

## **Culture, Tourism and Sport Campaign Lines**

### **Purpose of Report**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

This paper aims to prompt discussion about some key asks and lobbying lines from the Board to central government, picking up on conversations at the last Board about the definition of 'culture' used by the Board.

Members are invited to provide a steer on whether there are consistent lobbying lines the LGA should be using on culture, tourism and sport.

### **Recommendation**

That the CTS Board discuss the report and provide direction on future work.

### **Action**

Officers to progress as directed.

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## **Culture, Tourism and Sport Campaign Lines**

### **Background**

1. While LGA CTS press releases and media cover have increased significantly over the past year, our coverage has tended to be reactive – responding to committee inquiries, national weeks of activity, or in support of campaigns like live music. Our releases have also typically followed corporate lines, focusing on the level of funding reduction experienced by councils.
2. These are all valuable activities and feedback from stakeholders and partners is that this is raising the profile of the board and the work of councils generally; as well as raising partner awareness of the challenges facing local government. For instance, the Chartered Institute for Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) has changed some of its campaigning away from criticising local cuts towards lobbying for further funding for local government. This has been very constructive, allowing others to help make the funding case for our services.
3. However, aside from the live music press release and a release relating to the ageing leisure infrastructure, the Board has made few calls on central government. In comparison, other boards are leading campaigns on a range of issues including broadband, bright futures for children, and a fundamental reform of the skills system through a Work Local approach.
4. CTS press releases and lobbying have supported several of these campaigns. In part, the absence of a single campaign or lobbying line has enabled the CTS Board to respond more flexibly to issues, and invest its limited resources in sector improvement work.
5. Board members are invited to consider the following questions:
  - 5.1. Whether the current approach is sufficient and appropriate given the Board's limited resources;
  - 5.2. Should the range of subjects that the CTS portfolio comments on – which has tended to be museums, archives, parks, libraries and leisure centres – be broadened in light of discussions at the last board about culture-led regeneration; and,
  - 5.3. Are there key lines that we should seek to proactively publicise to government in the form of a campaign through the media. Some possible campaign areas are set out in paragraph 7, but are not exhaustive.

### **Possible Campaign Issues**

6. When prioritising a campaign line, it will be important to consider the following points:
  - 6.1. The level of resources needed to run an effective campaign alongside policy and improvement work - it will not be possible to run more than one campaign with the resources available.
  - 6.2. The need for a clear ask – the campaign must be clear what it needs from government, why it is needed, and the impact it will have
  - 6.3. The likelihood of success – for instance, whether it is likely that the Government or its agencies will agree that there is sufficient demand and need to tackle the identified issue
  - 6.4. The priority for local government – for instance, not only the number of councils or other members (such as National Parks) that will benefit from the campaign, but also how the investment will compare to other local government funding issues such as social care
  - 6.5. The ease with which the case can be made, and the level of public interest – to enable the LGA media team to secure coverage of a succession of releases on the same topic, the issue needs to have resonance with the public and be easily communicated to them.
7. The options below each have the potential to be worked up to form part of a media campaign directed at Government:
  - 7.1. The importance of building in culture and sport and physical activity into new housing developments and estates – there are established cautionary examples of how poor design can lead to communities that are not cohesive, not physically active, and generally disengaged. Given the levels of demand for house-building, and the lack of supply, there is a risk that new housing developments do not effectively deliver the social and cultural infrastructure needed to create a thriving community for the future. This would need coordination with the LGA planning and housing team, and would need to avoid unnecessarily placing burdens on builders that could prevent housebuilding.
  - 7.2. The need to invest in ageing sporting infrastructure, particularly swimming pools – our previous press release highlighted the fact that many leisure facilities are coming to the end of their lifespan. This release prompted concerns from Sport England and UK Active, who feel they have developed a workable model for replacing leisure centres in a new Wellbeing Centre concept. However, this is only achievable for areas with significant levels of population, whereas many of the older facilities are in more rural areas, which have also been affected by reductions in rural transport. By raising concerns about the level of provision in rural areas, we could challenge partners and stakeholders to develop equivalent models that work for rural areas.

- 7.3. Skills challenges for the sector – this could build on and amplify the Work Local campaign, but with a particular focus on tourism and the creative industries. This would be compatible with campaigns by the Creative Industries Federation and the Tourism Sector; and could be supplemented by our planned research into how a Work Local approach would benefit areas where tourism is a dominant industry.
- 7.4. The role of arts and physical activity in promoting public health and wellbeing, relieving pressures on the NHS (social prescribing) – the NHS is under pressure, and councils are also facing significant social care pressures. The APPG for Arts, Health and Wellbeing has been championing a set of recommendations to promote the role of the arts in social prescribing, and the recently formed Alliance for Culture Health and Wellbeing intends to take this further. This would give us strong allies to amplify our voice and articulate the need for the Department of Health, CCGs, and medical professionals to recognise the value of, and commission, arts and physical activity.
- 7.5. Fiscal devolution – the LGA has been calling for increased fiscal devolution to match the devolution of policy and responsibilities to combined authorities. A tourism tax was cited in the LGA's latest campaign document as one example of fiscal devolution. A small number of tourist-focused councils have raised this as a possibility, most recently Bath and North East Somerset. However, other areas have stated that they would not wish to introduce such a tax. A tourism tax is strongly opposed by the tourism sector, due to their concerns around the overall tax environment for accommodation. However, these taxes are common in Europe, so administrative difficulties should be able to be overcome.

### **Implications for Wales**

8. This is an English debate and the WLGA lead on lobbying in Cardiff.

### **Financial Implications**

9. None. The Board may choose to allocate some of the CTS 18/19 budget to support the campaign.

### **Next Steps**

10. If the Board decides to pursue the idea of a campaign (paragraph 5.3), officers will develop a draft narrative on the selected topic (paragraph 7).
11. This will be presented at the next Board for more in-depth discussion on that topic, to clarify the narrative and associated ask(s).