

Working towards a standard for Birmingham – the Learning City

This set of 'tools' is being developed as part of Birmingham's range of activities under the '2003 Year of Lifelong Learning' focus. It has been constructed from a range of local, national and international thinking and practice re learning cities, learning communities, learning organisations.

It attempts to capture the very wide set of perspectives on learning cities, learning communities, learning organisations that have been worked up in many different places i.e. rather than adding to an already long list of features of learning cities, it is more of an attempt to bring these together into a framework that can be used for three different purposes:

- to aid discussion, debate and insight
- to aid assessing the extent to which a locality is a learning city
- to aid the production of the development steps to be taken if a city wishes to move further towards being fully a learning city

It contains contributions from various organisations involved with learning in Birmingham and is being tested out in different ways. It will be 'launched' in the Autumn of 2003 and will continue to be refined until March 2004.

It is a selection of different documents that can be used differently for different purposes. It is not a workbook to go through. It is offered in a format that is for developmental purposes – its final format could be different.

It is proving useful in:

- exploring the idea of 'learning city'
- helping organisations reflect on their own practices
- establishing some measures against which Birmingham can claim the status of being a learning city.

Above all it is itself a learning tool – a stimulus to thinking, reflection and planning change.

The meaning and value of 'the Learning City' or 'the Learning Organisation' label will have different expectations for different groups. For some it is important to have a set of statements that can be used to claim that a city/organisation has reached the status of being a learning city/organisation. For others it is the ability to have a realistic estimate of the distance still to be travelled on the journey towards becoming a learning city/organisation. For others it may be more important to recognise that there is far to go, and to simply identify the few things that need to be done next.

Components of a learning city/learning organisation

Why are cities keen to be learning cities?

At a time when cities and organisations are striving to:

- manage complexity and contradictions
 - manage change, and increasing rates of change
 - become more inclusive and take a wider range of viewpoints into account
 - be economically high skilled
 - recognise diversity and differences, but also hold on to some overall coherence
- learning is seen as both a vital tool (as an aid to solving economic and social problems) and an end benefit (as an entitlement). Learning is increasingly seen as a generic underlying capacity that is more and more needed (at all levels and in a wider variety of forms) as we go through the early decades of the 21st century.

In order to meet their ambitions to be successful, developing, inclusive, cohesive and high-performing places where learning is valued and put to use, cities or organisations are likely to want more people to learn better and faster than they might currently be doing. For a learning city this might be so that people who live and work in the city (and those who manage it) are better able to understand the future and better able to shape it. They are thus more likely to:

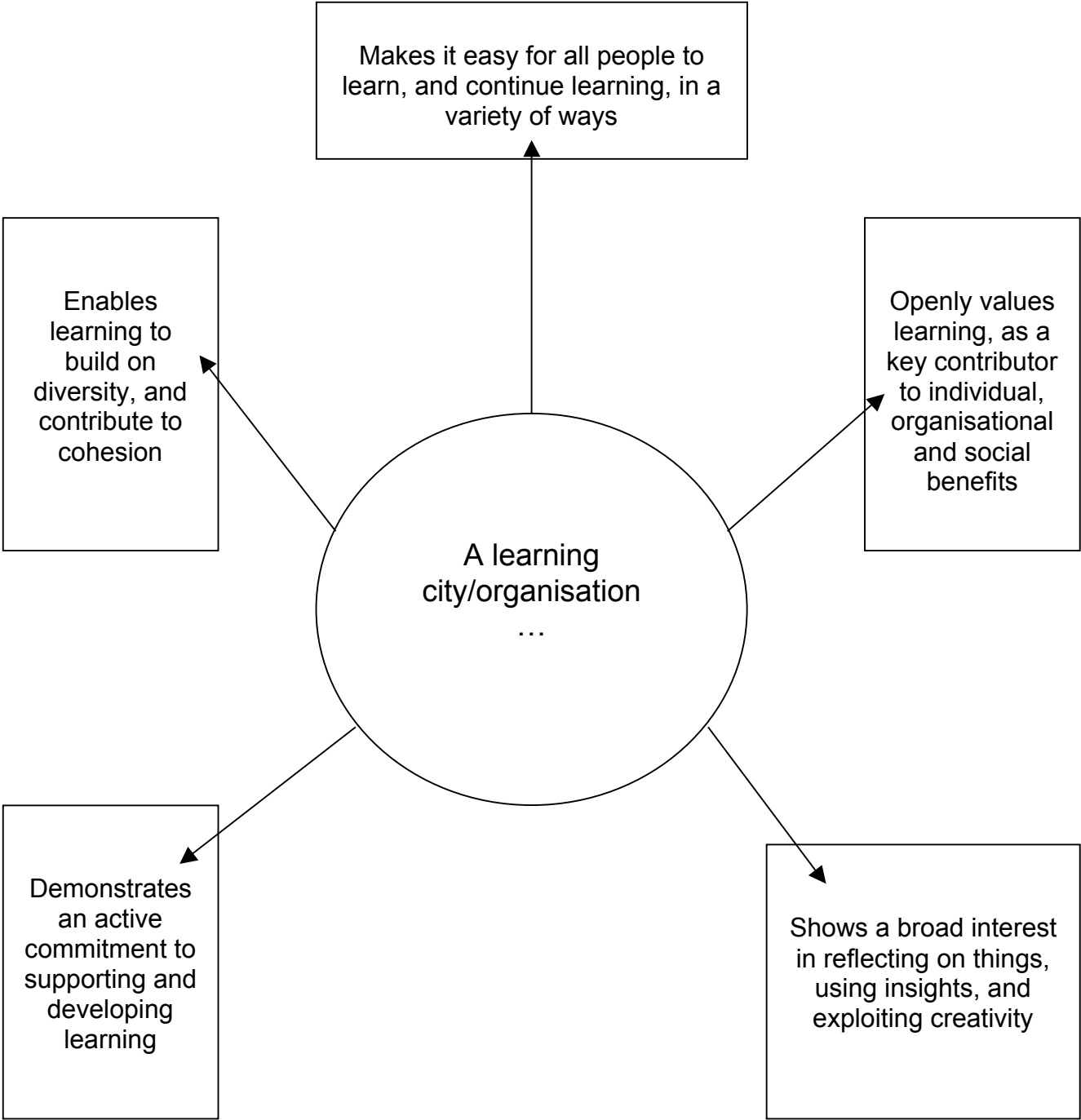
- ≤ make it easy for all people to continue learning in a variety of ways – addressing issues of access, entitlements, basic necessary skills, increased planning where this brings simplicity etc.
- ≤ value what exists and use existing expertise – but seek to constantly develop deeper understandings and secure new ways of doing things.
- ≤ respond creatively to the forces of change by reflecting on things, using insights and exploiting creativity; producing ‘know-how’ for individuals, businesses, organisations and systems.
- ≤ give active support to sustaining coherent, integrated, comprehensive and appropriate learning infrastructures; building connections between various strands and fostering collective progress as well as individual/institutional benefits.
- ≤ explicitly use many different forms of learning as a way of promoting cohesion, bringing about changes, and improving skills in ways that involve all parts of the community; seeing learning as integral to community change; recognising the value of the various understandings of different groups/communities.

Much of what has been listed as features of a learning city can be fitted within these five broad components. The five components form a framework for discussions; for looking at strengths and identifying areas for development;

and for assessing the extent to which a city is a learning city. The list is shown diagrammatically on the next page.

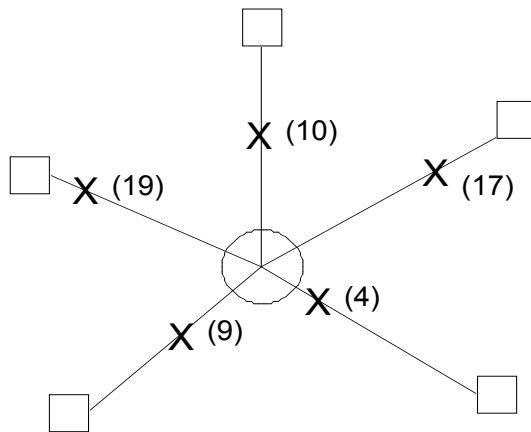
The text doubly refers to a 'learning city' and to a 'learning organisation'. This is because it is believed that a learning city is made up of a set of systems/organisations that are themselves learning. The grids attached therefore allow for an analysis at the 'whole city' level; at major organisational level; at departmental/unit/school/business level etc.

5 components of a learning city/learning organisation



This diagram can be used in a number of different ways:

- In a group, it can be used as an aid to discussion of where people think the city is in relation to each of the five components. This enables opinions to be aired, evidence to be discussed, insights to be gained.
- It is possible to 'score' the city along each of the five components of the diagram (with zero in the middle, and 'fully in place' at the end of each arm). As an example:



If each arm was 'worth' 20 points then the current 'score' on each component can be read off and the total of the five 'scores' would be a rough '% learning city' score.

