



Culture and Sport in Scotland's Local Authorities

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The last few years have been a time of significant change for public service delivery in Scotland. The Concordat between the Scottish Government and COSLA agreed in November 2007 defined the terms of a new relationship between central and local government in Scotland, with far reaching implications for local authorities and their partners.

A central element of this new relationship was the ending of ring fencing of local government funding and the creation of a Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) between each council, initially, and the Scottish Government, based on the 15 National Outcomes identified in the Government's National Performance Framework.

The SOAs outline strategic priorities for each local area and express those priorities as outcomes to be delivered by the local authority and its partners, while showing how those outcomes contribute to the Scottish Government's relevant National Outcomes.

Local authorities in Scotland are extensively involved in culture and sport through the provision of facilities and venues, support for third party organisations, and direct provision of cultural and sporting activities and programmes.

However, statutory requirements around the delivery of culture or sport are limited and with the removal of previous ring-fencing arrangements, both areas are in the position, more than ever before, of having to demonstrate their value in contributing to national and local strategic priorities. This is both an opportunity and a challenge.

At the same time, major organisational change is coming, at least in relation to culture. Creative Scotland, the new cultural agency that will replace the Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen is due to open for business in April 2010. The nature of the relationship between Creative Scotland and the local authorities is still under discussion, but will be a crucial aspect of the overall landscape of support for culture in Scotland.

In sport (and culture), there are major opportunities surrounding both the London Olympics in 2012 and the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014, and local authorities have a key role to play in securing a positive legacy from these events.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, public spending will come under immense pressure in the short to medium term as the UK and Scottish Governments work to reduce the national debt created the injection of money into the economy to mitigate the impacts of the global recession.

Therefore, local authority delivery of culture and sport faces a number of challenges:

- growing pressure on public finance making resources harder to access;
- a new and developing delivery regime with many uncertainties and lack of detailed clarity around roles and responsibilities (in culture);
- a new funding and outcome regime against which the local authorities are expected to deliver; and
- lack of statutory protection for investment in culture and sport.

However, with challenges come opportunities, and both culture and sport are well placed to contribute to national and local priorities across a broad range of areas from health and education to anti-social behaviour and community safety.

In light of these challenges and opportunities, it is an appropriate time to take stock of local authority delivery of culture and sport and to gain a sense of what local authorities themselves perceive to be the key issues for the future.

The overall purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of the scale, scope and nature of the delivery of culture and sport in Scotland's local authorities and to identify the key future challenges.

1.2 Some Initial Context

In presenting our findings it is important to set culture and sport in the wider context in order that we may better understand the research.

There is no statutory framework in place for local authorities to deliver culture or sport to citizens and communities in Scotland. Where statutory requirements do exist, these relate to the provision of adequate facilities.

Although our research has tried to place culture and sport in a national context, it is important to recognise that it is also part of the democratic process and therefore must (and does) also reflect the local priorities of each individual area.

The requirement on Local Authorities is therefore largely to deliver to their local agendas, albeit there is the requirement to deliver national targets through the SOA framework.

It is also important to be clear about what constitutes culture and sport. In the widest sense, many of the services delivered by local authorities could be said to have elements of culture and sport embedded within.

- for example, the education system is a key mechanism for providing opportunities for participation in culture and sport;
- a wide range of Council services, from criminal justice to community learning and development may undertake cultural or sporting programmes as a way of addressing their own priorities; and
- public realm improvements and regeneration projects may contain elements of cultural and sporting provision (e.g. new venues, facilities).

Such a wide definition would have rendered the research significantly more complex and difficult and it would have been almost impossible to allocate inputs and activities on an appropriate basis.

We have therefore accepted a narrower definition of culture and sport (see next section) but recognising that the local authorities' activities in these fields will extend way beyond our proposed definition.

1.3 Research Details

The overall aim of the research was to undertake a review of cultural and sport activity across Scotland's local authorities to determine the scale, nature, reach and activities currently delivered under the umbrella of culture and sport.

In defining culture and sport, we have adopted a simplistic definition as: *“those activities relating to arts, culture, heritage and physical recreation delivered and/or funded through Culture and Leisure (or similar) Departments”*.

It is likely to include (but not restricted to) some or all of the following:

- direct provision of culture and sport facilities and venues (theatres, museums and galleries, heritage, libraries, sports facilities etc);
- grants to third parties – arts/cultural organisations, community organisations etc;
- community arts and sports activities;

- cultural and sporting events and festivals;
- strategy and planning for culture and sport; and
- capital development programmes for culture and sport.

It is important to note that curricular aspects of school-based culture and sport were excluded from the analysis.

The study comprised the following elements:

- an online survey of Councils to gather data on their activities in relation to culture and sport;
- a review of expenditure data to provide an overview of trends¹;
- a brief review of SOAs to assess the position of culture and sport; and
- one-to-one consultations with a range of partner organisations including: Scottish Government; COSLA; Scottish Arts Council; Sport Scotland and a selection of individual authorities.

¹ The data were drawn from the CIPFA Annual Survey of Expenditure on Culture and Sport in Scottish Local Authorities.

2. Main Findings

2.1 Introduction

This section reviews the information provided by Scotland's Local Authorities regarding delivery of culture and sport services. In total 27 of Scotland's 32 Councils responded to the survey although not all completed both culture and sport elements. 22 completed the culture and sport sections, four only completed the culture element while one only completed the section on sport.

It is important to note that the analysis is based on the data provided by individual respondents. In many cases there are significant differences between authorities. This may be explained by further investigation to fully understanding the basis against which individual responses were provided.

We have also included an overview of the expenditure data gathered in the CIPFA survey and some comments on the treatment of culture and sport within the second round SOAs.

2.2 Position of Culture and Sport within Councils

Culture and sport are delivered through a wide range of Council departments, most often as part of wider education or community services as shown in **Table 2.1**, over.

A number of the stakeholders voiced some concern about this, as it was felt that both culture and sport often struggled with low visibility when delivered through departments with broader policy priorities and clear statutory requirements.

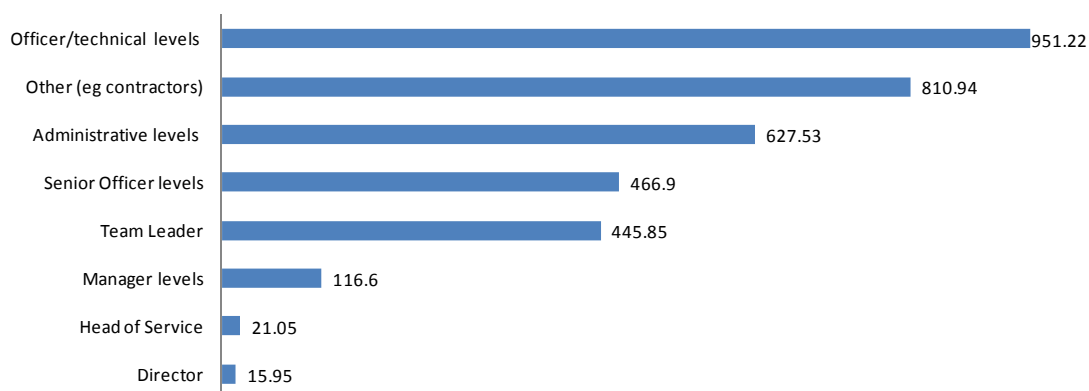
Table 2.1: Department responsible for culture and sport services

Council Department	Culture	Sport
Community Services	3	3
Leisure & Cultural Services	2	2
Education, Culture & Sport	2	2
Neighbourhood Services	2	2
Community Services	1	1
Community and Customer Services	1	1
Corporate Services	1	1
Culture and Sport	1	1
Learning and Leisure	1	1
Leisure & Communities	1	1
Education Learning & Leisure	1	1
Education and Leisure Services	1	1
Cultural Communities and Economic Development	1	1
Economic and Social Regeneration	1	1
Education and Children's Services	1	1
Social and Community Services	1	1
Community	1	-
Community Resources	1	-
Cultural Services	1	-
Culture and Community Services	1	-
Educational services	1	-
Education and Communities	-	1
Education	-	1
Educational Services and Housing, Environmental & Economic Development	-	1
Leisure Trust	-	1

2.3 Staff Numbers

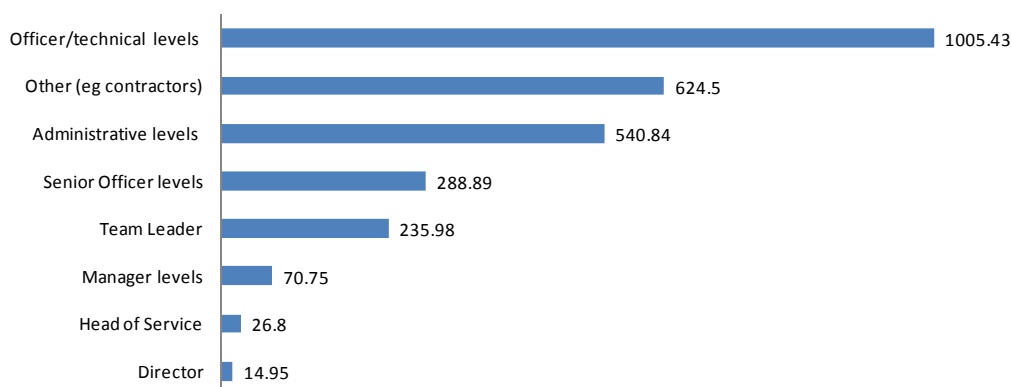
A total of 3,456 staff (FTEs) are involved in culture across the 23 local authorities that provided data. Over a quarter of these posts are held at officer/technical levels, as shown in **Figure 2.1**, over.

Figure 2.1: Number of dedicated staff Involved in delivery of culture (FTEs)



In sport, 2,808 staff are involved in sport service delivery across 17 local authorities that provided data. Over a third of these posts are held at officer/technical levels.

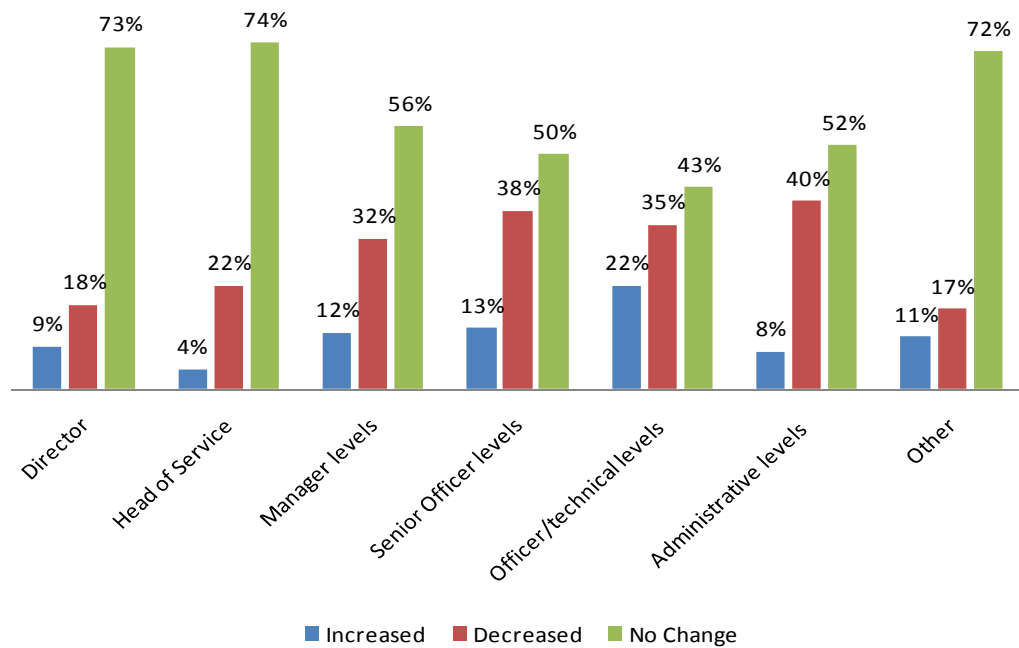
Figure 2.2: Number of dedicated staff Involved in delivery of sport (FTEs)



Therefore, 6,264 people are employed in the delivery of culture and sport services across the local authorities that provided data. This will include both staff within the authorities as well as those employed in Council owned and managed venues and facilities. It should also be noted that this may underestimate the total staff resource, as not all authorities have supplied data.

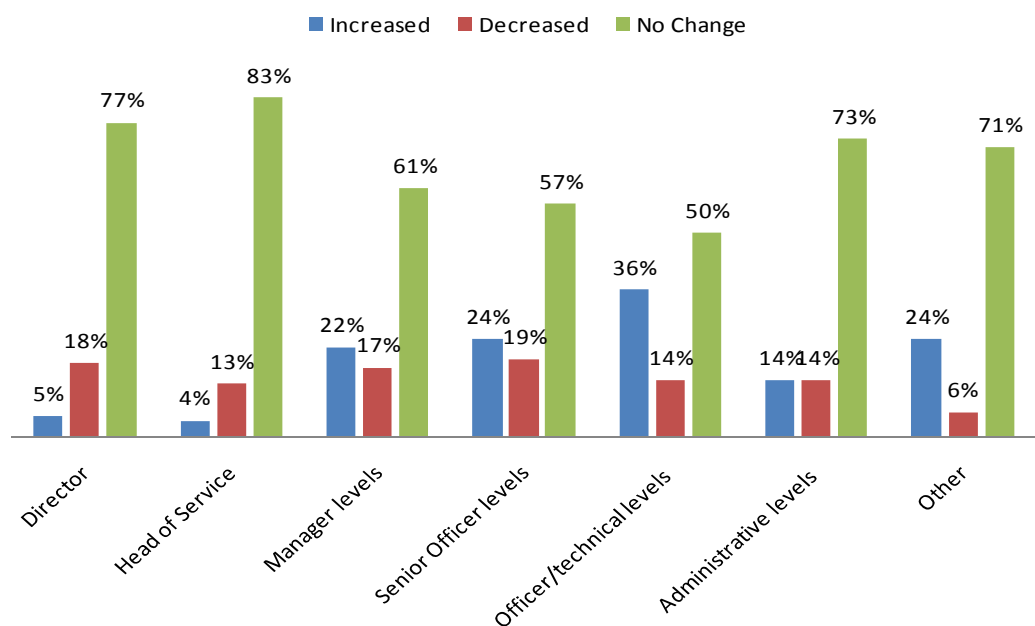
In relation to culture, the general trend over the last three years is one of no change, particularly at director, head of service and other levels. However, more Councils reported decreases in staff numbers than increases, with greatest pressure at senior officer and officer/technical levels. Generally, fewer than 15% reported increases.

Figure 2.3: Changes in Culture Staff Levels in Last Three Years



The picture in sport is slightly different, with less evidence of decreases in staff numbers. While the general trend over the last three years is one of no change, particularly at head of service, director and administrative levels, more Councils reported an increase in staff levels than reported a decrease.

Figure 2.4: Changes in Sport Staff Levels in Last Three Years

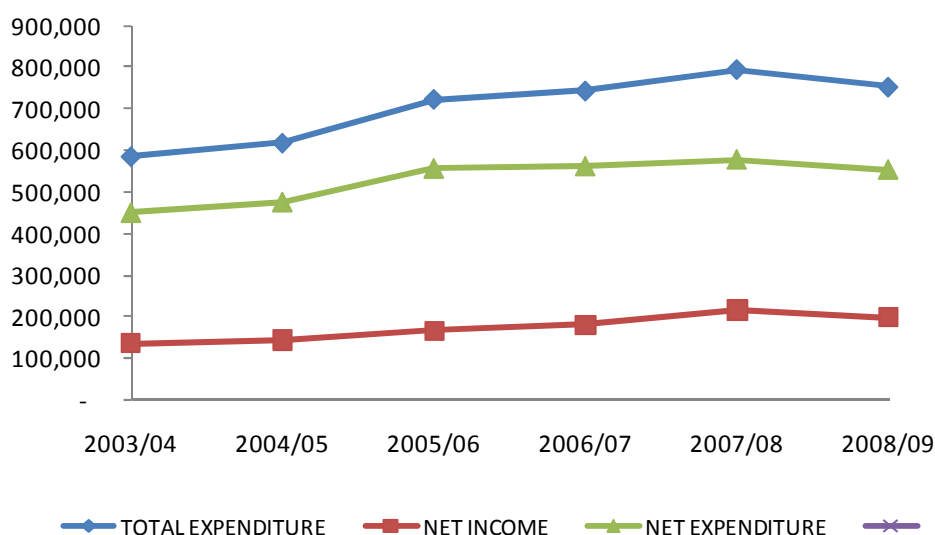


2.4 Expenditure on Culture and Sport

The data provided by CIPFA's Cultural Statistics in Scotland permit an analysis of expenditure trends in culture and sport across Scottish local authorities. Culture and sport here includes arts, sport, heritage and museums, libraries and community recreation.

Total gross expenditure on culture and sport in Scottish local authorities in 2008/09 was £752m, an increase of 28% on 2003/04 figures. Net expenditure also increased over the period by 23% to £550m in 2008/09, as shown below.

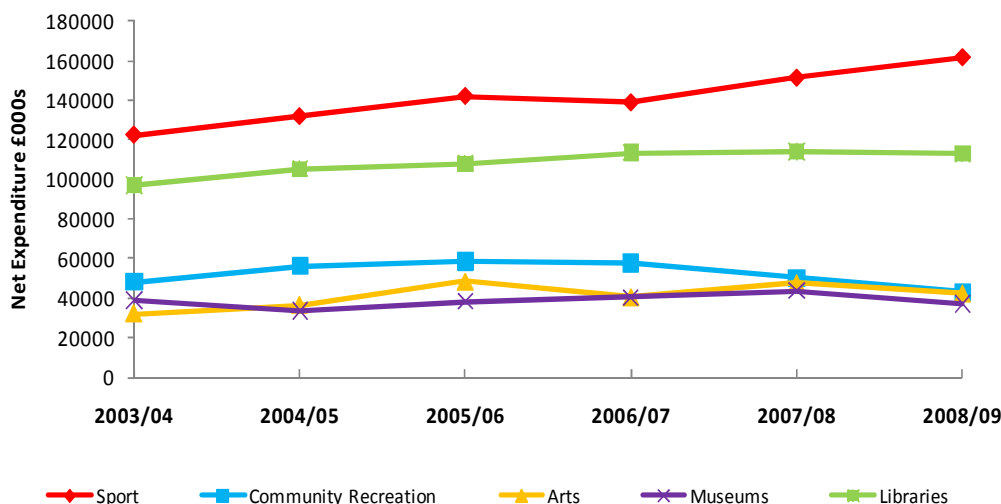
Figure 2.5: Total Expenditure and Income in Culture and Sport 2003/04 to 2008/09



Source: CIPFA Cultural Statistics

As shown in **Figure 2.6**, net expenditure between 2003/04 and 2008/09 has increased in sport, and slightly increased in libraries and arts, but has been more or less constant in museums and has decreased slightly in community recreation.

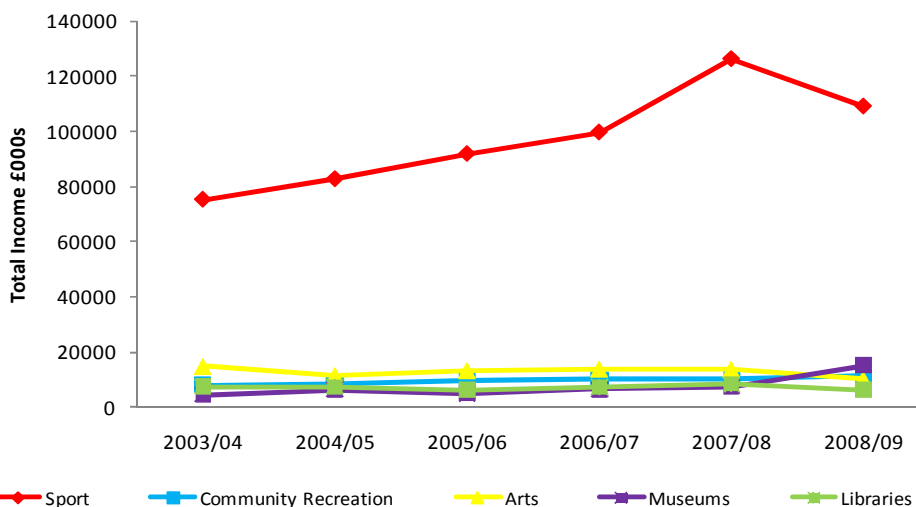
Figure 2.6: Net Expenditure on Culture and Sport 2003/04 to 2008/09



Source: CIPFA Cultural Statistics

Looking at the data in more detail, it becomes apparent that the increase in net expenditure in sport may be partly due to a fall in income. Changes in income levels in other areas have been minor, with the exception of an increase in museums income, perhaps also corresponding to the slight fall in net expenditure in this area. The data are shown in **Figure 2.7**, below.

Figure 2.7: Total Income in Culture and Sport 2003/04 to 2008/09

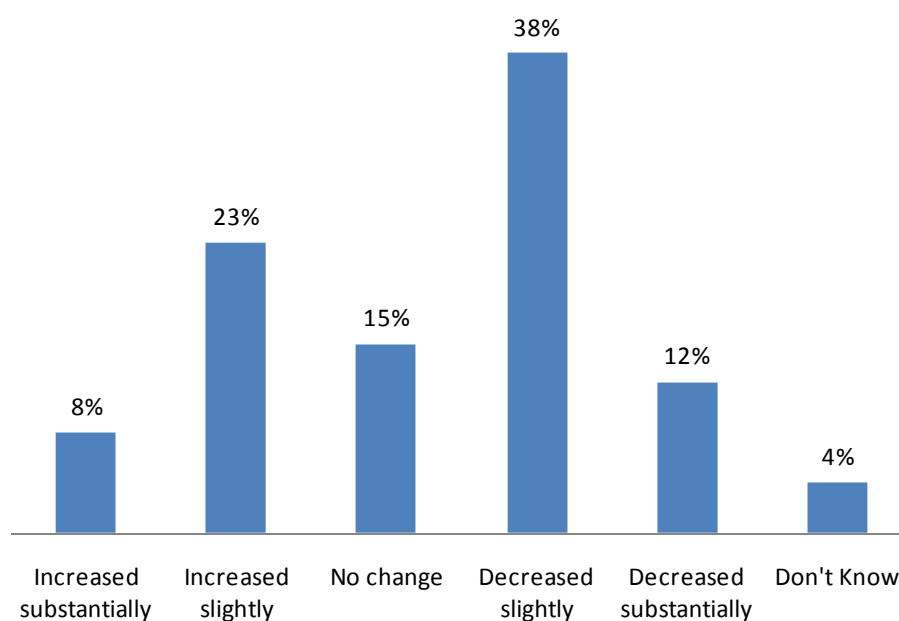


Source: CIPFA Cultural Statistics

In the current survey, authorities were asked whether or not their expenditure on culture and sport had changed in the last three years and if so in what way. This excludes externally funded programmes such as Active Schools and Cultural Co-ordinators.

