**CSIT**

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

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

Document 3.5:

**Self-Assessment of**

**‘Community & Civil Society at the Heart’**

**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 ‘Community & Civil Society at the Heart’ Red Thread?**

*Excellent organisations understand & respond to the needs & expectations of all parts of the community, put the community at the heart of the service, build capacity within civil society organisations and deliver the services in partnership with the community bodies & volunteers.*

**Self-Assessment method**

The ‘Community & Civil Society at the Heart’ 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’, 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.**

| Ref | Key Feature | Tick the appropriate box |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **High-level leadership** |
| 1 | Leadership understand that meeting the needs of the community is the reason for the existence of the service and communicate this with all staff & partners | a | b | c | d | e |
| 2 | Leaders understand how the services could benefit the community (the outcomes) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 3 | Leaders understand that the service will not achieve the required outcomes if customers are not (at least) satisfied with service delivery, and communicate this with staff & partners | a | b | c | d | e |
| 4 | Leaders create & communicate a clear & compelling vision on behalf of the community | a | b | c | d | e |
| 5 | Leaders recognise, endorse & promote the distinctive value of community bodies & volunteers | a | b | c | d | e |
| 6 | Leaders develop the capacity, mind-set & skills to play the roles of honest broker, facilitator, coach, enabler, advisor & challenger of civil society organisations & consortia | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths |
| Areas for Improvement |
| **Putting the needs & expectations of the community at the heart of the services** |
| 7 | Leaders understand & anticipate the present & future needs of the different parts of the community | a | b | c | d | e |
| 8 | People, groups & businesses from all parts of the community are given regular opportunities to express their needs & expectations and input views about the direction of the services & how they might be improved | a | b | c | d | e |
| 9 | The team works with other parts of the organisation and public, commercial & civil society partners to develop a coherent, integrated approach to consulting the community, which avoids duplication & over-consultation | a | b | c | d | e |
| 10 | The organisation develops skills & innovative approaches to enable it to obtain views & ideas from different parts of the community | a | b | c | d | e |
| 11 | The organisation develops the community’s capacity to influence strategy & service development | a | b | c | d | e |
| 12 | Feedback is given to those consulted, both on the results of the consultation and on the actions that were or were not taken | a | b | c | d | e |
| 13 | Strategy is based on the identified the needs & expectations of the community | a | b | c | d | e |
| 14 | Long-term development plans for facilities & public green space are created based on the identified needs & expectations of the community | a | b | c | d | e |
| 15 | The organisation or partnership reviews, develops & extends the service offer in a cyclical manner, based on the needs & interests of the different parts of the community | a | b | c | d | e |
| 16 | The organisation or partnership plans, implements & reviews methods of engaging the community in the services, based on an understanding of what will engage the different parts of the community | a | b | c | d | e |
| 17 | Service delivery is improved based on customer expectations & perceptions of the service | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths |
| Areas for Improvement |
| **Building capacity within civil society to develop & deliver the services** |
| 18 | Leaders establish & build capacity within civil society organisations of all sizes, consortia & volunteers to develop & deliver the services  | a | b | c | d | e |
| 19 | The organisation develops & maintains understanding of the role & capabilities of civil society organisations & volunteers  | a | b | c | d | e |
| 20 | The organisation works to engage civil society organisations in the scope of strategy & the process of developing strategy (making it their strategy) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 21 | The organisation supports, grows & sustains volunteering in culture, sport, green space & tourism (including encouraging & enabling its own staff to volunteer) | a | b | c | d | e |
| 22 | The organisation makes the best use of volunteers in carrying out its functions and applies its people management approaches to the volunteers where appropriate | a | b | c | d | e |
| 23 | The organisation helps civil society organisations of all sizes to benefit from strategic commissioning and other investment opportunities | a | b | c | d | e |
| 24 | The organisation takes opportunities to transfer assets to civil society organisations where this helps to achieve outcomes | a | b | c | d | e |
| 25 | The organisation builds support & influence throughout the community & local businesses  | a | b | c | d | e |
| 26 | The organisation supports civil society organisations to communicate & market culture, sport, green space & tourism services | a | b | c | d | e |
| 27 | The organisation develops the capability of civil society organisations & volunteers to deliver culture & sport services to a standard which meets & exceeds customer expectations | a | b | c | d | e |
| Strengths |
| Areas for Improvement |
| **Developing partnership working with civil society organisations to develop & deliver joined-up services** |
| 28 | The organisation proactively seeks out strategic, development & delivery partners from civil society to help achieve outcomes  | a | b | c | d | e |
| 29 | The organisation develops structured partnerships & consortia, involving civil society organisations, to provide a collaborative approach to service provision & obtaining, allocating & sharing resources in line with strategic outcomes | a | b | c | d | e |
| 30 | The organisation develops joint services with civil society organisations, and seeks to create joined-up culture & sport offer to the community | a | b | c | d | e |
| 31 | The organisation works with partners from civil society organisations to communicate & market the services in a joined-up way | a | b | c | d | e |
| 32 | Leaders view the wider organisation and its partnerships through the eyes of the community and act on this to develop joined-up, seamless & easy-to-use services | a | b | c | d | e |
| 33 | Leaders identify & respond to the risks involved in collaborating with civil society organisations to develop & deliver the services | a | b | c | d | e |
| **Strengths** |
| **Areas for Improvement** |
| **Results** |
| To what extent have we been effective in meeting the needs of the community (what do the results tell us?)To what extent have we increased volunteering in providing culture, sport, green space & tourism services? (what do the results tell us?To what extent have we increased the involvement of civil society organisations in providing culture, sport, green space & tourism services? (what do the results tell us?) |
| **Strengths** |
| **Areas for Improvement** |

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)