- Each component could be considered in turn by asking 'what next steps could be taken to increase the 'score' along each arm?' i.e. a set of next step development s are produced as the possible action plan for becoming more of a learning city.
- To some extent different types of responses might be got from groups of residents; staff involved in organisations; key managers thinking about their own bit of the 'map'; strategic managers operating across the networks of systems that make up complex cities etc.

It might be useful at times to separate these out and clearly aim for assessing the whole city's 'network of networks' or for limiting the exercise to exploring the state of learning across only one piece of the bigger picture.

These five components can be further expanded and used as five 'tests' for a learning city or organisation as one in which:

- **It is easy for all people to learn, and continue learning, in a variety of ways**

As evidenced by:

- ≤ encourages the existence of an environment that is rich in stimulating resources
- ≤ sees learning as being of different kinds; through various mechanisms
- ≤ ensures that all ages, all communities, all sectors able to engage in learning
- ≤ makes learning opportunities readily known about; good information and guidance widely available
- ≤ has loosely linked learning pathways/routes, that are clearly understood
- ≤ recognises that anyone can learn from a variety of others (and therefore help others to learn); allows for some self-direction in learning
- ≤ recognises that learning happens in different ways for different people
- ≤ recognises that learning can happen anywhere, anytime

- **Learning is seen as valuable, contributing to individual, organisational and social benefits**

As evidenced by:

- ≤ promotes 'learning'; sees learning as being for all people
- ≤ promotes high aspirations for all people
- ≤ celebrates learning for a range of purposes
- ≤ recognises a 'learning' component in most social processes
- ≤ values experience, wisdom and critical thinking
- ≤ expects that each learning opportunity will foster a continuing motivation to learn

- **There is a broad interest in reflecting on things, pulling out insights and exploiting creativity**

As evidenced by:

- ≤ anticipates change and puts learning in place proactively to assist in managing changes; made more adaptable through learning
- ≤ seeks out challenges and issues; and commits to using learning to help resolve these
- ≤ is able to be creative - and to use this creativity for change
- ≤ knows what's going on around it - and uses this knowledge
- ≤ wants to really know how it's doing, to get feedback and to 'improve on previous best'
- ≤ wants to work collaboratively with others - to exchange information and knowledge, adding to the common store of knowledge
- ≤ goes out of the way to seek the views and 'voices' of groups, individuals and communities.
- ≤ looks beyond the immediate; tries to get a sense of the bigger picture; uses frameworks as thinking tools

- **There are active commitments to supporting and developing learning**

As evidenced by:

- ≤ exceeds recognised quality standards; promotes guarantees, entitlements and minimum thresholds
- ≤ makes active use of new technologies
- ≤ fosters commitment to longer term visions and strategies; offers clear leadership and direction
- ≤ seeks improved outcomes for people
- ≤ puts in adequate resources in equitable ways
- ≤ has ways of sharing knowledge

- **Learning draws on diversity and contributes towards cohesion**

As evidenced by:

- ≤ draws on resources of all sectors; reflecting diversity of traditions and cultures
- ≤ looks for deeper understandings
- ≤ matches diversity with cohesion
- ≤ creates high skills levels for all
- ≤ uses learning to enable engagement with wider processes

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This sets a standard against which a city or an organisation can judge its claim to be a learning city or a learning organisation.

It is possible to:

- Use a way of highlighting each of the 33 features of a learning city (within their 5 broad headings) as
 - II = definitely true of our city
 - ? = partly true, still being developed
 - O = not really true
- This, if done in groups, allows for a set of discussions about where the city is/is not in relation to various features.
- Scoring each of the 33 features as:
 - 0 = clearly missing in our city
 - 1 = starting to be true/present
 - 2 = quite well established
 - 3 = clearly a strong feature of our citygives a score out of 99 i.e. almost a '% learning city' score.
- Doing the 'tick' or 'score' grading above highlights those features that need to be prioritised for improvement i.e. identifies 'next steps' in the progress to be made and becomes the basis of a learning city development plan.

A more sophisticated (but not automatically 'better') approach is to use these same 5 components and their contributory features to more explicitly judge the position in terms of the journey towards a Learning City. Since learning is not an all-or-nothing thing, it is appropriate to describe each feature in terms of what it might look like at an 'emergent' (just beginning; just starting to get to grips with ...) stage, at an 'established' (i.e. 'getting there - but some way to go') stage, and at an 'advanced' (i.e. 'mature - almost there') stage.

