in public places, projects, programs, libraries, galleries, museums and performance spaces.*
(Creating Communities consultancy brief)

summary

Allow time for reflection and interpretation to develop a clear brief for the audit, provide for suitable documentation that will inform the policy and subsequent strategic plans.

5 developing policy

The arts and cultural policy can be shaped utilising the information and resources developed in the previous stages. Arts and cultural interests and requirements are always changing so it will be necessary to link the policy to an appropriate review and evaluation process.

During this stage it will be important to work closely with established Council processes for policy development and endorsement. Writing policy does require skills, experience and an understanding of the Council context. Whatever its final form, the policy will need to give clear direction and be easily understood by all, including those without a background in arts and culture. (See appendix 1 for model policies.)

There is no set length for a policy document, but they usually contain a fairly generic set of statements:
- a '*principle' statement* that expresses the key value of the policy and is a succinct description of why arts and culture matter to Council and to the community
- several statements about the *roles* of the organisation in order to make the connections between Council's general responsibilities and arts and culture
- a list of *policy objectives* including three or four achievable outcomes the community wants which are clearly linked to Council's roles and responsibilities.

The Le Hunte District Council has identified the following three policy objectives, the second of which includes related strategies:

Objective 6.1: An appropriate range of active and passive facilities for the use of the community and visitors.
Objective 6.2: Provision of facilities and support for cultural activity in the community.
- *Increase the utilisation of halls for recreational and cultural activities and events*
- *Encourage more performing arts events in the community*
- *Support the ongoing development of library and information services*
- *Support the extension of the range of radio reception to include SBS/Community radio/broader radio, Triple J.*
Objective 6.3: Recognition, preservation and promotion of the history and heritage of the area.
(Le Hunte District Community Plan, November 1997)

Depending on the desired length (probably predetermined by the style of the Council's policy manual), policy documents can also include:
- an introduction or an executive summary which is an outline of why arts and cultural activities are a priority for Council, and how the policy assists Council's work in this area
- background and historical context, perhaps including the policy development process, which is likely to come from the initial briefing paper
- relationships with other Council policies and strategic plans in order to give a sense of integration across Council, and possibly to highlight the many aspects of arts and cultural work policies are rarely stand-alone documents, and often make reference to or are cited in other Council policies
- strategic or implementation plans which some Councils may include with the policy as a matter of course; others will develop them as separate documents.

Understanding what policy means

It is highly likely that Council is already acting from an agreed position on arts and culture. When developing a policy to make this position explicit, consider the following:

- Allow plenty of time for consultation regarding the draft of the arts and cultural policy, while working to the established Council endorsement procedures.
- Consider using a workshop to bring together the knowledge and understanding of the advisory group with staff experienced in writing policy to produce the final arts and cultural policy. Use the workshop to integrate the new policy with other policies and Council's strategic plan.
- Ensure priority areas, and possibly a draft principle statement and objectives, have been endorsed at the audit stage. These key concepts should be used when writing up the arts and cultural policy.
- Ensure the policy objectives are achievable. This should support realistic links to budgets, and help gain and maintain community support. It may be strategic to include a mix of short- and longer-term aims.

By the time the policy has reached this stage, it should be a highly distilled version of the working documents previously drawn up by the advisory group (including the initial briefing paper, the audit report and draft policy wording) and will rely on fuller expression in the strategic plans to bring it alive.

By way of succinct example, the City of Onkaparinga's framework for policy development, endorsement and review is given below.

- *Extensive consultation with both Elected Members and Council officers forms an integral component of [the] policy development and review process.*
- *Guidelines and Procedures documents were endorsed by Council to provide a clear process for new policy development as required to clarify Council's role and purpose and/or to address new legislative requirements.*
- *Policies are also reviewed every three years and are designed to occur post Council elections and provide comprehensive consideration of the newly elected body, community and staff's views and expectations.*
- *Annual reviews also occur to update references to legislation and strategic documents (such as the City of Onkaparinga's strategic directions outlined in Creating our Future 2002–2005) and to ensure cross-referencing to new Policy and Procedures.* (City of Onkaparinga policy response)

summary

Developing the policy entails a distillation of the information gathered in the previous stages. Ensure the policy's objectives are achievable through realistic links to budgets. It may be strategic to include a mix of short- and longer-term aims. Writing policy requires certain skills and time should be allowed for a draft to be given full consideration. Communities change and, to keep pace, so must public policy responses, so it is important to incorporate an appropriate evaluation/review mechanism.

Strategic plans, like policy documents, are dynamic working documents. They give a sense of direction and define how policy objectives will be achieved to meet agreed priorities within a specific timeframe.

The *Local Government Act* requires Councils to have 'strategic management plans' for the management of their areas for three to five years. While the form these take varies between Councils, the plans should seek to integrate Council's total range of activities. A strategy may be a separate document or may be incorporated into a larger one, but it must identify objectives and principal activities, indicate how a Council has considered intergovernment issues, outline revenues and expenses, and performance measures.

Linking the new arts and cultural policy to council's strategic plan is likely to follow a standard process endorsed by Council. It can result in a struggle to secure some of Council's limited resources, and this is where the results of the arts and cultural audit and the influence of the arts and cultural advisory group can be useful. Given demands on scarce resources, it will be particularly important to have identified benefits to, and contributions from, related areas and to have explored opportunities to secure grants and generate other income.

The new policy will need a strategic plan which will bring the policy alive as:
- policy objectives are implemented by strategies and activities
- resource allocations are planned and committed
- time lines bring focus to policy statements
- work programs are integrated to benefit arts and cultural development and other Council objectives.

The City of Salisbury Cultural Strategy Implementation Plan has seven objectives. These include:
To develop and support cultural activities, which enliven and express community pride and contribute to the emergence of a strong community identity.
The strategies for achieving this are to:
- *Encourage and support the organisation of major cultural events, performances and art activities, which are of regional significance within the City.*
- *Promote Salisbury's cultural program so as to attract cultural performance and activities to Salisbury for the benefit of the community.*
- *Provide and promote a diverse range of cultural opportunities for the Salisbury community to maximise involvement.*
- *Promote Salisbury as a performance venue.*
- *Provide an environment that is attractive and meaningful for residents and visitors to the City.*
(City of Salisbury, audit survey response)

Priorities expressed

The policy objectives outlined in the arts and cultural policy are clearly endorsed expressions of the priorities of Council and the community and need to be supported in Council's strategic plan. Including an achievable mix of short- and longer-term aims that are relevant to Council's role is likely to help secure resources for the policy's implementation.

The Policy defines Council's role and approach and provides a statement of intent. Council's strategic directions document is continuously referred to in Council reports and proposals and is used as a reporting mechanism [to show] that we 'do what we said we were going to do'.
(City of Onkaparinga policy response)

Arts and cultural activities, programs, facilities and events which help to achieve the arts and cultural policy can also realise broader Council strategies. This can be seen from the following examples.

The Museum plays an important role in fulfilling the Council's aim of enhancing local community and cultural life and of providing opportunities for cultural expression.
(City of Unley audit survey response)

The Festival of the Coast was also developed in response to the Council's interest in partnering the establishment of a 'local' arts festival with high levels of community participation and ownership, in order to effectively promote distinctive aspects of the character of the region to residents and the South Australian community … The primary focus for the 2001 Festival was building on levels of community participation and ownership.
(City of Charles Sturt audit survey response)

The objectives of the Oyster Fest include:
- *To ensure the people of Ceduna and surrounds … embrace the Oyster Fest as their major annual cause for celebration.*
- *To present a colourful, dynamic and quality program of concerts, workshops and other activities attractive to both the local community and her visitors. Through this program to promote artistic and cultural growth within our remote community.*
- *The festival should continue to promote community spirit, enhance positive opinion of the town and highlight the positives of living in Ceduna.*
(Ceduna District Council audit survey response)

summary

A strategy, or strategic plan is required to give effect to the arts and cultural policy. It must accord with the *Local Government Act*'s requirements and to the particular style and approach of each Council. This is the point at which broad resourcing decisions will need to be argued and taken.

