

**REVIEW AND CONSULTATION ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF
RENAISSANCE IN THE REGIONS**

A REPORT FOR MLA

PART ONE

APRIL 2005

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Part Two (separate document)

Notes of the main points from each of the consultation meetings, discussions and workshops (for MLA internal use only)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1. The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) appointed Kingshurst Consulting, Anne Murch and Associates and Gaby Porter and Associates to undertake a review and consultation on the implementation of Renaissance in the Regions. The review took place between November 2004 and April 2005.
2. The review and consultation focussed on the knowledge gained and lessons learned from Renaissance so far, in order to inform the Hub planning guidance for 2006/08.

The consultation process

3. A major consultation process took place to draw on the first hand experience and views of those involved in Renaissance and the wider museum community. This consultation involved workshops and discussions with:
 - Regional Agencies
 - staff from museum services within the regional museum Hubs and Hub Managers
 - representatives of the wider museum community in each region
 - representatives of relevant national organisations and funding bodies
 - MLA's own staff
4. The views which emerged from this consultation were then analysed and drawn together for discussion at a residential workshop in March for representatives of Regional Agencies, Hubs, national organisations and MLA.

Main issues to emerge from the consultation and lessons learned

5. There were a number of consistent messages to emerge from the overall consultation process:
 - a wide ranging recognition that Renaissance has achieved a good deal in a short space of time
 - a need to clarify and redefine the Renaissance vision
 - the importance of increasing Renaissance's public reach and benefits for museum users
 - the need to give greater emphasis to organisational and cultural change to help transform and modernise the museum domain
 - the need to strengthen the leadership of Renaissance, clarify who does what and improve ways of working across the programme.

Recommendations from the review

6. In order to address the main issues which arose during the consultation, the following recommendations should be reflected in MLA's planning guidance for 2006/08.

i) A draft vision for Renaissance

7. The study recommends a draft vision which is intended to:

- demonstrate a clear focus on users, engagement and participation
- emphasise the transformational nature of Renaissance and not just be concerned with funding
- have a clear outward focus and be capable of being understood by governing bodies and key stakeholders for example, Regional Development Agencies and local authorities
- recognise the importance of the programme's impact and links to other cultural sectors and priorities
- articulate clear priorities
- recognise creativity and cultural entitlement
- reflect wider regional priorities and re-emphasise the regional leadership of museums
- give greater recognition to the partnership nature of Renaissance – facilitating others to achieve the vision if it is to be truly user focused.

8. The draft vision is as follows:

Renaissance in the Region will continue to develop and transform museums and, in doing so, connect more people to the learning, creativity and enjoyment which museums offer.

MLA and its Regional Agencies will do so by:

- developing the network of regional Hubs to be beacons enabling more people to be engaged in, inspired by, enjoy and learn from their services; directly and in partnership with others
- working with regional Hubs to provide practical leadership and support to the overall museum community in each region to help develop their services for the communities they serve
- increasing public understanding of and engagement with museum collections, by opening up collections and the knowledge associated with them
- developing and diversifying museum staff, equipping them with the necessary skills and opportunities to modernise and develop their museums' services

(continued)

- capitalising on new opportunities to develop the role which museums play in the cultural, social and economic life of an area and, as a result, demonstrate their relevance to local people.

ii) Three themes to drive the programme

9. It is recommended that Renaissance is driven by three over-arching themes, which replace the eight priority areas used by Hubs in their earlier business planning. The themes involve:

- engaging people and building audiences
- creating new opportunities for people to enjoy collections through innovative and participative activities
- developing the capability of organisations and their workforce for the benefit of users.

iii) Guiding principles

10. To underpin the vision and three themes, a set of guiding principles are proposed for the programme so that Renaissance will be:

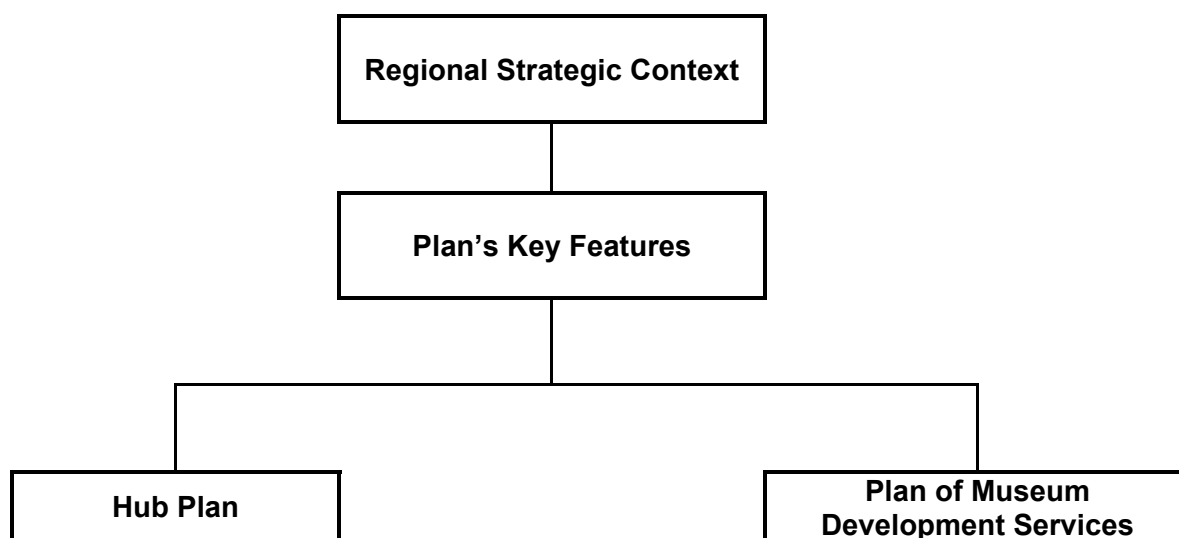
- informed by an agreed national strategy for the museum domain as a whole, within which Renaissance is an integral part
- driven by benefits to museum users
- supporting work on the integration of collections and audiences, with each informing the development of the other
- set against a planned process of organisational and cultural change, to bring about modernisation and increase sustainability
- encouraging experimentation and innovation in order to develop excellence
- based on effective partnerships across all aspects of the programme which add real value
- built on what has been achieved and learnt to date, drawing on a clear evidence base
- maximising the impact of resources by encouraging efficiency and effectiveness, leveraging additional funds and joint working
- delivered through one integrated regional plan which:
 - sets out the various elements of the region's plans and how they link together to form a coherent picture
 - describes the contribution which the programme will make to wider national and regional strategies
 - clarifies roles and responsibilities within the programme
 - can be drawn together into an overall national Renaissance plan.

iv) An agreed national museum strategy

11. The study recommends that MLA's planning guidance refers to the key features of the recent DCMS consultation paper "*Understanding the Future : Museums and 21st Century Life*", sets out MLA's views on the priorities required for a national museum strategy and the part which Renaissance should play in the strategy.

v) An integrated Renaissance plan in each region

12. It is recommended that there is one plan in each region which brings together the various elements of Renaissance activity undertaken by Hubs and Regional Agencies, as well as demonstrating how the different elements complement each other. There are however, timing issues about the wider Museum Development Services part of the plan. Nevertheless, the key elements of each regional plan should comprise:



vi) Outcomes which focus on users

13. The study recommends that Inspiring Learning for All (ILfA) is embedded in the future planning, delivery and evaluation of Renaissance. The use of ILfA's Generic Learning Outcomes will enable regions to measure users' experience of the programme.
14. The study also endorses MLA's plans to develop an agreed set of performance indicators to be reflected in regions' plans.

vii) Organisational and cultural change

15. It is recommended that MLA's planning guidance emphasises the importance of Hubs and Regional Agencies addressing organisational and cultural change in order to modernise the museum domain. And to do so by Hubs and those receiving Renaissance funding using ILfA as a planning model to support such change.

viii) Encouraging experimentation and innovation

16. The opportunity to test out new approaches to delivering services and supporting innovative ways of working is seen as an important feature of Renaissance. The study recommends that the planning guidance encourages the continued development of innovation within the programme, including new partnerships across the museum domain and with outside organisations.

xix) Effective partnership working

17. The study recommends that the planning guidance refers to two examples of good practice concerning partnership working. Firstly, the resources in the ILfA framework about building and maintaining effective partnerships. Secondly, the recent work on partnership development entitled 'The Prince's Trust: Making Partnerships Work'.

x) Building on lessons learned and sharing good practice

18. The study sets a number of recommendations for sharing good practice developed by regions and applying the lessons learned more widely.

Recommendations for the Planning Guidance

19. Most of the recommendations from the study, if agreed, need to be reflected in MLA's forthcoming 2006/08 planning guidance to regions. However, the study identifies those aspects of its recommendations which are specific to the planning guidance and those which have wider application or require a longer period of consideration.

APRIL 2005

SECTION ONE : INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 In November 2004 the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) appointed Kingshurst Consulting, Anne Murch and Associates and Gaby Porter and Associates to undertake a review and consultation on the implementation of Renaissance in the Regions.
- 1.2 This report draws together the results of that review and consultation. In commissioning the study, MLA recognised it would be premature at this early stage in the implementation of the Renaissance programme to assess its overall impact. Instead, the aim of the review was to explore the knowledge gained from Renaissance activity so far and use that knowledge to plan future improvements to processes and activities. In particular, the lessons learned from the implementation of the programme so far will be used by MLA to develop the 2006/08 planning guidance for the design and delivery of the initiative from April 2006.
- 1.3 The review and consultation took place between November 2004 and April 2005. It was undertaken by Barry Horner of Kingshurst Consulting, Anne Murch and Gaby Porter.
- 1.4 The progress of the review and consultation was overseen by a Project Management Board. This comprised MLA staff who met at various stages during the study and provided guidance to inform the work programme and the emerging recommendations now set out in this report.
- 1.5 Our report is in two parts. Part One describes:
 - the consultation process which took place
 - a summary of the main issues to emerge from the consultation
 - a series of overarching recommendations to help shape the future design and delivery of the Renaissance programme in the light of the lessons learned so far
 - specific recommendations which, if agreed, can inform the Renaissance planning guidance for 2006/08.
- 1.6 Part Two of our report contains notes of the main points from the various consultation meetings and discussions which were held.

SECTION TWO : THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 2.1 In this section we describe the main features of the consultation process which took place between January and March 2005 in order to inform the recommendations set out in this report and MLA's subsequent planning guidance.
- 2.2 The consultation process involved a programme of facilitated workshops and discussions to explore views and experience of Renaissance activity and the lessons that can be learned in planning for the future. This phase of the consultation involved:
- a workshop for 19 representatives of Regional Agencies, held on 10th January
 - a series of four workshops for Hub partners and managers comprising:
 - London and South East Hubs on 12th January (for 15 Hub people)
 - Phase One Hubs on 20th January (South West, North East and West Midlands Hubs involving 33 Hub people)
 - East of England and East Midlands Hubs on 24th January (for 21 Hub people)
 - North West and Yorkshire Hubs on 26th January (for 25 Hub people)
 - a forum in each region for representatives of the wider museum community, held between the end of January and mid February. Invitees were identified by the relevant Regional Agency with invitations sent on behalf of MLA. Attendance at the fora ranged from 27 people (in the East of England) to 10 people (in the North East). In addition, staff from the relevant Regional Agency and the Hub Manager also attended
 - in depth telephone or face to face interviews with representatives of relevant national bodies: DCMS, DfES, MA, NMDC, AIM and HLF. Such interviews took place during January and February.
- 2.3 In addition to our facilitation of the various workshops and regional fora, MLA staff attended each consultation meeting to explain the principles of Renaissance and hear discussion at first hand.
- 2.4 Following an analysis of the main issues to emerge from this round of consultation, a residential workshop was held on 16th and 17th March to consider the lessons learned from the Renaissance programme so far and help inform the detailed development of the planning guidance. The workshop was attended by 48 people bringing together up to two representatives from each Regional Agency, Hub lead partners and Hub Managers from each region, representatives of national bodies and MLA staff.
- 2.5 The objectives for the residential workshop were:
- to clarify and redefine the Renaissance vision in the light of experience so far
 - to consider the key issues emerging from the consultation process
 - to discuss how these issues should be addressed in the development of the Renaissance programme and in MLA's planning guidance.
- 2.6 In the following section we draw together the main findings and messages to emerge from the overall consultation process.

SECTION THREE : KEY ISSUES TO EMERGE FROM THE CONSULTATION PROCESS AND LESSONS LEARNED

3.1 During the course of the consultation programme a wide range of views and comments were expressed. Nevertheless, there were a number of consistent messages and themes to emerge. Following an analysis of all the points raised at the various stages of the consultation, we believe the following represent the key issues which are critical to the future design and delivery of the Renaissance programme:

- a clear recognition that Renaissance has achieved much in a short space of time
- a need to clarify the Renaissance vision
- increasing Renaissance's public reach and benefits for museum users
- giving greater emphasis to organisational and cultural change
- strengthening the leadership of the Renaissance programme, improving ways of working and advocacy.

3.2 We now consider each issue in turn.

Recognising the achievements of Renaissance so far

3.3 During the course of the consultation there was clear recognition by people from across the museum community that Renaissance has achieved a good deal in a short space of time. In summary these successes were seen to be:

- a range of significant achievements by Hubs in delivering their plans, albeit in the case of Phase Two Hubs without the fuller level of funding so far
- increased education activity by all Hubs was seen as a particular success, as was the degree of capacity building by Hub services, with new staff being recruited to begin to address previous under investment in curatorial and conservation work
- a welcome for the opportunity presented by Renaissance to try out new approaches and take risks, leading to increased staff commitment and self esteem
- positive working relationships and new partnerships having been developed, leading to many examples of collaborative working – between Hub services, between Hubs and Regional Agencies and with the wider museum community – although we return to this latter issue in paragraphs 3.30 – 3.31
- the role of the Museum Development Fund (MDF) and the work of the MDO network was well regarded across the regional museum community. We return to this question in paragraphs 3.27 - 3.28
- increased local, regional and national political awareness and support for museums arising from Renaissance.

- 3.4 A central message to emerge from the consultation was the importance of building on these foundations of success so as to embed the original Renaissance ambitions, in particular with the additional funding coming into play during the course of the 2006/08 planning cycle.

Clarifying and redefining the Renaissance vision

- 3.5 Many of those consulted were concerned that either the Renaissance vision lacked coherence as the programme had developed, were unclear what that vision was, or were uncertain as to whether or not it had changed from that articulated in the original Task Force report in September 2001.

- 3.6 The Task Force report identified five main areas for museums in the twenty-first century, which provided the basis for the Renaissance programme:

- to be an important resource and champion for learning and education
- to promote access and inclusion for a wider audience – one which is more representative of each region's population
- to contribute to economic regeneration
- to use collections to encourage inspiration and creativity
- to ensure excellence in the delivery of services.

- 3.7 However, many of those consulted considered that Renaissance had become too project and product focussed and there was a need to rearticulate the Renaissance vision in the light of experience.

- 3.8 There was not unanimous agreement about precisely what that vision should be, although during the course of the residential workshop a number of characteristics were identified which should be reflected in an updated Renaissance vision. Thus an updated vision should:

- demonstrate a clear focus on users, engagement and participation
- emphasise the transformational nature of Renaissance and not just be concerned with funding
- have a clear outward focus and be capable of being understood by governing bodies and key stakeholders for example, Regional Development Agencies and local authorities
- recognise the importance of the programme's impact and links to other cultural sectors and priorities
- articulate clear priorities
- recognise creativity and cultural entitlement

- reflect wider regional priorities and re-emphasise the regional leadership of museums
- give greater recognition to the partnership nature of Renaissance – facilitating others to achieve the vision if it is to be truly user focused.

3.9 We return to the question of the Renaissance vision in Section Four of this report.

Increasing public reach and benefit for museum users

3.10 During the consultation process many examples were highlighted of good practice in extending the reach of museum services and benefiting new users. They include, for example:

- numerous examples of broadening activity with school children via each Hub's education activity
- Hubs working increasingly within communities who are non traditional museum users – for example a festival of Muslim Cultures in Yorkshire; work with Asian women in Bristol to showcase traditional textile skills; and in Plymouth the Museum in Transit initiative which tours local housing estates
- a successful family friendly campaign in Wolverhampton museum service
- outreach work with ethnic minority communities and refugees across London through the Hub's Global Cultures project
- joint exhibition programmes between regional and national museums to engage new audiences and new partners – for example in the North East, North West and West Midlands
- innovative touring exhibitions – for example in Hampshire a county wide programme which included "Marvellous Meals", an interactive exhibition to help families learn about the history of food and provide tips on nutrition
- supporting development posts in the East Midlands to stimulate community led projects and initiatives
- addressing disability issues in the East of England through use of the Hub's Specialisms Fund initiative

3.11 These and many other examples illustrate the significant range of activity which has been achieved under Renaissance during its first years. However, there was a widely held view during the consultation that even greater emphasis needs to be given to the direct benefits of Renaissance for users – particularly in engaging a wider range of users who are more representative of the overall communities which museums serve.

- 3.12 This issue, of course, goes to the heart of the Renaissance agenda and reflects a widespread recognition of the need for a refreshed Renaissance vision which has a clear focus on users. In turn, the ability of all those involved in the programme – at a national, regional and local level – to demonstrate the benefits of Renaissance activity for users through a robust set of performance measures was judged by many as being paramount.
- 3.13 Such performance measures were seen to encompass not only quantitative activity but also qualitative outcomes in order to provide a strong evidence base from which to advocate the programme's success. There was a recognition however, that a balance would have to be struck between the need to develop a strong evidence base, whilst retaining MLA's present light touch arrangements in monitoring Renaissance activity and not make future demands to measure and collect data too onerous.

Organisational and cultural change

- 3.14 The Task Force report placed considerable importance on the need to modernise the museum domain and to achieve such modernisation through a planned process of organisational and cultural change. However, during the review many identified this as an area which has not had sufficient emphasis in the Renaissance programme to date. There was a general recognition of why this was the case in the first years of Renaissance given the need to demonstrate early achievements. Nevertheless, the issue was one which it was felt the new planning guidance should address.
- 3.15 The consultation – and in particular the residential workshop – identified a number of characteristics required by a transformed management culture in order to deliver real change, not all of which were in the original Task Force report:
- clear organisational purpose
 - explicit values to support purpose, acknowledging that these values may not be fixed but flexible to reflect changes taking place
 - consultative, porous, transparent
 - high performance teams
 - tolerant of risk (although there may be tensions here for museums delivering to demanding performance driven targets)
 - continuous learning
 - developing staff; welcoming and embracing people (trustees, staff and volunteers) from different backgrounds with different styles
 - diversity in terms of boards of governing bodies, staff and user base
 - leadership at all levels to deliver the vision.
- 3.16 During the course of the residential workshop, the following barriers to change were also identified:
- attitudinal – embracing change and knowing how to manage change. At the moment support mechanisms for people leading this process are seen to be inadequate

- organisational capacity or perceived organisational capacity – museums can see the need for change but are not always prepared to shift resources to reflect these priorities, nor do they have the experience to manage such change
- lack of shared vision at institutional level
- a lack of national consistency and too much regional diversity concerning what Renaissance is about
- a perceived lack of connection of Renaissance with institutional priorities
- Renaissance itself – there is a danger of ghettoising the change process and the need to ensure that its impact is understood and recognised across all areas of museum activity

3.17 There was general agreement that the planning guidance should reflect how organisations intend to tackle these barriers, drawing on the principles of the Inspiring Learning for All (ILfA) framework which we comment on further in Section Four.