This can then begin to provide a template for people (from across the learning spectrum) to annually describe where a city such as Birmingham is on the emergent/established/advanced scale for each component (or for its more detailed features) - and thus to be able to say where the city needs to move to next in its progress towards being fully a learning city i.e. this set of grids forms a helpful planning tool as well as a thinking tool.

Whilst the words in each box, of the template that follows, have been carefully selected they are meant to capture broad intentions about learning and may need to be interpreted slightly differently in each organisation/city's own context. Whilst not claiming to be the only possible phrases, it is believed that the descriptions, the features, and the balance across the 5 broad components capture the full spectrum of what is meant by becoming a learning city or a learning organisation.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>It is easy for all people to learn, and continue learning, in a variety of ways</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encourages the existence of an environment that is rich in stimulating resources - of different kinds; through various mechanisms - all ages, all communities, all sectors able to engage in learning - readily known about; good information and guidance - that are loosely linked together to give pathways/routes - offered collaboratively, not competitively - recognising that can learn from a variety of others (and therefore help others to learn) - recognising that learning happens in different ways for different people - recognising that learning can happen anywhere, anytime 			
FEATURES	EMERGENT CHARACTERISTICS	ESTABLISHED CHARACTERISTICS	ADVANCED CHARACTERISTICS
Encourages the existence of an environment that is rich in stimulating resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environments are largely unstimulating • Resources for learning are of low level/low quality/low interest • Little voluntary use is made of communal learning resources • Little excitement generated by every day processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environments characterised by scattered ‘pockets’ of interest • Resources for learning are of variable quality • Communal learning resources mainly used only by certain groups, or in limited ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality resources for learning constantly come across • Environments characterised by widespread interest; prompt interesting questions • Puzzles and paradoxes regarded as interesting events • Communal learning resources well used in a variety of ways
Recognises a role in learning for a wide range of organisations and approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is equated only with formal structures, and with specific activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal institutions seen as ‘lead’ organisations, with others seen as having marginal roles. • Learning seen as possible via various activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning seen as happening via a wide range of organisations and approaches, recognising the strengths of each.
All ages, all communities, all sectors able to engage in learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning seen as ‘for me’ by limited sections of the community, and in low numbers. Particular forms of learning stereotyped to specific groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts made to broaden the appeal of learning – targets set for changes. • Learning taken up by more than a few fixed groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunities actively taken up by large numbers, across broad cross-sections of community.
Information, support and guidance for learning readily available re learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable information is hard to get, is unclear or ambiguous; and is only available through restricted channels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is available, but with little guidance or support beyond the simple access to information. • Information in several settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed, clear information is easily available; with support and guidance – enabling realistic choices to be made. • Information available in an appropriate and wide range of settings.
Continuous routes for learning exist and are clearly understood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning occurs in disconnected steps; little sense of choice or momentum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways to continue learning appear limited to single steps, within same context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive and coherent options exist for learning to continue; These are understood in terms of detail, requirements and consequences.

<p>Enables people to see themselves both as learners and as teachers, able to learn from a variety of others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Learning’ equated with ‘passive participant’: ‘teaching’ equated with ‘formally qualified’. • Little sense of self-directed learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Learning’ equated with active participant: ‘teaching’ seen as happening in a variety of formal and informal ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General understanding of situations where people can see themselves at times as ‘learners’ and at times as ‘teachers’. • Recognition of the extent to which people are able to direct own learning
<p>Encourages activity based on a range of learning styles; and recognises that learning happens in different ways for different people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning takes place mostly through restricted set of models and only associated with formal ‘educational’ activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning takes place through several models and is mostly associated with educational activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning takes place via many different models and is openly associated with sports, arts, ‘educational’, community activity etc etc.
<p>Learning is able to happen anywhere, anytime</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunities are largely restricted in time, place etc • Limited access to learning resources • Learning is seen as happening in fixed ways, in certain contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special projects/events provide wider access to learning – but not ‘everyday activity’ • Only some groups have widened access to learning opportunities • Some groups promoting an ‘open’ view of learning, others promoting a ‘closed’ view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning opportunities easily accessible e.g. remotely via ICT • Learning opportunities are available widely and for much of the time • Learning is seen as possible in wide variety of contexts