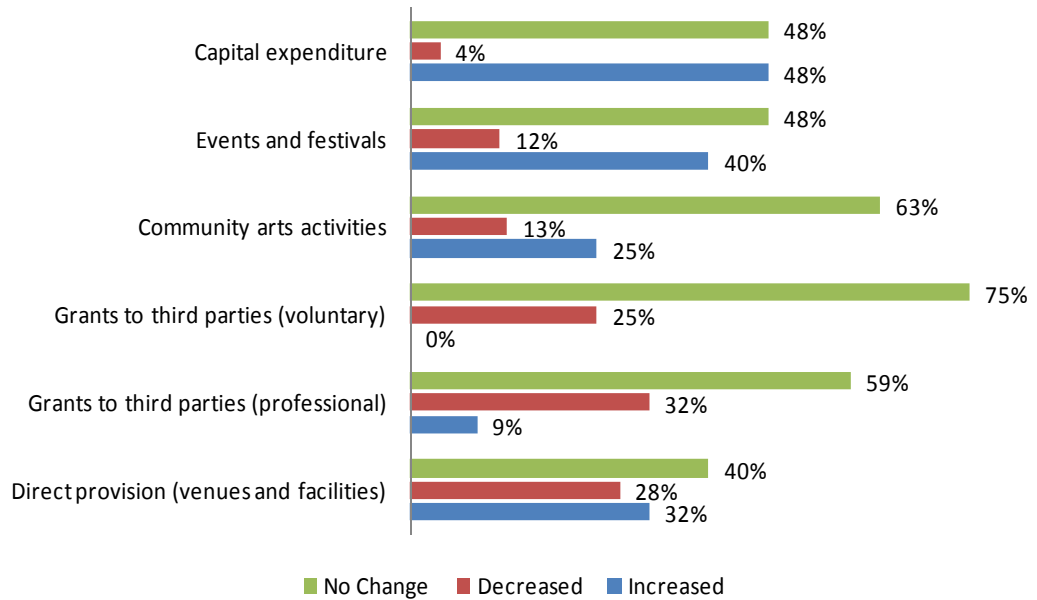
Half of the responding authorities reported a decrease in expenditure on culture, while almost a third reported an increase. While this may seem at odds with the trends in the CIPFA data, this feedback refers to the last three years only, where overall increases in spend have been less marked (in culture). It is also the case that large increases in a few authorities could account for the overall growth in spend observed in the CIPFA data.

Figure 2.8: Changes in Expenditure on Culture in last three years



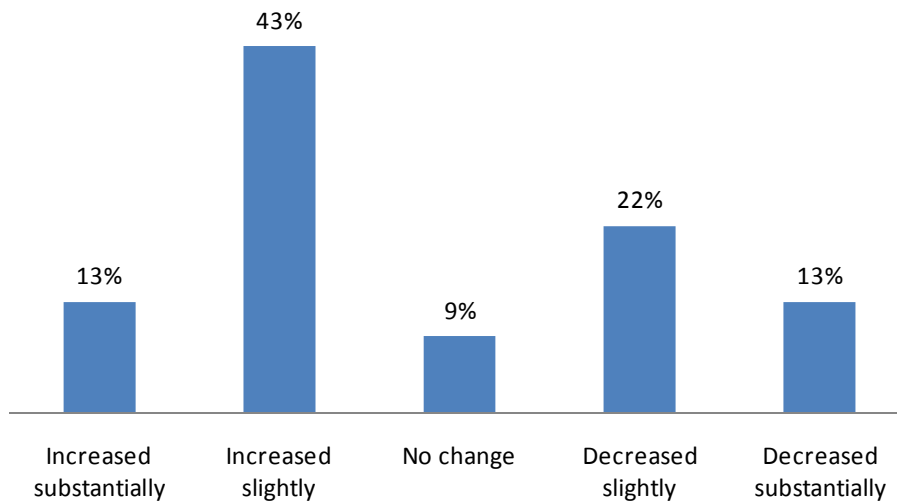
Councils were also asked how expenditure on different areas of cultural service delivery had changed. Almost half reported growth in capital expenditure and 40% in events and festivals, while almost a third reported a decrease in grants to third parties (professional). This is shown in **Figure 2.9**, over.

Figure 2.9: Changes in Culture Expenditure in specific areas of activity



The pattern in sport was again different, with more Councils reporting an increase in spend (56%) than a decrease (35%).

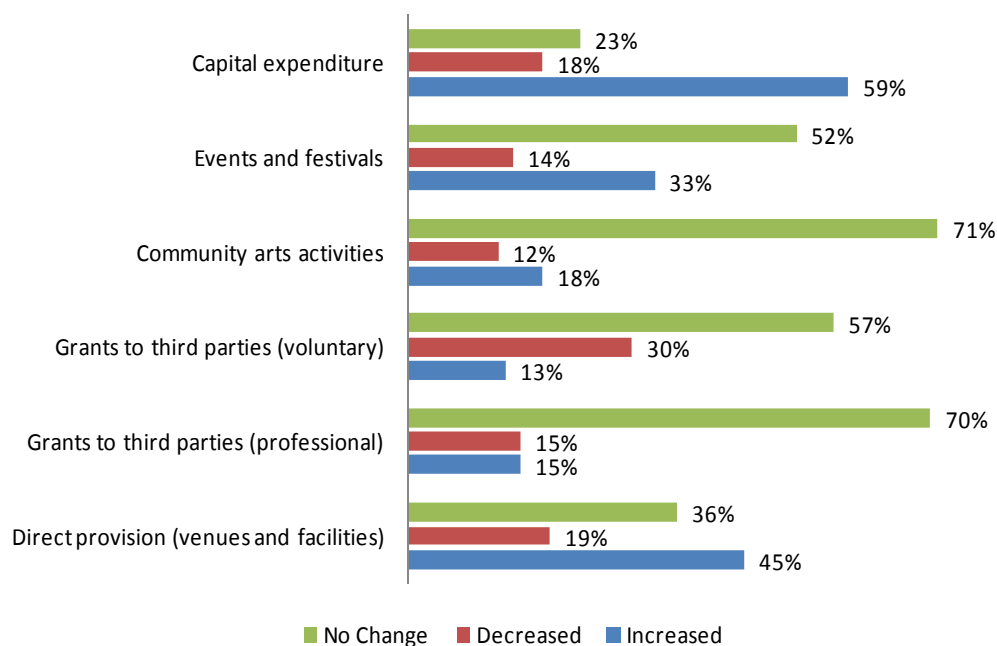
Figure 2.10: Changes in Expenditure on Sport in last three years



Increases are noted in capital expenditure and direct provision with the largest decrease in grants to third parties (voluntary). Over 50% have noted no change in grants to third parties, both voluntary and professional, community sports activities and events and festivals.

In relation to specific areas of activity, increases in spend were reported in capital expenditure (59% of Councils) and direct provision (45%) with the largest proportion reporting a decrease in grants to third parties (voluntary) (57%). Over 50% reported no change in grants to third parties, both voluntary and professional, community activities and events and festivals.

Figure 2.11: Changes in Sport Expenditure in specific areas of activity



2.5 Strategic Priorities

Councils were asked about the level of strategic priority given to culture and sport within their authorities and within Community Planning Partnerships.

Somewhat in contrast to the more negative views of a number of stakeholders, almost 60% of Councils reported that culture had a high priority, although more than a quarter reported low priority. 40% also reported that culture had increased in priority in the last three years, with only 12% reporting a decrease. This is shown in **Figures 2.12 and 2.13**, over.

Figure 2.12: Culture's Priority within Authorities

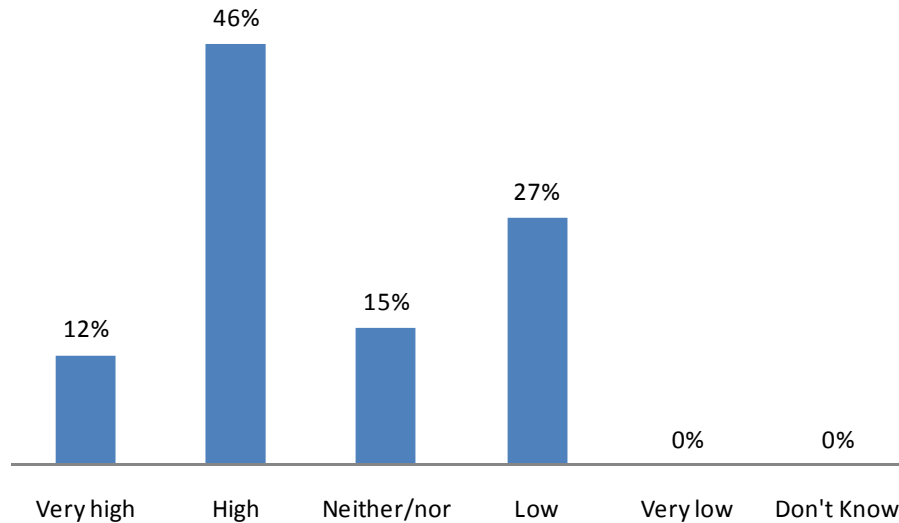
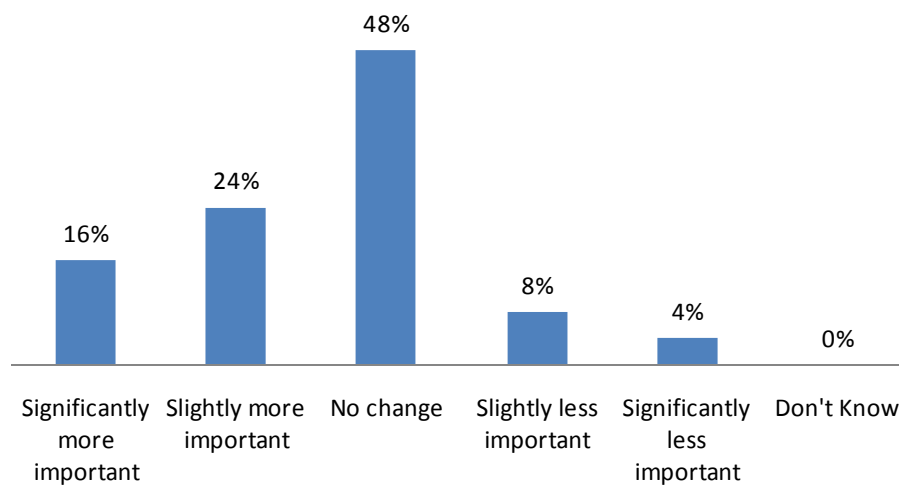


Figure 2.13: Change in Culture's Priority over the last three years



Nearly two thirds reported that sport is a high or very high priority within the authority, and less than 10% rated the priority level as low. 57% also reported that sport has become a more important priority over the last three years and no authorities reported a decrease in the priority given to sport (see **Figures 2.14** and **2.15**, over).