Strengthening leadership of Renaissance and ways of working

3.18 The Task Force report envisaged the Renaissance framework becoming an integrated system, with identified leadership for the museum community in each region and defined roles for each element of the programme, involving:

- *regional Hubs*: as centres of excellence and leaders of their regional museum communities, piloting new ideas and providing examples of best practice for wider application
- *Regional Agencies*: supporting wider museum development, for example through the Museum Development Fund (MDF), and providing a strategic regional role
- *Designated and university museums*: who were seen as natural partners for Hubs
- *national museums*: in terms of increased partnership working with Hubs and other museums
- *local and community museums*: having information on best practice, being able to participate in regional schemes which addressed professional problems (for example through the use of MDF), taking part in learning and inclusion initiatives and having access to improved training and development.

3.19 However, a consistent message to emerge from the consultation was that leadership of the Renaissance programme – at various levels – was not clear, resulting in a good deal of confusion about the respective roles and responsibilities of Hubs, Regional Agencies, and MDOs, as well as where the wider museum community fitted into the Renaissance framework.

3.20 During the course of the residential workshop, MLA's role nationally in relation to Renaissance and its priorities were seen to be as follows:

- leading the strategy to get more money
- building a coherent voice in the sector
- raising the profile of Renaissance as a whole and advocacy outside of just DCMS
- establishing a clear focus on the user
- creating opportunities for the sector to come together
- becoming a single funding body for the sector
- clearly articulating roles and responsibilities
- being confident and consistent
 - saying no
 - consulting more effectively
- achieving the right balance between telling and listening
- knowing when to direct and recognising leadership exists in other places
- emphasising the importance of partnership working across the programme
- understanding local government better and give greater acknowledgement of their role and funding
- overseeing national data collection – analysis and application.

3.21 The role of Regional Agencies in regard to Renaissance was judged to involve:

- bringing key players together – in the domain and beyond – to plan the coherent regional delivery of Renaissance
- getting buy in from the museum constituency, against realistic expectations of their direct payback from Renaissance
- building stronger links with local government, against the background of Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Local Area Agreements etc.
- making the case for the sector regionally – with their Regional Cultural Consortium, Regional Development Agency and other relevant bodies
- brokering partnerships
- providing regional intelligence, identifying opportunities
- gathering, analysing and using data.

3.22 In addition, the residential workshop considered the key success factors and characteristics of effective Hubs. They were seen to include:

- clear evidence of delivery
- a focus and clarity of vision

- being user driven
- team working and leadership
- a mix of skills
- trust, corporate consensus and respect
- sharing risks and responsibilities to deliver outcomes
- a top down commitment to Renaissance
- pragmatism – mechanisms to review the focus and fit of activities
- an ability to devise experiences which can be shared across the Hub
- being a recognised learning organisation.

- 3.23 As can be seen from the above comments, amongst Hubs and Regional Agencies there was a strong desire for MLA to provide leadership, clarity and consistency in the planning and delivery of Renaissance. On the other hand, there was a concern that further Renaissance planning should not become so prescriptive as to preclude Hubs and Regional Agencies from being able to reflect regional differences and specific regional needs in their planning.
- 3.24 There were also calls from amongst Hubs, Regional Agencies and the wider museum community for greater clarity concerning the extent of Hub funding to support the development of their own services, compared with the level of funds used to support activity with non Hub institutions.
- 3.25 Amongst the lead partners of Hubs there were some concerns raised about the extent to which they were having to carry out additional functions and therefore use additional resources of their own in carrying out a leadership role for Renaissance. This included the role of Hub lead partners in Renaissance data collection, advocacy within the wider museum community, liaison with their Regional Agency and attendance at MLA meetings.
- 3.26 Most importantly however there was a recognition amongst Hubs, Regional Agencies and others, that future Renaissance planning needs to be integrated more effectively at a regional level. This will present a more coherent picture of what is being achieved and who does what in delivering the Renaissance vision. Such an approach was seen as key in ensuring a more strategic response, as Renaissance develops and becomes embedded in the coming years.
- 3.27 In addition, there were some other important messages which emerged from the regional fora for the wider museum community about ways of working and advocacy of the programme. **Firstly**, the MDF and the work of Museum Development Officers (MDOs), a number of whom are supported through Renaissance funding, received consistent support from local museums.

- 3.28 The work of MDOs and the use of MDF was seen by many as a practical and visible manifestation of Renaissance which has provided real benefit to non Hub museums through practical advice, access to training and other support. We recognise that the current review of MDF means that at present MLA cannot confirm how it intends to take forward the development of the MDO network. However, we believe the very positive response to the work of MDOs needs to be reflected in the Renaissance planning guidance and, in turn, in regional plans. Also support for the work of the MDO network during the course of this consultation is something MLA will wish to take into account in reaching decisions on the future of the MDO programme.
- 3.29 **Secondly**, during the course of the regional fora there was a strong demand for clearer communication of the Renaissance message at all levels. Many of those who took part in the regional fora had little real awareness of what Renaissance activity was taking place or how it linked together into a coherent picture at a regional and national level.
- 3.30 In particular, there were calls for a clearer understanding about what Renaissance means for non Hub museums and how they can both participate in and benefit from the programme. A number of non Hub museums expressed a willingness to support Renaissance activity and, in doing so, extend the scope and reach of the programme. For example, a number of medium size museums considered they could add value and complement existing Hub programmes by providing access to their collections and/or staff resources.
- 3.31 The point was made on several occasions that considerable expertise exists outside of Hub museums which could be capitalised on through more effective partnership working. And that these arrangements should be based on a partnership of equals. Developing such partnerships was also seen as a practical way of supporting Hubs in meeting overall Renaissance targets. At the present time, non Hub museums were unclear as to how they fit into the Renaissance framework and would welcome clarification of the part they could play, as well as Hubs welcoming guidance on developing such partnerships.
- 3.32 **Lastly**, in the light of the perceived lack of awareness of Renaissance activity amongst local museums we encountered calls for stronger advocacy material to communicate the Renaissance message. Such material was required to:
- demonstrate more clearly the overarching Renaissance vision
 - describe how that vision is being carried forward to reflect different regional needs
 - identify the role which the wider museum community can play in helping deliver Renaissance in each region
 - highlight the benefits for those museums in doing so.
- 3.33 In the following two sections we describe our proposals for addressing the issues identified during the consultation process. We start in next section by setting out our overall recommendations. This is followed in Section Five by those recommendations which are specific to the 2006/08 planning guidelines to be issued shortly by MLA.

