

Update on the Government's Culture White Paper

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This item updates the Board on the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's (DCMS) Culture White Paper, which was published in March 2016, and suggests steps for the LGA in supporting councils to respond to the recommendations.

The LGA has consistently highlighted councils' significant investment in, and support for, culture, and the role of councils in shaping cultural provision within their localities. Strong local government involvement in taking forward the White Paper's actions is crucial if we are to sustain cultural provision in the long term.

Recommendation

Members are asked to comment upon, and agree, the next steps for the LGA suggested in section 6.

Action

Officers to take forward actions in line with Boards' steer.

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Update on the Government's Culture White Paper

The Culture White Paper

1. Between August 2015 and February 2016, the government undertook a consultation to develop a Culture White Paper. A total of 232 organisations, including many councils, took part in roundtable discussions that were organised. As part of the consultation, the Chair of the CTS Board met with Ed Vaizey MP, Culture Minister, attended a Ministerial roundtable and wrote to Ministers setting out our vision for the White Paper. (See Annex A).
2. In March 2016, the government launched its first [Culture White Paper](#) in more than 50 years and only the second ever published. The White Paper sets out how the Government will support the cultural sector over the coming years and how culture will play an active role in building a fairer and more prosperous nation that takes a lead on the international stage. The LGA's response is [here](#).
3. The White Paper includes a number of points from the LGA's response:
 - 3.1 Recognition of the importance of culture to place, economic growth and of local government's leadership role in unlocking the wider benefits of culture.
 - 3.2 Acknowledgement that outside London local government is the biggest public investor in culture and that despite funding pressures, there is much innovation. Case studies cited include East Lindsey District Council and the North East Combined Authority.
 - 3.3 Commitment to a new place based way of working between the DCMS national agencies, local government and partners.
 - 3.4 Commitment to greater involvement from the DCMS national bodies in promoting the contribution of culture to improving health and wellbeing.
 - 3.5 The LGA is mentioned in relation to our joint improvement offer for councillors and the work on the Libraries Taskforce, which we are leading on with the Government.
4. The White Paper covers four themes which outline the aspirations for the cultural sector. A number of statements are made with some specific actions about what the Government will do. The following lists the four themes and the key recommendations that will affect councils:
 - 4.1 Everyone should enjoy the opportunities culture offers, no matter where they start in life**
 - 4.1.1 The government will put in place measures to increase participation in culture, especially amongst those who are currently excluded from the opportunities that culture has to offer, and children and young people.

- 4.1.2 A new cultural citizen's programme will reach across 70 areas where cultural participation is lowest.
- 4.1.3 With the introduction of the apprenticeships levy, there is an expectation that larger cultural organisations will take on apprentices.
- 4.1.4 Requiring funded bodies to publish strategies for increasing diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

4.2 The riches of our culture should benefit communities across the country

- 4.2.1 Arts Council England (ACE) is committed to supporting culture outside London and has made a commitment to increase the proportion of Lottery funding it allocates outside London to 75 per cent by 2018.
- 4.2.2 Government wants national cultural institutions and funders - in the public, private and charitable sectors – to work together and back the vision of local leaders, local authorities, local businesses, local communities and others.
- 4.2.3 The government wants to see more local partnerships established, like the North East Culture Partnership, which develop visions for culture within their localities and which are embedded in council plans and policies. This will be achieved through 12 Great Place scheme pilots.
- 4.2.4 Government will work with Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and other partners to develop and promote the benefits of culture for good health, wellbeing and safer communities.
- 4.2.5 Historic England will establish Heritage Action Zones, which will look to improve relationships between local partners and manage change and new developments.

4.3 The power of culture can increase our international standing

- 4.3.1 The government has increased investment in the GREAT campaign to £60 million per annum until 2019/20. The new Events and Industry Board will enable Britain to make more of the opportunities offered by festivals and major cultural events.

4.4 Cultural investment, resilience and reform

- 4.4.1 The government will carry out tailored reviews of Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund during 2016/17 and a review of museums in England.

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- 4.4.2 A new museums and galleries tax relief will be launched in April 2017, following formal consultation on its design. It will support museums and galleries to develop new exhibitions and display their collections across the country.
- 4.4.3 The VAT refund scheme eligibility criteria will be broadened so that more museums and galleries, which offer free public access to their collections can benefit.
- 4.4.4 The 80 per cent mandatory rate relief for charities will continue and changes to discretionary relief will be a matter for councils, with the government continuing to fund 50 per cent of the cost of any relief granted.
- 4.4.5 The government will work with ACE, the Heritage Lottery Fund and other partners to support cultural organisations to diversify their funding.

Next steps

- 5. Councillor Stephens, CTS Board Chair, attended the launch event for the Culture White Paper in March and secured a commitment from the Culture Minister to fully involve councils in taking forward the recommendations. The Minister reinforced this commitment when he met the CTS Board Chair in April.
- 6. The White Paper recommendations present us with an opportunity to secure further support for local cultural provision, building upon our existing work with DCMS and the national agencies. Below are some suggested principles to guide the LGA's role:
 - 6.1 Ensuring that DCMS and the national agencies recognise the wider context for councils. In particular, the acute funding challenges facing discretionary cultural services, the changing ways in which councils are delivering public services and the opportunities for culture from public sector reform such as devolution.
 - 6.2 Ensuring that DCMS and national agencies understand and take account of local government's leadership role, their significant investment in culture and how the whole council - from planning to licensing and transport - can support and strengthen the contribution of culture to place and economic growth.
 - 6.3 Seeking to influence the development of initiatives that will impact directly on councils, in particular the Great Place Scheme. We will want to ensure that new initiatives recognise existing innovation, offer useful additional support, enable sufficient local flexibility and are taken forward in line with sector led improvement.
 - 6.4 Representing councils' interests in the various reviews that will be undertaken. In particular, the reviews of ACE, the HLF and the museums sector (which will include local museums). The reviews are an opportunity to

further embed a shared place based approach to culture that helps ensure the total public subsidy is spent as efficiently as possible on local priorities and that locally-led innovation is supported and shared.

- 6.5 Making appropriate links to other LGA Boards. For example, the Community Wellbeing Board in relation to the focus on maximising the health benefits from cultural participation, the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board on the role of planning and the Children and Young People's Board on increasing low participation rates amongst children and young people.
7. CTS Lead Members have asked that we invite the Culture Minister to the September Board and organise a roundtable for councillors to discuss how local government can help take forward the recommendations. This could also be an opportunity for DCMS, Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic England to hear direct from councillors.
8. There is also an opportunity to engage councillors in the discussions on the actions during the development of the cultural improvement programme, in particular the seminars and Leadership Essentials Culture events that are planned in the coming months.