These guidelines do not prescribe any particular model of evaluation; they refer to issues that should be addressed when undertaking an evaluation. Councils may wish to evaluate the process used to develop the policy and strategy. They should however, review the policy itself on a regular basis and they must, at least every three years, review its associated strategic management plans. Councils should be very clear when they embark on an evaluation about whether they are evaluating the process, or the policy itself. Clearly the process used to develop a policy can be evaluated once it is completed; however, to review the policy itself ideally requires several years of experience in implementing it.

Evaluation is an important tool and should be documented. It assists Council to learn from experience and to refine policies and objectives over time. Actual implementation of policy is often the best test of its appropriateness and the best guide to refining it.

Evaluating processes

To evaluate the process used to develop the arts and cultural policy most effectively, an evaluation framework should be established at the same time as the project brief/scoping paper. This framework should relate the aims to the outcomes and assess how the process was implemented. The framework should be:
- understood from the start of the process
- considered in the briefing for the initial working party, steering committee or advisory group
- integrated into the project's work plan.

In this way much of the evaluation work can be efficiently assembled at the appropriate time, rather than being a separate task.

Since the key document informing the policy is the report from the arts and cultural audit, the evaluation of the policy development process will need to pay particular attention to the:
- inclusive nature of the audit consultation process
- appropriate articulation of the arts and cultural interests of the community
- adequate depiction of the audit's values and priorities in the policy and its associated strategies.

Reviewing policy/strategy

When it comes to reviewing the policy itself, an evaluation report on the process of developing the policy, and documentation of the strategy development and implementation experience, will be vital. In a major review, it is also important to ensure that consultation with stakeholders occurs.

The evaluation process is cyclical but includes a number of distinct stages, integrated with the conventional stages of a planning cycle. These are: setting objectives; planning how to meet them; undertaking the work; and reviewing progress. There are more complicated matrices for expressing this, but the basic principle is clear: you decide what you want to do and how to do it, before carrying out the work and assessing your performance against your original objectives.
(Matarasso 1996, p.4)

In community development or community services, the areas in Council where arts and cultural responsibilities generally reside, most evaluations comment on relationships between Council and community. It may be appropriate to adapt a general Council evaluation procedure (if available) or a community development model and seek feedback from community participants.

Good material is available on the subject of evaluation, particularly in the area of arts and culture where the results are often qualitative and located within the community. (Some references are listed in appendix 2.) Methodologies for evaluating arts and cultural events, are relevant to policy implementation and should be included as part of the policy's review process. The review, possibly undertaken up to three years later, would ideally include an update of the audit conducted through a community consultation process.

- This update would identify any changes in priorities and values resulting from changes in the community's arts and cultural interests.
- Any such changes would then be incorporated in the revised policy and related strategic plans.

The evaluation should also include an assessment of whether the agreed strategies for achieving the policy's objectives have been successfully implemented and whether this has occurred within the timeframes agreed in the policy's strategic plan.

By the time the final evaluation stage of the project has been reached, far more people at Council will be aware of their organisation's role in arts and culture. Thus the evaluation process can be used strategically both to confirm the position of the arts and cultural policy and to advocate for further resources and commitment from Council.

summary

Evaluation of the policy development process and a review of the policy over time are both valuable learning tools and often contribute most to the effective refining of policies. It is important to set an evaluation framework at the start to ensure that appropriate documentation is gathered along the way.

appendix 1
Model arts and cultural policies

MODEL POLICY (long version)

This policy comprises an introduction, a draft key principle, an outline of Councils' roles in arts and cultural development, nine key roles, and three objectives, each supported by a range of strategic statements.

Interim arts and cultural policy for the Local Government Association of SA (LGA)

The following interim policy statement was presented to and adopted by the LGA's half-yearly general meeting in March 2002. While it was designed as a state-level policy, its elements will assist Councils to identify elements which may be appropriate within a Council policy document and therefore it is provided as a reference resource.

