

Changing Perceptions, Changing Cities, Changing Economies

A historical review of the development of learning cities and learning regions

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Changing Perceptions, Changing Cities, Changing Economies – A historical review of the development of Learning Cities and Learning Regions.

Abstract:

Recent developments in the USA, Britain and elsewhere demonstrate how cities, and the regions around them, are now the main engines of a nation's economic growth. This paper suggests that the fuel for those engines now and in the future is, and will continue to be, the learning of its institutions, its companies and its citizens, whether that learning is formal, informal or non-formal. Without learning, adaptability, flexibility, diversity and versatility, city/regions will not continue to develop sustainably. They will need to become Learning Cities and Learning city/regions. The paper shows that these are terms which, while dating back to antiquity, have increasingly gained common usage as a result of the emphasis on the application of lifelong learning concepts into everyday life within cities and regions. It also demonstrates how economic, and other aspects of growth, are centred on the incidence of learning. While the learning city heyday in Britain and Europe was around the turn of the millennium, in China, South Korea and other Asian countries, learning cities are now seen by government as the passport to economic success and are also transforming social and environmental regeneration. The changing development of the concept of the Learning City/Region over the years, and predominantly in the past 20 years, is mapped out in the following pages, together with the tools, materials, strategies and perceptions that have been developed to help city leaders, institution heads and companies develop and implement appropriate policies. It argues that these, and other, approaches to the establishment of Learning Cities/Regions need to be holistically managed and implemented. It further suggests the existence of another paradigm shift at work - the age of education and training, which has served us well in the late 20th century in satisfying the needs of a growing, upwardly mobile proportion of the population, is now giving way to the era of lifelong learning, in which the means, the methods and the new tools and techniques are directed towards improving and releasing the motivation, skills and talents of everyone in a city/region, lifelong. Those cities that are successful in achieving this will be the economic winners in the paradox where intelligent local action leads to success in a globalised world.

NB Learning Cities and Learning Regions are interchangeable in this paper. While there are obvious differences of scale and function, the underlying lifelong learning principles of each are similar. Thus, in the interests of conciseness, I have used the terminology of Learning City/Region to describe places where learning is, and must be, the well-spring of economic, social, cultural and environmental development.

Lifelong Learning and the lessons of history

At the dawn of the 21st Century, humanity found itself at a crossroads. The writer Dee Hock (1) put it thus.

"We are at that very point in time when a 400-year-old age is dying and another is struggling to be born - a shifting of culture, science, society and institutions enormously greater than the world has ever experienced. Ahead, the possibility of the regeneration of individuality, liberty, community and ethics such as the world has never known, and a harmony with nature, with one another, and with the divine intelligence such as the world has never dreamed."

Such an all-encompassing utopian view is refined by American Journalist and Futurologist, Alvin Toffler. In 'The Third Wave', (2) he suggests that human progress is a wavelike response to technological imperatives, each successive advance overlapping the previous one, and each one led by the few rather than the many. Toffler sees education as the answer. 'The responsibility for change', he says, 'lies with us. We must begin with ourselves, teaching ourselves not to close our minds prematurely to the novel, the surprising, the seemingly radical. He is supported by Professor Charles Handy, international writer and management consultant. In 'Managing the Dream', (3) Handy says, 'When the future was an extension of the present, it was reasonable to assume that what worked today would also work next year. That assumption must now be tossed out. The world is not in a stable state. We are seeing change that not only

accelerates ever faster but is also discontinuous. Such change lacks continuity and follows no logical sequence.' Handy's solution to this state of affairs is to emphasise the pre-eminence of learning, though not necessarily within the formal structures existing at present, which he believes have become ever more bogged down in rigid subject disciplines and memory-based assessment structures.

In short the transformation from a world in which the narrow focus of 'education and training' provided by statutory duty for those who want it at set times within organisations created for the purpose, to a lifelong learning society where learning, in the words of the first Rover Learning Business principle, is once again '*the most important human instinct*' available to all, and desired by all, where, when, how and from whom they want it throughout a lifetime is one of the imperatives of the 21st Century.

But Dee Hock's contention that we are at the beginning of a golden age, has, in one sense, always been true. The tide in the affairs of men can indeed be taken at the flood, or it can ebb away into the distance to be tried again when wiser counsels exercise influence. Educational history, like many other areas of human activity, has a habit of moving in cycles and the idea of Learning for and throughout life follows this pattern. Thus, when we consider its importance in today's world as the generator of new thinking and action in education, we should not forget the historical precedents from which the conception emanates. 2500 years ago, for example, in Greece, Plato put forward the theory of 'Dia Viou Paedeia', which he described as '*the responsibility of every citizen to educate himself and develop his own potential.*' (5). The use of the masculine gender is authentic but not exclusive, even in Plato's day). And indeed in Athens and many other Greek cities over hundreds of years, learning was an everyday, natural thing to do for large numbers of citizens. Though geared to the peculiar social patterns and the limited knowledge of the time, economic and social development in the city rested on this principle. Slaves, for example, were not included by right in the list of those participating in the formal structures of learning, although they no doubt learned informally and often well.

Alexandria is another example of the power of the local dimension in learning in antiquity. Its great library was at the centre of another great period in the expansion of civilised thought and consciousness, a 2500 years old acknowledgement of the value of knowledge in humanity's rise towards a more civilised status, and destroyed unfortunately by the twin forces of barbarian ignorance and fire. Later, in the 16th Century, Jan Comenius suggested, in Pampaedia, (6) that '*Every age is destined for learning, nor is a person given other goals in learning than in life itself.*' And this at a time of great upheaval when wars of religion were tearing the European continent apart, and when original thinking was not exactly encouraged by the authorities.

Conflicting definitions

In the ebb and flow of philosophies about learning, we are not short of educational advice from the great thinkers of the day. The present age is no exception. It is an age of deep and persistent flood. Several thousand reports and papers, books and compendiums have been published by international and governmental organisations, by learned committees, by experts, universities and individuals over the past few years on the urgent need for, and the vast benefits to be gained from, implementing lifelong learning concepts in order to stimulate economic growth. Not all of them agree on what these concepts are. Many put a particular spin on them to fit their own perceptions and desired outcomes. But one of the common denominators is the need to change from the top-down, educator-led educational systems we now have, to procedures and processes that are more bottom-up, and based on the real needs of the learners – a 180 degree transfer of power and ownership of learning from teacher to learner. The trick is how we might make it happen in reality, especially when politicians disagree in order to curry favour with voters..

The growth of the Learning City and Region

Plato's starting point was the city itself. The primary rationale for encouraging citizens to learn was so that they could contribute to the life and growth of the city and the community at large, perhaps one of the first recorded examples of active citizenship. Thus though learning was an individual pursuit, the rationale for taking part had its source in community, in living together harmoniously and in growing in

understanding together. Alexandria's library attracted scholars and learners from all parts of the known world and it prided itself on being a learning city. Many Islamic cities, such as Damascus and Jerusalem were, between 900 and 1300 years ago, real 'Learning Cities', centres of culture and learning, participated in by most of their citizens, centres of trade and industry, and probably truer learning cities than anywhere that exists in our modern world. Once more they were victims of crusading religious and conquest-hungry fervour.

And so, in the present-day movement towards the concept of the 'Learning City', 'the Learning Region', 'the Learning Community' as geographical models within the social concept of 'the learning society' - all of them terms now in common usage - we may learn much from the past. The concept has been in vogue over a number of years. In the 1970s, OECD funded a project to create 'Educating Cities' (7). It invited 7 cities from among its member states - Edmonton in Canada, Gothenburg, Vienna and Edinburgh in Europe, Kakegawa in Japan, Adelaide in Australia and Pittsburgh in the United States to put Education at the forefront of their strategies in order to justify the term 'Educating City.' More recently the term 'Learning City' has become more popular. Liverpool in UK declared itself to be a 'City of Learning' in 1996, and was quickly followed in the UK by Southampton, Norwich, Edinburgh, Birmingham and others. In the early 2000s the UK Learning Cities Network (8) numbered some 80 members. European cities such as Espoo, Gothenburg and Dublin followed their own Learning City pathways. Meanwhile, at another level, the City of Barcelona has, since 1992, led an Association of 'Educating Cities' now reaching some 450 members worldwide. These cities are the leaders in the Learning City movement because they recognise that to prosper economically, socially and culturally, their citizens will need to come to terms with rapid and accelerating change.

Characteristics of a Learning City and Region

Amidst all this plethora of activity in the mid-nineties, the European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI), now unfortunately defunct, initiated a debate on the major characteristics of a Learning City, how it would define itself and how it might be distinguished from a city that did not recognise the economic and social benefits to be derived from learning. Longworth, a former President of the Association, published a number of articles in its house magazine 'Comment' to clarify the issues (9). Figure 1 below shows a table produced in one of these, outlining his view of the major characteristics of a Learning City. In 1996, the European Year of Lifelong Learning, he published, with Davies, a book describing the role and implications of Lifelong Learning for stakeholders in the city (10). The consequences of implementing lifelong learning principles in schools, universities, business and industry and local government were discussed here, as was their potential contribution to working with each other in order stimulate the growth of community and city. This book was followed 3 years later by a more targeted book, subtitled 'Learning Cities for a Learning Century' (11), containing examples from a wide variety of cities that were ahead of the rest in thinking and action, including the Learning City/Region of Kent in the UK, which, in a last chapter, measured itself against many of the characteristics in Figure 1.

LEARNING CITIES - FACING THE FUTURE

A Learning City is one with plans and strategies to encourage personal growth, social cohesion and sustainable wealth-creation through the development of the human potential of all its citizens and working partnerships between all its organisations

L	Leadership	Links its strategy to the development of leadership and Learning counselling courses and skills in and for the whole community
E	Employment and Employability	Effects plans to define and develop skills and competencies which make all its citizens employable
A	Aspirations	Activates the creative potential of its citizens through a strategy for encouraging the use of personal learning plans, mentors and guides in citizens of all ages
R	Resources	Releases the full potential of community resources, including human resources, by enabling mutually beneficial partnerships between public and private sectors
N	Networks	Nourishes tolerance and outward-looking mindsets through projects to link citizens of all races, ages and creeds locally, nationally and internationally
I	Information	Increases participation in learning by devising innovative strategies to provide information where people gather, and pro-active publicity campaigns to promote learning
N	Needs and Requirements	Nurtures a culture of learning by proactively auditing the learning requirements of all its citizens and providing the Opportunities to satisfy them
G	Growth	Generates wealth through a defined strategy of developing its human talent and innovative projects with other learning communities
C	Change Management	Cultivates programmes which allow citizens to cope positively and without fear in a world of rapid change
I	Investment	Influences the future by linking learning strategies to cross-departmental financial strategies
T	Technology	Transforms the city into a modern centre of learning by the effective use of the new learning technologies
I	Involvement	Inspires citizens to contribute to city life and culture by building a database of their skills, knowledge and talents and encouraging them to make them available to others
E	Environment	Energises programmes which enable all citizens to take positive action to care for the environment
S	Strategies for the Family	Stimulates the community and whole families to learn by running festivals, fairs and other fun events which promote the habit of learning.

Figure 1: Characteristics of a Learning City

Provenance of Learning City and Region knowledge

At the same time booklets on the subject, such as ‘Learning Cities, Learning Towns’, were produced from the UK Learning Cities Network. At this point, the urban development departments of cities and universities became involved in this area, inserting a more planning, management, regeneration, technology and economic development focus. Charles Landry’s influential book ‘*The Creative City – a Toolkit for Urban Innovators*’(12) is a good example. A large number of other authors have commented

on the way in which the Learning City/Region is understood from the urban development and industrial point of view. For example, Wolfe (13) suggests that the Learning City/Region provides the right institutional environment to promote private and social learning at four scales: individual; company; groups of companies; government. The concepts of social capital and trust, and the role played by co-operative and collective learning is emphasised by commentators such as Asheim (14); the focus in such an interpretation being the ability to link together co-operative relationships between a wide range of social actors in city and regional development coalitions. This view still contributes much to the on-going debate, but as a result of ELLI's and later work, the concept of the Learning City and Region is recognised as a more holistic one combining a complex mixture of social, cultural, economic, political, educational and environmental rationales.

The TELS Learning Cities project

The European Commission has not been idle in supporting research and development of the concept. In 1998 it funded ELLI's pioneering TELS (Towards a European Learning Society) project (15). This surveyed 80 European municipalities from 14 countries by developing indicators to measure their progress towards becoming 'Learning Cities, Towns and, in some cases, Regions' in 10 domains and 28 sub-domains of their learning activities. This project is interesting in that it is one of the first to identify indicators by which municipalities can measure their own performance and progress, including wealth creation as a key concept. In order to do this, the project developed a 'Learning Cities Audit Tool' - in effect an interactive questionnaire with an educational purpose to help those completing it to understand more about the concept and its implications. The domains and sub-domains of city activity contained in this tool are shown in Figure 2 below.

