

Criteria for allocating national funding

Purpose of report

For reference.

Summary

This report provides information on the methodology and data sets used by the Government and national arms-length bodies to allocate funding to councils.

Is this report confidential? Yes No

Recommendation/s

Members are asked to comment on the questions posed in 32-33.

Action/s

Officers to feed in the Board views to existing LGA workstreams on data and funding simplification as directed.

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Background

1. Following a discussion at the CTS Board on funding, members asked officers to bring a paper to members with details of the datasets Sport England, Arts Council England and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) use to allocate or prioritise funding to places.
2. This paper sets out how current funding is being allocated and prioritised.

Funding for culture

Arts Council England

3. Arts Council England's (ACE) Delivery Plan sets out a three-pronged approach to working in place:
 - 3.1. a universal offer that is accessible to all parts of the country
 - 3.2. continued work in places where joint investment in culture and opportunity to work with our partners and other arm's length bodies across heritage, sport, film, tourism and civil society are relatively high
 - 3.3. priority places in which cultural engagement and ACE current investment are too low, and where, as a result, opportunities for creative and cultural engagement are underdeveloped.

Priority Places

4. [Fifty-four places across England](#) have been selected as priority places. They will remain their priority places for the duration of the Delivery Plan 2021-24. ACE will study local strategic plans and consult with key stakeholders in each place, including communities, local authorities, and cultural organisations, to understand their aspirations and how they connect with the Delivery Plan for 2021-24.
5. Once ACE has worked with priority places to identify shared aspirations, they will support places to achieve them by increasing investment and allocation of staff resource. There is no specific budget or fund allocated to priority places, so this will be achieved by increasing the amount of funding going into them from existing funds.
6. In particular, ACE would expect priority places to benefit from the new Place Partnership Fund. ACE will also seek opportunities to invest in new National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) in priority places, increase investment in existing NPOs in priority places and incentivise other NPOs to undertake more activity in priority places.
7. Priority places have been identified at local authority district level.

8. Each of the five Arts Council areas identified up to 15 priority places.
9. Priority places have been selected by comparison with other places in their area [broadly analogous to regions], not other places nationally.
10. Within each area every local authority was given a score for **need** and **opportunity**. Need was defined by engagement and investment levels, plus other data sources, and opportunity (the capacity and ambition at this moment in time to increase engagement) was defined by a scored set of prompts.

11. Need

- 11.1. Levels of social and financial deprivation
- 11.2. Levels of engagement with art and culture
- 11.3. How much ACE has already funded
- 11.4. Vulnerability to COVID-19
- 11.5. Proportion of children eligible for free school meals
- 11.6. Proportion of children with special educational needs
- 11.7. Census data on ethnicity and disability

12. Opportunity

- 12.1. Ambition: is there a local cultural strategy? Were local communities asked about it? Are local leaders on board?
- 12.2. Capacity: what local arts and culture can the community build on? Are there other partners that could get involved? Lots of Artsmark schools?
- 12.3. Timing: is something special on the horizon? Is there some urgency or need that is timebound?

13. Places that scored highly for both need and opportunity went forward to a balancing process to ensure that the final list of priority places for each area included places within each sub region, and different types of places such as urban and rural. In addition, places in which need for increased opportunities for children and young people was particularly high, and places that would help ACE to achieve their equality objectives were also taken into account.

Levelling Up for Culture Places

14. Following the publication of the Priority Places list, ACE worked with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to identify an expanded list of 109 local authority areas, all outside of Greater London, which will be the focus for additional Arts Council England engagement and investment. These are called the **Levelling Up for Culture Places**. This approach has been agreed between the Arts Council and DCMS. However, they do not correspond directly to the Levelling Up Fund priority places and the methodology used for each fund is different.

15. Levelling Up for Culture Places have been identified using the same method developed to identify the Priority Places. The 109 Levelling Up for Culture Places include:

- 15.1. The 53 local authority areas that are within the 49 existing Priority Places that are outside of London
 - 15.2. A further 56 local authority areas outside of London that have the highest need
16. In order to identify the places with the highest need, ACE adapted the methodology used to measure need when identifying Priority Places. They used data relating to Arts Council investment, public engagement with culture and creativity, deprivation, the Covid-19 pandemic, children and young people, ethnicity, and disability. The data related to Arts Council investment and public engagement in culture and creativity were weighted to ensure they had the most influence on overall scoring.
17. In order to adapt the methodology to the specific task of identifying Levelling Up for Culture Places nationally ACE:
- 17.1. compared places nationally rather than within each of the ACE Areas
 - 17.2. excluded places in London before calculating comparative scores
 - 17.3. considered individual local authorities only (so whilst Tees Valley Combined Authority is one Priority Place, its individual local authorities are five Levelling Up for Culture Places)
 - 17.4. used only 'need' scores rather than 'need' and 'opportunity' scores

Funding for sport

Sport England

18. Each year Sport England (SE) invests more than £250 million of National Lottery and public money to help people play sport and take part in physical activity.
19. Sport England's [Uniting the Movement](#) strategy has a strong focus on tackling inequalities and levelling up, and as a result of this it is disproportionately investing more in the people and places that need more support.
20. Specifically, SE is focusing on addressing inequalities and supporting people who have poorer health outcomes and lower activity levels.
21. The following table shows the different funding opportunities available and their criteria for prioritising funding.

Name of Sport England fund	Objectives	Total Funds available	Prioritisation criteria
Active Together Fund	Helps local sports clubs, not for profit, Town or parish councils delivering activity within their community and education establishments (that provide access for their whole community), to set up and run crowdfunding campaigns to help sustain themselves through COVID-19 crisis and return to play.	£7.5m (£10,000 in match funding for Crowdfunder projects)	<p>Activity that is delivered in areas experiencing social and economic deprivation, including rural communities</p> <p>Activity focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ disabled people ○ lower socio-economic groups, ○ Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups ○ Young people aged 16-24 ○ Older people aged 70+ <p>Projects not meeting these priorities will still be funded but the level of match funding offered may be reduced.</p>
Queen's Platinum Jubilee Activity Fund	Supports not for profit, community and local authority bodies (town, parish and community council) sport and physical activity based projects that are working with people in disadvantaged communities to bring people together and tackle inequalities and help people be active.	£5m (awards between £300 - £10,000)	People living in areas defined by Indices of Multiple Deprivation 1-3
Places and Spaces Fund (part of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games package)	A facility-based development programme that helps town and parish councils community sport and physical activity groups who are looking to create, improve or change	£7.5m (£10,000 in match funding for	<p>Activity is delivered in areas experiencing social and economic deprivation, including rural communities</p> <p>Activity focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ disabled people

	a space or place that will provide opportunities for people to be more active in their local community.	Crowdfunder projects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ lower socio-economic groups, ○ Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups ○ Young people aged 16-24 ○ Older people aged 70+ <p>Projects not meeting these priorities will still be funded but the level of match funding offered may be reduced.</p> <p>Bids from areas experiencing high levels of deprivation, impact of coronavirus, loss capability and capacity in community organisations.</p> <p>Bids demonstrating celebration of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, providing information on how the place or space is going to provide a legacy and unite your community and work in collaboration with other partners.</p> <p>Appropriate ownership of the facility or space is a requirement.</p>
Together Fund (TF)	<p>TF is a continuation of the Tackling Inequalities Fund SE up to help the sport and physical activity sector through the pandemic.</p> <p>Based on SE insight TF supports community organisations working with groups that are being disproportionately affected by COVID-19 to be physically active.</p>	£20m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lower socio-economic groups ● Culturally diverse communities ● Disabled people ● People with long-term health conditions.

<p>Strategic Facilities Fund (This fund is not via an application process. Sport England works with local authorities and partners to align capital investment with SE strategic objectives)</p>	<p>Supports local authorities to invest strategically in sport and physical activity to deliver outcomes essential to local communities. Doesn't cover the needs of an individual building or sport.</p>		<p>Allocations are based on locally tailored evidence of need and demand.</p>
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DCMS/LTA Park Tennis Court Funding

22. The Government has invested £22m and the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) has invested a further £8.5 to create a £30.5 million package to refurbish 4,500 public tennis courts in deprived parts of the UK. The ambition is to ensure playable, affordable, accessible facilities across the entire parks tennis landscape and invest in tennis as a sport.
23. Prioritisation is being given to public park tennis courts in poor or unplayable condition and venues that can provide the largest opportunities to play tennis whilst also achieving coverage across a local authority area.
24. The funding is available for existing courts located in parks that have a tarmac surface and do not have a gate access system. The LTA is using a level of prioritisation based on an ability to complete all renovations and installations within the project timeframe of April 2022 - April 2024, prioritisation is also being given to venues which can achieve maximum participation return
25. The LTA used specific criteria to identify which parks are appropriate for gate access technology, this included identifying potential participant levels based on population data, to ascertain which sites can drive the highest level of participation and which courts are in a condition justifying investment in renovation. Evidence on this latter point was collated by representatives of the Lawn Tennis Association.

Implications for Wales

26. None.

Implications for inclusion, diversity and equality

27. It is positive that Sport England and Arts Council England are using its data insights to invest in projects that will help to reduce inequalities for groups who have been worse affected by the COVID-19 crisis. This will benefit those groups that traditionally have poorer health outcomes, lower activity levels and lower participation rates.
28. The move by Sport England towards less traditional forms of grant funding such as Crowdfunding may present a barrier for some local sport and community groups who lack the skills, technology and/or capacity to run a crowdfunding campaign which are delivered via digital platforms.
29. In addition, the levels of disposable income will vary across the country. This presents a similar challenge faced by many Northern councils who have a lower value tax base, so raising council tax nets them less income than councils based in wealthier areas. This potentially doubly disadvantages these councils because they have a lower council tax base and less disposable income among residents.

Financial implications

30. None.

Conclusion

31. There is a significant range of evidence used to inform targeting of funds. However, overall, the arms-length bodies seem to be developing approaches that recognise nuance within locations and building that into funding decisions. This allows for a more diverse group of areas to receive funding, compared to some other government funding allocations.
32. There are a number of conversations across the LGA about simplification of funding streams, as part of Government commitments around levelling up and funding reform. Board members are invited to identify any CTS specific issues or opportunities that should be fed into this work.
33. There is a question about whether councils and central government have the right data to inform funding and investment decisions. Recent proposals in the Levelling Up white paper, as well as a new [DCMS strategy on data](#) aim to improve this. Are there key requests or principles from councils that should be included in their thinking?