

## **Culture, Tourism and Sport Programme Board – report from Cllr Chris White (Chair)**

### **Libraries**

1. The LGA and Arts Council England (ACE) have jointly launched the Libraries Development Initiative – a £200,000 fund to build upon our already highly successful Future Libraries Programme. We have received over 100 expressions of interest. Projects will explore new and more efficient ways of delivering library services with LGA capturing and sharing the learning.
2. Portfolio holders for libraries from around the country came together at the LGA on 6 December to share their experiences of modernising library services. In my opening speech, I emphasised that councils are already transforming libraries and the need for the outdated statutory framework to be reformed. In response to very positive feedback we will run a similar event in Leeds next year.
3. I met Miranda McKearney, Chief Executive of the Reading Agency, on 13 December. We discussed the changing role of public libraries in supporting literacy and agreed to explore a summit and conference in 2012.
4. I attended the launch of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on libraries on 14 December. The LGA has offered to participate in the APPG's work.

### **Ed Vaizey MP, Culture Minister**

5. I met the Culture Minister on 7 November and said that the LGA is working with Arts Council England to ensure that new programmes for museums and libraries continue to support councils to lead their own improvement and share good practice. I also updated the minister on the challenges councils are facing with the roll out of superfast broadband, including access to European funding and concerns about microtrenching.

### **Sport and 2012 Games**

6. Cllr Simon Henig (Vice-Chair) and I spoke at the member leadership academy for portfolio holders for sport on 29/30 November, which the LGA organised in partnership with Sport England. I highlighted the importance of strong local political leadership and the event supported councillors to make the most of the opportunities for sport presented by localism, public health reforms, commissioning and the 2012 Games.
7. I attended the Nations and Regions (NRG) meeting on 6 December, where I reiterated the LGA's position that we will continue to work in partnership with NRG to ensure a safe and successful Games are delivered, with councils playing a full part in making this happen.

8. I met Charles Allen, Chair of the NRG on 14 December, to discuss the latest preparations for the 2012 Games. I raised councils' concerns about engagement in planning the Torch Relay and the economic impact on London of people staying away from the city during the Games. We agreed on the importance of joint communications to councils on key issues in the run-up to the Games.
9. I represented the CTS Board at the first meeting of the LGA's 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Task and Finish Group on 15 December. I highlighted CTS Board lobbying on the Torch Relay and the need for transport operators to work much more closely with councils when planning how services will be altered during the Games.

### **The Visitor Economy**

10. Sir Merrick Cockell and I met Penelope, Viscountess Cobham, Chairman of VisitEngland on 28 November. We emphasised the importance of VisitEngland fully involving local enterprise partnerships in the 'growing tourism locally' project.
11. I attended the inaugural meeting of the Visitor Economy Forum on 1 December. Representatives from industry and the public sector discussed key issues facing the visitor economy, including the opportunities presented by Tourism Business Improvement Districts, which the CTS Board is keen to explore.

### **CTS Board 23 November**

12. Alan Davey, Chief Executive of Arts Council England (ACE), said that ACE's new responsibilities for libraries and museums presented an opportunity for them to have a single, coherent conversation with local government. He stressed the importance of partnership working with councils and their commitment to support innovation.

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