Category	Explanation	Sub-topics
a) Commitment to a Learning City	The extent to which the city or town has already started to implement plans and strategies which set it out on the path to becoming a Learning Community, and the thinking it has done to date	Strategies for Lifelong Learning Organisation of Lifelong Learning City Charters for Lifelong Learning European projects and orientation The City as a Learning organisation Readiness for Learning City
b) Information and Communication -	Ways in which Lifelong Learning ideas and plans are communicated to a) those responsible for implementing them and b) citizens at large. Including new curriculum development, teacher training, learning centres, use of the media, collection of information on learning requirements etc	Information Strategies Use of the Media Learning Literature Marketing of Lifelong Learning
c) Partnerships and Resources	- the extent to which links between different sectors of the city have been encouraged and enabled, and their effectiveness. Including links between schools, colleges, business and industry, universities, professional associations, special interest groups, local government and other organisations. Includes physical and human resource sharing, knowledge generation, mobilisation etc	Partnership types Use for New resources Combining Existing Resources
d) Leadership Development	the extent to which lifelong learning leaders have been developed and how. Including community leadership courses, project management, city management, organisational mix.	Existing Leaders New Leaders Materials development
e) Social Inclusion	projects and strategies to include those at present excluded - the mentally and physically handicapped, the unemployed, minorities, women returners, people with learning difficulties etc	Barriers to Learning Qualifications, Standards and Assessment Special Programmes European National
f) Environment and Citizenship	projects to inform and involve citizens in city environmental matters. How the city is informing its citizens of all ages about citizenship and involving them in its practical expression in the city	Environment Awareness and Learning - Adults and Children Environmental involvement Citizenship and Democracy
g) Technology and Networks -	innovative ways in which information and communications technology is used to link organisations and people internally, and with people and organisations in other communities. Includes use of open and distance learning, effective use of networks between all ages for learning and understanding of the internet.	Distance Learning Multimedia and Open Learning Using internet and networks Wired City
h) Wealth creation, employment and employability -	schemes and projects to improve the creation of both wealth and employment and to give citizens lifetime skills, knowledge and competencies to improve their employment prospects. Includes financial incentives, studies, links with industry, industry links with other communities etc.	Employment and Skills Wealth Creation Learning Requirements Analyses and Citizens Learning Audits Employability Initiatives
h) Mobilisation, participation and the Personal Development of Citizens	- the extent to which contribution is encouraged and enabled. Includes projects to gather and use the knowledge, skills and talents of people and to encourage their use for the common development of the city.	Lifelong Learning Tools and Techniques - Personal Learning Plans, Mentoring, Study Circles etc Personal Development of Citizens Teacher/Counsellor Development and Training Participation and Contribution Strategies
j) Learning Events and Family involvement -	projects, plans and events to increase the credibility, attractiveness, visibility and incidence of learning among citizens individually and in families. Includes learning festivals, booklet generation, celebrations of learning, learning competitions, recognition events etc	Learning celebrations - festivals, fairs etc. Learning recognition and rewards Family Learning strategies

Figure 2 - the TELS Learning Cities indicators

Some of these categories also provide indicators for new projects each of which needs development. The way in which information is presented (item b) is indeed important if the reluctant learner is to be attracted back into the fold; leaders (item d) do need to be developed to help this process; and, contribution, celebration and family involvement (items j and h) are significant keys to success. Wealth creation (item h) through more and better learning is a powerful motivator for cities beset by problems of unemployment and deprivation, the corollary being that better learning leads to the first of the three OECD rationales for lifelong learning - greater prosperity, social stability and personal fulfilment. (16)

Although not a formal research project with well-defined geographical or methodological parameters, TELS produced many insights into the state of knowledge about the state of lifelong learning awareness in a variety of European cities, towns and regions. It provided the following two definitions, later used by the European Commission in the formulation of further projects in this area.

'A learning city, town or region recognises and understands the key role of learning in the development of basic prosperity, social stability and personal fulfilment, and mobilises all its human, physical and financial resources creatively and sensitively to develop the full human potential of all its citizens It provides both a structural and a mental framework which allows its citizens to understand and react positively to change'

A Learning Community is a city, town or region which goes beyond its statutory duty to provide education and training for those who require it and instead creates a vibrant, participative, culturally aware and economically buoyant human environment through the provision, justification and active promotion of learning opportunities to enhance the potential of all its citizens.

The latter definition suggests, perhaps for the first time in European thinking, that there is the beginning of a movement away from the age of Education and Training into a much more inclusive and all-encompassing era of lifelong learning characterised by the notion of the fulfilment of everyone's human potential. In more exploitative terms, human capital development as a resource for the growth of the city's social and economic capital.

Developing a Policy for Learning Cities and Regions

The results obtained by TELS confirmed a sorry lack of basic knowledge about the effects of lifelong learning in the majority of European municipalities. But it also uncovered the existence of some cities where much progress has been made, and more excitingly, a wish among most of the participating cities to know more. Indeed a good number of the participating cities admitted to becoming interested in the concept as a result of completing the audit, an interesting bi-product of the survey. Further, despite its lack of a scientific methodology, the TELS project, completed in 2000, became the European Commission's major source of information on the local and regional dimension of Lifelong Learning. Its list of recommendations, shown in figures 3 and 4 below, covers both macro level actions at the level of government and the more micro-level activities for towns and cities.

TELS Recommendations to Government

1. Create a cross-sectoral Strand in the Socrates Programme to support the development of Learning Cities and Regions. Name it after a famous civic leader or the Goddess of Communities
2. Establish a programme for Cities of Learning similar to that for Cities of Culture. If necessary run a competition to decide which city it will be in each country.
3. Provide incentives for the formation of new regional, national, and European infrastructures which help Learning Community concepts to develop more quickly
4. Develop indicators which measure and monitor aspects of the growth of Learning Cities and the Learning Society and Initiate Surveys and Studies on these in and across member states
5. Raise the awareness of Learning Community concepts in municipalities throughout Europe through high-visibility events such as the European Learning Cities week
6. Develop a 'Charter for European Learning Cities' outlining the City's responsibilities vis-à-vis its citizens as learners, and its relationship to a wider European Learning Community, which cities sign up to.
7. Create a European network of one or more university departments in each country able to specialise in Learning City Research and Development
8. Develop an all-encompassing, easy-to-use, web-based Learning Community simulation tool and make it accessible to all.
9. Promote Europe-wide interactions and partnerships between Local Government, Industry and others for Wealth/Employment Creation and International Employability
10. Establish Links with global organisations and countries to share good practice and foster joint cultural, economic and educational development in the area of Learning Communities.

Figure 3 – Recommendations to Government from the TELS project

The first of these would provide the vehicle for implementation of the rest and, though R3L (Regional LifeLong Learning) is hardly a well-known goddess (see item 1 above), this eponymous title later became the new European Commission programme in the Learning City field. 17 projects, including one in which a much more sophisticated set of Indicators project was developed and tested, address some of the recommendations in figures 3 and 4. This theme will be taken up later.

TELS Recommendations for Embryo Learning Cities

1. Establish a Lifelong Learning Partnership Committee comprising people from all parts of the city, private and public. Be bold - invite unconventional people on to it eg unemployed. Establish the guidelines for this Committee and give it powers to initiate activities, and set targets for each of these activities.
2. Establish a sub-committee for each action area - Involve as wide a selection of people as possible in each group. Set targets and goals for people and organisations.
3. Appoint a Champion of Lifelong Learning - one of the most influential figures in the City. Give him/her powers to get things done.
4. Hold a one-day conference of 100 key people and hire key Lifelong Learning experts to deliver the Lifelong Learning message to them. Make the conference bi-directional - during the day hold a series of guided brainstorming sessions in several aspects of Learning City activity to obtain their commitment and ideas. Give someone the responsibility to collect and act upon these ideas.
5. Create an electronic Learning City Forum to which these people and others can contribute. Give them access to national and international forums (eg the TELS Forum) to allow them to communicate with sources of expertise in other cities.
6. Develop a leadership plan. Hire experts to run a series of Lifelong Learning City workshops, seminars and conferences for people from all parts of City life in order to create as quickly as possible a core of committed workers. Make this a cascade process - require the experts to provide the materials and train participants to train others.
7. Join a Learning Cities organisation - more than one if there is value-added. Some offer more than others. For example, the NewTELS network can offer access to experts for workshops and seminars, electronic forums between professionals and councillors in many cities, the facility to develop good practice Case Studies, information and knowledge on-line and a core of like-minded cities with which you can work.
8. Organise a Learning Festival. Involve many organisations in the city. Link it to other activities taking place eg Adult Learners Week, Achievement Awards etc
9. Audit the Learning Needs of all your citizens. Devise a questionnaire administer it in companies, shopping centres, pubs etc Use the Universities to carry out and analyse the research results.
10. Hold a (bi)-annual conference for organisations in your, and others', city. Set your targets to be reported back at this. Set new targets based on these.
11. Encourage the use of the tools and techniques of Lifelong Learning in all your educational and business establishments- personal learning plans, mentorship programmes etc
12. Develop a City Charter outlining the actions you will take to improve learning in the city.
13. Make a database of the talents, skills, knowledge, experience and creative ideas of the citizens and discuss with them how they can contribute to the learning of others
14. Involve people in designing strategies for, and monitoring, their own environment.
15. Put as many people as possible, from all walks of life, in touch with others in different cities, towns and countries through electronic networks.
16. Develop a strategy and a business plan. Link it to the activities described above. Set realistic goals and objectives.

Figure 4 Recommendations to Municipalities from the TELS project

As a result of TELS, seminars were held in Brussels for interested regional organisations and papers were produced. This in turn resulted in the production of a European Policy Paper on the 'Local and Regional Dimension of Lifelong Learning' (17) distributed to all member states for comments. Longworth, who both managed the TELS project and wrote the European Policy Paper comments, '*At this embryo stage in learning city development there can be no other conclusion than that there is a long way to go. The majority of the municipalities coming into the project were unaware of the term 'Learning City', much less what it signified. In that respect the project has itself initiated a learning process... ..*

Cities and towns in a globalised world cannot afford not to become learning cities and towns. It is a matter of prosperity, stability, employability and the personal development of all citizens.'

The TELS experience was also embedded in another consultation document, the European memorandum on Lifelong Learning (18), a seminal and challenging paper containing many references to the need for local actions. For example, it suggests that *'Regional and local levels of governance have become increasingly influential in recent years in line with intensified demand for decision-making and services 'close to the ground'. The provision of education and training is one of the policy areas destined to be part of this trend – for most people, from childhood through to old age, learning happens locally'*

That self-evident view is also expressed in the heavily watered down European White paper resulting from that consultation, *'Realising a European Area of Lifelong Learning* (19), though it prefers to use the term 'Learning Region' so that it can encompass a wider geographical area than the municipality, but, in Euro-speak, smaller units such as cities and towns are also included within that term.

OECD and the Learning City/Region

Quite separately, in 2000 the OECD initiated its own Learning City/Regions project in developing regions of Europe. The resultant report and book *'Cities and Regions in the New Learning Economy'* (20) predictably, given its provenance, concentrated on the economic benefits of developing a learning city. In particular the process of transforming the industrial economy into a society largely based on the production and dissemination of information and knowledge was seen as the rationale for increased lifelong learning. It highlighted the apparent paradox between the process of globalisation and the need for actions to promote innovation, productivity and economic performance at the local level. It analysed among other things, the correlation between primary, secondary and tertiary education levels and Gross Domestic Product per capita in 180 regions of the European Union and came to a number of conclusions important for local and regional authorities. Some of these are:

- While tertiary education remains important, secondary education appears to be the most important for regional economic performance. Higher Education is clearly essential in terms of innovations, but Secondary Education instils the intermediary skills, which are also crucial to industrial know-how and "learning-by-doing".
- High levels of individual learning in themselves do not contribute to economic growth before it has been applied to the production of goods and services. It is important therefore to stress the practical application of learning and to encourage creativity.
- The extent to which individuals and organisations absorb and apply learning and innovation will determine their competitiveness in the learning economy. *learning cities and regions have in common is an explicit commitment to placing innovation and learning at the core of development. All seek to sustain economic activity through various combinations of lifelong learning, innovation and creative uses of information and communication technologies.'* As in TELS, the OECD Study provided recommendations for the development of Learning City/Regions, shown in figure 5 below.

OECD Principles for a Learning City/Region

Inputs to the learning process

1. Ensure that high-quality and well-resourced educational provision is in place, in which effective individual learning throughout people's lives can be delivered.
2. Co-ordinate carefully the supply of skilled and knowledgeable individuals through education and training and the demand for them within the regional economy, so that the full benefits of individual learning may be reaped through its effects on organisational learning.
3. Establish appropriate framework conditions for the improvement of organisational learning, both within firms and between firms and other organisations in networks of interaction, and demonstrate to firms the benefits of these forms of learning.
4. Facilitate effective organisational learning not simply for a pre-selected set of conventionally defined 'high-tech' sectors, but across all of the industries and sectors within the regional economy that have the potential to develop high levels of innovative capacity.
5. Identify very carefully the extent to which the resources available to the region (existing industries, educational provision, research facilities, positive social capital and so forth) constitute an impediment to economic development ('lock-in') or may usefully contribute in developing innovative strategies for the future.
6. Respond positively to emergent economic and social conditions, especially where this involves the 'unlearning' of inappropriate practices and bodies of knowledge (including policy makers' own) left over from the regional institutions of previous eras.

Mechanisms of the Learning City/Region

7. Pay close attention to mechanisms for co-ordination policies across what have generally been separate departmental responsibilities (for industrial development, R&D, science and technology, education and training and so forth) and between different levels of governance (regional, national and supra-national).
8. Develop strategies to foster appropriate forms of social capital as a key mechanism in promoting more effective organisational learning and innovation.
9. Evaluate continuously the relationship between participation in individual learning, innovation and wider labour market changes, especially with respect to social exclusion of groups within the regional population.
10. Ensure that regional strategies for learning and innovation are accorded legitimacy by the population of the region to be transformed.

Figure 5 OECD Principles for the Learning City and Region.

Learning City/Region Developments in Australia

The OECD work has obviously contributed much to new thinking about Learning Cities and Regions and these principles have formed the basis for developments in many parts of the world. We will return to Europe and the R3L projects later, but, at the same time as all this European activity was taking place, a great deal of Learning Cities and Regions work was being done on the other side of the world in Australia. Every state boasted its own Government inspired learning cities association and in Victoria, for example, all municipalities of more than 5000 people were expected to belong to this and to pursue learning city policies. Based on Longworth's work in ELLI and TELS, the National Government commissioned the Australian National Training Authority to carry out a TELS-like audit in 10

communities and to complete an audit of their learning strategies and capacity as part of their journey towards becoming a learning community. The results of each enquiry can be found on the ANTA website (22).

In 2002, the state of Victoria also organised, with OECD, a conference on Learning Cities and commissioned a wide-ranging report (23) on the subject from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. This comprehensive document attempts to describe and analyse the progress of Victoria as a Learning City/Region within the context of international developments and benchmarks. It provides this analysis against the 10 principles shown in figure 5 above.

Once again its purpose in promoting the learning city and region is economic growth and development but interestingly the four themes of the conference rose above these, establishing a link between employment and such topics as social inclusion and good governance. viz

- sustainable economic growth including the expansion of high quality jobs.
- social inclusion and the building of social capital.
- the role and limitations of different education and training strategies in fostering learning cities and regions.
- an integrated approach to achieving good governance

Equally some of the recommendations made in this seminal document transcend the purely economic, following the principle demonstrated by both the TELS and OECD studies of a correlation between the social, the economic and the cultural. Many of those shown in figure 6 below mirror the recommendations produced by TELS.

Recommendations from the Victoria State Learning City/Region Report

1. Break down the sectoral barriers between schools, VET and higher education, and government and non-government sectors
2. Design Initiatives to encourage and extend adult learning and lifelong learning
3. Ensure that publicly funded training providers, in particular, are challenged to provide high quality programs and services
4. Work with business organisations to provide forums for firms and their personnel to interact
5. Establish and regularly renew across government benchmarks for the relevant resources for economic growth, drawn from the most recent international standards;
6. Promote the concept of learning organisations through a variety of means, beginning with a leadership role by government and the public sector
7. The political articulation of a future for the region that is inclusive of a diversity of cultures and ideas, and which meets change by promoting discourses on policy options.
8. Support networks, especially those that complement and strengthen other networks and organisations, notably at the local government level.
9. Facilitate information systems, especially those that provide high degrees of access, such as public libraries, school community centres, adult and community education providers.
10. Build a high degree of transparency in government, and in particular in its relationships with the private sector.
11. Establish across government data gathering and analysis capacity that can provide ready and accurate advice to relevant areas of government
12. Increase the understanding amongst regional government employees of the impact of global change on employment, work and industries; and in particular amongst education and training personnel
13. Integrate into career guidance materials, programs and facilities of information about the role of learning and innovation in the future economy and society.

Figure 6 - Recommendations for action in Victoria (Australia)

The state of Victoria has also produced a plethora of reports offering advice to its towns and cities and urging them to become Learning Cities within a Learning City/Region. One of these is a community Consultation Resource Guide (24) to assist local authorities to involve local communities in the development of their learning towns and cities. We will talk more of consultation later in this paper. Another is a community resource service ie '*a government initiative providing a set of guidelines to Community building which aim to improve social, economic and environmental well-being for all Victorians, and to develop new partnerships to address inequity and disadvantage*'.(25) The essentially social and community focus of these initiatives demonstrates a step forward from the economic justification for Learning City/Regions envisaged by the state conference.

Meanwhile, next door in South Australia, similar developments have taken place. Ralph, Executive Director of the South Australia Centre for Education and Development in Lifelong Learning, again now unfortunately defunct, initiated a number of projects and leaflets on learning cities and regions. He introduced a new dimension into the Learning City/Regions debate (26), that of the need to celebrate learning openly and visibly in order to overcome the psychological and emotional barriers to learning in some sections of the population. To that end he initiated 'Learning Festivals' in Adelaide, an activity which has also been carried out in Glasgow by Young (27) and in Sapporo, Japan, described in some

details by Longworth in 'Learning Cities or a Learning century.' (11). Ralph also fought hard to have South Australia named as a 'State of Learning' and presided over the development of Learning City/Region strategies in townships such as Marion, Salisbury, Mawson Lakes and Adelaide itself.

The third of these, Mawson Lakes, is a particularly interesting development in community engagement in learning, a place where all sectors of the community, including business and industry, act as a resource for each other and where learning is designed into the construction of the new town. In this author's humble opinion it is the world's foremost example of a small Learning Community, and one from which others can learn. It is described in more detail in '*Lifelong Learning in Action – Transforming 21st Century Education*'. (28) Similar experiments are taking place in the South East region of Queensland, where rapid population growth and the easy availability of land is leading to interesting public-private experiments in marrying the physical, educational, environmental, cultural and social aspects of the building of 'Learning Communities.'

Both of these latter regions participated in a European Commission inspired project called PALLACE, described in later pages.

Smart cities

In North America, the concentration seems to be more technological. A Learning City would be termed a '**smart city**', a movement based on vastly increasing the amount of technology and the city's use of it. The smart cities network describe themselves as '*communities using information technology as a catalyst for transforming life and work to meet the challenge of the new millennium*' (29) Thus, while the objective included cultural and social matters, the means to that end was the use of technology by large numbers of people and that often led to the development of a more economic rationale to, in the words of the network, '*link local communities to the global information economy.*'

Technology and Smart cities were also identified in the thinking of the then UK Department for Education and Employment which became involved in this aspect of the Learning City debate as long ago as 1995. DfEE later funded the initial formation of the UK Learning Cities network and even devoted a section of its web-site to the subject. Figure 7 below, from its handbook entitled, *Learning Communities: A guide to assessing practice and progress*, (30) tried to articulate a distinction between a Learning City and a Learning Community

Differences between Learning Communities and Learning Cities	
Learning Communities	Learning Cities
Organic in nature—grow from within	Extraneous in nature—link existing organizations and add new structures
Grassroots approach—demands the participation of people from all sectors of the community with “filter up” effects on the community as a whole	Focused primarily on the IT/Telecommunications sector, with “filter down” effects on the rest of the community
Inclusive—brings together social, recreational, economic, spiritual, health, education, and more sectors	Exclusive—as above
Co-operative—keen to work with other communities to share ideas, best practises, etc.	Competitive—focus is to attract business and industry, and generate jobs for own community over others

Figure 7 DfEE differences

This demonstrates the semantic difficulty with definitions. A Learning City in DfEE-speak was self-evidently a smart city in North America while a Learning Community was another term for Learning City and Region in the British vocabulary. For the purposes of this paper we interpret a community as a neighbourhood within a city, though it could equally well be a community of practice or of like-minded people. Much that happens in a learning city and region will happen at neighbourhood level, especially in matters of active citizenship, consultation and voluntary/community organisation activity

The Learning Society

To add yet another semantic twist, the '**Learning Society**' is an all-embracing term often used to describe the concept of a learning commonwealth within a nation or a city. There is of course, as one would expect a wealth of literature surrounding the concept. In one of its annual publications (31), the European Round Table of Industrialists, representative of Europe's 42 largest industrial companies, made the point that a Learning Society would parallel the Information or Knowledge Society, and indeed act in symbiosis with it. One could not exist without the other. It suggested that not just economies have changed - *'fragmentation of the traditional family group and of family values produces a fundamental reorganisation of cultures, social habits, beliefs and values'*. 'Education'. it said, 'is about learning, not being taught ' and called upon industrialists to 'take an active part' in creating the Learning Society accompanied by supportive action from European Government. Its five definition points for a Learning Society are shown in Figure 8 below together with those added by Longworth and Davies of the European Lifelong Learning Initiative(32).

Ten Characteristics of a Learning Society

A Learning Society would be one in which.....

1. Learning is accepted as a continuing activity throughout life

2. Learners take responsibility for their own progress

3. Assessment confirms progress rather than brands failure

4. Capability, personal and shared values, team-working are recognised equally with the pursuit of knowledge

5. Learning is a partnership between students, parents, teachers, employers and the community, who all work together to improve performance

Five additional principles to have been added by the European Lifelong Learning Initiative

6. Everyone accepts some responsibility for the learning of others

7. Men, women, the disabled and minority groups have equal access to learning opportunities

8. Learning is seen as creative, rewarding and enjoyable

9. Learning is outward-looking, mind-opening and promotes tolerance, respect and understanding of other cultures, creeds, races and traditions

10. Learning is frequently celebrated individually, in families, in the community and in the wider world.

Figure 8 ERT and ELLI principles of a Learning Society

Such interest from a powerful industrialist body emphasises the economic importance given to lifelong learning by many sectors of society. Certainly all, except maybe number 3, which is outside the capability of a town or city to influence, are desirable attributes which we would try to convert into action within a learning city and region.

Learning Organisations in a Learning City/Region

There is more in the constellation of epithets associated with lifelong learning and learning cities. The '**Learning Organisation**' is a frequently used term, particularly in industry. It describes a community of people with a common aim. More often than not, that aim is an economic one and the 'Learning Organisation' is a company. Jack Horgan, Former Director of the European Commission's Eurotinet Programme (37) described it thus

'A Learning Organization is one which has a vision of tomorrow, seeing the people who make up the organization not simply being trained and developed to meet the organization's ends in a limiting and prescriptive manner, but for a more expanded role.'

Thus, business gain may be the main reason to become a Learning Organization; but the means to achieve that gain is through the development of human potential in the workforce – the expanded role. And the way in which that potential is developed entails a different mind-set from the traditional way in

which industry is run. Gone in many modern organisations is the Executive Suite, with its perks for Senior managers and Directors. Gone is a large proportion of middle management, who were seen to be getting in the way of productivity. Hierarchies are flat. Into the vacuum thus created comes the quality culture driven by customer orientation, just-in-time ordering and decision-making at the most appropriate point by the most appropriate people. Line Managers consult the workforce and bring them into the decision-making process. Team Learning is the new panacea.

This of course engenders an urgent requirement for learning, so that the new decision-makers can make informed judgements and increase their knowledge of production processes, marketing imperatives, quality requirements and international differences. In the learning organisation, everybody from the Managing Director to the Janitor learns, often with the aid of a formal personal learning plan. Some companies used 'Learning Requirements Audits' to measure the learning needs of each individual in the workforce. Mentoring is a frequently used tool for increasing motivation. Managers became coaches or 'Learning Counsellors', developing 'Personal Development Files' and advising on 'Personal Learning Plans', and armed with an array of incentives to encourage people to get into the learning habit. John Berkeley, former Education and Careers Manager of the Rover group said (38)

'Today managers serve primarily as facilitators, coaches, mentors and motivators empowering the real experts who are the associates (members of the workforce). Managers and employees all work together as a potent force for continuous improvement in both quality and productivity.'

Most major car manufacturers offered sums of money to entice their employees to take education even if it had nothing to do with the company's activities or purpose as in the Ford Motor Company's EDAP programme (39). Southee described it thus:

EDAP takes a liberal view of the type of learning eligible for support, and this has been crucial when working to encourage non-traditional learners back into learning. Someone who has done little or no formal learning since leaving school needs to be gently encouraged back into learning. This has taken many forms over the years, from learning to swim or play a musical instrument, to taking a sports coaching course to help train a junior football team. Others have chosen to learn skills for home improvements - bricklaying, plastering or some other useful skill. Whatever the activity, the main aim is to increase self confidence and gently ease people back into formal learning in the most enjoyable way possible. But these are just a few examples of the types of courses that people have participated in through EDAP. The range of activities covers the whole adult curriculum, including basic/essential skills, vocational skills, academic qualifications up to graduate level, and a range of personal interest and health and fitness courses. Individuals can apply for as many EDAP courses as they like as long as they do not exceed the £200 annual grant'

This is not Quaker philanthropy as in the days of William Hesketh Lever and the Cadbury family. Rather it is a recognition that fostering of the habit of learning impacts the bottom line. But a Learning Organisation need not be a company. Indeed ELLI's ten characteristics (40), developed by Longworth and shown in figure 9 on the next page, specify that it can be a company, a professional association, a university, a school, a city, a nation or any group of people, large or small, with a need and a desire to improve performance through learning.

