**CSIT**

A toolkit to help the culture, sport, green space & tourism sectors to

***re-group, survive & re-grow the services for the community***

Document 3.6

**Self-Assessment of Efficiency & Value for Money**

**Assessing & understanding your organisation’s, or partnership’s,**

**current strengths & areas for improvement**

***“He who asks the questions cannot avoid the answers”***

A Cameroon proverb!

Version 2, July 2011

**Introduction**

The *Red* *Thread* Self-Assessment tools enable you to focus on one or more *threads* running throughout the CSIT Benchmark, which represent vital subjects for the culture, sport, green space & tourism sectors. The *threads* are based on the *Vision* for *Excellence* shown in Document Two and contain ‘key features’ from the CSIT[[1]](#footnote-1) Benchmark.

**What are you working towards by using this Efficiency & Value for Money Red Thread?**

*Excellent organisations understand what ‘value’ means and are committed to enhancing ‘value for money’ through using techniques to diagnose & reduce non-value adding activity & waste, sharing resources with partners, exploring creative opportunities for funding, developing opportunities to win strategic commissions and making optimum use of assets.*

**Self-Assessment method**

The ‘Efficiency & Value for Money’ Self-Assessment can be conducted by a single organisation or an existing partnership (which will help to explore the opportunities arising from collaborative working). The organisation or partnership should establish a cross-functional Self-Assessment Team, responsible for reaching consensus on current strengths & areas for improvement and planning improvement projects. This should take approximately one day.

The following process is recommended (adjust this to suit your specific needs & style – it is your Self-Assessment!):

1. Take one section at a time (e.g. High-level leadership & strategy’, etc)
2. Individually (i.e. each Self-Assessment Team member by themselves) consider the ‘key features’ shown on the Self-Assessment Questionnaire, reading the words carefully, and decide which of the following statements best reflects the organisation or partnership’s current progress for each key ‘feature’:

**a = Not yet**

**b = We are in the early stages of developing this**

**c = We partly do this**

**d = We do all of this, most of the time**

**e = We have been doing all of this for a few years - we have assessed & refined our behaviour in this area**

Shade or tick the appropriate box.

1. When everyone has completed this for the section, discuss your perceptions and reach a team consensus on ratings, strengths & areas for improvement (focus the discussions on the disparities)
2. Move on to the next section and repeat the process
3. When you have completed this, review your Self-Assessment and discuss & agree the following:

**What are the most significant areas for improvement?**

**What themes run through your Self-Assessment (‘golden threads’ & ‘fault lines’)?**

**What are the few underlying causes of most of the areas for improvement?**

**Health Warning!**

**Remember that self-assessment is not a competition, a points-scoring exercise, a ‘blame game’ or a way to improve your image; it is merely an exercise to help you to agree priorities for improvement.**

**Self-Assessment Questionnaire**

| Ref | Key Feature | Tick the appropriate box |
| --- | --- | --- |
| High level leadership & strategy |
| 1 | Leaders develop & maintain a high-level strategic commitment to improving efficiency & value for money, including social entrepreneurialism | a | b | c | d | e |
| 2 | Strategy includes outcomes & performance targets relating to value for money & efficiency | a | b | c | d | e |
| 3 | The organisation establishes the capabilities (knowledge, competencies & capacity) required to achieve efficiency & value for money, including those relating to process improvement techniques, collaborative working, strategic commissioning & management options | a | b | c | d | e |
| 4 | Leaders collaborate across the organisation and with partners (including commercial organisations), thinking & working outside of traditional organisational boundaries to improve efficiency & value for money | a | b | c | d | e |
| 5 | Leaders are actively involved in key strategic partnerships with commissioning responsibility (e.g. health, adult social care & children’s services) and proactively develop these relationships | a | b | c | d | e |
| 6 | Leaders build the capacity within the commercial sector and civil society to develop the opportunities for collaborative delivery models for the services  | a | b | c | d | e |
| 7 | Leaders actively investigate innovative organisational & partnership models & working methodologies to enhance efficiency & value for money  | a | b | c | d | e |
| 8 | Leaders proactively identify the need for major change to improve efficiency & value for money and act quickly & effectively to take opportunities  | a | b | c | d | e |
| 9 | Leaders establish ways of assessing, challenging & improving efficiency & value for money and are personally involved in this activity | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths |
| Areas for Improvement |
| **Performance measurement & improvement for value for money & efficiency** |
| 10 | The organisation’s balanced set of performance measures includes those which measure & predict value for money and monitor operational efficiency (in line with strategy – see 2) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 11 | Data relating to these performance measures is captured on time at regular intervals | a | b | c | d | e |
| 12 | The data is collated to show historical performance trends & performance against internal targets in an easy-to-understand way | a | b | c | d | e |
| 13 | The organisation conducts rigorous & regular performance benchmarking exercises relating to efficiency & value for money | a | b | c | d | e |
| 14 | This information is communicated widely throughout the organisation and with partners | a | b | c | d | e |
| 15 | The organisation holds regular performance reviews to consider the performance trends and plan improvement activity | a | b | c | d | e |
| 16  | Following the reviews, actions are agreed to address areas for improvement proportionate to the importance of targets, extent of under-performance, timescales & resource requirements | a | b | c | d | e |
| 17 | Performance reports are provided to senior leaders (e.g. board members, trustees & elected members), managers, staff & partners to communicate progress and describe actions to be taken to address under-performance | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths |
| Areas for Improvement |
| **Financial management, income & investment** |
| 18 | The organisation’s financial resources, including revenue & capital, are allocated & planned to support achievement of strategy | a | b | c | d | e |
| 19 | Financial risks are identified and contingency plans established | a | b | c | d | e |
| 20 | Systems for monitoring financial performance provide accurate and timely information | a | b | c | d | e |
| 21 | There is flexibility in financial plans to allow people to be innovative and take advantage of opportunities to improve & develop the service | a | b | c | d | e |
| 22 | The organisation establish prices for the services in line with service outcomes and the need to generate income where this is possible without adversely affecting accessibility | a | b | c | d | e |
| 23 | The organisation proactively explores & secures external investment into the culture, sport, green space & tourism services (including the services provided by other delivery agents & consortia) to help achieve strategic outcomes | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths |
| Areas for Improvement |
| Asset management |
| 24 | The organisation reviews & takes advantage of joint facilities and investigates all opportunities to co-locate services in other buildings (integrated leisure & wellbeing centres) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 25 | The organisation uses its facilities & equipment creatively to ensure they are used to capacity and meet customer needs & expectations, including joint use with partners | a | b | c | d | e |
| 26 | The organisation explores & takes advantage of opportunities for transferring assets to civil society bodies | a | b | c | d | e |
| 27 | The organisation explores all opportunities for making available spare capacity in its offices to other parts of the organisation, partners or other parties through commercial arrangements | a | b | c | d | e |
| 28 | The organisation has a planned programme of preventative maintenance, refurbishment & renewal which maximises the performance of the assets | a | b | c | d | e |
| 29 | The organisation procures goods, utilities & maintenance services in an efficient way, develops long-term procurement partnerships with suppliers and works in partnership with other organisations to obtain improved purchasing agreements | a | b | c | d | e |
| 30 | All opportunities to rationalise service points and reduce overall asset costs are considered and either discounted or taken | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths |
| Areas for Improvement |
| **Process management & improvement** |
| 31 | People develop a clear insight to the concepts of ‘waste’ and ‘non-value adding activity’, a commitment to identify reducing both and an understanding of these improvement techniques | a | b | c | d | e |
| 32 | Leaders identify a framework of ‘end-to-end core processes’ (i.e. the sequence of steps which cut across departments and partner operations and which finish by directly affecting the service provided to the end customer) and develop a system for managing these processes to enhance efficiency (i.e. remove non-value adding activity) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 33 | The organisation designs & defines core processes & support processes (documenting these where necessary) to achieve optimum efficiency | a | b | c | d | e |
| 34 | The organisation regularly reviews & improves processes to minimise non-value adding activity, using measurement & learning activities (including learning from other organisations within & outside of the sector) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 35 | Staff & partners are engaged in process improvement activity and their innovation & knowledge are captured and used | a | b | c | d | e |
| 36 | Customer feedback is used to improved processes | a | b | c | d | e |
| 37 | The organisation uses continuous improvement techniques to reduce waste within all work functions | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths |
| Areas for Improvement |
| **Shared functions & management** |
| 38 | Leaders proactively develop collaborations to explore opportunities for shared support functions | a | b | c | d | e |
| 39 | Leaders proactively develop collaborations to explore opportunities for shared management | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths |
| Areas for Improvement |
| **Procuring formal delivery partners & developing the partnerships** |
| 40 | Leaders conduct cyclical rigorous evaluation of the options for delivering the services through formal collaboration with commercial organisations, public sector bodies, existing & new non-profit distributing organisations & civil society organisations, and identify the options which will achieve desired outcomes in the most effective, efficient & economic way | a | b | c | d | e |
| 41 | Leaders proactively investigate collaborative approaches to obtaining & managing formal delivery partnerships (e.g. county-wide leisure management contract, etc) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 42 | The organisation or partnership implements the identified options using rigorous procurement procedures and formal contracts, both of which support the identified outcomes and the goal of continuous value improvement | a | b | c | d | e |
| 43 | The organisation develops true *synergy* (i.e. shared commitment, passion, ideas & action to achieve for the same goals) and joint continuous value improvement with delivery partners and resolve any conflicts & tensions  | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths |
| Areas for Improvement |
| **Strategic commissioning**  |
| 44 | The organisation works with partners to present an integrated & unified presence to potential commissioners of the services and builds relevant relationships | a | b | c | d | e |
| 45 | The organisation maps commissioning opportunities available, takes steps to fully understand the needs of communities and the commissioning bodies and is able to adapt services to meet these needs | a | b | c | d | e |
| 46 | Competency & knowledge are developed in the organisation to support commissioning, including influencing & advocacy skills | a | b | c | d | e |
| 47 | An evidence base is built up to demonstrate the potential contribution the services can make to specific outcomes | a | b | c | d | e |
| 48 | Arrangements are in place to manage the performance of commissioned contracts  | a | b | c | d | e |
| 49 | The organisation takes steps to achieve & demonstrate value for money, compliance with appropriate legal requirements and appropriate standards where required | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths |
| Areas for Improvement |
| Results |
| To what extent have we been effective in achieving efficiency & value for money (what do the results tell us?) |
| Strengths |

What are the most significant areas for improvement (bearing in mind what is required to survive & thrive in the future)?

What themes run though your Self-Assessment results (‘golden threads’ & ‘fault lines’)?

What are the few underlying causes of the areas for improvement?

1. This version of CSIT has been designed and developed in association with Steve Wood steve-wood@talktalk.net [↑](#footnote-ref-1)