

## **Survey of how far Birmingham can be described as a Learning City**

(undertaken May 2004, on behalf of Birmingham Lifelong Learning Partnership)

The Community Strategy for Birmingham sets out a number of aspirations re Birmingham and learning. Considerable progress is being made to strengthen the ways in which learning within the city is contributing both to economic competitiveness and to the improvements in local neighbourhoods.

Birmingham also aspires to be a Learning City. In support of this, some work has been done over the past year to identify (from academic studies, from review activities and from the self-definitions used by a wide range of learning organisations/learning communities/learning towns/learning cities) the recurring themes that make up 'The Learning City'.

These recurring themes have been used to draw up a framework against which a set of learning structures (e.g. the learning infrastructure of Birmingham) can assess their position in relation to the journey along the way to being fully a learning city – and can use this to identify those elements which need more attention if further progress is to be made.

This framework has been circulated to the Learning Cities Network (and received positive comments and support), has been trialled in a range of settings locally, and has been reviewed in a couple of cities in other countries.

In June 2004 it was emailed to a wide range of people who formed part of the key intermediaries/position holders in the whole network of learning systems and structures across Birmingham in order to get a broad assessment of where we think Birmingham currently stands against this framework. The Birmingham Lifelong Learning Partnership collected responses via the Core Skills Development Partnership who received and processed the responses to this survey.

Two response sheets were attached as Response 1 and Response 2

Response 1 has five headline statements (with a brief explanation of each) and a box for each in which to type a number from 0 to 20.

0 would indicate that, in your view (from where you stand in the learning landscape that is Birmingham) Birmingham's systems and structures for learning do not at all match up to this standard.

20 would indicate that, in your opinion (from where you stand in the learning landscape that is Birmingham) Birmingham is 'fully there' in relation to this element.

Numbers between 0 and 20 will, then, represent the extent to which in your opinion, Birmingham is 'getting there', as a Learning City, against each element.

This normally takes less than 5 minutes to complete.

Response 2 is a slightly more sophisticated set of statements along the same lines (again with a brief explanation of what each headline statement might cover). These are to be scored (again by typing in a number in the appropriate box) along the scale:

0-5 = Birmingham is best described in general by the 'low level' description

6-10 = Birmingham in general is some way better than 'low level', but has a long way to go yet

11-15 = Birmingham is well on the way towards the 'high level' descriptions, but not fully there yet

16-20 = Birmingham is best described as being 'almost there' in relation to the 'high level' descriptions.

This normally takes around 20 minutes to complete.