Here again we see affinities to the needs of many learning cities. References to aspects such as preferred learning styles, open and distance learning and the environment would appear on any list of indicators for a learning city and region. They have a 'desire to improve performance through learning'. They 'invest in their own future' by so doing. They need to 'learn and relearn constantly in order to remain innovative, inventive, invigorating and in business.'

10 Indicators of a Learning Organisation
1. A Learning Organisation can be a company, a professional association, a University, a school, a city, a nation or any group of people, large or small, with a need and a desire to improve performance through learning.
2. A Learning Organisation invests in its own future through the Education and Training of all its people
3. A Learning Organisation creates opportunities for, and encourages, all its people in all its functions to fulfil their human potential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>as employees, members, professionals or students of the organisation</i> - <i>as ambassadors of the organisation to its customers, clients, audiences and suppliers</i> - <i>as citizens of the wider society in which the organisation exists</i> - <i>as human beings with the need to realise their own capabilities</i>
4. A Learning Organisation shares its vision of tomorrow with its people and stimulates them to challenge it, to change it and to contribute to it
5. A Learning Organisation integrates work and learning and inspires all its people to seek quality, excellence and continuous improvement in both
6. A Learning Organisation mobilises all its human talent by putting the emphasis on 'Learning' and planning its Education and Training activities accordingly
7. A Learning Organisation empowers ALL its people to broaden their horizons in harmony with their own preferred learning styles
8. A Learning organisation applies up to date open and distance delivery technologies appropriately to create broader and more varied learning opportunities
9. A Learning Organisation responds proactively to the wider needs of the environment and the society in which it operates, and encourages its people to do likewise
10. A Learning Organisation learns and relearns constantly in order to remain innovative, inventive, invigorating and in business.

Figure 9 - Characteristics of a Learning Organisation

The dynamic behind the Learning Organisation can be applied in several parts of the Learning City and Region. To be sure the Local and Regional administration departments need to incorporate it into their management practices, and so does each stakeholder in, for example, the schools, universities, adult colleges, hospitals, police etc by focussing on the client as customer. Many cities are already doing so and using external quality and standards reference points such as 'Investors in people' (41), in the words of its mission statement 'a national quality standard which sets a level of good practice for improving an organisation's performance through its people'. There is too a larger sense in which cities and regions themselves, through a collective of their administration departments, their stakeholders, their businesses, their citizens and their suppliers and customers from inside and outside the city form a living, vibrant and standalone learning organisation. This more complex aspect of the city and region as a 'Learning

Organisation' is being addressed by the R3L INDICATORS project run from Stirling University, and described in later pages.

CEDEFOP, Vocational Training and the Learning City/Region

At this point we could profitably return to Europe. We left it at the stage where it was contemplating a new programme devoted exclusively to the local and regional dimension of lifelong learning. But this was not the only initiative taken in this area. The European CEDEFOP organisation for Vocational Education and Training also applied itself to the concept in the context of assessing the role of educational institutions in both improving personal motivation to learn among disenfranchised learners and increasing economic performance. Nyhan, editor of *'Towards the Learning City/Region - education and innovation in the European Union and the United States'* (42) put forward a number of innovative ideas.

In the Learning City/Region, he suggested, the term 'learning' has a much broader meaning in that it refers to the collective and collaborative learning by all of the different actors in a region – each one learning from each other and each one learning with each other – in planning and implementing social and economic innovations. Thus one major objective of regional management is to develop a means by which educational and other organisations have a common purpose. When this happens societies will be able to innovate because they have the capacity for collective learning about how to develop new knowledge and in particular practical 'know-how' type of knowledge. He suggested that collective learning for innovation takes place better in small more self-contained social units - such as regions, localities or cities - where people have the opportunities to live and interact and cooperate with each other in an immediate way. The role of educational organisations is to act both as a catalyst for the production of new ideas and as brokers or mediators enabling different bodies to begin to work together, developing the know-how to turn these ideas into reality.

As with the OECD reasoning, Learning City/Regions for CEDEFOP therefore have a predominantly economic rationale. They work towards creating appropriate infrastructure and conditions so as to gain a comparative advantage, an 'edge' in the competitive environment generated by globalisation. The distinctive feature of a 'Learning City/Region' is the co-operation between different actors, i.e. educational bodies, research and development agencies, statutory bodies, enterprises and non-governmental organisations ('civil society') - in working together on how to devise solutions and produce new knowledge to address local needs. Educational institutions in this scenario have a much larger responsibility than as organisations for delivering courses. To fulfil their role in a Learning City/Region they will need to adopt new strategies and build new kinds of relationships with the different economic, social and cultural actors in society.

European Learning City/Region Development Projects

The European Commission has taken a wider view of the issues in its choice of projects to support. Unlike some of its member states which themselves have a narrow economic and adult education view of lifelong learning, the Commission, as do other world organisations such as UNESCO, recognises the whole-of-life, cradle to grave inspiration, evidenced in its 1996 'year of lifelong learning'. Thus the full range of local Lifelong Learning applications was at the core of many of its 'Grundtvig' projects for Adult Education and an increasing number of its 'Comenius' projects for schools and teacher training. The NewTELS project (43), for example, aimed to establish associations of learning cities in 18 European countries by running introductory seminars for city leaders there, and creating an electronic network for the distribution of information and the stimulation of debate.

Lilliput Learning Materials

Conversely, the LILLIPUT project (44), organised from Napier University, engaged seven partners in developing, testing, modifying and making available 14 web-delivered learning modules and materials on 14 aspects of the learning city as shown in figure 10 below. Longworth, who managed the project and coordinated the input of 7 partners from Denmark, France, Norway, Sweden, Ireland, Scotland and the

Czech Republic, estimated that there are more than 300 hours worth of learning materials in the modules. They cover cradle to grave issues in the physical, environmental, political, cultural, social, regenerative and sustainability arena. They are Learning modules. Ownership of the learning has, as far as possible, been passed to the learner in best lifelong learning tradition. The learning leader, that is the person who downloads and puts together the course or seminar, acts as a facilitator of that learning, drawing upon the experience, creativity, imagination and knowledge of the learners themselves, but also using the exercises in the toolkits to stimulate that creativity. The full range of modules is shown in figure 10 below.

LILLIPUT project learning modules

- a) **Module 1 - Introductory Module – The Learning City in Action** (Napier University, Edinburgh) exploring the basic concepts of the Learning City, why it is important in the 21st century, what it is and how it can be implemented.
- b) **Module 2 - The Individual in a Learning City/Region** (Skagen Adult Education Centre, Denmark) exploring the strategies by which individuals can become active learning citizens within a learning city including the use of learning audits and personal learning plans and the concept of active citizenship
- c) **Module 3 - Adult Learning Providers in a Learning City/Region** (Napier University, Edinburgh) providing lifelong learning materials to enable adult education colleges to understand their roles and responsibilities in the growth of a learning city.
- d) **Module 4 –The Community in the Learning City/Region** (Akershus University College, Norway) – introducing ideas and concepts of the community in a Learning City/Region and exploring the ways in which modern cities are focusing upon neighbourhoods as units for regeneration, education and lifelong learning.
- e) **Module 5 – The Community in action in the Learning City/Region Region** (Akershus University College, Norway) exploring the ways in which excluded groups can be brought into the mainstream of learning city life and the importance of diversity in the cultural development of the city.
- f) **Module 6 –Politics and Democracy in the Learning City/Region** (Toulouse Business School) providing materials to educate elected representatives and city professionals on what needs to be done to build it and how to engage citizens.
- g) **Module 7 – The Economics, Technology and Sustainability in the Learning City** (Toulouse Business School) looks at the economic factors, including financial and other resource implications and strategies, of constructing a Learning City/Region.
- h) **Module 8 – The Workplace (Part 1) – Learning Organisations, Leadership and Management in a Learning City** (Dublin City Development Board, Ireland), exploring how large and small companies are becoming Learning Organisations and the changes this is producing in leadership and management strategies.
- i) **Module 9 - The Workplace in the Learning City/Region (Part 2)** (Dublin City Development Board, Ireland) exploring the core skills needed by a 21st century workplace and the thinking skills needed by the workforce,
- j) **Modules 10 and 11 - Administration in the Learning City** (Palacky University, Olomouc, Czech Republic) exploring aspects of administration in the Learning City including language learning and public administration and Law.
- k) **Module 12 - The School in the Learning City/Region** (Napier University, Scotland) outlining the characteristics of a lifelong learning school and its role and responsibility in the construction of a Learning City.
- l) **Module 13 -The Family in a Learning City/Region** (Skagen Adult Education Centre, Denmark) providing materials on lifelong learning to allow an understanding of the importance of family in lifelong learning..
- m) **Module 14 – The University in a Learning City/Region** (Goteborg University, Sweden) providing lifelong learning materials to enable universities to understand the centrality of their roles and responsibilities in the growth of a learning city.

Figure 10 LILLIPUT Learning Modules on Learning Cities and Regions

As can be seen from the list above, LILLIPUT was a comprehensive project. The modules, which are now available free of charge on the Eurolocal site (see below), cover most aspects of the learning city and region, including some of those often forgotten. Each module is divided into topics and lessons each lasting between one and two hours. Learning Leaders are provided with

- a) For each topic and lesson, a description of its content and purpose
- b) for each lesson, a toolkit containing questionnaires, visual aids, charts, diagrams, papers, quotations,

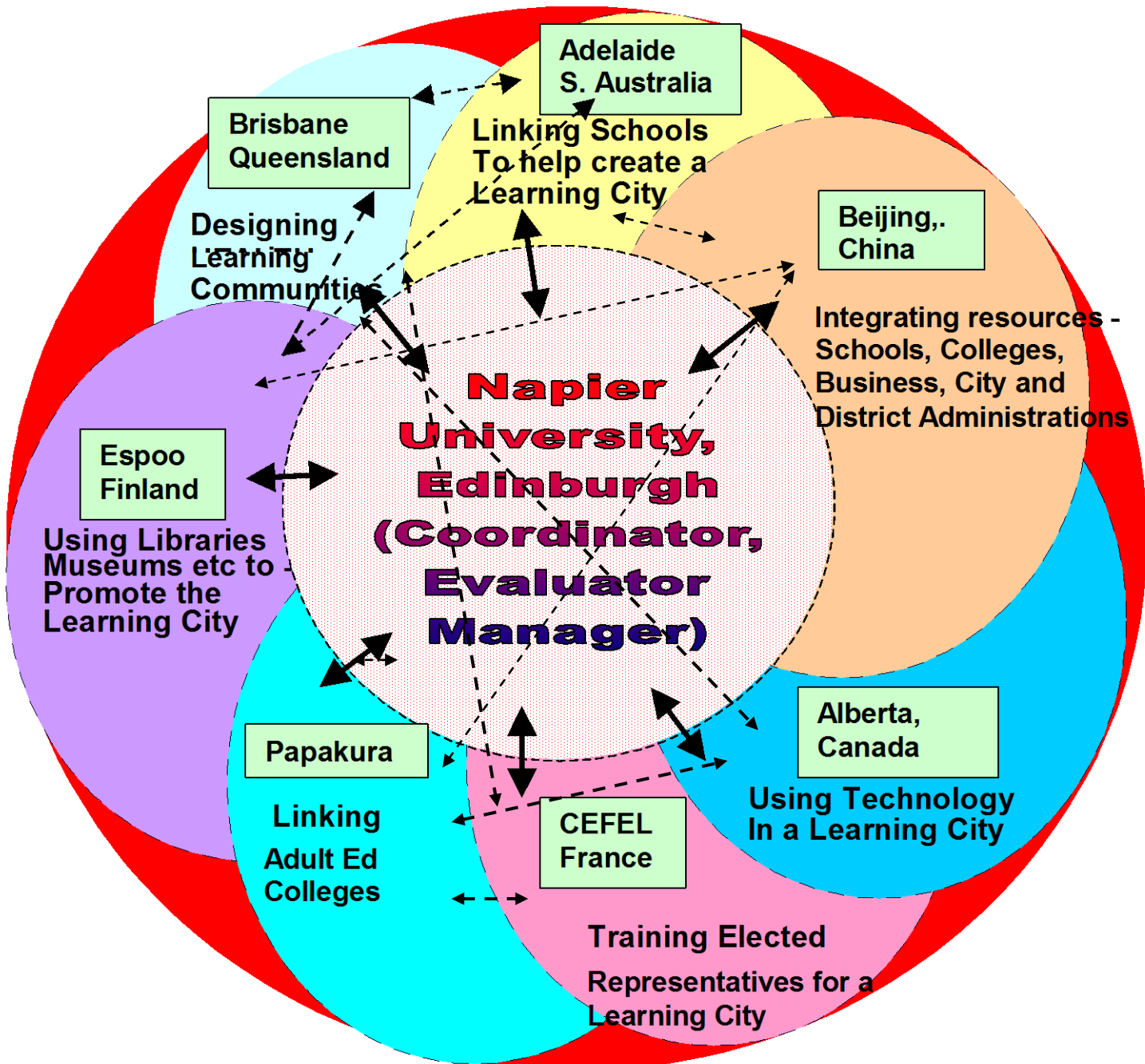
- presentations, exercises etc to help with the presentation of the subject matter.
- c) For each lesson, A set of guidelines and suggestions on how to use these materials
 - d) objectives for each topic and lesson

Pallace

While Lilliput produced valuable learning materials for all target audiences in cities, another project funded by the European Commission ranged much wider. This was PALLACE – *promoting active lifelong learning in Australia, China, Canada and Europe* (45). It linked stakeholders – schools, adult education colleges, universities, elected representatives, cultural services departments in 8 Learning City/Regions across the globe – South-east Queensland, South Australia, the Auckland region of New Zealand, France, The Learning City/Region around Espoo, Finland, The Edmonton Region of Canada, Beijing in China and Edinburgh in Scotland, since the project management was based at Napier University there. Each region concentrated on a particular stakeholder expertise and linked with another region to help develop it, as in figure 11 below.