Introduction: Arts and Cultural Development in Local Communities

South Australian Councils play an important and central role in the cultural life of their communities. Historically, Councils have made significant contributions to local arts and cultural activity. Halls, libraries, galleries, civic centres, museums, parks and public meeting places and facilities have been a focal point for community participation.

Based on the audit undertaken since November 2001 as part of the Creative State Policy Project, there is no doubt that Councils take an active role in supporting their communities to enjoy a wide range of high quality arts and cultural experiences, both as active participants and in an audience capacity, in their local environment. This includes opportunities to engage in local community-based activities, as well as access to wider arts and cultural experiences. Councils are actively encouraging and creating linkages between individual artists, local arts and cultural groups, schools, local traders, architects, developers and other business groups, and Indigenous and multicultural groups. Some Councils are also integrating arts and cultural activities across areas of core council business.

The place of arts and cultural development in building community cohesion is widely recognised, and Councils and other levels of government are also more aware of the opportunities for creating local economic growth through arts and cultural development. The decisions taken by Councils are directly related to the creation of 'place' in a local area – expressing its identity, making it a destination for visitors and tourists, and building its unique profile.

Arts and cultural development provide opportunities for enjoyment, creative expression and contribute to an improved quality of life for local communities.
- The *Local Government Act 1999* reinforces the role that Councils have in improving the quality of life of the community, their responsibilities to provide community and cultural services and facilities and the importance of ensuring equitable access to these.
- The Local Government Association's Future Directions statement (2001) emphasises the importance of improving the quality of life and community building in South Australian communities through creative and cultural programs. The four major directions identified in the statement – improved quality of life, improved management of public assets, securing adequate revenue and ecologically sustainable development – can be integrated through local arts and cultural development.
- Cultural activities include the visual, performing and literary arts, community events and activities, educational activities leading to the development of cultural skills and knowledge, festivals, celebrations, commemorative events, the preservation of local heritage, community and urban planning and design, public art and cultural planning. These are supported locally through Councils' arts and cultural facilities, programs, services and staff, through which Councils aim to cater for all sections of the community.
- South Australia places great importance on the arts and cultural development at the local and regional levels. The Local Government Association, Councils, the South Australian Government and arts and cultural industry bodies are working together to encourage recognition of the value of arts and cultural development in local and regional areas. These networks are central to supporting local initiatives as well as providing access to wider arts and cultural experiences.

Draft Arts and Cultural Development Principle

The following wording is proposed as the key principle underpinning Council involvement in this area:
Local cultural and artistic expression and participation in communities is central to effective local democracy and contributes to economic and social growth in communities.

The Role of Councils in Supporting Arts and Cultural Development

Councils play a central leadership role in building community capacity. A Council's commitment to arts and cultural development can empower local people and engender a sense of pride in their identity through arts, heritage, environment and community. Councils play an important role in creating social, educational and economic opportunities.

The Local Government Association's existing policy on community relations and strengthening diversity together with its recognition of Aboriginal Reconciliation also reinforce the important role Councils play in valuing diversity and difference in cultural expression.

The role of Councils in supporting arts and cultural development is wide ranging. It includes:

1 Consulting With Local Communities
Councils engage local communities, groups and residents in the planning and development of arts and cultural programs, services and facilities.

2 Focussing On Local Needs And Interests
Councils focus on local people, places and cultures and on the particular needs, interests and traditions of their communities (while understanding and giving due weight to the national, state and regional context in which they operate) when developing arts and cultural policies and plans.

3 Valuing Local Identity
Councils value the diversity of local cultural resources and capacities, and will seek the contribution of different cultures to local cultural identity. They can play a major role in linking the local with national and international cultural experience.

4 Ensuring Local Access and Participation
Councils will ensure that their arts and cultural policies, plans and programs support opportunities for access and participation in a wide range of high quality arts and cultural activities and/or experiences in both an active and audience capacity. This includes opportunities to engage in local community based activities as well as wider arts and cultural experiences.

5 Local Heritage
Councils preserve, maintain and support the interpretation of and access to materials relating to the history of local communities.