SECTION FOUR : OUR OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 In this section we set out our overall recommendations to address the issues which have emerged from the consultation process. We see these as central to the future planning and delivery of Renaissance. In Section Five we identify those recommendations which should feature in the planning guidance to be issued to regions in May.
- 4.2 We have grouped our overall recommendations under the following headings:
- a draft vision for Renaissance
 - three themes to drive the programme
 - a set of guiding principles to underpin the vision and themes
 - an agreed national museum strategy
 - an integrated Renaissance plan in each region
 - outcomes which focus on users
 - a process of organisational and cultural change
 - encouraging experimentation and innovation
 - effective partnership working
 - building on lessons learned and sharing good practice.
- 4.3 We describe each set of recommendations in turn.

A draft vision for Renaissance

- 4.4 In the light of the comments in Section Three, we have developed a draft vision for Renaissance for MLA to consider. This is intended to give the programme a clear sense of purpose and direction and is as follows:

Renaissance in the Region will continue to develop and transform museums and, in doing so, connect more people to the learning, creativity and enjoyment which museums offer.

MLA and its Regional Agencies will do so by:

- developing the network of regional Hubs to be beacons enabling more people to be engaged in, inspired by, enjoy and learn from their services; directly and in partnership with others
- working with regional Hubs to provide practical leadership and support to the overall museum community in each region to help develop their services for the communities they serve

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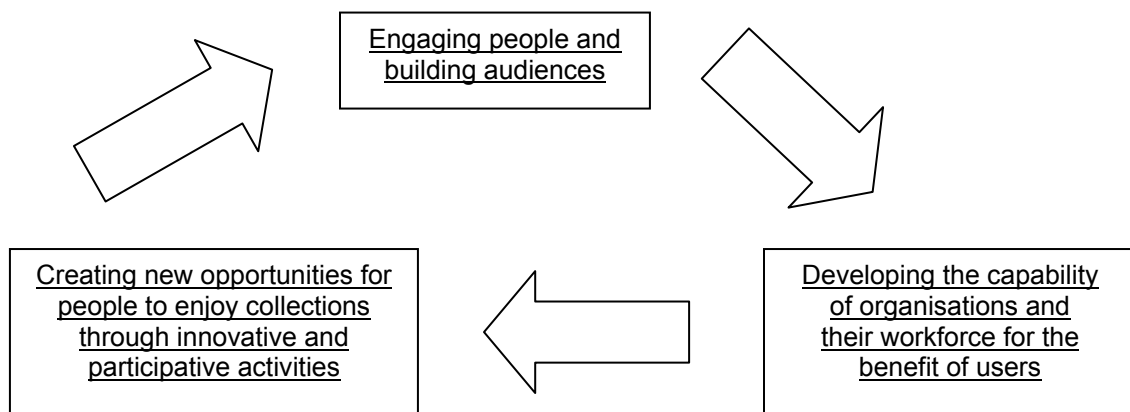
- increasing public understanding of and engagement with museum collections, by opening up collections and the knowledge associated with them
- developing and diversifying museum staff, equipping them with the necessary skills and opportunities to modernise and develop their museums' services
- capitalising on new opportunities to develop the role which museums play in the cultural, social and economic life of an area and, as a result, demonstrate their relevance to local people.

Three themes to drive the programme

4.5 We recommend that the overall Renaissance programme is driven by three themes (which we believe should replace the eight priority areas previously used by Hubs in their business planning – see below):

- engaging people and building audiences (incorporating PA1, PA2, PA5)
- creating new opportunities for people to enjoy collections through innovative and participative activities (incorporating PA3, PA4)
- developing the capability of organisations and their workforce for the benefit of users (incorporating PA6, PA7, PA8).

4.6 These three themes, which we see as the main building blocks in developing regional plans for 2006/08, have an interconnection as set out in the following diagram:



4.7 The priority areas for Hub work programmes were defined in the previous planning guidance as:

PA1 – creating a comprehensive service for schools

PA2 – reaching a wider community

PA3 – developing a programme for the redisplay of permanent collections

PA4 – enhancing the care, management and conservation of collections

PA5 - improving access to knowledge and information

PA6 – developing the workforce

PA7 – reaching and exceeding existing standards

PA8 – ensuring the Hub operates in the most effective and efficient way

4.8 However, the three themes we propose offer a number of distinct advantages over the previous eight priority areas:

- they provide for a more integrated approach and rationale for all Renaissance activity at a regional level (the previous priority areas did not apply to non Hub aspects of plans)
- they are far more clearly targeted on users and outcome focused than the previous priority areas and, as such, are aligned closely with the revised Renaissance vision we propose
- they are clear, easy to understand and recognise – both within the museum world and more widely
- they avoid perpetuating “silo working” between different aspects of a region’s programme
- they emphasise the relationship between collections and public benefit
- they simplify the planning process – some of the previous priority areas covered similar ground and were, as a result, unclear to many involved in the programme or those outside it.

Guiding principles


4.9 In order to underpin the proposed vision and the three themes we have set out above, the following set of guiding principles are proposed. These guiding principles were developed during the course of the consultation process to ensure that the Renaissance programme will be:

- informed by an agreed national strategy for the museum domain as a whole, within which Renaissance is an integral part
- driven by benefits to museum users

- supporting work on the integration of collections and audiences, with each informing the development of the other
- set against a planned process of organisational and cultural change, to bring about modernisation and increase sustainability
- encouraging experimentation and innovation in order to develop excellence
- based on effective partnerships across all aspects of the programme which add real value
- built on what has been achieved and learnt to date, drawing on a clear evidence base
- maximising the impact of resources by encouraging efficiency and effectiveness, leveraging additional funds and joint working
- delivered through one integrated regional plan which:
 - sets out the various elements of the region’s plans and how they link together to form a coherent picture
 - describes the contribution which the programme will make to wider national and regional strategies
 - clarifies roles and responsibilities within the programme
 - can be drawn together into an overall national Renaissance plan.

An agreed national museum strategy

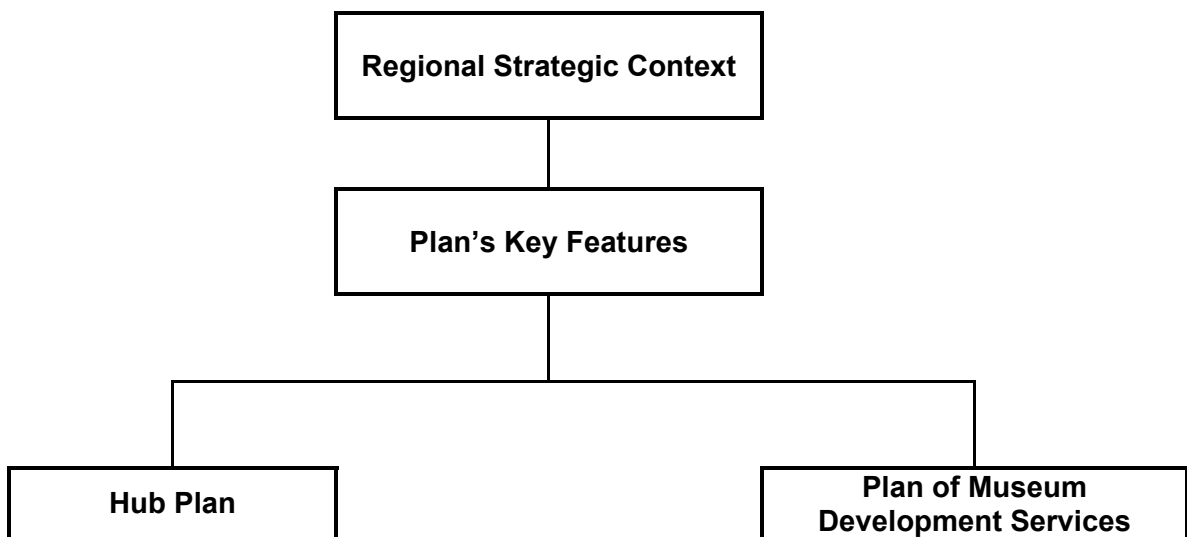
- 4.10 The recent DCMS consultation paper *“Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st Century Life”* begins the process of developing a national strategy for the museum domain. The consultation paper identifies a number of aspects of England’s museums which need to be addressed, all of which are directly relevant to Renaissance:
- the public realm
 - museums, identity and citizenship
 - collections and their uses
 - learning and research
 - careers, training and leadership
 - coherence and advocacy
 - partnerships and measuring value.
- 4.11. Responses to the consultation paper are to be made by the end of June. Thereafter DCMS will prepare a report setting out its strategic intentions, as well as explaining how it will work to tackle the emerging priorities. It will be important that Renaissance is an integral part of the eventual museum strategy which emerges out of the DCMS

consultation paper and that MLA leads the development of the strategy. Whilst that strategy will be too late to be incorporated in the forthcoming planning guidance, it should nevertheless provide a strategic framework for the planning of the programme in future. 

- 4.12 We therefore recommend that the planning guidance should refer to the key features of the DCMS consultation paper, the proposed national museum strategy and set out MLA's views on the priorities for a national museum strategy.
- 4.13. In addition to a national museum strategy, a number of regional museum strategies have been produced or are currently being developed. These need to reflect the delivery of the Renaissance vision. Renaissance plans in each region should reflect the distinctive nature of the region and describe how they fit within their region's wider museum strategy and add value.

An integrated Renaissance plan in each region

- 4.14 We recommend that the various regional elements of Renaissance should be brought together in each region into one coherent plan which demonstrates how the different aspects of the programme complement each other and address the three overall themes we propose in paragraph 4.5 above. The plan will also draw on the work by Hubs on their Audience Development Plans, in particular the strategic analysis, context and service audit which has been undertaken.
- 4.15 We propose that the key elements of each regional plan should comprise:



4.16 We describe the features of each element of the plan in turn:

the regional strategic context

- how the plan fits with and adds value to the regional museum strategy (where there is one) and other main regional strategies – for example the regional cultural strategy and the regional economic strategy
- the programme’s main achievements so far in the region, key issues which remain to be addressed and lessons learned from Renaissance activity to date
- how the new plan will deliver the Renaissance vision, what the region’s overall priorities are and how they will impact on user numbers and the quality of their experience
- how those priorities address the needs and characteristics of their local communities, drawing on a profile of users and non users from the Hub’s Audience Development Plan and wider knowledge of regional audiences
- the extent and nature of consultation within the region in developing the plan and how this has helped shape it, including consultation with key strategic partners such as other regional cultural agencies and Local Education Authorities
- Regional Agency and Hub responsibilities in delivering the plan
- a summary of the regional communications and advocacy strategy to ensure better understanding of what Renaissance means in each region, including how good practice and lessons learned will be shared.

The Plan’s key features

- a concise statement of:
 - what outcomes the plan is seeking to achieve using the ILfA framework (see paragraphs 4.20-4.21 below)
 - the number of users that will benefit and the quality of their engagement with collections (outputs and impact)
 - particular target groups who will be engaged and the rationale for such activity
 - how the plan contributes to the overall DCMS PSA targets
- a summary of the plan’s costs, against the three theme headings
- an index detailing all the programmes covered by the plan
- how the plan addresses organisational and cultural change within the region, with a summary of each Hub museums’ plan for such change (see paragraphs 4.24-4.28 below)

- how experimentation and innovation are reflected in the plan
- a summary of how the overall plan will be monitored and evaluated, by whom, when and how risks will be managed

Hub Plan

- each Hub's work programme describing what they will deliver against Renaissance's three themes in terms of:
 - programme title and reference number
 - lead organisation responsible
 - what is planned (a bullet point summary of aims/activity)
 - what will be achieved (targets)
 - what benefits there will be for users (where this is not already shown in the targets)
 - budget (for each financial year, with non Renaissance funds levered in shown separately and whether such funds are secure/committed, together with their source)
 - how the programme/activity will contribute to the regional outcomes planned for Renaissance

Plan of Museum Development Services

- Regional Agency plans for the use of their Renaissance core funding
 - MDF plans
- 4.17 We also recommend that the planning guidance has a specific requirement for Hubs and Regional Agencies to consult their wider museum community at a very early stage in developing their new Renaissance plans, including plans to work in partnership to deliver specific activities. We comment further on partnership working at paragraphs 4.30 – 4.33.
- 4.18 We are aware that the planning guidance for Regional Agencies for the Museum Development Services plan will not be issued at the same time as the forthcoming overall Renaissance planning guidelines because of the current review of MDF taking place. In Section Five we therefore comment further on the timing of the different elements of the plans and what will be required in the main planning guidance to be issued in May.