SEMINARS IN EUROPE,
AUSTRALIA, CANADA
NEW ZEALAND

SETTING UP A
GLOBAL LEARNING
CITIES NETWORK



THE 'PALLACE' PROJECT – LINKING STAKEHOLDERS IN LEARNING CITIES AND REGIONS GLOBALLY

Figure 11 The Pallace Global Learning Cities project

We may imagine how this type of project might take hold if only there were the proper global funding authorities. The development of a series of similar city networks, and the insertion of a more deprived city such as Basra, Kabul, Harare or Gaza into each, could provide a real challenge to the learning city and at the same time concentrate development effort where it is most needed. Longworth, who also managed the project, isolates the following seven advantages of such an approach.(46)

- Thousands more people and organisations contributing to the solution of social, cultural, environmental, political and economic problems
- A giant leap in mutual understanding and a transformation of mind-sets through greater communication between people and organisations
- Profitable economic, trade and technical development through contact between business and industry
- Active interaction and involvement, and a huge increase in available resource through the mobilisation of the goodwill, talents, skills, experience and creativity between cities and regions
- Fewer refugees – developing problems can be anticipated and addressed through cooperation between the cities
- It's sustainable – because it's so much more dispersed. Governments and NGOs are no longer the only initiators of aid to the underdeveloped. Action is now shared with the cities and, through them, the people.
- organisations and institutions in the city/region have a real world-class focus and *raison d'être*

Such unbridled idealism would require more resource and political commitment than seems to be available at the present time, Governments seeming to prefer other methods of persuasion. However the PALLACE project had some solid achievements behind it,

- How cultural services in museums and libraries could help to enhance knowledge of the learning city and involve citizens themselves,
- How not only school pupils and teachers in Finland and Adelaide benefited from the targeted interaction, but also the cities themselves.
- How elected representatives in Sannois (France) and Marion (South Australia) increased their knowledge of the learning city and its implications
- The thinking behind the creation of a cross-sectoral lifelong learning centre and strategy for a city sector of 800,000 people in Beijing
- The development of learning principles into new communities in Mawson Lakes and South Queensland

Stakeholder Audits – measuring lifelong learning progress in the Learning City and Region

From the unlikely romanticism of PALLACE, we can move to the solid pragmatism of INDICATORS , one of the projects in the R3L programme, which resulted from the TELS recommendations and its subsequent policy paper. R3L supported 17 projects from all parts of the European Union. Its purpose was to develop inter-regional networks that would themselves each develop a set of project outcomes and exchange information, experiences and ideas through the R3L site (47). INDICATORS was one of these.

Earlier we mentioned that the project outcomes provided one of the vehicles by which a whole City or Region might also become a 'Learning Organisation'. We also suggested that a Learning City would mobilise its stakeholders to contribute its expertise and human and other resources to its construction. Managed from the University of Stirling in Scotland, the project created a series of tools which they call 'Stakeholder Audits.' These were carefully worded, interactive documents that would enable respondees to understand the many basic elements of lifelong learning as it affected their organisation, and to convert this new knowledge into actions that would implement its concepts both internally within the organisation (ie turn it into a learning organisation) and externally (ie work with other organisations to

help build a learning society, a learning city or a Learning City/Region within the geographical area where the organisation resides).

Stakeholder Audits were much more than questionnaires. The objective was as much to give insights and knowledge and provoke reflection as to gather data (though this is a desirable spin-off). It was therefore designed to perform several tasks:

- a) to establish a 'dialogue' between the designer and the resposdee, since the designer is not present while the audit was being completed.
- b) to pass over essential new knowledge and ideas to the resposdee that provoke reflection and stimulate insight (this may be done through the use of quotations from expert reports etc)
- c) to allow the opinions, experiences and ideas of the resposdee to be freely expressed and meshed with the requirements for change within the organisation
- d) to act as a driver for change – emphasising the dynamic nature of stakeholder organisations
- e) to act as a staff training stimulator, for example as the basis for focus group discussion on particular topics
- f) to provide ideas for the development of innovative internal policies and strategies to accommodate learning organisation principles
- g) to energise stakeholders to contribute to Learning City/Region development according to their role and ability

Five Audits were developed and tested in situ – for Local and Regional Authority Administrations, for schools, for Adult Vocational Education establishments, for Universities and for Small and medium-sized enterprises. They covered the whole gamut of lifelong learning indicators including:

- The organisation as a Learning organisation
- Quality and Standards
- Continuous Improvement programmes for staff (and students)
- The organisation's role in the building of a Learning City/Region
- Wider Access to Learning
- Partnerships and Resources
- Availability and Use of technology in Distance Learning, networking and multi-media development
- Active citizenship in the community
- Existing strategies and policies for lifelong learning
- Information and Communication internally and externally including message accessibility
- Support systems and the breaking down of barriers
- Teacher development
- Socio-economic policies and skills identification and development
- Resource and Financial strategies
- Environmental initiatives
- Celebration of Learning
- Sustainability
- Learning Charters
- Etc

But it was the approach that was important. These were Audits rather than questionnaires. Tools to be used rather than surveys to gather information. They contained quotations from reports and books to stimulate reflection and provide authority, they invited opinion, experiences, feedback and the addition of

city initiatives, and they proffered ideas and knowledge to energise a movement towards establishing a need and then to develop or modify a strategy to satisfy it. Two versions were developed – a short one to give the resposdee a taste of the parameters involved and a vision of the place of the stakeholder in the learning city, and a longer version to assist in the development of policies. They could be used collectively under the leadership of a local or regional authority to establish the whole region as a learning organisation.

According to Osborne, Longworth, Sankey and Gray (48) local authorities in particular pronounced the tools to be useful and informative, they appeared to promote reflection in schools, and adult educational organisations and small businesses confessed to being interested. However, the authors of the report also pointed out that the size of the sample was too small to provide conclusive evidence of success, and a much larger trial needed to be implemented. Regrettably this did not happen because of a lack of funding, though a later project, EUROlocal (see later), was accepted and this published all the projects and tools mentioned in this paper inside an interactive website for the use of everyone.

Learning Charters

The idea of learning charters is interesting. They first made an appearance as an outcome of a conference at the city of Southampton in 1998 (49) and were adopted by the city itself and in Espoo, Finland. Later they were incorporated into the European Policy paper and the Lilliput project was charged with refining them. Two versions of the charter existed – one showing the commitment of the city or region to its own citizens as learners (figure 12) and another outlining the rights of learners as citizens. (figure 13).

A Charter for Learning Cities

WE RECOGNISE THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING AS THE MAJOR DRIVING FORCE FOR THE FUTURE PROSPERITY, STABILITY AND WELL-BEING OF OUR CITIZENS.

We declare that we will invest in Lifelong Learning within our community by:

- 1. DEVELOPING PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS** BETWEEN ALL SECTORS OF THE CITY FOR OPTIMISING AND SHARING RESOURCES, AND INCREASING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL
- 2. DISCOVERING THE LEARNING REQUIREMENTS** OF EVERY CITIZEN FOR PERSONAL GROWTH, CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY WELL-BEING
- 3. ENERGISING LEARNING PROVIDERS** TO SUPPLY LEARNING GEARED TO THE NEEDS OF EACH LEARNER WHERE, WHEN, HOW AND BY WHOM IT IS REQUIRED, LIFELONG.
- 4. STIMULATING DEMAND FOR LEARNING** THROUGH INNOVATIVE INFORMATION STRATEGIES, PROMOTIONAL EVENTS AND THE EFFECTIVE USE OF THE MEDIA
- 5. SUPPORTING THE SUPPLY OF LEARNING** BY PROVIDING MODERN LEARNING GUIDANCE SERVICES AND ENABLING THE EFFECTIVE USE OF NEW LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES
- 6. MOTIVATING ALL CITIZENS** TO CONTRIBUTE THEIR OWN TALENTS, SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND ENERGY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CARE, COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, SCHOOLS AND OTHER PEOPLE
- 7. PROMOTING WEALTH CREATION** THROUGH ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT AND ASSISTANCE FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANISATIONS TO BECOME LEARNING ORGANISATIONS
- 8. ACTIVATING OUTWARD-LOOKING PROGRAMMES** TO ENABLE CITIZENS TO LEARN FROM OTHERS IN THEIR OWN, AND THE GLOBAL, COMMUNITY
- 9. COMBATING EXCLUSION** BY CREATIVE PROGRAMMES TO INVOLVE THE EXCLUDED IN LEARNING AND THE LIFE OF THE CITY
- 10. RECOGNISING THE PLEASURE OF LEARNING** THROUGH EVENTS TO **CELEBRATE AND REWARD** LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT IN ORGANISATIONS, FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS

On behalf of the City of SEAL

Signed

Title.....

Figure 12: City commitment charter

A LEARNER'S CHARTER

GOOD FOOD, GOOD HEALTH AND GOOD LEARNING ARE INTERDEPENDENT PARTS OF THE HUMAN BIO-SYSTEM

AS A CITIZEN YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO LEARN AND TO DEVELOP YOUR OWN FULL POTENTIAL THROUGHOUT LIFE

YOUR RIGHT TO LEARNING EXISTS IRRESPECTIVE OF YOUR RELIGION, ETHNIC BACKGROUND, AGE, NATIONALITY OR GENDER

AS A CUSTOMER FOR LEARNING YOUR NEEDS TAKE FIRST PRIORITY

AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, LEARNING WILL BE PROVIDED FOR YOU WHERE, WHEN AND HOW YOU DESIRE IT

THE VALUE OF LEARNING WILL BE ACTIVELY PROMOTED AND ENCOURAGED THROUGHOUT YOUR LIFETIME

YOUR INDIVIDUAL LEARNING STYLE WILL BE RECOGNISED AND CATERED FOR

WHETHER OR NOT YOU HAVE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO RECEIVE EXPERT HELP WITHIN SOPHISTICATED SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE SYSTEMS AT ALL TIMES

YOU WILL HAVE ACCESS TO MODERN RESOURCES FOR LEARNING WHEREVER THEY MAY BE

AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, YOU WILL BE GIVEN OWNERSHIP OF, AND CONTROL OVER, YOUR OWN LEARNING

WHATEVER LEARNING YOU CHOOSE TO DO WILL BE TREATED WITH RESPECT, RECOGNITION AND REWARD

Figure 13 Charter of Individual rights to learning

Such charters are not in great use in the present day though, as number of learning cities and regions increases, it is expected that the use of firmer and more visible commitments will also increase.

LILARA – Learning in Local and Regional Authorities.

The LILARA (Learning in Local and Regional Authorities) project was a European university–local authority project developing consultation tools to identify the learning needs of managers and professionals *vis a vis* the growth of learning cities and regions. It explored the total quality management notion into new territory by suggesting that learning cities, regions, towns, communities, societies, however we describe them, would not be created unless there is a large cadre of administrators in local and regional authorities and their stakeholders with the knowledge and the energy to drive the learning city agenda

As in the drive for Total Quality Management during the 1990s, quality will not pervade unless every person in the organization has been immersed into the concept. So it is in the administration departments of a budding learning city. Each person will need to know at least the basic principles of the learning region and each department will have its own particular orientation towards implementing them. (Doyle et al. 2007)

It was important therefore to research, design and deliver the learning that administrators need so that they can play their part in developing the region as a learning region. Moreover, such activities encourage the delivery of the joined-up, holistic local government needed to cope with 21st century challenges Initiated in Europe, from Stirling University, LILARA has also been replicated in Victoria, Australia.

LILARA developed its own interactive audit of the needs and desires of local and regional authority staff for knowledge and learning about the future of their authorities as learning cities and regions. In order to overcome the problem of a lack of knowledge in the resposdee, the Audit initially provided some definitions for comment and, in the interests of allowing participants to make up their own mind, invites them to provide their own definition. It continued by asking for personal responses to statements such as

The future <u>prosperity</u> of the city depends upon its ability to <u>motivate</u> its citizens that learning is a lifelong activity.
Future <u>social stability</u> in the city depends upon its ability to <u>motivate</u> its citizens that learning is a lifelong activity.
The local authority that is not <u>open and responsive</u> to the changes that both the wider world and its own citizens require of it will experience declining success, employment and security.

and their own perceptions of the awareness of local leaders to these statements. It continued by looking at their authority as a learning organisation and eliciting responses about their understanding of how they think the authority was performing in 30 different learning organisation aspects. Figure 14 below shows some examples.