6 Local Indigenous Cultures
Local Government recognises the unique value of Indigenous cultures and is committed to include these in arts and cultural planning and program development.

7 Quality of Living
Councils aim to improve the quality of living in their communities through the development of arts and cultural policies and programs.

8 **Community Development**
Councils support the development and promotion of arts and cultural programs and services that encourage personal, community and civic development.

9 **Cultural Enterprise**
Councils have a key role in building sustainable arts and cultural businesses and activities. This includes creating links between arts and cultural festivals, events and organisations and opportunities for cultural tourism. As part of an enterprising approach, Councils can support local business and skills development as well as encouraging employment and training opportunities.

Policy Objectives

There are three main policy objectives for Councils seeking to implement arts and cultural development opportunities. These are intended to strengthen social, economic and environmental outcomes through integrating planning and delivery across Council programs.

1. **Councils will encourage and support local people and local communities to participate in arts and cultural activities by:**
   - identifying and celebrating local cultural practices, communities and activities
   - inspiring creative activity which celebrates local cultural identify and diversity
   - promoting and facilitating a strategic approach to arts and cultural activities
   - providing access to local, state and national arts and cultural activities and services
   - valuing the contribution of volunteers to local arts and cultural efforts
   - ensuring the widespread participation and involvement of all sections of the community, including those not traditionally associated with cultural and community activities and those with diverse cultural backgrounds
   - providing opportunities for children and young people to participate in high quality arts and cultural activities in an active and audience capacity in their local environment
   - fostering longer-term services and programs
   - providing adequate resources for arts and cultural development
   - articulating relationships with and support from neighbouring Councils, regions, State and Commonwealth governments and their agencies.

2. **Councils will create, preserve and enhance public places and nurture public art and culture by:**
   - integrating land use planning, capital works development, local place and landscape design, cultural identity and opportunities for artistic expression
   - creating opportunities for the inclusion of innovative public art and design that will foster ongoing dialogue and debate in the development of the urban environment
   - providing and maintaining facilities for cultural and artistic expression and opportunities for artists' involvement in the development these public spaces
   - locating, preserving and maintaining collections and materials that celebrate local traditions and cultural history thereby offering insights into local identity and local distinctiveness
   - maximising opportunities to include artists on design teams and integrate public artworks at the earliest design stage of new developments and urban and regional renewal programs.

3. **Councils will foster cultural enterprise by:**
   - encouraging and extending partnerships between arts and cultural organisations and local community and educational services, regional boards, State and Commonwealth governments and local businesses
   - linking arts and cultural planning and programs with local, regional and state economic development opportunities
   - employing new technologies to extend the range of access, services and creative networks in support of arts and cultural programs
   - ensuring best value is achieved with both external grants and local reserves

- fostering joint ventures between Councils and, where appropriate, between Councils and Indigenous Development Boards
- encouraging business development, employment and training opportunities
- identifying opportunities to develop sustainable local arts and cultural programs and activities that will deliver positive local social and economic outcomes
- encouraging sponsorship and support from major large businesses which have a local profile.

B MODEL ARTS AND CULTURAL POLICY (short version)

The arts and cultural policy is linked to Council's strategic plan, *Creating Our Future* through its lead policy on social wellbeing and quality of life.

Key Principle

This Council values and respects the arts and cultural interests of the community and their capacity to enhance social wellbeing and express local identity.

Roles

1. Council facilitates partnerships and provides resources for arts and cultural development for the community in the form of arts and cultural programs, events, activities and facilities.

2. Council supports and encourages an awareness and pride in the local sense of place, history, and Indigenous and European heritage.

3. Council encourages opportunities and resources for the local arts and cultural economy.

Objectives

1. To facilitate partnerships with other agencies to bring arts and cultural resources to the community by:
- upgrading the Town Hall to be used as a space for the rehearsal and production of community and touring performances
- supporting opportunities for the community to plan, engage and participate in regional, state and national arts and cultural promotions, campaigns and events
- providing advice and assistance to the community in seeking and applying for grants and other resources for arts and cultural programs, events and facilities.

