Cultural policy in New Zealand

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The Government’s focus

• Outcome One
  – the diversity, visibility and accessibility of our culture, and participation in cultural experiences, are enhanced

• Outcome Two
  – the programmes, services and products of funded agencies are of high quality and widely accessible

• Outcome Three
  – the value and contribution of culture to New Zealand’s social, environmental and economic well-being is recognised
Why cultural policy is important

• 75% of New Zealanders believe cultural activities are extremely important to their identity

• More than 126,000 people work in cultural industries making up 2.1% of Gross Domestic Product

• Expenditure:
  – Central government $273 million a year
  – Local government $351 million a year
Local Government’s interest

The purpose of local government is to:

(a) Enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and

(b) Promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of communities, in the present and for the future.
Focus on well-being and outcomes

• Addressing the four well-beings a necessary contribution to sustainable development
• Identifying community outcomes the process for engaging citizens
  – Councils design engagement strategies appropriate to their communities
  – Community outcomes largely aspirational
• Culture as the arts versus culture as values and way of life
What is ‘cultural well-being’?

- No definition, however the Ministry of Culture and Heritage describes it as:
  - The vitality that communities and individuals enjoy through participation in recreation, creative and cultural activities and the freedom to retain, interpret and express their arts, history, heritage and traditions.

- Councils required to come to their own understanding about the meaning of ‘cultural well-being’
Wellington City Council’s Arts and Culture strategy

• Developed in response to challenges confronting the arts and cultural sector
  – Competition from bigger cities
  – Threats to arts infrastructure from reduction in grants, sponsorship and income

• Proposes that the council
  – Promote the value of investing in the arts
  – Facilitate collaboration between arts organizations
  – Provide greater access to new technologies
Wellington’s Vision

- Wellington is the place for all people to experiment with, learn about and experience New Zealand's contemporary arts and culture
- Three priorities
  - Enabling the best and the boldest of contemporary arts and cultures
  - Diverse experiences by diverse communities
  - Thriving creative enterprises
- Culture a ‘tool’ for achieving other objectives
Conclusion

- Councils comfortable with the idea of a quadruple ‘bottom line’
- Emphasis on taking an integrated approach to enhancing well-being and quality of life
- Recent legislative change has removed the requirement that communities determine their own outcomes.
  - More council-centric outcomes
  - Less ability for citizens to set strategic direction
Useful websites: