



department for  
**culture, media  
and sport**

# Transforming DCMS

March 2007

improving  
the quality  
of life for all

Our aim is to improve the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities, support the pursuit of excellence, and champion the tourism, creative and leisure industries.

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# Transforming DCMS

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DCMS is moving centre stage. Our responsibilities, for increasing participation in sport and culture, for preserving the best of our cultural heritage for future generations and for the creative and leisure economy, are more and more important to the quality of people's lives. They also support wider Government priorities, such as promoting social cohesion.

In rising to these challenges, our highly committed staff are our biggest asset. But we also need to transform ourselves as a department, whilst working with less money and fewer people.

This plan outlines the Board's decisions on what will change, drawing on the findings of our recent Capability Review.

# Looking ahead: what will be different about DCMS?

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In mid 2008 we will be able to say . . .

- **We understand clearly how we add value.** We are highly influential in promoting culture and sport within central and local government and beyond, taking full advantage of our unique perspective. We use this influence to initiate and lead inspirational projects that change the face of the sector. The Olympics, our biggest project ever, is now engaging the whole Department, though we do not allow it to overshadow our other work. We continue to create space for others to act, by sustaining cultural institutions and regulatory frameworks.

Because we are clear about how we add value, we are now more decisive about what we do and don't do. We concentrate on a smaller number of high priorities than in the past, and have shed less important work. The value of new initiatives is routinely and vigorously tested within the department at the planning stage. Our working style is exceptionally collaborative. But we continue also to be highly resilient, determined to overcome obstacles to achieving what is right and important.

- **DCMS's leadership is decisive, corporate and visible.** The board is now smaller, but includes more people who are independent outsiders. It works well with Ministers to maintain the department's strategic direction and drive forward its work. An advisory panel draws on external expertise to improve the strategic management of the department. An executive board of DCMS directors leads day to day work.
- **Relationships with our Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) are based on strategic collaboration.** We manage these relationships in a consistent, open, integrated and efficient way. The level of our support and challenge explicitly depends on how far each NDPB contributes to achieving our priorities, and on our assessment of financial and delivery risks.

Confidence in our NDPBs' governance and performance has increased. We ask for less frequent and detailed information than in the past. We are more ready to delegate responsibility (eg for providing briefing to Ministers). We involve them as a matter of course in making policy, including through the advisory panel.

We identify and broker ways for them to work better together and actively support their interests in discussions where they do not have a direct voice.

But we also tell our NDPBs clearly what we expect them to do in exchange for our funding. Where we are not confident that they are meeting those commitments, we challenge them firmly, and put in place plans for improvement, with a clear timetable.

The leaders and staff of our NDPBs welcome this new relationship, based on clarity and trust. They speak highly of our professionalism and appreciate our willingness to speak up for them.

- **Staff are fully engaged in the transformation.** Change has been rapid. But it has drawn fully on the diverse talents, ideas and skills of our staff. They remain proud of the department and committed to their work.
- **We have reorganised the department to focus on where we add value and to support the new relationship with NDPBs.** We do not work in sectoral silos. Those staff who still concentrate on relationships with NDPBs and other partners are managing essential processes in an efficient and standardised way. Our more senior staff concentrate on maintaining strong relationships with the key NDPB leadership teams.

More of our jobs are defined in terms of professional functions and expertise (eg business analyst, programme manager, researcher), and of cross-cutting policy outcomes (eg a strong role for sport and culture in education). People move around quickly and confidently to deal with changing risks and priorities. Our corporate services teams are actively involved in forward planning, and have the expertise to do this well.

We have met our headcount targets for 2007-08. We have clear plans to target future cuts on areas where we can reorganise work to increase efficiency, and on peripheral or low value work, including unproductive process and second-guessing.

- **We have improved how we recruit and allocate staff, and how we manage their development.** We have the right people in the right jobs at the right time. Job satisfaction remains high. Our workforce is an exemplar of diversity.

All our managers give a high priority to developing others. We have identified the people whose future contribution we value and are creating opportunities to develop their skills and achieve their potential. That includes more and better-supported loans and secondments (both ways) between DCMS and our NDPBs and local government, at all levels. This interchange helps to maintain the supply of skills and experience that we need to realise our added value. It also helps to build mutual trust and understanding with our partners.

Pay and grading is geared, in an affordable way, to attracting and retaining highly skilled people. We visibly reward strong performance in all areas and always deal decisively and fairly with poor performance.

- **DCMS is developing excellent capability in evidence and research.** A culture of using evidence and research is rapidly being embedded. Working closely with our NDPBs, we have built on the success of Taking Part to produce a cost effective, shared research strategy. We dedicate resources to horizon scanning, anticipating and preparing for how the world is changing. We evaluate honestly and as a matter of course the impact of our existing policies. We reflect that in advice to Ministers on our future policies.

# How we will transform DCMS: starting now

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Over the coming months, we will move at pace towards achieving these seven outcomes. The work will be led by seven task forces, involving staff and partners, reporting to the Permanent Secretary and top management.

- **By July 2007** our new governance arrangements will be fully operational. We will publish a new Prospectus, setting out the value added by DCMS. At the same time, we will introduce new ways of working with our NDPBs.
- **From October 2007** we will consult staff on organisational changes and a new people strategy. These will take into account our value added, the new approach to NDPBs and the need to improve our evidence base.
- **By January 2008** we will complete our decisions about the department's future shape and ways of working.
- **By April 2008** we will introduce these changes.

**DCMS Board**  
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