

**Culture, Tourism and Sport Programme Board - report from
Cllr Chris White**

1. The CTS Board and its officers have been kept busy by the high profile of issues such as library closures, quango reorganisations and the increasing closeness of the 2012 Games.

LG Group / CLOA Culture Tourism and Sport Conference

2. I, along with many of my Board colleagues, attended the LG Group / CLOA Culture, Tourism and Sport conference on 3 and 4 March. There were 120 delegates present to hear Ed Vaizey MP, Culture Minister, give the keynote political address. The Minister praised the work of the Local Government Group in supporting councils to modernise libraries through the Future Libraries Programme. Delegates also heard from councils who are at the cutting edge of improving local cultural services and other influential speakers in a series of lively plenary addresses, debates and workshops. I would like to thank City of York Council for hosting excellent study tours, and to thank LG Group officers for organising an incredibly well-run conference.
3. The Conference was preceded by a short Board meeting at which Members discussed how libraries are responding to funding challenges, and received a very informative presentation about York's cultural offer from Cllr Nigel Ayre, Executive Member for Leisure, Culture & Social Inclusion, City of York Council.

2012 Games Social Legacy Delivery Board, 8 February 2011

4. I attended a meeting of the Government's 2012 Games Social Legacy Delivery Board which focussed on the Opportunity 2012 initiative and efforts to influence attitudes towards disabled people through the 2012 Games. I highlighted that local authorities already have a good track record as employers of people with disabilities and that there are many examples of local authorities using community sport to influence perceptions of disabled people.

Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) Annual Conference and Executive meeting, 10 and 11 February 2011

5. I attended the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) Annual Conference in Belfast on 10 and 11 February. I spoke in a plenary session at the Conference about the LGA's work in relation to 2012 and the opportunities presented by the Games for local government and communities in Northern Ireland. I also attended a meeting of the NILGA Executive on 11 February to discuss how local authorities in Northern Ireland can maximise the sporting, economic and social benefits for local communities from the 2012 Games.

DCMS Informal Local Government Network, 10 February 2011

6. Cllr Stephen Castle co-chaired a meeting of the DCMS Informal Local Government Network, with Ed Vaizey MP and Jonathan Stephens, DCMS Permanent Secretary. In introductory remarks, Cllr Castle outlined the key challenges facing local cultural services, and emphasised the importance of local government working together to improve services. There were a number of presentations from councils who are pioneering new ways of delivering library services, and from organisations such as the Asset Development Trust, who are supporting this work.

Meeting with Ed Vaizey MP, Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, 23 February 2011

7. I held one of my routine liaison meetings with the Culture Minister to discuss a range of topics. In particular, I updated the Minister on LG Group actions to share the learning from phase 1 projects of the Future Libraries Programme (FLP) and emphasised our support for extending the Programme. We agreed on the importance of carrying on the FLP into a second phase. I also updated the Minister on proposals to establish an LGA / Ministerial Community Services Group to discuss joint working on connected issues including, the modernisation of the post office network, digital inclusion, superfast broadband, service delivery from community buildings and the future of the library service.

Joint working with the Arts Council

8. I have exchanged letters with Dame Liz Forgan, Chair of the Arts Council, setting out common principles that will underpin the Arts Council's plans for assuming wider responsibilities for libraries and museums from April 2012. The Arts Council has an opportunity to have a "single conversation" with local councils, spanning libraries, museums and the arts. We have agreed on the importance of partnership working nationally and locally, that our collective focus must be on self improvement, innovation and modernisation, and the importance of building leadership capacity.

LG Group Children and Young People's Programme Board

9. I discussed with Baroness Ritchie, Chair of the LG Group Children and Young People's Programme Board, areas of common interest between our two Boards. This includes school sport, school music, playing fields and play. We agreed on the importance of cross-Board working, and to develop shared policy positions on these issues.

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