Management/ leadership	Employees are <u>consulted</u> frequently and fully.
Organisational decision-making	Decisions are made and acted upon at the most <u>appropriate point in each area of responsibility</u> .
Rewards	A <u>reward system</u> exists and is applied to council employees
Organisation management	Non-hierarchical – each employee is a colleague and treated with equal <u>respect</u> .
Feedback	<u>Feedback</u> on all matters is welcomed, acted upon and always replied to
Grievance channels	There is a <u>confidential</u> system of airing grievances with no come-back to the complainant.
Contribution to policy-making	Employees are <u>encouraged to contribute</u> to policy-making. Suggestions always replied to.

Continuous improvement	Council employees have personal development plans and an implementation plan.
Lifelong learning	Employees of the local authority are encouraged and given management help to continue to learn
Lifelong learning	Council employees are encouraged and given help to <u>learn inside and outside</u> of the organisation.
Learning support	<u>Personal support structures</u> (eg learning counsellors) exist to ensure that every employee can be directed towards learning relevant to his/her own needs.
Learning facilities	The local authority has its own <u>in-house learning facilities</u> made available to all.
Use of learning technologies	Full use is made of new <u>learning technologies</u> for helping people learn.
Displays of learning values	Prominent displays are found in all departments and buildings of the <u>value of learning</u> and encouragement to take it.
Displays of results	Prominent displays of the <u>performance</u> of the council are found in all departments and building.

Figure 14 Local Authorities as Learning Organisations – LILARA project

There were another 15 of these. Throughout, participants were invited to insert their own comments and opinions. It can be seen that the Audit differed from a standard questionnaire. It was as much an interactive educational document which gave ideas and information as well as receiving opinions and more ideas in return, all in the interests of provoking debate and receiving a more informed response.

However, the real meat of the Audit was to be found in section 2. It is where respondents, having ingested the basic tenets of the learning city in section 1, were asked to articulate their own learning requirements in order to make their own contribution to local knowledge and action (or not, as the case may be!). Here we divided the domains of the learning city/region into 12 learning topics and issues as shown in figure 15 below.

LILARA Learning Needs Audit – Personal

	Learning City topics	Topic Examples	High	Med
2.2.1	Basic knowledge, understanding and awareness Issues	Nature and characteristics of a Learning City. Why it is necessary. How it is different. Agents of change. Implications for me, for my family, for my fellow citizens. My role and responsibility. Constructing a Learning City. Examples of good practice.		
2.2.2	Organisational and planning issues	My area as a learning organisation. My role in strategy and policy development. Tools and techniques for improving performance. Continuous learning programmes. Quality management. Managing my learning. Developing leadership. Examples of good practice.		
2.2.3	Wealth creation issues	Employment and employability. Attracting industry and inward investment. Workplaces as learning organisations. Skills and competences for the future. The Learning City as an investment. Role of the regional development agency. Linking cities globally. Learning festivals. Marketing the area as a Learning City. Entrepreneurial education. Case studies.		
2.2.4	Social issues	Personal development tools and techniques. Learning incentives. Social inclusion. Developing Learning Communities and Learning Societies. Multiculturalism and diversity. Promoting tolerance and inter-ethnic communication. Work-life balance. Case studies of good practice.		
2.2.5.	Educational issues	Creating a culture of learning. Teaching and learning differences. New skills-based curricula for a learning age. Continuous professional development for all. Learner ownership. New learning methods. Learning styles. Mentoring schemes. Counselling. Improving access to learning. Removing barriers. Celebrating, rewarding and recognising learning success. Non-traditional students. Evaluation.		
2.2.6.	Resource and financial issues	Investing in lifelong learning. Full service budgeting schemes. Service credit. Partnerships for increasing resource. Tapping into community human, financial and physical resources. Case studies of good practice.		
2.2.7.	Contribution and participation Issues	Personal contribution to building a learning area/community. Active citizenship. Volunteering. Corporate social responsibility. Time-off social programmes. Mobilising the community. Case studies of good practice.		
2.2.8.	Political and democracy issues	Learning and local politics. Consulting the people. Educating civic leaders. Civic education for all. Local and global responsibilities. Learning City charters, participation and contribution. Learning Communities and Neighbourhoods. Communicating the learning message to all.		
2.2.9.	Technology issues	Technology and the learning future. Smart cities. Wired Cities. Using the Internet and education technology tools for learning. Linking Learning Cities nationally and globally. Learning Region Networks. Distance learning and multimedia. Case studies of good practice.		
2.2.10	Stakeholder issues	Institutions as stakeholders - roles and responsibilities of schools, universities, adult colleges, business and industry, voluntary and community organisations. People as stakeholders, individuals and families, councillors, myself. Using previous learning experiences. Case studies		
2.2.11	Cultural issues	Culture in the Learning City. Local history. Role of museums, libraries, galleries etc. Street culture. Case studies of good practice. Citizen involvement		
2.2.12	Environmental and Sustainability Issues	Citizen involvement, Sustainability. Eco-diversity, Eco-awareness, Area regeneration, Rural and Urban Planning, waste management, pollution control		

Each one was more fully explained by division into sub-topics and each individual was expected to have a different set of learning issues and topics, which the project partners would then try to satisfy locally in cooperation with the local authority.. The first 200 respondents in a Scottish city identified their learning needs as follows

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Priority	Basic Concept	Organisational	Wealth Creation	Social Issues	Educ Issues	Finance	Contribution	Political issues	Technical Issues	Stake holders	Environmental
High	61	63	37	79	88	44	53	51	45	48	66
Medium	82	80	74	72	63	79	94	77	85	74	71
Low	44	45	76	35	36	60	35	55	54	60	41

Figure 16: Some results of LILARA Learning Needs Audit

In general results were interesting though numbers responding were low and gave rise to the following conclusions

- A perceived relatively low interest among local authority employees – In Stirling only 210 out of 4000 replied to the audit, though this could have also been due to many other factors such as poor communication and/or unfamiliarity with the concept. In other places the percentage was lower.
- Even among the 200 or so who did respond, a large educational burden which indicates the need for more self-learning materials and new approaches to continuing professional development
- A low knowledge of learning city/region concepts among management and a total absence of participation/interest among local politicians
- A closed culture in cities and regions that does not lend itself to the acceptance of new ideas and concepts from external sources.

The LILARA tools are available on the internet at <http://eurolocal.info>

PENR3L A European Learning Region expertise network

But all of these ideas, plans and actions come to nothing if there is not a sustained effort to implement them in a systematic way and to bring together the people with the knowledge to make a difference, as in recommendation 7 of figure 1. As in so many promising funded projects, the thin veneer of sustainability often disperses with the end of the funding. In late 2007 the European Commission, which recognised that the key to implementing its lifelong learning policy is the creation and stimulation of learning cities and regions, approved a project to establish a sustainable expertise network in this area in Europe. This was called PENR3L (PASCAL European Network of Lifelong learning Regions), linked to the PASCAL organisation mentioned below. (Longworth and Osborne, 2008) The institution leading the project was the Department of Adult and Continuing Education at the university of Stirling, which had already established itself as a forward-looking organisation in this field by developing the LILARA tools, described above. Another earlier contribution had been the development of 'stakeholder audits,' the interactive tools to allow a local authority and its stakeholders in universities, schools, adult education and SMEs to become learning organisations working together to create a learning city. At the time, too, it was the European centre of the global PASCAL Observatory.

PENR3L organised two seminal workshops in Barcelona and Kaunas (Lithuania) to debate the issues surrounding the development of learning cities/regions and the ways in which this could be initiated, propagated and sustained. The workshops covered an eclectic and substantial set of topics and sub-topics shown in figure 17 below,

Theme 1: Learning Regions, Learning Cities and Economic Development

Sub themes

- Characteristics of Learning Regions and Cities
 - What constitutes a learning region – how is it different?
 - Importance of Research, knowledge, intelligence and information for economic development
 - Sustainability and economic development
- Learning Organisations in a Learning Region
 - Characteristics of Learning Organisations
 - Continuous learning development and support programmes - For whom? Why? What? How?
 - Learning Conditions for developing Innovation and creativity
 - Stakeholders as Learning Organisations - Stakeholder audits
 - The region as an adaptive Learning Organisation
 - Partnerships and purposes – local, national, European, Global
- Marketing and publicising Learning Cities and Regions
 - Communicating internally to organisations and people – stimulating internal investment
 - Marketing the learning region to the wider world – stimulating external investment
- Resources and Capital
 - Building new capital and resource
 - Mobilising Human, Intellectual, Community and Economic Capital
 - Relationship between Economic and Social Capital
- Employability, Employment, skills and learning etc
 - Discovering and satisfying learning needs in local authorities for economic development
 - Learning Needs – content, methods and sources of materials
 - Skills for 21st century learning cities and regions
 - Development Tools and techniques – personal learning plans, audits, mentors, guides etc

Theme 2: Learning Regions, Learning Cities - Social and Community Development

Subthemes

- Creating a culture of learning – why? how? – breaking down barriers.
 - Stakeholders and their roles – especially voluntary and community organisations
 - Tools and techniques in a social setting, personal learning plans, personal audits, mentors and guides
 - Coping with Diversity, multi and inter-culturalism
 - Learning Needs, content, methods and providers
- Consultation, involvement and democracy
 - Consultation methods – from information to empowerment
 - Neighbourhood learning development strategies
 - Improving involvement and democracy
- Active Citizenship and volunteering
 - Mobilising people and communities
 - Volunteering strategies
 - Networking citizens of all ages internationally
- Environment, climate change and sustainable development
- Continuous learning/development and support programmes
- Resources and Capital - as above concentrating on social capital

Theme 3 Learning Regions, Learning Cities – Networking, intelligence and knowledge

Sub themes

Needs and requirements of cities and regions
What sort of intelligence and how to communicate?
What partnerships, why and between whom?
What resources for the network
Politics and structures
Network Communication methods
Network Sustainability

Figure 17: PENR3L Learning Region Topics (Longworth and Osborne, 2008)

The complexity of the Learning City/Region concept can be seen in both figures above. The difficulties lie firstly in envisioning the interconnections that transform a set of discrete topics into a holistic strategy, and secondly in establishing an international dimension in the face of the local and national mind-set that pervades current thinking. Cities/Regions often see themselves in fierce competition with each other for

scarce resources, and it is sometimes difficult for them to recognise that greater international cooperation can help them achieve their aims and objectives more easily.

EUROlocal – a European knowledge-gathering project

One European initiative that can be useful to all cities and regions throughout Europe is EUROlocal. Four collaborating organisations with a history of experience in learning regions and cities were involved: the Pascal Observatory, University of Glasgow, (UK), Learning Regions Deutschland (LRD) (Germany), Universitas Bari (Italy) and the University of Pecs (Hungary). The principle aim of this project was to provide a central repository in the form of a sophisticated website to store more than two decades of data, tools, indicators, reports, videos, projects, recommendations, plans, strategies and learning materials for the benefit of European cities and regions. See figure 18.below.