Figure 2.14: Sport's Priority within Authorities

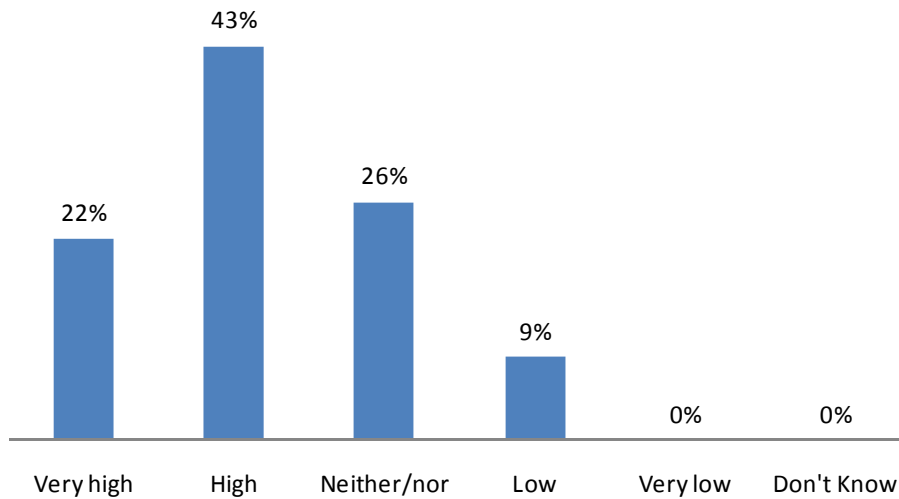
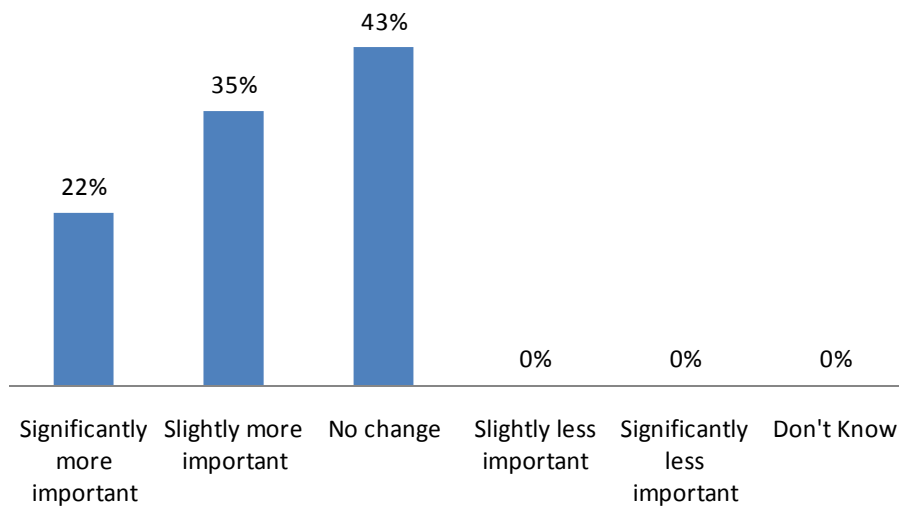


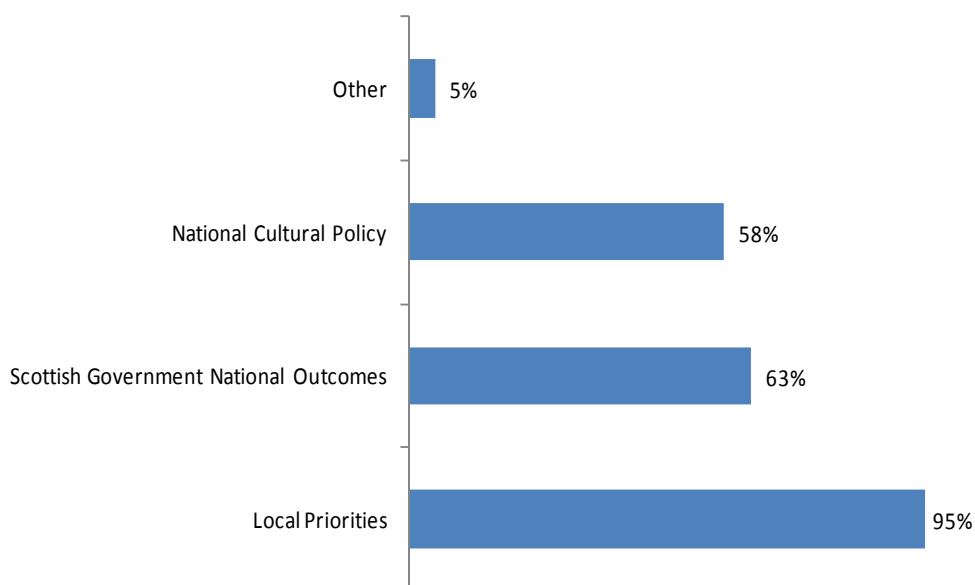
Figure 2.15: Change in Sport's Priority over the last three years



Most local authorities (81%) have a specific Cultural Strategy covering their area, most of which go beyond local authorities activities only to provide a framework for cultural development across the area.

Local priorities were reported to be the most important influences on Cultural Strategies, although 63% also identified the Scottish Government's National outcomes as an important influence, as shown in **Figure 2.16**, over.

Figure 2.16: Most Important Influences on Cultural Strategies

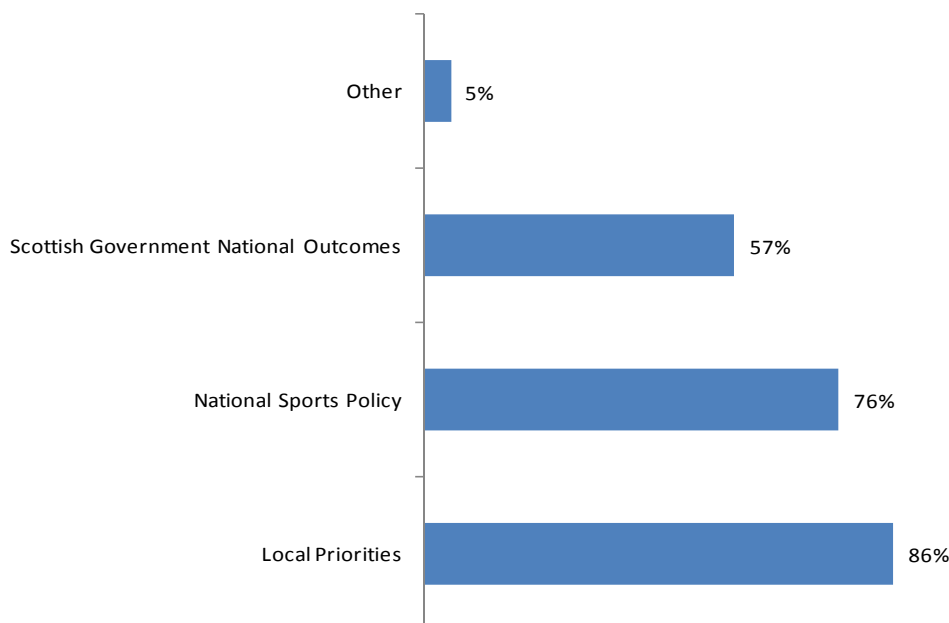


Respondents were also asked to identify the top five priorities and objectives of their culture strategy/strategies. The most common responses covered areas such as:

- encourage wider access and participation in cultural activities;
- develop cultural partnerships;
- promote cultural activity;
- increase funding and investment; and
- use cultural activities to promote lifelong learning.

All the local authorities responding to the survey stated that they had a specific Sport Strategy covering their area. As with culture, most Sports Strategies are intended to cover all activities in the local authority area, and local priorities were again identified as the most important influence on strategy in sport. Interestingly, national policy in sport was identified by more councils as an influence than national policy in culture.

Figure 2.17: Most Important Influences on Sport Strategies



Respondents were asked to identify the top five priorities and objectives of their sport strategy/strategies. The most common responses covered areas such as:

- encourage wider access and participation in sport activities;
- promotion of activities and health benefits;
- develop, improve and provide facilities;
- develop effective partnerships; and
- create pathways for development.

2.6 Single Outcome Agreements

In the first round of SOAs (2008-2009) contained only limited references to culture and sport and, with a few exceptions, the feeling was that coverage was patchy and inconsistent. In response, two key publications were made available to local authorities and their community planning partners as they considered the content of the second phase SOA (2009-2010):

- *Culture Delivers* (Scottish Government); and
- *The Potential for Sport* (Sport Scotland).

Both documents provided concise information and guidance about the potential contribution that culture and sport respectively could make to the 15 National outcomes.

It is not the purpose of this study to evaluate the impacts of these documents. However, time did permit a brief review of the coverage of culture in SOAs and a more impressionistic assessment of the position of sport, based on feedback from a number of consultees.

2.6.1 Culture

Overall Coverage

In relation to overall coverage of culture, our analysis found that:

- less than half (13 out of 32) of local authorities have strong overall coverage of culture in their SOAs;
- eight have some coverage and either make vague references to culture or do not go into detail in what they are trying to achieve; and
- almost a third (11 out of 32) have little or no coverage.

Participation and Access

Our analysis examined the extent to which each Local Authority's SOA highlighted participation and access to creative and cultural activities. It was found that:

- there is comprehensive coverage in terms of participation and access with 24 out of 32 Local Authorities indicating some form of focus on this within their SOAs;
- much of these references are in relation to attending cultural events and activities and libraries, museums and galleries;
- there are several references to the importance of arts and culture in tourism;
- coverage of engagement with local creative communities is mentioned less than general provision and wider applications of culture

The analysis also identified that there is much improvement in culture content from the first round of SOAs in terms of plans for provision and participation and positive uses of culture to help deliver a range of outcomes and good practical detail and indicators.

Creative and Community Support

This indicator shows the extent to which there is a focus on supporting the creative community and creative industries within each of the SOAs. The table illustrates the following:

- coverage of engagement with local creative communities is mentioned less than general provision and wider application of culture;
- there is limited focus as only 17 out of 32 Local Authorities have mentioned supporting the creative community within their SOA; and
- support for the creative community included activities such as developing a strategy for the sector, investment in creative facilities and activities, raising the profile and image of the area through marketing and promoting it as a cultural destination or a focus on supporting growth of the creative industries.

Contribution to National Cross Cutting Themes

Analysis of the 2009-10 SOAs identified that the percentage of Local Authorities which plan to work with culture in relation to the ten National Outcome themes are as follows:

- Identity – 69%;
- Enterprise & Skills – 53%;
- Environment – 44%;
- Young People - 43%;
- Communities – 22%;
- Health – 9%;
- Equality – 6%;
- Services – 6%;
- Safety – 3%; and
- Greener – 3%.

The only national indicators which are represented relatively strongly are Identity (69%) and Enterprise & Skills (53%). These stipulate creating a strong, fair and inclusive national identity, creating employment opportunities for people and producing better educated, skilled and successful individuals.

Only 43% plan to use culture as way of working with young people, in terms of ensuring that they are confident, successful learners and are ready to

succeed. This would seem rather low given the evidence on the benefits of using cultural and creative activities in working with young people.

Less than 10% plan to work with culture as a way of tackling inequalities in Scottish society, improving services, preventing crime, disorders and danger and creating a greener society by reducing the local and global environmental impact of consumption and production.

2.6.2 Summary - Culture

The analysis of SOAs revealed the following:

- overall less than half of the SOAs have a strong coverage of culture and almost a third have little or no coverage at all;
- coverage varies greatly across the Local Authorities with some having a strong focus on supporting participation/access, the sector and using culture to contribute to national cross cutting themes, whilst others are vague or fail to clearly outline their plans;
- it was identified that there has been an increased focus on culture in comparison to previous years;
- there does appear to be comprehensive coverage in relation to participation and access but less so in terms of supporting the creative and cultural industries; and
- other than the National Priority of Identity, there is limited focus across the various Local Authority Single Outcome Agreements in working with culture to meet the cross cutting national priorities; and
- again there are big differences between the Local Authorities in terms of the degree to which they plan to work with culture to meet National Outcome themes.

As a final comment, the overwhelming focus of the SOA is on the instrumental value of culture and far less on intrinsic value – the ‘arts for arts sake’ argument.