2. To support a community-driven program of arts and cultural activities and events by:
- providing appropriate support to the Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee
- facilitating community consultations and other forums to elicit community arts and cultural priorities and interests
- raising awareness of the range of arts and cultural activities available for all abilities and age groups
- supporting the annual summer festival with Council in-kind support and other resources
- dedicating 30 percent of Council's annual community grant funds to local arts and cultural organisations and groups.

3. To encourage and support the local arts and cultural economy by:
- supporting local artists and cultural tourism
- producing high quality promotional material featuring local arts and cultural activities.

4. To support and promote a local sense of place, history and heritage by:
- providing support to the Council's Centenary exhibition in 2003
- upgrading and maintaining the Old Farm Buildings and their surroundings to national heritage standards by 2006
- developing a Public Art Policy to be implemented by 2003-04.

appendix 2
References

This list contains a number of key reports and publications. Those from the early 1990s are likely to be located in the libraries of arts agencies. The websites for the state government arts departments and arts advocacy organisations provide useful information and links.

For current material it is best to start with online resources and a brief selection of key sites is listed with this in mind. Email and telephone contact details are also provided.

Key agencies

Arts SA

Arts SA is the South Australian Government's arts policy and funding body. Its website <www.artsa.gov.au> provides connections to many South Australian agencies and organisations. Included in its resources is a comprehensive collection of public art images.
Email: **artssa@saugov.sa.gov.au**
Telephone: (08) 8463 5444

Community Arts Network SA Inc (CAN SA)

CAN SA is the peak body and the principal source of community cultural development (CCD) advice, information and support services in South Australia. CAN SA also influences nationally through policy development, *Artwork* magazine the national journal for CCD practice and the recently developed website for CCD <www.ccd.net>.
Email: **cansa@cansa.on.net**
Telephone: (08) 8231 0900

Country Arts SA

Country Arts SA is the principal provider of arts programs to country South Australians.
www.countryarts.org.au
Email: **email@countryarts.org.au**
Telephone: (08) 8444 0400

Local Government Association of SA (LGA)

The LGA is the peak body for local government in South Australia. All the material produced by the Creating Communities project is available from the LGA either in hard copy or online from <www.lga.sa.gov.au>.
Email: **lga@lga.sa.gov.au**
Telephone: (08) 8224 2000

Australia Council

The Australia Council is the Commonwealth Government's principal arts funding and advisory body. It aims to enrich the life of the nation by supporting and promoting the arts. Its website <www.ozco.gov.au> provides links to all state-based funding agencies and other art form agencies.
Email: **mail@ozco.gov.au**
Telephone: 1800 226 912 (toll free)

Reports and publications

- City of Adelaide 2001, *Watch this place: The City of Adelaide Public Art Policy 2001–2006,* Adelaide.
- Donovan, Andrew 1993, *Creative councils, the South Australian arts and local government consultancy project*, Local Government Association of SA, Adelaide.
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- Matarasso, Francois 1996, *Defining values, evaluating arts programs*, Comedia, UK. Available online at <www.comedia.org.uk>.
- Williams, Deirdre 1995, *Creating social capital*, *a study of the long-term benefits from community based arts funding*, Community Arts Network SA, Adelaide.
- — 1990, *Roads, rates, renaissance, local government in the arts in the nineties*, Community Arts Network SA, Adelaide.
- Winikoff, Tamara (ed) 1995, *Places not spaces, placemaking in Australia,* Envirobook, Sydney.

Online resources

- Many Australian sites on arts and cultural development can be accessed through the Australia Council site at <www.ozco.gov.au>.
- For topics such as evaluations, policy development and social capital, see <www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au> and <www.comedia.org.uk >.
- For international sites on cultural policy that may be of interest, see <www.culturalpolicy.org> and <www.culturelink.org>.
- For international sites relating to community development, consider those of major funding organisations such as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation <www.jfk.org.uk>, the Rockfeller Foundation <www.rockfound.org> and similar resources found through <www.regen.net>, the portal for UK work on neighbourhood renewal and general community and social inclusion matters.

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