EUROlocal DIMENSIONS

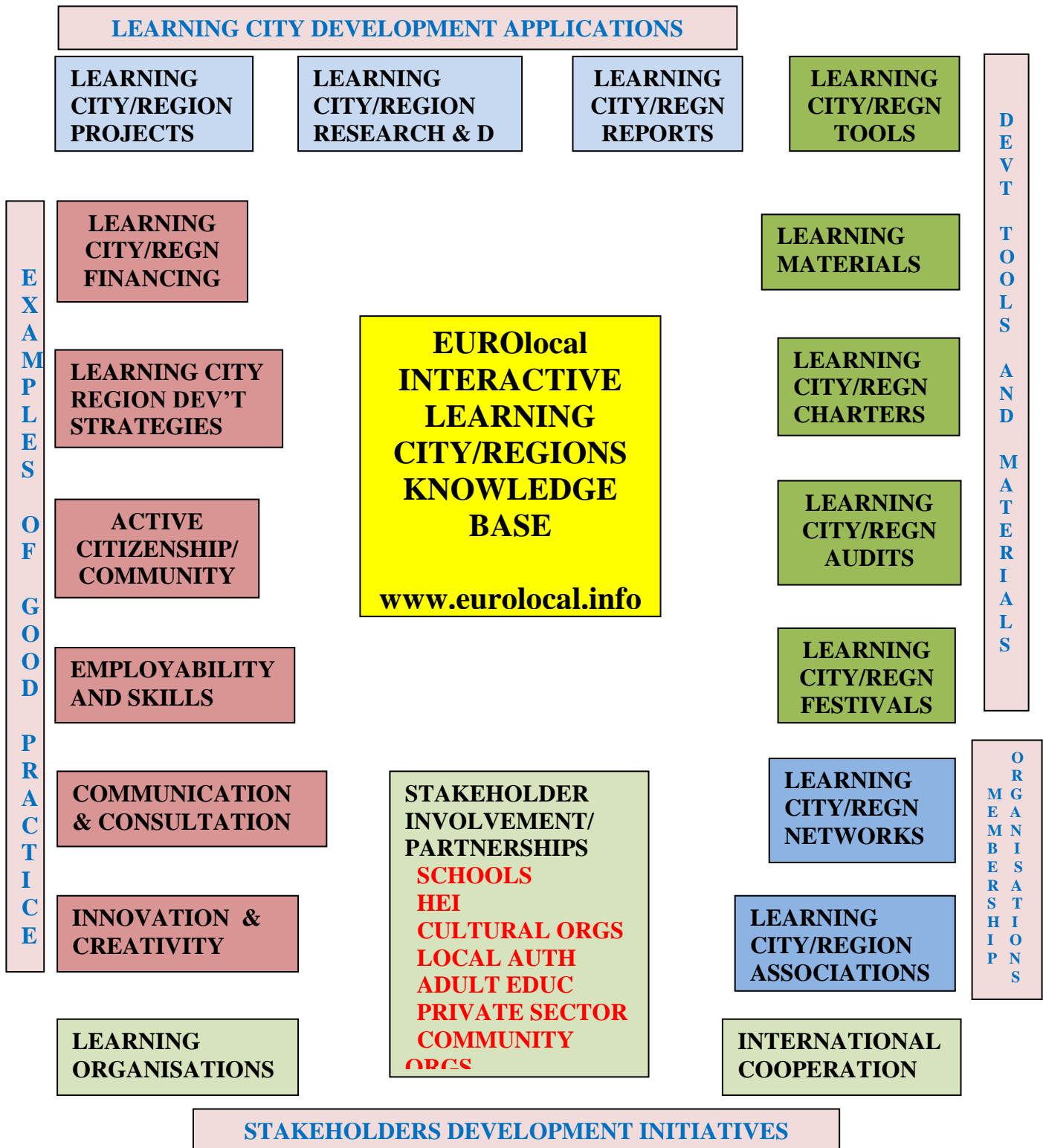


Figure 18: EUROlocal Dimensions (Longworth and Osborne, 2010) (52)

As well as creating a rich reservoir of materials EUROLocal has also collated more than 800 city/regional development contacts from throughout Europe. It has also housed the existing audit tools mentioned in this paper, and translated and tested these in different sectoral areas, including schools, adult education institutions, local authorities and universities. More learning materials were devised for others interested in learning regions and cities to use.

Longer-term targets in relation to dissemination, exploitation and sustainability have also been developed and reached. For example, the work of the project has been fed directly into the developments within UNESCO's IPLC initiative, described below. By establishing strong sets of connections with other networks, regions and cities as well as individuals, and by being maintained after the lifetime of the project by a global network, the PASCAL Observatory, unusually high prospects for longevity exist for EUROlocal. Furthermore the project was designed to have maximum impact on the development of linked strategies for Lifelong Learning Regions at EU level. It does this by having

- Provided a wealth of potentially valuable knowledge for European regions that urgently needed to be brought together and made available in one place. Furthermore commentary and analysis of these materials, both thematically and by geographic region, adds value to content.
- Made the knowledge available in an innovative way. The innovativeness and extensive use of a web site that contains many features of modern Internet custom and convention (for example, blogs, rich media, interaction and 'digging') enhances the project's impact on those who intend to develop learning regions in the future. The design of the site also facilitates the organisation of material in ways that facilitate thematic and geographical analysis, and by permitting remote user submissions always to a degree ways in which knowledge can be co-constructed.
- Provided learning and publicity materials that enable all European Regions to develop a strategy that exploits the available wealth of knowledge for its stakeholders in VET institutions, universities, schools, enterprises, local administrations and adult education institutions
- Devised a dissemination plan that targets regional development agencies in all EU countries.
- Provided the guidelines and recommendations for a new expanded European policy in this area.

The UNESCO International Platform for Learning Cities

The Final Project concerned with the development of Learning Cities in this paper is the UNESCO International Platform for Learning Cities (IPLC). This was launched in Beijing in October of 2013 and is intended to make a huge difference to cities around the world. Its scope is wide, covering economic, cultural, environmental and social aspects of city development and engaging city leaders in strategies to improve governance, display commitment and mobilise all city institutions in the task of renewal and regeneration. UNESCO's major task has been to develop indicators (key features) that would help city leaders and professionals to understand the importance of lifelong learning for economic, social, and environmental development. Figure 19 below shows a précis of the subjects covered within these key features. A longer term aim might be to create the title of UNESCO Global Learning City to those cities which show the most progress over time, with all that means for inward investment, city pride and developmental momentum. The project was nurtured at the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning in Hamburg with the help of the PASCAL organisation, described below. High on the agenda will be the linking of cities on a global basis so that they can exchange expertise, good practice, ideas and experience, and work with each other to collectively solve problems. Plans for implementing the network are still in the development stage.

Rationale for the IPLC Index

Three Wider benefits (The Why)	Rationale leading to the search for specific measurements
1. Individual empowerment and social cohesion	Lifelong Learning should lead to these desirable benefits for the city, which will improve not only the social conditions under which people live and work but also the self-confidence and engagement of its citizens. (Cf Hume GLV, Australia)
2. Economic Development and Cultural prosperity	By increasing the educational level and the employability and creative and cultural awareness of citizens, LLL will have a strong effect on the city's ability to innovate and attract inward investment. (Cf South Korean cities increase in GNP)
3. Sustainable Development	Coping with climate change, maintenance of ecological diversity, environmental protection and sustainability are essential for our continued existence on this planet. Lifelong Learning has a crucial task to develop awareness in both administrators and citizens (cf Copenhagen)
Six Pillars (The What and the How)	
1. Inclusive Learning from basic to Higher Education	This is to measure the year on year success of a learning city's need and mission to increase the percentage of students involved in learning at all levels in order to improve social and economic prospects, and the support measures that enable this to happen (cf Finnish Cities)
2. Participation in Community Learning	This is to measure the year on year success of a learning city's need and mission to involve its citizens in continuous formal, informal and non-formal learning in order to enable them to meet the challenges of rapid change, to engage in city life and to sustain well-being (cf Edinburgh)
3. Effective learning for and in the workplace	This is to measure the year on year success of city's support strategies to reduce unemployment, including requiring all public and private organisations to become lifelong learning organisations, encouraging their employees to engage in continuous professional and workplace development in order to maintain employability,
4. Extended use of modern learning technologies	This is to measure the year on year success of learning city strategies to increase the use of modern ICT technologies for lifelong learning in all parts of the city – at work, in schools and communities, at home - in order to increase the incidence and cost-effectiveness of learning (cf smart cities)
5. Enhanced quality and excellence in learning	This measures the year on year success of learning city strategies to improve quality and excellence in education and learning for all in order to enhance employability, well-being and a love of learning
6. A Vibrant culture of learning throughout life	This is to measure the year on year success of the information and communication strategies taken by a learning city to inspire large numbers of its citizens to continue to learn throughout life, in order to improve its economic performance, its social cohesion and its active environmental citizenship
Three Fundamental conditions	
1. Vision, Political Will and Commitment	This measures the innovative strategies developed by a city in order to transform itself into a learning city.
2. Governance and the participation of all stakeholders	The participation of individual and organisational stakeholders is a fundamental requirement for learning cities. This measures the year on year success of city strategies to mobilise them in the service of the city and the extent to which the city monitors its own growth
3. Mobilisation and utilisation of resources and potentials.	Cities often have many more resources than they think. This measures the year on year success of the city's strategies to reveal and exploit the full potential of their local and international human, intellectual, cultural and community resources in order to enrich its learning performance

Figure 19. UNESCO Learning City Key Features

The PASCAL Observatory

Currently PASCAL is the major organisation for stimulating learning city development. Established with OECD help, it divides itself into regional expertise centres in Australia (RMIT Melbourne,) North America (Northern Illinois University) and Europe (the CRADALL Development Unit at Glasgow University) among others. PASCAL (www.obs-pascal.com) allows users in local and regional government, to access details of the latest global developments in social capital, place management and learning regions in the new economy. Within the cadre of Learning City/region development, it:

- ✓ commissions reports on relevant topics by international experts,
- ✓ provides access to a clearinghouse of relevant policy, research and programs associated with successful interventions,
- ✓ stimulates research and consultancy services focused on developing and managing partnerships that are designed to promote community well-being and strengthen economic, social and environmental development in cities
- ✓ devises benchmarking tools to encourage greater stakeholder cohesion and involvement in regional development
- ✓ organises seminars and conferences on topics of interest to leaders and organisations in would-be learning cities and regions

The organisation has a dynamism and an outward-looking mission to engender change at an international level. It has already completed the PURE (Promoting Universities Regional Engagement) project, to provide the know-how and the bench-marking tools by which universities and regional authorities can work together, and its PIE (PASCAL International Exchanges) project has generated a mass of learning cities information that explores economic, cultural, environmental and social justice topics. In support of this and of other global learning city projects, such as the UNESCO IPLC, it has initiated a 'LearningCities2020' programme, which offers monitoring, consultancy and development services provided by its extensive network of associates around the world.

City-states and Region-states

Clearly the longer term advantages of inter-region cooperation are being addressed, much in the same way that PALLACE engaged the stakeholders of the future in debate about the city's, and their own, future. The link between the social, the environmental and the economic has always been there in local authorities. In cooperation projects such as this the solutions are becoming more internationalised. Of course Kent is not the only region to establish fruitful links with other parts of the world. The city of Southampton's cooperation project with Chengdu in China is yet another example of the proliferation of global interaction between cities and regions. For all parts of local government there are opportunities and benefits.

It is perhaps a reflection of the increasing autonomy and influence of regional government. John Eger, former adviser to two US Presidents, has gone so far as to suggest that there is a return to the concept of the powerful city and region-state that existed for example in the palatinates of Northern Germany before unification, and in Athens, Sparta and Venice in the more distant past. (Eger, 1996) He bases this opinion on the increased power and influence now trickling down to local and regional government in many countries of the world allied to the enormous potential power of the new information and communications technologies for intercity, inter-institutional and interpersonal multilogue. And to a certain degree he is right. The opportunities do exist, and are being exploited by creative and innovative cities and regions. And yet the world of the early 21st century is hardly a safer or happier place in which to live. Perhaps a newer dimension is needed.

The PALLACE report anticipates this.

There is whole new dimension to the debate when we discuss the global role of cities and regions for the future. Whatever model is adopted – city-ring, city mentoring, city-twinning, city networking – an even greater challenge occurs when we can include into these networks cities and regions from the less-favoured countries of this planet, (Longworth and Allwinkle, 2005)

. The book ‘Learning Cities, Learning Regions, Learning Communities’ [Longworth 2006] is also accompanied by 56 downloadable sessions with 400 assignments and exercises to match the topics in the book (www.longlearn.org.uk) Where materials do not exist at all, the partners will create them.

Dublin- an example of Learning City Consultation

One final word about the Learning City/Regions in Practice and especially the consultation process. In the early 2000s, the city of Dublin undertook a great deal of work in converting itself into a Learning City/Region. Its two-year process of consultation led by the Dublin City Development Board (51) produced a wealth of information about the needs and desires of citizens, which the city has incorporated into its Learning City/Region strategy. Figure 20 encapsulates the essence of this.