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Learning is seen as valuable; contributing to individual, organisational and social benefits</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promotes 'learning'; rather than 'courses/programmes/organisations'; sees learning as being for all people - promotes high aspirations for all people - celebrates learning for a range of purposes - recognises a 'learning' component in most social processes - values experience, wisdom and critical thinking - expects that each learning opportunity will foster a continuing motivation to learn 			
FEATURES	EMERGENT CHARACTERISTICS	ESTABLISHED CHARACTERISTICS	ADVANCED CHARACTERISTICS
Promotes value of learning for all people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disconnected promotion of learning opportunities. • Learning seen as being for certain groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective promotion of learning opportunities. • Learning seen as 'for all', but only really offered to certain groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective promotion of the value of learning. • Learning seen as appropriate for all groups.
Fosters high aspirations for individuals, localities, organisations and the city as a whole.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little progress made re learning objectives; little sense of momentum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress made in response to external pressures and challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At various levels there is a 'can do' approach – striving for improved skills and deeper understandings.
Celebrates learning for a range of purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning outcomes not valued; 'internal' recognition only. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning, and learning outcomes, get restricted wider recognition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider patterns and diversity of learning celebrated.
Sees learning as able to meet interconnected, individual, community, economic and social objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning seen as for a specific purpose only; with own form of learning seen as superior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning seen as leading to range of benefits, but is still structured in set ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning seen as a component of most other processes; and via a variety of routes.
Experience, wisdom and critical thinking are valued and made use of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills and understandings are lost as people move on • Constant reinvention of similar processes/structures • Experience not valued; little value placed on critical thinking skills • Knowledge and experience seen as resting with a 'special few' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expertise, skills, wisdom etc collected but not made use of • Some linkages between decisions made and what is already known • Varied groups brought together for particular purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience, skills, wisdom etc known about, disseminated and made use of • 'Best understandings' used as basis for decision making • 'experience'; 'thoughtfulness' etc actively promoted
Learning opportunities foster a continuing motivation to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivations to continue learning cannot be sustained • Learning experiences seen as worthless activity • Large numbers show little inclination to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a general valuing of learning • Some increases in the numbers actively learning • Learning is sustained variably across agencies, sectors or groups • Learning can be seen as a disappointing experience by substantial numbers; but as useful by others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations of learning experiences are very positive; little falling off of interest • Large, and growing, numbers show inclination to learn • Learning sustained across age ranges

- **There is a broad interest in reflecting on things, pulling out insights and exploiting creativity**
 - anticipates change and puts learning in place proactively to assist in managing changes
 - seeks out challenges and issues; and commits to using learning to help resolve these
 - is able to be creative - and to use this creativity for change
 - knows what's going on around it - and uses this knowledge
 - wants to really know how it's doing, to get feedback and to 'improve on previous best'
 - wants to work collaboratively with others - to exchange information and knowledge, adding to the common store of knowledge
 - goes out of the way to seek the views and 'voices' of groups, individuals and communities
 - looks beyond the immediate; tries to get a sense of the bigger picture

FEATURES	EMERGENT CHARACTERISTICS	ESTABLISHED CHARACTERISTICS	ADVANCED CHARACTERISTICS
Anticipates change and puts learning in place proactively to assist in managing changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in context are often seen as a threat and a surprise • Steps are taken retrospectively to deal with changes • Need for new approaches, new attitudes not seen as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reactively dealing with some situations, whilst trying to 'get in front' with others • Most of the change in context was 'as predicted' • Recognises need for changed approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes are seen in advance, and responded to in planned ways • Change is seen as much as an opportunity as a difficulty • New approaches consistently being tested • Systems made more able to adapt, through learning
Identifies challenges and issues; and uses learning to assist with these	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content to do things as they have been habitually done • Where challenges are identified – these are then ignored • Need to change is seen as a problem, not a potential solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies certain issues; responds with special projects • Each challenge dealt with as a one-off; little call for continuous improvement • Relies on a few experts to come up with solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Can do/must do/will do' approach to challenges • Challenges seen as opportunities to improve • Learning seen as necessary for dealing with situations • Takes time out to review what is working well and what is challenging.
Has capacity for creativity and innovation – linked to wider purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable patterns of activity. Change seen as a problem. • 'Standard assumptions' not challenged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disconnected developments that are labelled 'innovative' but which, longer term, add up to no real progress. • Ideas looked for. Assumptions able to be challenged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change is embraced; problems identified and innovation encouraged, in context of contributing to real progress in planned ways. • Looks for answers; adapts ideas.
Use made of feedback and 'intelligence', to prompt further learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts in ways that are disconnected from wider networks and wider thinking; unconcerned about getting real feedback on activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is interested only in getting positive responses; seeks to continue current activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks out wider knowledge contexts; looks for detailed feedback (positive and negative) on activities, as a basis for deciding about future activities.
Has capacity to recognise significant learning points from what it's doing and act on them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little attempt to look for learning implicit within activities. • Same 'mistakes' recur frequently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of information circulated; little attempt to turn this into packaged 'knowledge'. • 'Mistakes' acknowledged; but with no clear ways forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning points recognised; knowledge pulled out, and managed for wider improvements. • Learns from experiences