Outcomes which focus on users

- 4.19 The consultation exercise has confirmed the need to strengthen the programme's focus on increasing public reach and the benefits for users.

- 4.20 ILfA provides a useful and recognised means of focusing on outcomes and users and measuring the impact of Renaissance activity. We therefore believe it should be embedded in the future planning, delivery and evaluation of the Renaissance programme. Using ILfA's Generic Learning Outcomes will enable regions and MLA to measure users' experience of Renaissance. In addition, the development of Generic Social Outcomes arising from social policy research will assist in measuring the social impact of Renaissance activity in the future.
- 4.21 We therefore recommend that the key features section of each region's plan should clearly demonstrate how services will work with partners and users to develop programmes that reflect their needs. In addition to the use of Generic Learning Outcomes and the forthcoming Generic Social Outcomes, urgent work is needed by MLA to define and agree a robust set of performance indicators to measure the progress of each region's plans. Such indicators are also required to measure the eventual DCMS PSA targets as they apply to Renaissance.
- 4.22 We endorse MLA's plan to develop an agreed set of performance indicators which can be reflected in the regional plans. We recommend the performance indicators:
- focus on users to demonstrate public benefit, linking to the Generic Learning Outcomes and the forthcoming Generic Social Outcomes (see below). This should also illustrate how collections provide public benefit by making explicit links to curatorial functions
 - be applied across all aspects of the Renaissance programme
 - link to the shared priorities agreed by Central and Local Government and are harmonised with existing performance measurement tools, for example Best Value Performance Indicators and those used for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment of local authorities
 - demonstrate value for money and wider cultural and economic impact expressed as Generic Learning Outcomes and, in time, Generic Social Outcomes in order to measure impact against:
 - civic renewal
 - healthy communities
 - economic regeneration
 - social capital
 - learning
 - cultural diversity.
- 4.23 We recognise that the Generic Social Outcomes referred to above will not be available in time to be included in the May planning guidance or for regions to reflect them in their draft plans by September. However, we recommend that the guidance refers to their development and proposes that they are piloted by Hubs as soon as they are available.

Organisational and cultural change

- 4.24 The need to modernise the museum domain through a planned process of organisational and cultural change was recognised during the consultation process as a key issue to be addressed.
- 4.25 By using ILfA and placing learning at the centre of a museum's work, organisations will be able to reflect on their current practices, understand their organisational development needs and plan for these. Through this process they will be able to transform themselves, based around a vision for museums in the twenty first century in which:
- collections are prized and understood as a unique legacy to be developed, challenged and celebrated
 - audiences and collections are of equal importance, where each reflects and is enriched by the other
 - communication is based on a shared dialogue where users are encouraged to bring their own experience and meanings to objects and the selection of resources
 - knowledge and expertise is a shared resource, with specialist staff becoming active facilitators for others to learn from, discover and research; working with and for the community
 - front line staff actively engage users in learning
 - users are at the centre of all the museum does
 - museums are learning organisations, where staff are continuously developing themselves and their practice to support a changing context to their work
 - partnership working is a key to the development of services with and for users.
- 4.26 The current development by MLA of an organisational change framework linked to ILfA will provide relevant and useful resources for Hub museums and Regional Agencies.
- 4.27 We therefore recommend that the planning guidance requires Hubs and other recipients of Renaissance funding to use ILfA as a planning model to support organisational and cultural change. In addition we propose that:
- as part of each region's overall plan, all Hub museums should produce a clear plan for organisational change and development within their service which identifies how barriers will be overcome
 - each Hub should summarise their organisational and workforce development priorities in order to demonstrate:

- how learning from Renaissance programmes will be more broadly embedded to benefit staff and volunteers, working within Hub museums
 - how the new skills sets highlighted by Renaissance and national frameworks such as ILfA will be developed across the staff and volunteer groups including leadership development at senior and middle management levels
 - what they will be doing to diversify their workforce (this may include Positive Action Traineeships and other programmes or approaches that will extend these)
 - the steps they will take to build their effectiveness as learning organisations
 - how they will contribute to the development of the wider workforce as a result of Renaissance funding
- within each region’s plan, the Regional Agency should set out a statement of how it and the Hub will disseminate and apply the Hub’s experience of organisational and cultural change more widely across their regional museum community

4.28 We also recommend that outside of the forthcoming planning guidance:

- ILfA should be developed by MLA so that it can be used as the basis for peer reviews or other assessment frameworks. (Some workshop training on how the ILfA principles can be applied to Renaissance may need to be offered centrally.)
- MLA should undertake research to determine successful examples of organisational and cultural change in other sectors (for example the NHS) from which lessons can be learned and applied.

Encouraging experimentation and innovation

4.29 The opportunity to try out new approaches to delivering services and support innovative ways of working is seen to be an important – and welcome – feature of Renaissance. This could include new partnerships with non Hub museums and, indeed, with organisations outside the museum domain. In order to promote experimentation and innovation we recommend that each region’s plan describes the precise ways in which they are innovating and taking risks through their programmes.

Effective partnership working

4.30 Effective partnership working is central to ILfA and lies at the heart of the Renaissance programme. It underpins its delivery by:

- increasing the range and quality of opportunities for museum users
- adding value to and extending the reach of programmes
- expanding opportunities for staff to learn through working with organisations with different skills and experience
- raising awareness of the contribution that museums make to broader agendas such as learning, social cohesion, regeneration etc.

- 4.31 Partnership working takes many forms: between individual members of a Hub, between Hubs and Regional Agencies, between national and regional museums, between those with Designated Collections and other museums, between Hubs, MDOs and the wider museum community, with organisations from outside the sector, and between MLA and those delivering Renaissance at a regional and local level.
- 4.32 The Renaissance programme already contains examples of successful partnership working. However, during the consultation process a number of Hubs, Regional Agencies and members of the wider museum community considered that further guidance would be useful on developing and sustaining effective partnerships.
- 4.33 The ILfA framework provides useful messages and resources to support building and maintaining effective partnerships¹ and we recommend that this is referred to in the planning guidance. In addition we understand that the Prince's Trust has recently undertaken work on partnership development, producing a practical guide to building and maintaining effective partnerships. Therefore the outcomes from this work should also be included in the planning guidance as an example of good practice.