2.6.3 Sport

The feedback from the consultations was that sport is generally not well represented in SOAs, and although this may be attributable to the pace of their initial introduction, the continuing inconsistent and patchy coverage of sport in the latest round of SOAs shows little significant change.

As with culture, there was surprisingly little emphasis on sport in the education curriculum and physical education, particularly in light of the scale

of the benefits that this offers to young people and the key targets for physical activity amongst young people.

There is also little mention of strategic documents relating to sport within the SOAs, despite the prevalence of local authority strategies in this area.

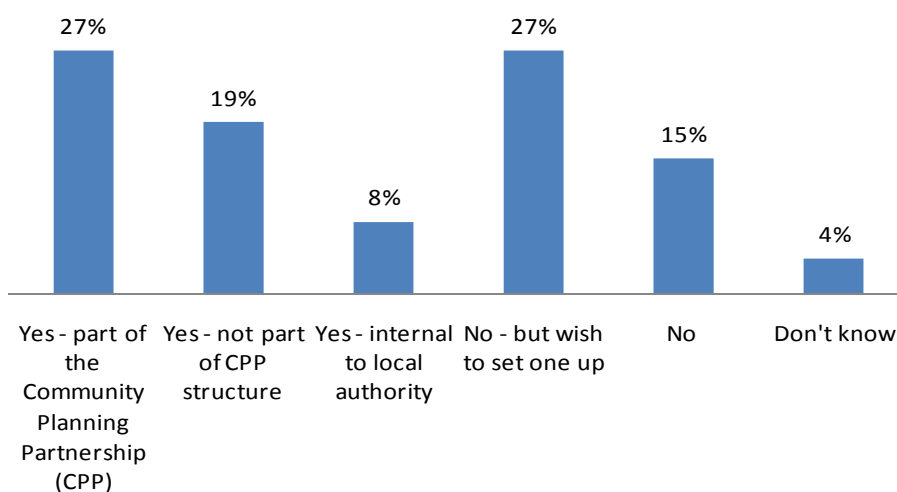
Many consultees were concerned about the limited coverage of sport (and culture) within SOA documents, particularly as the SOA process was felt to be increasingly important in setting priorities and driving investment decisions.

2.7 Partnership Working

With the rise of Community Planning and the emphasis on partnership working across all areas of public service delivery, the role of partnership groups and the relationships to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) were considered important to explore. Indeed, previous research has demonstrated the importance of established partnership groups in engaging CPPs in issues relating to culture².

Just over half of the local authorities that responded have a dedicated partnership group for culture, with over a quarter being part of the CPP. 42% do not have a dedicated group, but 27% would be interested in setting one up.

Figure 2.18: Cultural Partnership Groups



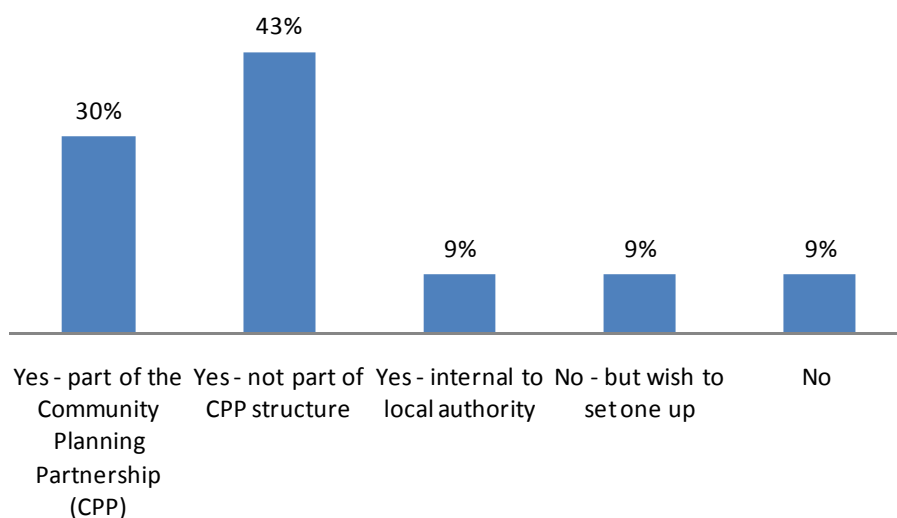
The principal means by which issues relating to culture are represented on CPPs is through dedicated officer representation (36%) or through established partnership groups, whether part of the CPP structure itself or

² Evaluation of the Cultural Pathfinder Programme, EKOS, 2009

not (24% and 16% respectively). Only 8% of Councils reported that culture was not represented at all within the CPP.

Nearly three quarters of local authorities have a dedicated sport partnership group with nearly a third being part of the CPP. 18% do not have a dedicated group, and 9% would be interested in setting one up.

Figure 2.19: Sport Partnership Groups



Again, dedicated officer representation was the most frequently identified means of representing sport issues within CPPs (42%), followed by partnership groups within the CPP structure (25%). 13% of Councils reported that sport was not represented at all within their CPP.

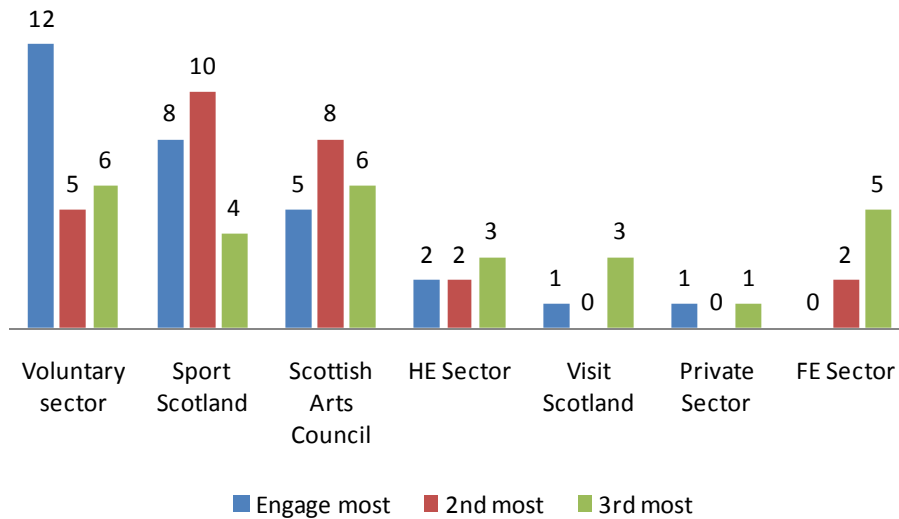
In terms of the level of priority for culture and sport within CPPs, responses were mixed. While more than a third (39%) believed that culture has either a high or very high priority within their CPP, with 27% stating it has a low or very low priority.

Half of the local authorities believe sport has either a high or very high priority within their CPP.

Local authorities were also asked to rank partners in terms of the extent of their engagement, and also on the quality of these partnerships.

The partners with which authorities most engage are the voluntary sector Sport Scotland and the Scottish Arts Council. Partnerships with the HE and FE sectors, and with Visit Scotland or the private sector are far less prevalent, as shown in **Figure 2.20**, below.

Figure 2.20: Ranking of Partners in Terms of Engagement



When asked to then rate the quality of these partnerships, the voluntary sector and Sport Scotland both rated very highly. Visit Scotland had the lowest rating with 19 out of 24 rating the partnership as poor or very poor.

Figure 2.21: Rating the quality of partnerships



2.8 Performance Measurement

The study also explored the ways in which local authorities currently measure performance in relation to culture and sport.

All authorities undertake some form of baseline analysis to measure performance in both culture and sport, although 46% do not undertake regular baseline work in culture and 36% do not do so in sport.

Nearly all the local authorities undertake regular performance measurement of culture and sport services according to a defined framework – 92% for culture and 91% for sport. The remainder either report only against the measures in SOAs and 4% do not undertake any regular performance measurement (culture).

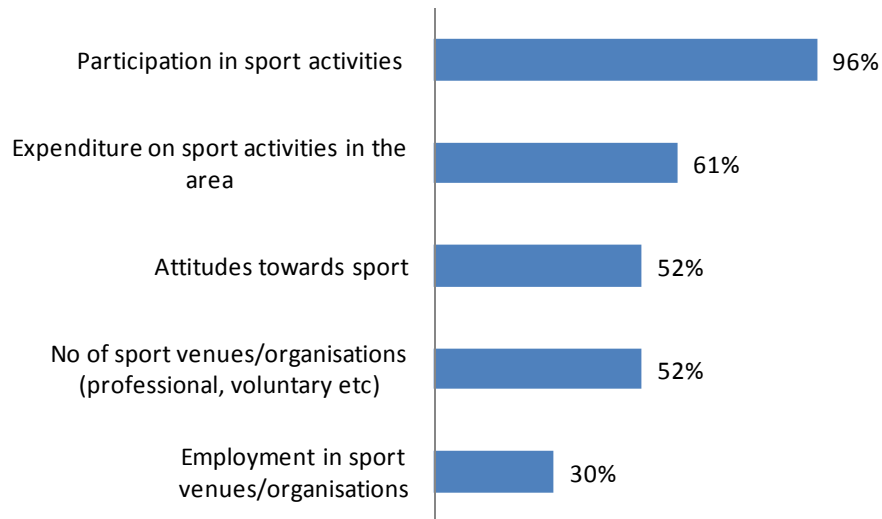
In terms of what is measured, participation in cultural and sport activities is the main indicator used by nearly all local authorities. Most authorities also collect information on expenditure, number of venues/facilities and organisations and some also collect attitudinal measures.

Figures 2.22 and **2.23**, below and over, detail the results for culture and sport respectively.

Figure 2.22: Performance Measures in Culture



Figure 2.23: Performance Measures in Sport



In relation to the measures contained within SOAs, views were decidedly mixed. Less than a third considered the SOA measures to be appropriate to measuring culture, and less than quarter for sport. This is shown in **Figures 2.24 and 2.25**, below and over.

Figure 2.24: How appropriate are measures contained within the SOA to monitor culture in your area?

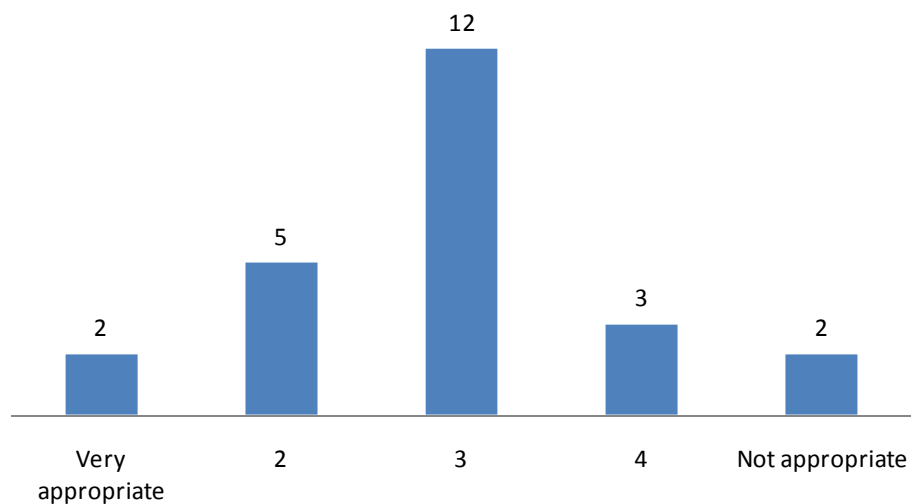
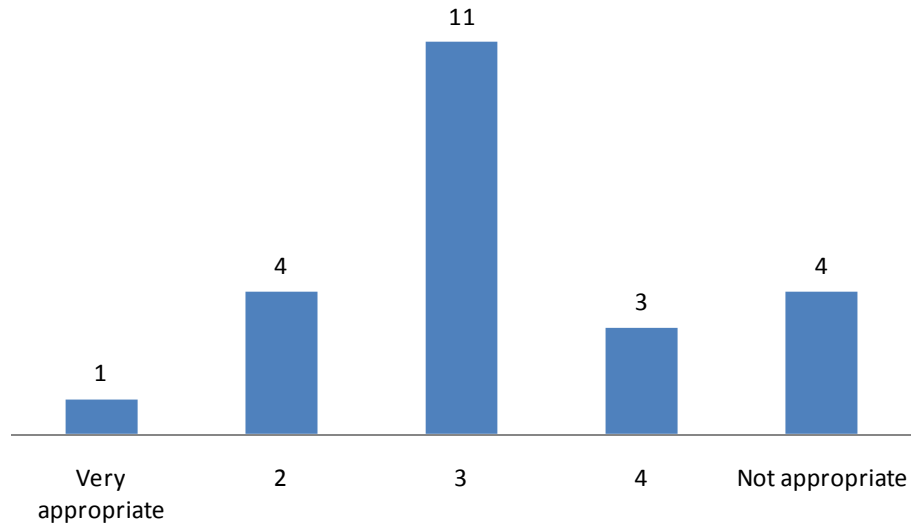
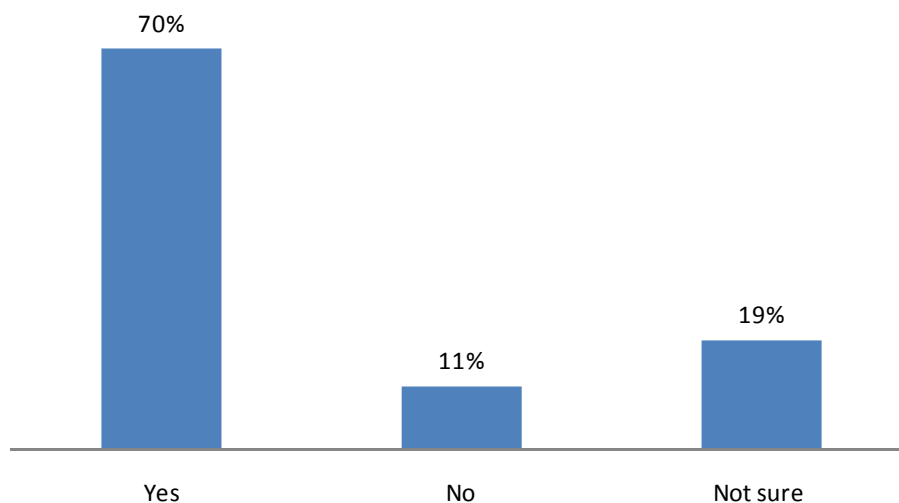


Figure 2.25: How appropriate are measures contained within the SOA to monitor sport in your area?



When asked if there would be value in a nationally consistent performance management framework for culture and sport in Scotland, 70% said that there would, with only 11% disagreeing.

Figure 2.26: Would there be value in a national performance management framework for culture and sport for use across Scottish local authorities?

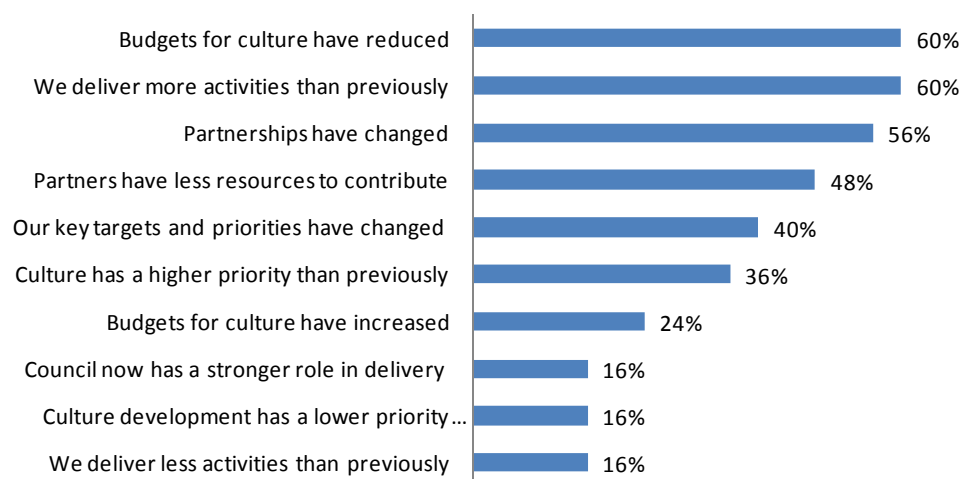


2.9 Changes in Delivery

This section of the report considers how the delivery of culture and sport services has changed over the last few years and explores the likely impacts of future changes.

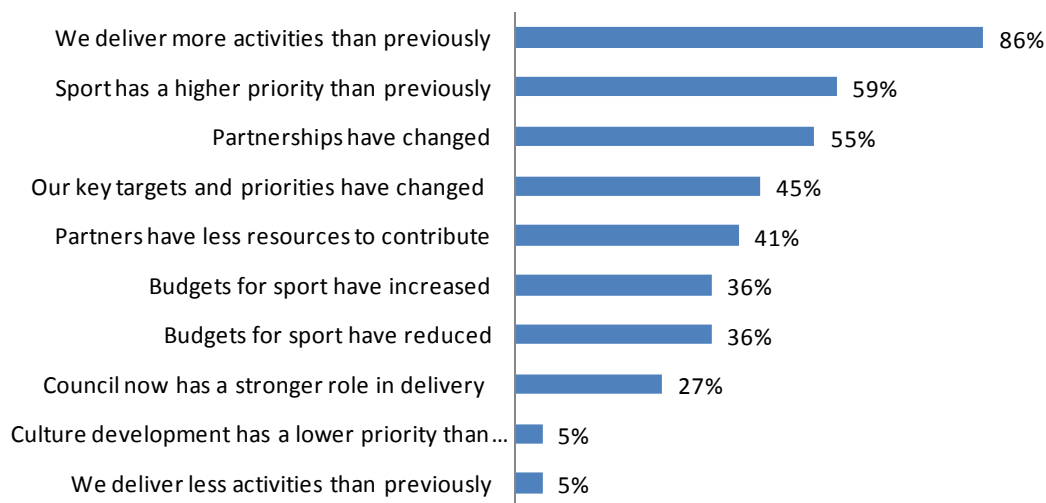
Figure 2.27 looks at how the delivery of culture has changed in recent years. 60% of authorities reported both a decrease in budgets for culture and a requirement to deliver more than previously. Recent years have also seen a change in partnerships and also a reduction in the contributions from partners.

Figure 2.27: Ways in which the delivery of culture has changed in recent years



In sport, the most frequently reported changes have been in the delivery of more activities and also sport having a higher priority than previously. Recent years have also seen a change in partnerships. There is less reported downward pressure on budgets than in culture.

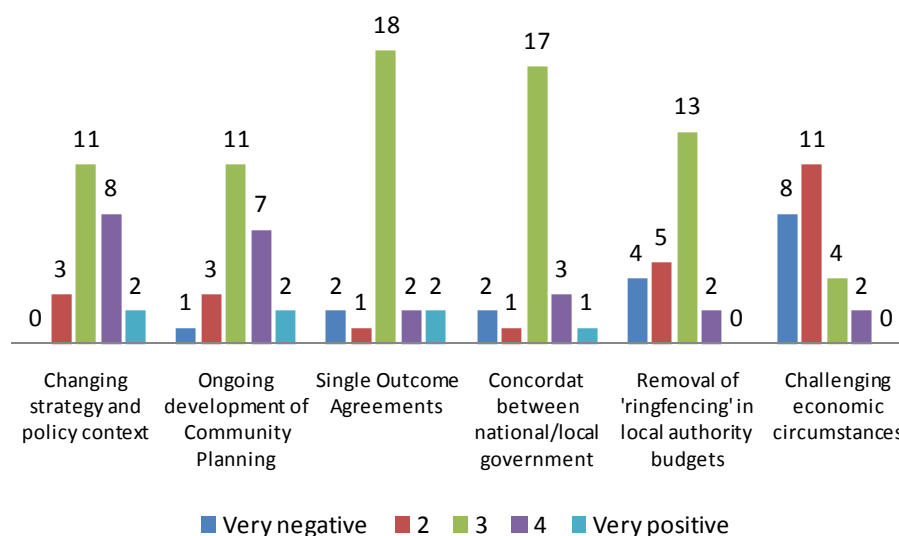
Figure 2.28: Ways in which the delivery of sport has changed in recent years



Authorities were also asked to rate the potential impact of a number of broad changes on the delivery of culture and sport in their area.

As **Figure 2.29**, below, shows the majority of areas would generally have little impact. While the changing strategy and policy context and the ongoing development of community planning were perceived either as positive or neutral, the jury appears to be out on SOAs. Unsurprisingly, the change that most identified as negative was the challenging economic environment, and there is also evidence to suggest some nervousness over the removal of ring-fenced budgets in culture.

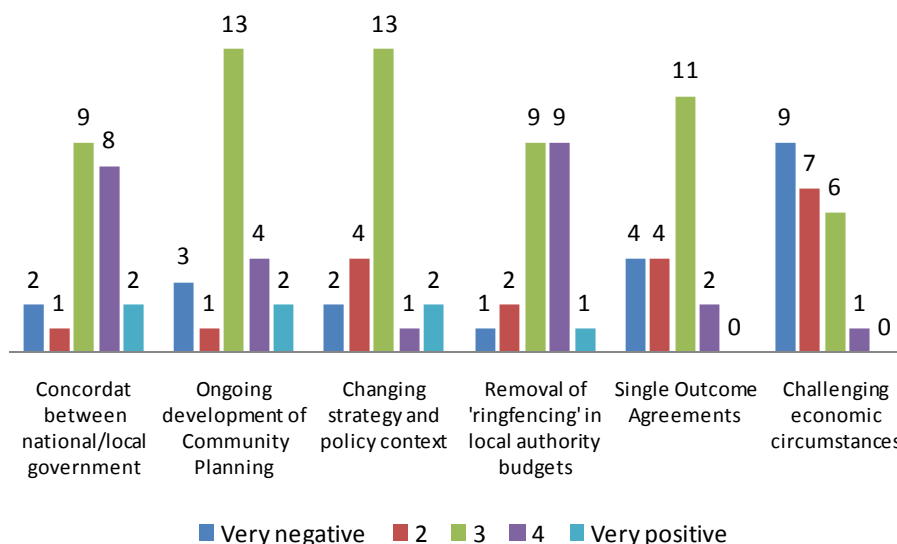
Figure 2.29: Potential Impact of the following on the delivery of culture in your Council?



In contrast, the removal of ring-fenced budgets was more positively viewed in relation to sport, and the Concordat agreement also received a positive response. Again, the challenging economic environment was highlighted as the area to have a potential negative impact. The results are shown in **Figure 2.30**, below.

In both areas, the general pattern of responses does suggest either a degree of uncertainty or that it still is too early to judge. Indeed, the feedback from stakeholders on these issues was that it was still too early to gain a clear sense of the impacts of Community Planning processes or of SOAs on the future delivery of culture and sport.