<p>Willingness to share knowledge, and to seek it from others. Addresses progress through partnership/ collaborative effort.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is treated as ‘secret’; no willingness to seek the views of others. • Work is done in isolation, and in response of own view of what is needed • Organisations mostly link with similar organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and deeper understandings only sought when necessary for self, or is sought indiscriminately through the need to know everything. • Some limited cross-organisational sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and understandings intelligently shared with others; and intelligently sought from others. • Cross functional linkages exist between agencies of different kind.
<p>Seeks to encourage the voices of diverse individuals and communities re learning; and to enable responses to these.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek views only from existing participants in structured activities and programmes; limited capacity to respond. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek views via specific ‘projects’; with little change as a result. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms in place for a wide and diverse range of people to express views re learning; and likelihood that these will be taken account of.
<p>Use is made of flexible frameworks and thinking tools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use is made of anecdotal, over-specific case studies from own experience. • Documents are seen as ‘passive’ reports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use is made of fixed, prescriptive lists and recipes. • Learning feeds into ‘next step’ plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use is made of frameworks that have wide applicability as useful thinking and action tools. • Learning is actively integrated into policy/strategy developments.

There are active commitments to supporting and developing learning			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exceeds recognised standards; promotes guarantees and entitlements - makes active use of new technologies - fosters commitment to longer term visions and strategies - seeks improved outcomes for people - puts in adequate resources in equitable ways - has ways of sharing knowledge 			
FEATURES	EMERGENT CHARACTERISTICS	ESTABLISHED CHARACTERISTICS	ADVANCED CHARACTERISTICS
Commits to exceeding agreed learning standards, entitlements and guarantees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no commitment to do other than meet minimum expectations • No attempt to establish thresholds/minimum levels of skills/learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets set are those most easily achievable • Little ambition to be at leading edge • Threshold levels of skills/learning planned for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum levels of quality are exceeded • Challenging, aspirational goals are set • Entitlements/guarantees met • There are clusters of knowledge/skills excellence • Threshold levels of skills/learning met
Makes active use of new technologies and processes; and contributes to the development of these	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relies on developments produced elsewhere. • Seen as ‘out of touch’ with progress • Held back by lack of appropriate technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technologies used variably or by certain groups only • Reliance on external developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to well respected developments • Uses ‘leading edge’ approaches • New technologies spread rapidly
Commits to implementing longer-term visions and strategies that have learning as a key strand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operates reactively, day-to-day • Sees little role for learning as a key component of longer-term progress. • Little sense of overall leadership/direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good communication between stakeholders re goals/purposes • Little joint planning • Learning seen as a potential factor in influencing the future • Leadership within separate sections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinks in terms of 5-10 year changes • Strong sense of overall leadership/direction • 3 year plans are delivered on year-by-year • Learning built into all renewal/regeneration/progress-related activity
Commits to agreed improvements in achievements and outcomes for people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little overt interest in securing better outcomes for people • Happy with things as they are, even if in need of improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work done to list the improvements needed • Unrealistic or unimplemented plans • Largely ‘process’ changes – little effect on outcomes for people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targets used constructively to produce improved outcomes for people • Planned outcomes largely achieved
Commits adequate resources to learning – in planned and equitable ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is under-resourced • No real planned ways forward • Use of resources regarded as inequitable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning over-reliant on short term funding • Resources gathered in unplanned ways; and put behind disconnected purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is adequately/well resourced • Resources used in agreed, planned ways
Encourages processes/structures for knowledge acquisition, sharing, distribution and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding things out relies on chance encounters • Some people consistently get knowledge, others consistently don’t • Little sharing of knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge exists but is often overlooked/ignored • Knowledge shared in restricted and disconnected ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible and effective use made of reviews, think tanks, surveys etc to create/gather knowledge • Key elements are systematically shared and distributed • There are systems for learning how to learn