Building on lessons learned and sharing good practice

- 4.34 The Renaissance programme has achieved much in its first years with a significant number of quantifiable achievements. However, more can now be done to share such achievements across regions and apply the learning more widely. Sharing good practice should be recognised as something that happens during an activity, not just afterwards; and that it happens face-to-face as well as through the production of written case studies and reports.
- 4.35 In addition, we have already described at paragraph 4.22 an approach to developing an agreed set of nationally applied performance indicators in order to provide a clear evidence base against which to measure the performance of the Renaissance programme.
- 4.36 In order to share good practice and lessons learned we recommend that:
- each region's plan contains a self assessment of their key achievements and lessons learned from their Renaissance activity to date; and how they will apply that learning in the future within the Renaissance programmes and more widely. This self assessment would be part of the regional strategic context section of each region's plan (see paragraph 4.16)
 - regional plans set out their approach to sharing good practice (as part of the regional strategic context)
 - MLA develop further its database of case study material to provide an ongoing source of good practice material for dissemination and advocacy purposes. Such a database could be placed and updated on MLA's website, as well as those of relevant Hubs and Regional Agencies

¹ http://www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk/go_further/build_partnerships

- greater emphasis is given at national Renaissance workshops and gatherings – both with Hubs and Regional Agencies – to the sharing of good practice, with regions invited to share examples of innovative approaches and new thinking around specific issues (for example outreach activity or work to engage the wider museum world in Renaissance programmes) and also what has not worked and why. A rolling programme of such issues could be a feature of future sessions, developing alternative approaches to learning and sharing, which in themselves could become good practice
- work takes place by MLA to develop an agreed set of performance indicators to provide an effective evidence base to measure Renaissance’s achievements and progress (as proposed at paragraph 4.22).

4.37 We now turn in the following section to those aspects of our recommendations which should feature in the May planning guidance.

SECTION FIVE : RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MAY PLANNING GUIDANCE

- 5.1 We recognise that not all of our recommendations described in the preceding section can be reflected fully in the forthcoming planning guidance for Renaissance. Therefore in this section we identify those recommendations which we believe should feature specifically in the May planning guidance.
- 5.2 We propose that the key features of the May planning guidance should incorporate:
- **an updated Renaissance vision** (paragraph 4.4) – we see this as a fundamental starting point for the planning guidance
 - an explanation and rationale for **the three themes** to drive the Renaissance programme in each region (paragraphs 4.5 – 4.8)
 - **the guiding principles** which underpin the vision and themes (paragraph 4.9)
 - a reference to **the DCMS consultation paper** and an explanation of MLA's views on the priorities for a national museum strategy (paragraphs 4.10 – 4.13)
 - an explanation of the **main elements of each region's Renaissance plan** (paragraph 4.14 – 4.18). We comment further on this in paragraphs 5.3 – 5.5 below
 - a clear statement that **the principles of the ILfA framework** should be embedded in regions' planning, delivery and evaluation of the programme (paragraphs 4.19 - 4.20)
 - an explanation of the process to develop **new performance indicators** for the programme and its timing, together with a description of the intended DCMS PSA targets when they are agreed (paragraphs 4.21 – 4.22). We realise, of course, that the intended Generic Social Outcomes (described in paragraphs 4.22 – 4.23) will not be available in time for inclusion in the planning guidance. However, we recommend the guidance includes a reference to them being piloted by Hubs when they become available
 - a firm reference to the importance of plans **addressing organisational and cultural change** and the use of ILfA as a tool to do so (paragraphs 4.24 – 4.27). We propose that the key features of each region's plans describe how they address this issue (paragraph 4.16). The other recommendations we make concerning organisational and cultural change (paragraph 4.28) are for MLA to consider outside of the May planning guidance
 - a requirement for regions to describe how they will support **experimentation and innovative approaches** (paragraph 4.29), in the key features of their plans
 - guidance to regions on **partnership working**, incorporating guidance from the report 'The Prince's Trust: Making Partnerships Work', and the messages about effective partnerships in the ILfA framework (paragraphs 4.30 – 4.33)

- how regions will build on **lessons learned and share good practice** (paragraphs 4.34 - 4.36). We have also proposed that MLA develop further its database of case study material and give increased attention to the sharing of good practice and lessons learned at future Renaissance meetings. Our recommendations on these points (paragraph 4.36) are for MLA to consider outside the May planning guidance.
- 5.3 The heart of the overall planning guidance is the part concerned with the main elements of each region's plan. We have described at paragraphs 4.15 - 4.16 what we see those key elements as being. The guidance needs to recognise that the draft plans being developed by regions for September will not include the plans for wider Museum Development Services.
- 5.4 However, the guidance should make it clear that this aspect of the plan should be incorporated in each region's overall plan later in the year, ready for its implementation from April 2006. The guidance should also describe how the other parts of the regional plan we propose – the regional strategic context, the plan's key features and the Hub plan – are expected to be developed jointly by the Regional Agency and the Hub.
- 5.5 We recommend that the guidance allows for maximum regional discretion in the extent to which they allocate Renaissance resources between the three theme areas. The key will be for each region to demonstrate how the plans address the respective needs of their region and are built on firm evidence of users and audiences, together with wide ranging consultation within their region. There are however, two specific areas where we believe the planning guidance should be more prescriptive:
- the balance between the funds which Hubs use to deliver activities within their own services and those which the Hub use for wider partnership working with non Hub institutions. We recommend that, as a guide, Hubs should aim for 75% of their overall budget being focussed on developing their own services and 25% on developing activity with other organisations outside of the immediate Hub partnership
 - the amount of funds which Hubs allocate from their overall budget to support lead partners in carrying out their additional responsibilities and functions. We recommend that no more than £50,000 per year should be allocated from overall Hub budgets to support such lead partner activity.

SECTION SIX : CONCLUDING COMMENTS

- 6.1 The review and consultation has highlighted the very real achievements of Renaissance in its first two years of operational activity and these are described in this report. The consultation has also identified a number of issues which, in the light of the direct experience of those involved in the programme, should be addressed in the context of the 2006/08 Renaissance planning guidelines.
- 6.2 We believe it is important that those planning guidelines build on the best of the programme's activity to date and also reflect the broad consensus we found concerning the issues set out in this report. We submit our report and recommendations to MLA accordingly.