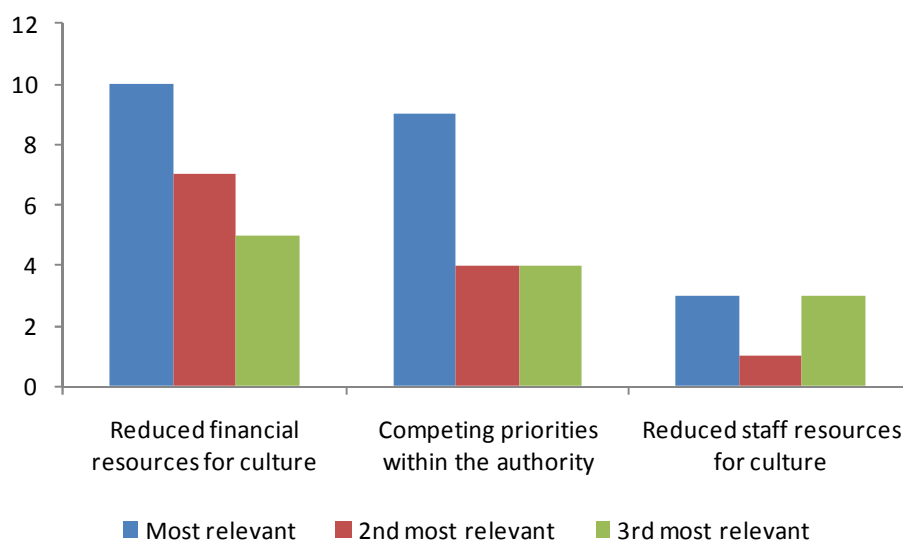
Figure 2.30: Potential Impact of the following on the delivery of sport in your Council?



2.10 Future Challenges

When asked to rank the top three challenges facing delivery of culture in the future most highlighted reduced financial resources for culture, closely followed by competing priorities within the authority.

Figure 2.31: Top three challenges in delivering culture in the future



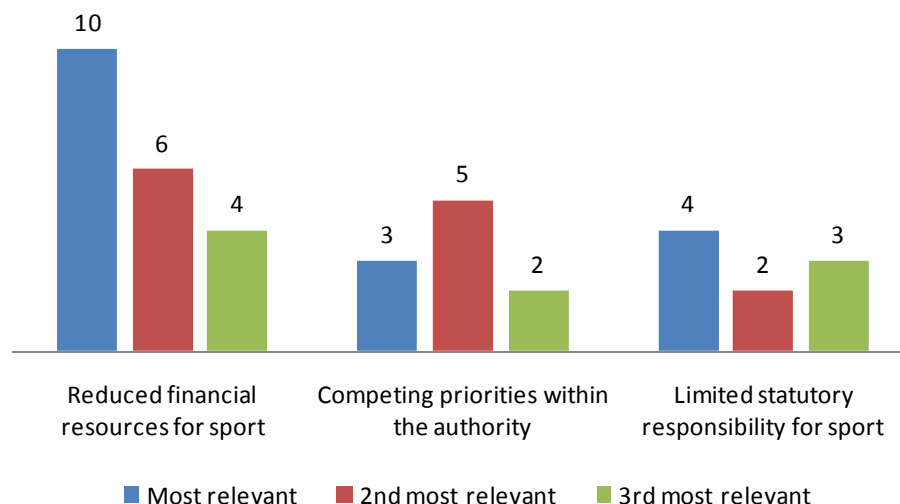
Nearly half of the local authorities (46%) rated their ability to meet these challenges in the future as good with just over a quarter (27%) stating their ability as not good.

The authorities that rated their ability as good/very good believed it was down to recognising the challenges and putting in place plans and strategies to deal with those challenges and recognition that culture will be a priority in the future.

Authorities that rated their ability as not good anticipated a reduction in funding, resources and staff as the main reasons their ability to meet future challenges will be difficult.

The picture in relation to sport is broadly similar, with reduced financial resources for sport competing priorities within the authority again the most frequently identified future challenges.

Figure 2.32: Top three challenges in delivering sport in the future



Half of the local authorities rated their ability to meet these challenges in the future as good with only 12% stating their ability as not good.

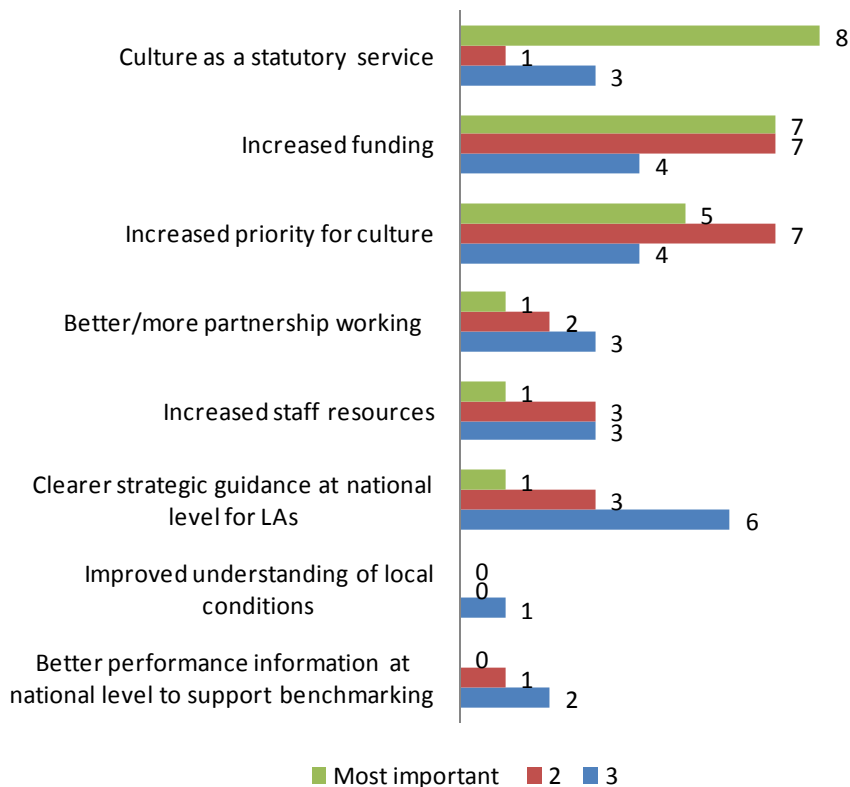
The authorities who rated their ability as good/very good believed it was due to investment and development of facilities.

Authorities who rated their ability as not good anticipated a reduction in resources and staff as the main reasons their ability to meet future challenges will be difficult.

Respondents were then asked to consider the relative importance of a number of issues that could help them meet key challenges in the future.

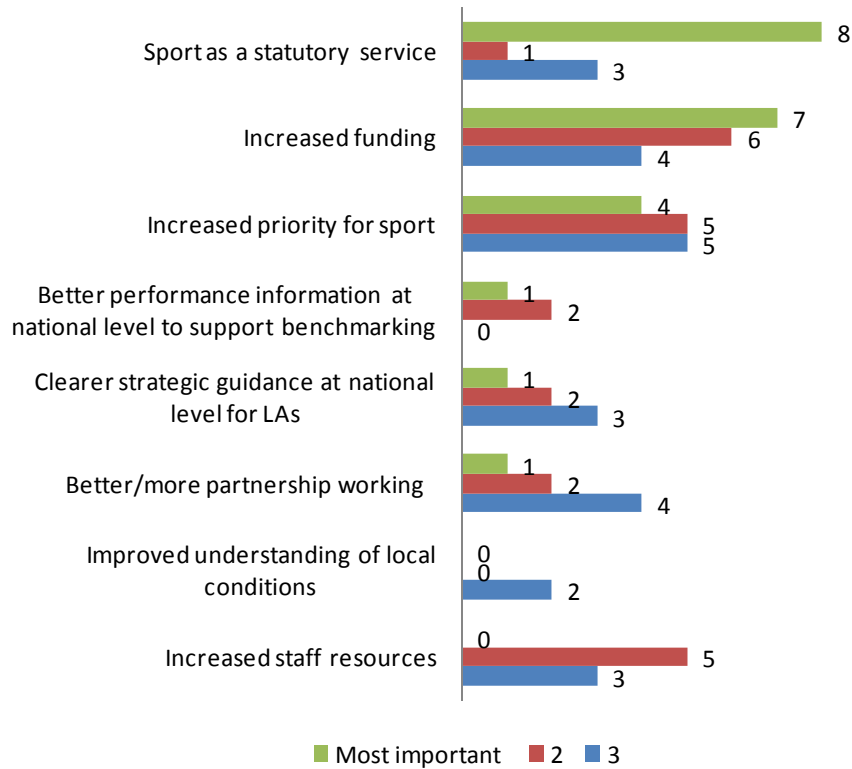
In relation to culture, the three issues ranked highest in terms of their potential to help Councils meet future challenges were culture as a statutory service, increased funding and an increase in priority for culture. These findings are shown below.

Figure 2.33: Ranked in importance in helping authorities meet challenges in relation to culture



The three highest ranked issues in meeting future challenges in sport were sport to become a statutory service, increased funding and an increase in priority for sport, as shown overleaf.

Figure 2.34: Ranked in importance in helping authorities meet challenges in relation to sport



The majority (85%) believe their approach needs to change as a result of changes in the operating environment. This is due to reduced and uncertain funding in the future. Reduced budgets and losing staff will force authorities into changing their approach. Authorities also see the importance of developing new partnerships and strategies and how to do better with what they currently have.

3. Implications for Future Policy

3.1 Introduction

As noted in the introduction, this is a crucial time for culture and sport in Scotland. A new relationship between national and local government, changes in the structure and responsibilities of national cultural agencies and the forthcoming opportunities of the Olympics and Commonwealth Games are all major drivers of change.

In seeking to draw some conclusions from the detailed analysis presented in Chapter 2, we have focussed on the implications for future policy and practice. These issues have been informed by the series of one-to-one consultations with key stakeholders, as well as discussions at the VOCAL annual conference in 2009.

3.2 Culture and Sport in Scotland

Despite being a non-statutory requirement, culture and sport services and activities are delivered by all of Scotland's Local Authorities.

However, one of the conclusions of the research is that the delivery of culture and sport is considerably different and diverse in scale, scope, activities and delivery, as well as in terms of where or how resources are invested. Every local authority is different – in some cases there are significant differences even between broadly similar authorities.

This reflects both the historic and democratic nature of the service which has developed to reflect the local agenda.

As an illustration of this, the analysis has highlighted that there are 25 different departmental 'titles' within the 27 respondent authorities for where culture and sport are located within the authority. It is also interesting to note that in different authorities, culture and sport are delivered through much larger departments, often education services.