Learning draws on diversity and contributes towards cohesion			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - draws on resources of all sectors; reflecting diversity of traditions and cultures - looks for deeper understandings - matches diversity with cohesion - creates high skills levels for all - uses learning to enable engagement with wider processes 			
FEATURES	EMERGENT CHARACTERISTICS	ESTABLISHED CHARACTERISTICS	ADVANCED CHARACTERISTICS
Learning resources of all sectors are used; learning reflects a diversity of traditions and cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draws on resources in limited, monocultural ways • Some groups offered restricted learning choices • Substantial aspects portrayed as ‘minority interests’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning draws selectively on diversity and cultures • Resources from a variety of traditions are used in discrete ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning recognises value of diverse traditions and cultures • Resources from a variety of traditions and cultures are integrated into learning
Deeper social understandings are sought and promoted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understandings are not sought – fixed views maintained • ‘understanding’ is seen as one group persuading another 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited opportunities created for shared understandings • ‘Understanding’ is seen as making the best of relatively fixed views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared understandings are actively fostered • ‘understanding’ is seen as agreeing that differences fit within a bigger picture
Believes that there are learning gains from an environment that is both diverse and cohesive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresolved conflicts between diversity and cohesion • Activity is seen in partisan ‘silo’ ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to value both diversity and cohesion sit uneasily together • Activity is seen in terms of segments and ‘ownership’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic and productive interactions between diversity and cohesion • Activity is seen to gain from diversity within coherent frameworks
Creates high skills levels throughout the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High skills associated with particular groups • Some groups consistently continue to underachieve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent, variable underlying patterns of achievement across various sections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All groups demonstrate the capacity to achieve high skill levels
Learning is used to increase the engagement with wider processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some groups remain marginalized by lack of skills to engage with processes. • Some preventative programmes in place for most obvious examples. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial numbers of individuals lack the skills to engage with processes. • Special programmes/support designed to bring people into ‘mainstream’. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most individuals have the skills to engage with wider processes. • Ongoing support to enable all to maximise contributions.

The descriptions in each box can be changed to suit the peculiarities of each individual city and are meant to be for guidance of the sorts of qualities a learning city might demonstrate at each level for each of the 33 features.

The blank grids that follow can be used in a number of different ways:

- The Emergent/Established/Advanced Framework can be used as a discussion tool
Groups of people could use the disaggregated grids to discuss each of the five components in turn (or to focus on one particular component).
'Where are we really?' 'What more should we be doing?' 'What are our strengths that can be shared with others?' 'What do we want to change?' 'What do we need to do to be able to claim to be a learning city or a learning organisation?'
- The Emergent/Established/Advanced Frameworks can be used as a scoring tool
For each feature (e.g. 'Encourages the existence of an environment that is rich in stimulating resources') an individual or group could distribute 3 points across the 3 stages to reflect the balance of the current position for that feature. This could give possible scores of e.g.:
 - emergent = 3; established = 0; advanced = 0 (total = 3)
 - or emergent = 0; established = 2; advanced = 1 (total = 3)
 - or emergent = 1; established = 1; advanced = 1 (total = 3)- and so on.

There are 33 different features altogether, across the 5 key components. Distributing 3 points across each of these 33 means that 99 points have been spread across the emergent; established and advanced columns.

Adding the total score down each of the 3 columns give an approximate percentage of the extent to which the city/organisation is a learning one at the emergent stage, the established stage, and the advanced stage.

If it is hard to distribute only 3 points across the 3 columns, an alternative is to distribute 6 points across the 3 columns for each row (and dividing the column totals by two to keep the 'percentage' scores).

- The grid can be used to identify priorities and next steps
The 'scoring' above can be used as the basis for describing which features need to be worked on next in order to shift emergent characteristics to become established, and established ones to become advanced ones.

Or a discussion could be held around which of the 33 features are e.g. 'our best things at the moment'; 'the ten priorities for change'; 'the 5 quick progress things where little changes will bring big improvements' etc. Identifying these enables next steps to be taken to be agreed upon.