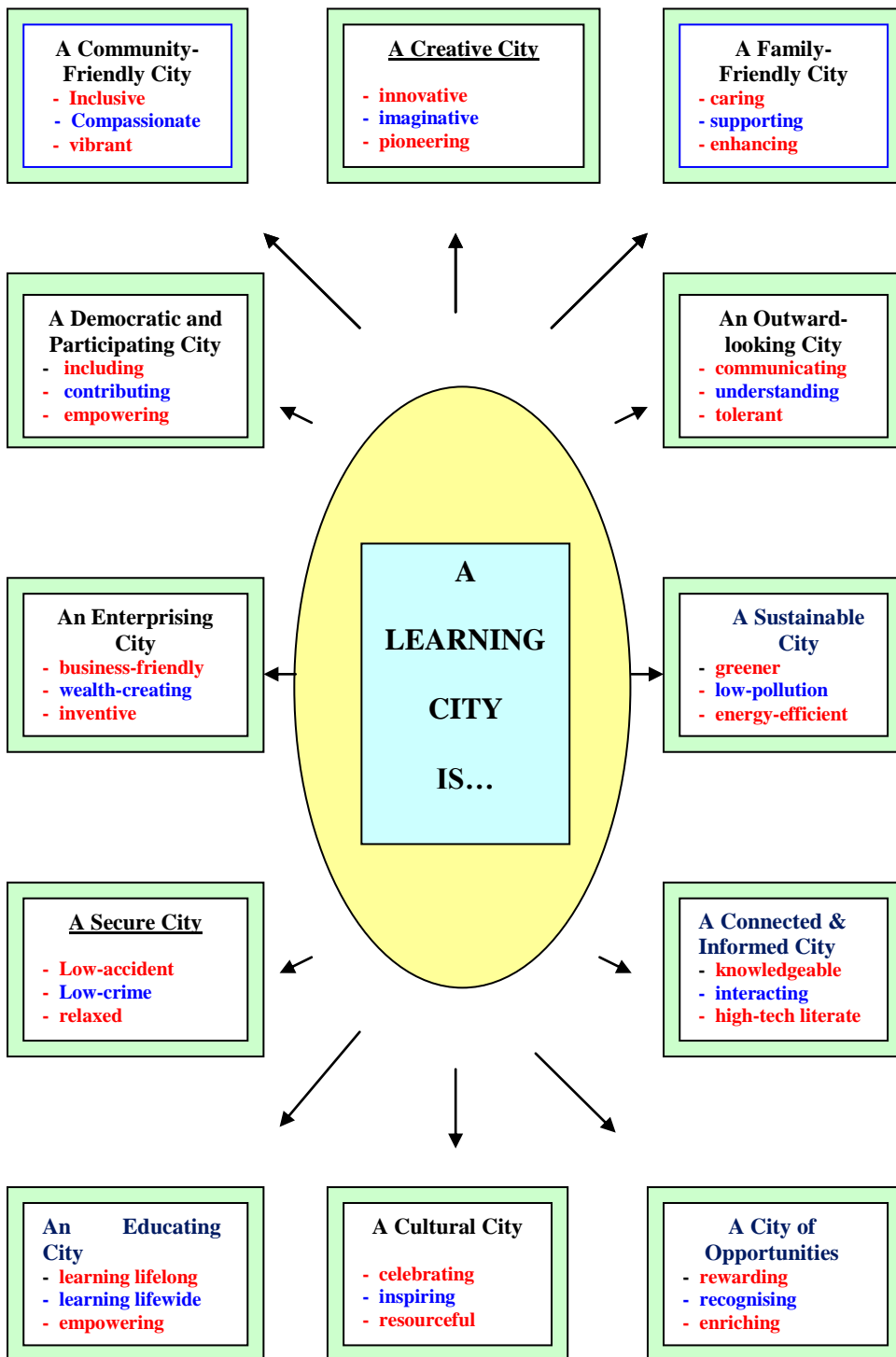


Figure 20: The Centrality of Learning in City Development

Clearly Dublin is inspired to increase its commitment to lifelong learning within a learning city strategy for reasons that go well beyond the purely economic. Though the link between learning and economics is well-established, so also is the link between learning and social stability, learning and cultural participation, learning and opportunity, learning and sustainability and many others shown in figure 20. In the Dublin Learning City Strategy document (51), Finnegan, Director of the Dublin City Development Board, comments: *‘Developing this strategy has been like setting out on a voyage of discovery. The waters were uncharted, the crew untested, the ocean was unpredictable and the destination not entirely clear. Commitment will turn the strategy into reality. This commitment is mobilised around a vision.....It is a vision that challenges boundaries.....’*

From Education and Training to Lifelong Learning in the Learning City/Region.

What distinguishes a learning city from others is

- a) the extent to which the city engages its citizens in determining its future – for that it will need to introduce strategies that enable lifelong learning for all, giving them the tools and competences to make good decisions, helping to solve problems, becoming adaptable and flexible, versatile and entrepreneurial.
- b) The extent to which the city engages its institutional stakeholders – businesses, higher and further education, schools, the local authority itself – in contributing to an environment in which economic, social and environmental development is well understood and delivered. This may involve becoming learning organisations, working in partnerships and mobilising the unique resources which each can offer.
- c) The extent to which individuals and communities contribute to the welfare of others in the city through active citizenship and volunteering strategies. This may mean innovative strategies to mobilise and organise this effort
- d) The extent to which the city encourages a wider vision in its citizens and its organisations, including the local authority, and encourages them to understand and address local, national and international environmental, sustainability and humanitarian problems. This may involve links with and between peoples and organisations from around the world to promote understanding, tolerance and shared good practice.
- e) The extent to which the city embraces innovation and creativity in dealing with its economic, environmental and social issues, including poverty reduction, social exclusion, health, disability and change, and inculcates a sense of self-confidence and well-being in its people.
- f) The extent to which the city has a strategy to maximise the potential of all its resources – intellectual, cultural, community, human, geographical, location, environmental, financial, health, educational, technological and economic - in order to build a more prosperous, stable and equitable future for its citizens
- g) the extent to which the city communicates its vision and its high values to its citizens, its organisations and the wider world in order to create civic esteem, shared energy and inward investment – this will entail using all the media at its disposal
- h) The frequency with which the city monitors and measures itself against a wide range of learning city

So what can we learn from this round-up of Learning City/Region characteristics. Firstly we should point out that none of the projects shown in this paper is a pure research project. They are development exercises with developmental outcomes. Stakeholder Audits for example are not research questionnaires, free of dependent and independent variables. They are tools, instruments to push forward the debate positively, to enable people and organisations understand and respond to ideas of lifelong learning, learning organisations and the learning city; to transform it from theory to practice from a perspective of knowledge and experience in industry, academia and professional associations.

Secondly, we can accept that the Learning City and Region concept is a peculiar mix of the political, economic, social, financial, environmental, cultural, educational and technological, and that to omit any one of these is to render the result the poorer. It dynamic comes from a whole variety of interlocking initiatives – new productive partnerships, leadership development, proper information and communication methods, celebration, focused surveys and studies, decent educational support structures, continuous improvement strategies for all, motivation and ownership of learning and all those contained in the left hand column of figure 21 below. This is why the indicators contained in the Stakeholder Audits of the INDICATORS project are so comprehensive, as are the key features in the UNESCO IPLC project.

They may produce long documents but that is inevitable when the transformation from an education and training to a lifelong learning society involves such a rich mixture of complex factors.

The aim is to isolate each factor, to examine it for its implications and then to continuously develop the strategy, initiate and re-initiate the action, energise and re-energise the people and innovate incessantly. As in a Learning Organisation, the Learning City/Region is an endlessly developing entity, re-inventing and re-invigorating itself in a never-ending progression. When learning stops, development stops.

Figure 15 therefore has been compiled from the list of Learning City/Region requirements, some of them in this paper, some in other documents and tools. It is most certainly incomplete. But it gives the city manager an idea of the magnitude of the task ahead. And it provides work for those people and organisations who are prepared to accept the challenge of change, to think outside the box and to participate in the development of their own Learning City/Regions.

From the Age of Education and Training to the era of Lifelong Learning in the Learning City/Region

	Topic	Education and Training	Lifelong Learning	Action
1.	The city as a Learning Organisation	Education and training supplied to existing and committed learners by Learning Providers in cities and regions as a statutory duty	Everyone is empowered to learn according to their own needs, demands and learning styles, Focus on the development of <i>all</i> their human and organisational potential. Providers become <i>Learning Organisations</i>	Carry out frequent surveys and studies. Find and satisfy customer needs for learning. Develop a city-wide lifelong learning strategy based on real need and good information. Develop Indicators to enable Learning Providers to become true Learning Organisations.
2.	Decision-making, Breaking barriers to learning	Educational decision-making in city rooted in a 20 th century mass education and training paradigm	Decisions made on individual learning needs, demands and styles of all citizens of all ages and aptitudes	Find the barriers to learning and dismantle them. Develop and market a strategy based on lifelong and lifewide learning for all.
3.	Joined up Local Government	Cities, Towns and Regions foster empire-building within separate and discrete departments	Cities etc encourage cooperation between departments and devise holistic strategies to link the economic, social and environmental	Invite all departments to submit plans for the development of lifelong learning in the local community of Japan and to identify the linkages with other local authority services
4.	Support for Learning	Sparse mass educational support and back-up structures brought into service when problems arise	Sophisticated on-going support structures concentrating on needs and demands of each learner in the city no matter what age	Provide individual support including personal learning counsellors, community mentors, psychologists and early diagnosis and back-up,
5.	Finding and using all resources	Educators as providers - sole distributors of information, knowledge and resource to learners	Educators as managers - of all the resources and expertise available in a city, town or region	Discover and use the talents, skills, expertise and knowledge within the community from all sources. In service training to empower educators to use this.
6.	Giving ownership to the learner	Ownership of the need to learn and its content is with the educator	Learner, as customer, rules. As far as possible ownership of the need to learn and its content is given to individuals	Develop and use techniques and tools to help individuals of all ages understand their own learning needs and styles eg. audits and personal learning plans
7.	Examinations as Learning Opportunities	Examinations used to separate successes from failures at specific times	Examinations as failure-free learning opportunities confirming progress and encouraging further learning	Influence development of innovative assessment tools embedded into personal learning programmes, and examined when the student feels ready
8	Skills-based curriculum	Education in city institutions is Knowledge and Information based - <u>what</u> to think	Learning in city institutions and the community is understanding, skills and values based - <u>how</u> to think	Redevelop content dominated curricula into personal skills-based learning programmes that expand the capacity of people to engage in learning
9.	Joined-up Learning	Education is compartmentalised according to age, aptitude and purpose	Learning is Lifelong in concept and content, providing links vertically and horizontally between age groups in buildings open to the whole community	Open up learning to the whole community. Provide community-based facilities which encourage links between learning providers and people of all ages. Community schools, Lifelong Learning Centres etc
10	Access to learning	Courses developed and delivered by city learning providers on their own premises top-down	Learning made available where, when, how and from whom the learner wants it with the learner's consent bottom-up	Encourage providers to provide learning where people are - homes, schools, workplaces, pubs, stadia, church halls etc
11	Partnerships in the Learning City	Each sector of the city, town and region determines and bids for its own needs	Holistic – increases resources through cooperation between each sector of the community	Facilitate partnerships between sectors as an investment in new resources and knowledge

12	Active Learning	City Education providers deliver passive classroom based education based on tested memory development	Learning is an active, creative, exciting journey into the future involving learners in new experiences and developing positive values and attitudes.	Encourage active learning methods – brainstorms, data collection and analysis, creative discussion, case studies and simulations, visits etc to make learning fun, pleasurable and an expression of the most natural human instinct. Borrow ideas from Industry
13	Technology and Networks	Cities Towns and Regions provide inward-looking educational systems - to satisfy specified needs	Outward-looking systems - to open minds, encourage broader horizons, promote understanding of others and develop trading links	Twin with other learning cities. Use technology and networks to link people of all ages nationally and internationally to enhance understanding of other creeds, cultures and customs
14	Focus on the Learner	Education content is based on the needs of organisations and governments to provide evidence of progress	Learning is based on the need to develop human potential, creativity and response to change and uncertainty in an unknown future	Influence curricula etc to develop Education for competence, flexibility, adaptability and versatility. Keep options and minds open. Develop more sophisticated indicators of progress.
15	Promoting Employability	Educates and trains for employment and short term need	Promotes Learning for employability in the long-term	Carry out regular skills surveys leading well into the future. Cooperate with industry to determine needs. Widen the scope of educational provision
16	Developing Indicators	Cities and Learning providers resistant to new ideas, approaches and procedures.	Cities and Learning providers are flexible with a clear view of the ways in which new approaches can benefit them and their students	Develop indicators allowing learning providers to measure and monitor their own progress and performance in becoming learning organisations and to participate in learning city development.
17	Continuous Improvement	Professionals and administrators attend educational courses according to need or desire. Occasional seminars in workplace	Every professional, administrator and student in the city has a continuous improvement plan for personal skill and knowledge development embedded into the management system	Encourage the development of written continuous improvement plans for all city staff and for all students. Extend these others in the community as desired. Encourage administrators to contribute ideas for learning city development
18	Celebrating Learning	Citizens see Learning as a difficult chore and as received wisdom	Citizens see Learning as fun, participative and involving, and as perceived wisdom	Celebrate, reward and recognise learning frequently at all ages and stages of learning
19	Learning and Culture	Cultural life of city kept separate from education life and facilities	Education and culture synonymous in a glorious mixture of Learning Opportunities from all parts of the community	Turn all community buildings - Libraries, museums, theatres, galleries, shopping malls etc – into new-look educational adventure playgrounds for everyone
20	Active Citizenship	Education as a top-down exercise by city institutions staffed by professionals with little community involvement	The city as a hive of voluntary activity involving citizens in a large variety of supportive and interactive programmes which contribute to the growth of a Learning city.	Encourage active citizenship by individuals, families, organisations and communities through volunteering and commitment. Organise and channel all the available goodwill and make the link between demand and supply of available expertise.
21	Marketing Value of Learning	Education and training as a financial investment for cities, organisations and nations	Learning as a social, personal and financial investment in and by people for the benefit of nations, organisations, society in general and themselves	Market learning strongly as an investment - by a city in its citizens, by a workplace in its workforce, by learning providers in their students' future, by people in their own future worth and happiness
22	Wealth Creation	Economic, social, cultural and environmental are separately planned strategies	Economic, social, cultural and environmental are inter-connected and interdependent	Ensure that development committees contain a mix of experts each of whom can interact in holistic strategy development

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