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# Culture and Sport in Local Government



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Findings from the VOCAL/EKOS Survey  
VOCAL Conference October 2009

# Background

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- rationale for the study
  - Concordat
  - Single Outcome Agreements
  - public spending pressure
  - infrastructural change
- research objectives and details
- health warnings

# Current Situation

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- more than 6,000 people employed in delivery of C&S, but larger reported decrease in culture
- annual net spend of almost £400m (2008/09 est)
- pressure on budgets, but growth in capital spend
- priority levels within Councils reportedly quite high (58% culture, 65% sport) - lower priority in CPPs/SOAs
- C&S typically sit within Community or Education Services, but in amongst other priorities
- SOA coverage patchy although improving
- recent changes have meant delivering more for less within changing partnership environment

# Future Issues

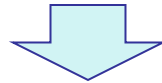
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- widespread concern about future resources – staff and money
- general recognition of need to refresh strategy and approach
- move away from direct provision while delivering more
- 27% rate their ability to meet future challenges in culture as not good – 12% in sport
- introduction of SOAs and CPPs neutral, but some unease about removal of ring fencing
- issue of statutory responsibilities still high on the agenda, and desire for clearer strategic guidance for culture at national level
- need for clear evidence

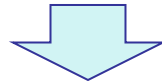
# Three big questions

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**Why should we invest in culture and sport?**



**How can we ensure sufficient priority for culture and sport?**



**With limited resources, what are the priorities for investment?**

# Why invest in culture and sport?

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- £400m – what is the return?
- data limited – inputs and activities with some very basic output measures
- curiously limited focus on economic measures
- links to national outcomes poorly evidenced – need a logic model to identify the causal links
- independent evaluation limited and piecemeal
- no consistent framework (yet demand for one)

# How can we ensure sufficient priority for culture and sport?

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- evidence of impact and return on investment
- clear national policy
- effective leadership at strategic levels
- SOA and CPP profile still variable
- clear structures for strategic engagement also variable

# What are the priorities?

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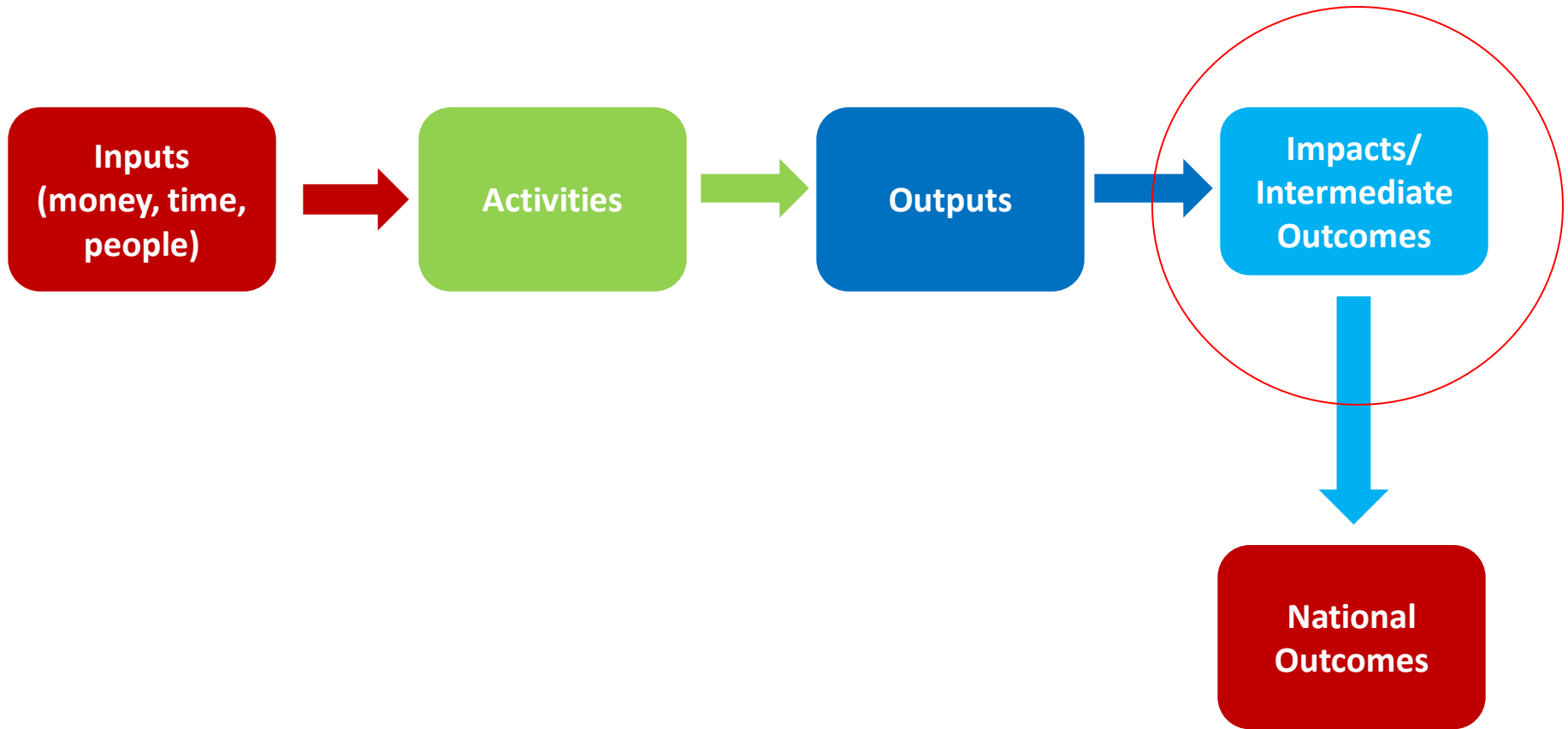
- how are cultural and sporting needs assessed?
- growth in capital spending – the right approach?
- national/local focus and priorities?
- proliferation of local strategies, but too often broad and vague
- what is the right spatial level for strategic planning?

# What now?

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- build compelling logic models to demonstrate impact and causal links to national outcomes

# Logic model



# What now?

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- populate the models with existing evaluation evidence
- develop a consistent (and manageable) approach to measurement across the sector
- develop leadership at individual and institutional levels
- use logic models and evidence to develop clear criteria for prioritisation
- embed evaluation processes across the sector

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*Things may come to those who wait, but  
only those left behind by those who hustle*

**Abraham Lincoln**