- **It is easy for all people to learn, and continue learning, in a variety of ways**
 - encourages the existence of an environment that is rich in stimulating resources
 - of different kinds; through various mechanisms
 - all ages, all communities, all sectors able to engage in learning
 - readily known about; good information and guidance
 - that are loosely linked together to give pathways/routes
 - offered collaboratively, not competitively
 - recognising that can learn from a variety of others (and therefore help others to learn)
 - recognising that learning happens in different ways for different people
 - recognising that learning can happen anywhere, anytime

FEATURES	EMERGENT CHARACTERISTICS	ESTABLISHED CHARACTERISTICS	ADVANCED CHARACTERISTICS
Encourages the existence of an environment that is rich in stimulating resources			
Recognises a role in learning for a wide range of organisations and approaches.			
All ages, all communities, all sectors able to engage in learning.			
Information, support and guidance for learning readily available re learning.			
Continuous routes for learning exist and are clearly understood.			

<p>Enables people to see themselves both as learners and as teachers, able to learn from a variety of others</p>			
<p>Encourages activity based on a range of learning styles; and recognises that learning happens in different ways for different people.</p>			
<p>Learning is able to happen anywhere, anytime</p>			

- **Learning is seen as valuable; contributing to individual, organisational and social benefits**
 - promotes 'learning'; rather than 'courses/programmes/organisations'; sees learning as being for all people
 - promotes high aspirations for all people
 - celebrates learning for a range of purposes
 - recognises a 'learning' component in most social processes
 - values experience, wisdom and critical thinking
 - expects that each learning opportunity will foster a continuing motivation to learn

FEATURES	EMERGENT CHARACTERISTICS	ESTABLISHED CHARACTERISTICS	ADVANCED CHARACTERISTICS
Promotes value of learning for all people			
Fosters high aspirations for individuals, localities, organisations and the city as a whole.			
Celebrates learning for a range of purposes			
Sees learning as able to meet interconnected, individual, community, economic and social objectives.			
Experience, wisdom and critical thinking are valued and made use of			
Learning opportunities foster a continuing motivation to learn			

- **There is a broad interest in reflecting on things, pulling out insights and exploiting creativity**
 - anticipates change and puts learning in place proactively to assist in managing changes
 - seeks out challenges and issues; and commits to using learning to help resolve these
 - is able to be creative - and to use this creativity for change
 - knows what's going on around it - and uses this knowledge
 - wants to really know how it's doing, to get feedback and to 'improve on previous best'
 - wants to work collaboratively with others - to exchange information and knowledge, adding to the common store of knowledge
 - goes out of the way to seek the views and 'voices' of groups, individuals and communities
 - looks beyond the immediate; tries to get a sense of the bigger picture

FEATURES	EMERGENT CHARACTERISTICS	ESTABLISHED CHARACTERISTICS	ADVANCED CHARACTERISTICS
Anticipates change and puts learning in place proactively to assist in managing changes			
Identifies challenges and issues; and uses learning to assist with these			
Has capacity for creativity and innovation – linked to wider purposes.			
Use made of feedback and 'intelligence', to prompt further learning			
Has capacity to recognise significant learning points from what it's doing and act on them.			

<p>Willingness to share knowledge, and to seek it from others. Addresses progress through partnership/ collaborative effort.</p>			
<p>Seeks to encourage the voices of diverse individuals and communities re learning; and to enable responses to these.</p>			
<p>Use is made of flexible frameworks and thinking tools.</p>			

<p>There are active commitments to supporting and developing learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exceeds recognised standards; promotes guarantees and entitlements - makes active use of new technologies - fosters commitment to longer term visions and strategies - seeks improved outcomes for people - puts in adequate resources in equitable ways - has ways of sharing knowledge 			
FEATURES	EMERGENT CHARACTERISTICS	ESTABLISHED CHARACTERISTICS	ADVANCED CHARACTERISTICS
Commits to exceeding agreed learning standards, entitlements and guarantees			
Makes active use of new technologies and processes; and contributes to the development of these			
Commits to implementing longer-term visions and strategies that have learning as a key strand			
Commits to agreed improvements in achievements and outcomes for people			
Commits adequate resources to learning – in planned and equitable ways			
Encourages processes/structures for knowledge acquisition, sharing, distribution and development			

<p>Learning draws on diversity and contributes towards cohesion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - draws on resources of all sectors; reflecting diversity of traditions and cultures - looks for deeper understandings - matches diversity with cohesion - creates high skills levels for all - uses learning to enable engagement with wider processes 			
FEATURES	EMERGENT CHARACTERISTICS	ESTABLISHED CHARACTERISTICS	ADVANCED CHARACTERISTICS
Learning resources of all sectors are used; learning reflects a diversity of traditions and cultures			
Deeper social understandings are sought and promoted			
Believes that there are learning gains from an environment that is both diverse and cohesive			
Creates high skills levels throughout the community			
Learning is used to increase the engagement with wider processes			