Some Key Conclusions

- local authority involvement in culture and sport is very significant indeed, accounting for total gross expenditure in excess of £750m and employing more than 6,000 FTE jobs;
- within these headlines, the evidence suggests greater pressure on budgets and on staff resources in culture than in sport, although

grants to third parties are under pressure in both areas. Capital expenditure appears to be more resilient;

- the level of priority given to culture and sport is variable, but is reportedly high in the majority of Councils, particularly for sport, and few Councils report a decrease in priority;
- dedicated strategies for culture and sport are widespread and are generally driven mainly by local priorities (as is appropriate). National policy has a higher level of influence on local strategies in sport than in culture, but the National Outcomes are an important driver for both;
- the strategic priorities identified by Councils typically converge around issues relating to access and participation, partnership working and delivering activities and facilities and are often at a broad and general level;
- the coverage of both culture and sport in SOAs remains patchy, although there are signs that this has improved since the first round, particularly in culture. However, culture is still being seen as contributing to a narrow set of national themes – mainly national identity and enterprise, and the broader relevance of both culture and sport is not yet coming through in SOAs;
- partnership structures are reasonably well developed in sport, if less so in culture, although these groups are not always embedded in CPP structures. The level of reported priority for culture and sport within CPPs is also lower than in Councils themselves;
- elsewhere, partnership working with national agencies (Sport Scotland and the Scottish Arts Council) are generally well established and positively viewed, as is partnership working with the voluntary sector;
- in relation to performance measurement, the picture is mixed. Although all authorities reported undertaking baseline work, not all do it on a regular basis. Similarly, while almost all undertake some form of performance measurement work, this typically focuses on relatively basic measures relating to participation and expenditure. There is curiously less focus on measures of economic impact even in terms of numbers employed in the delivery of culture and sport services, and there is demand for a nationally consistent approach to performance measurement for culture and sport;
- there also appear to be some concerns around how appropriate the current SOA indicators are in providing a clear understanding of performance or progress in relation to culture and sport;

- feedback from authorities is that while culture budgets have been reducing, Councils are expected to deliver more with less resources, and within a changing partnership environment where partners often have less resource to contribute. In sport, authorities are also expected to deliver more, although there has been less budget pressure and even an increase in the level of priority attached to sport services; and
- the evidence appears to suggest that it is still too early for Councils to provide a clear view on the impact of major shifts in the operating environment (community planning, SOAs) on the delivery of culture and sport. However, there is evidence of some nervousness regarding the loss of ring fenced budgets, at least in relation to culture.

3.3 Key Issues and Priorities

While the above presents a snapshot of the delivery of culture and sport in Scotland's local authorities, the research also considered key issues and the priorities that will be important in the future:

- the impression is that sport is rising in priority, but that this is not the case for culture, at least not to the same extent and not as widely across authorities. The evidence also suggests that culture may be less well placed in resource terms;
- there is widespread concern about the availability of resources in the future, and a feeling that culture and sport may struggle to compete with other priorities where statutory requirements are in place. There is also concern about the low visibility of culture and sport within SOAs, particularly as these become the key drivers of investment decisions at local level;
- the partnership environment is changing, both as a result of the growing importance of Community Planning Partnerships, but also as part of wider alignment of public sector activities (i.e. under the Government's single national purpose of sustainable economic growth). There is also a strong emphasis on partnership with the voluntary sector in both culture and sport, but the feedback suggests pressure on the resources available to support these partners, particularly in sport;
- 85% of Councils believe that their approach to the delivery of culture and sport has to change in this environment, but it is a source of some concern that only around half of Councils rate their ability to meet the future challenges in culture and sport as good or very good; and

- feelings around the SOA approach are somewhat mixed, and it is probably too early to draw any firm conclusions about how this will impact on culture and sport in future. What is clear is that culture and sport must work hard to demonstrate their wider relevance and contribution to the National Outcomes if they are to achieve greater prominence in SOAs.

3.4 The Future of Culture and Sport

The above analysis, taken together with various consultations highlights a number of key issues for the future.

Currently, culture and sport services and activities are largely a reflection of history and tradition where the focus is on responding to local priorities as determined by the local elected representatives.

However, current economic and other challenges continue to require change and adaption in the local operating environment to better reflect future needs, opportunities and challenges.

In this environment it is only right and proper that local authorities review and challenge what they deliver through their culture and sport activities and seek to better position these to achieve the greatest impacts on their local communities.

The research did not attempt to measure outputs or outcomes from culture and sport interventions. However, in future it will be important that Councils are able to monitor and measure what actual effects their interventions have on their local communities – particularly at a time when Government is seeking to base allocation decisions on maximising the value of their investments.

Following on from the analysis, there are a number of development areas where authorities should seek to make progress in driving forward the provision of culture and sport.

We have however, identified four issues in particular which are considered as crucial in developing culture and sport services and which could be addressed through the work of VOCAL and its partners. These issues are summarised below.

Priority and Visibility

There is concern amongst stakeholders that culture, and possibly also sport, lack visibility within Council structures and that political commitment is variable, particularly at local level. There is also some evidence of demand for

clearer policy guidance at national level, particularly in culture, and a feeling that the level of national commitment to culture and sport is unclear.

The most consistently identified response to this was around the need to develop strategic and political **leadership in culture and sport**. Within authorities, there is a need to support strong leadership at strategic level within officers, and also to engage elected members and develop powerful advocates and champions for culture and sport.

Programmes of cultural leadership are available (e.g. Clore Leadership Programme) but often focus on leaders within the cultural sector rather than in the public sector. There may be an opportunity in working with national agencies to develop a similar programme for senior Council officers and elected members.

In addition, the analysis also found that clear structures for partnership working and strategic engagement, for example with CPPs, are variable. While it would be unwise to establish more groups without purpose, there is a need to ensure **clear routes of engagement for culture and sport**, particularly into community planning structures and the SOA process.

Partnership working takes up much time and resources and it will therefore be important to ensure its effectiveness and efficiency. Also, are the local authorities always the right organisations to deliver any particular services or would others be better placed? – an issue that we return to below.

However, these measures alone will not solve all of the issues with the profile and visibility of culture and sport. The location of culture and sport within broader service departments remains a challenge, particularly as senior officers are unlikely to have a background in either area – e.g. Directors of Education are far more likely to have a background in education.

Crucially, the position of culture and sport will only improve if there is clear and unambiguous **evidence of their contribution to the National Outcomes**. This is discussed below.

Developing the Evidence Base for Culture and Sport

Local government is facing the most significant funding challenges in a generation, and it is likely that overall reductions in budgets will not be met through efficiency savings alone. Councils will need to consider doing things differently, reducing the scale of some provision, or even cutting some services altogether.

In this environment, all services will be seeking to demonstrate their value in order to compete for the available resources, and Councils must have reliable information on which to develop priorities and make investment decisions.

Here culture and sport face significant challenges. As noted earlier, gross expenditure on culture and sport by Scotland's local authorities was more than £750m in 2008/09. However, the lack of a nationally consistent approach to performance measurement means that it is currently not possible to account for the return on that investment.

This is not a sustainable position. If culture and sport are to secure future investment, it is essential that there is robust evidence to demonstrate the return on that investment.

There are two separate but linked issues in this:

- the need to provide a consistent account of the returns from current investments in culture and sport; and
- the need to demonstrate through evidence the contribution that culture and sport can make to National Outcomes.

The first calls for a consistent **performance measurement framework** that can be applied across all authorities addressing issues such as:

- appropriate key performance indicators;
- an agreed suite of activity, output and outcome measures (current measures focus largely on inputs – expenditure; activities – number of facilities; and basic outputs – participation. There is far less focus on outcome measures);
- sources of information and collection details;
- monitoring and reporting protocols; and
- approach to evaluation.

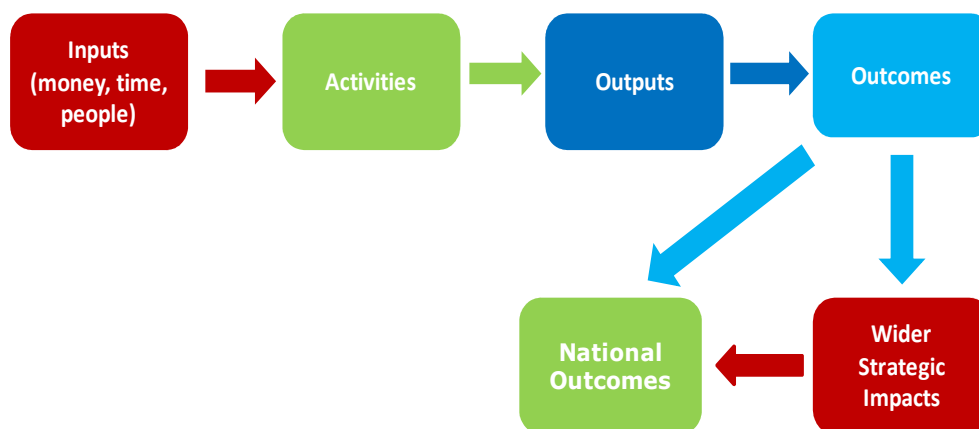
This does not necessarily require a complex framework, as a simple approach to performance measurement may still produce good quality results. The additional benefits are that it allows reporting of outputs and outcomes at a national level and will be able to show the contribution that Scotland's local authorities make to Government strategic objectives and targets.

The second issue is equally, if not more, challenging and relates to the need to collate and articulate clearly the evidence that culture and sport can contribute to the key themes of the National Performance Framework such as economic development, public health, community safety and young people.

Some of this evidence already exists, and indeed has been summarised in the past (see, for example, *The Evidence Base for Culture and Sport Policy*, Ruiz, J. Scottish Government, 2003). However, what is needed is an organising framework in which to review and present this evidence.

Here the use of logic chain models may be useful to consider. A logic chain describes the causal links between the inputs to a project (financial, human resources etc), the activities that those inputs support, the immediate outputs of the projects (e.g. participation) and the outcomes arising from the outputs (e.g. individual or community benefits). Logic chains can also identify wider impacts of projects and initiatives at a strategic or regional level (e.g. increased profile for culture and sport, development of the sector etc). However, the feedback suggests a current gap in the logic chain – the *intermediate* outcomes from cultural and sports activities and how these subsequently contribute to National Outcomes. Addressing this knowledge or evidence gap should be a key priority.

Figure 3.1: Outline Logic Model



The above model is illustrative only and further work will be required to articulate a compelling logic model for different kinds of cultural and sporting activities.

The Quality Improvement Framework (QIF), ‘*How Good is our Culture and Sport*’ developed by the Scottish Government in partnership with VOCAL is currently piloting with a number of Councils. The QIF may well offer significant opportunity to build and present a stronger case for investment in culture and sport, but its potential in this respect should be tested as part of the piloting process.

It is also worth exploring best practice elsewhere. For example, authorities in England have been facing similar issues, and the work of I&DeA and CLOA may provide useful input (e.g. through the *Cultural and Sport Planning Toolkit* and *Making Performance Management Work for Culture and Sport*, I&DeA).

Finally, the combination of a nationally consistent performance measurement framework and a stronger evidence base establishing the ways in which culture and sport create impacts and contribute to local and national outcomes will have a further and crucially important benefit. It will provide a more robust basis for prioritising future investment.

Prioritising Investment

Many Councils recognised the need to refresh/ review their current strategies to reflect the many changes highlighted in this report. Too often the strategies that exist are general and converge around a familiar list of priorities that, while hard to argue against, do not provide a clear basis for prioritising resources.

Crucially, in developing future strategic priorities, a key question to address will be the spatial level at which strategy is developed. While there is no right or wrong answer to this it should be a question that is at least addressed. There is also the related issue of the balance between national and local priorities and how responsibilities will be divided within a changing public sector delivery environment.

Finally, in determining future strategy and priorities for investment, it is currently unclear how the cultural and sporting needs of communities are assessed. Useful lessons in this respect can be gained from the Scottish Government's Cultural Pathfinder initiative and its subsequent evaluation.

New Models of Service Delivery

The analysis has highlighted the role that partnerships play in delivering culture and sport services, in particular partnership with national agencies and with the voluntary sector. In the case of the latter, there is a real tension in having, on the one hand, a degree of reliance on the voluntary sector as delivery agents and on the other, declining resources to support the sector.

In addition, consultation feedback hinted at a broader shift in the ways in which local authorities engage in service delivery. In particular, there is growing support for authorities to take a more facilitating and enabling role, rather than one based largely on direct provision. Indeed, this may become an economic necessity, along with shared service models and cross-Council collaborative working.

Of course, these issues extend beyond culture and sport, and have implications for all areas of public service provision. However, in the context of culture and sport, there is an urgent need to explore and develop new models that can ensure effective service delivery within a constrained funding environment.