

## **2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Task and Finish Group – report from Cllr Stephen Castle (Chairman)**

1. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Task and Finish Group, which was set up to provide a 'check and challenge' to LGA Programme Boards had its first meeting on 15 December 2011.
2. The Games will be the country's biggest ever peace-time logistical exercise. Although the key focus is on the dates of the Olympic Games on 27 July – 12 August and the Paralympic Games from 29 August to 9 September, the arrival of the torch on 18 May 2012 will mark the start of an 18 week period that the Games organisers are calling 'business as unusual'. The scale of the events will have an impact on councils across the country. In addition to the London Boroughs where the main venues are located, there are nine venues outside London, the torch relay will be stopping overnight in every county in England, 22 areas will be hosting large screens for public viewing and a number of councils are hosting international pre-games training camps.
3. The first meeting of the Group discussed key operational issues, including emergency planning, the torch relay, transport and communications and agreed a work programme for the months ahead.
4. The Group wants to encourage each Programme Board to consider what activities are already underway or remain to be addressed to support councils in the period before and during the Olympic and Paralympic Games to ensure that the LGA provides a coherent offer to councils. The Culture, Tourism and Sport Programme Board will continue to have policy oversight, including the legacy (e.g. community sports participation and tourism) and on aspects such as promoting the UK wide calendar of events and encouraging councils and communities involved in the Games.

### **Emergency Planning and Resilience**

5. A significant amount has already been done to support emergency planning activities in the run up to the Games, which has been overseen jointly by the Culture, Tourism and Sport Programme Board and the Safer and Stronger Communities Programme Board. The National Local Authority Olympic Resilience Programme has been established which is funded by the Home Office, backed by the LGA and London Councils and hosted by the London Fire Brigade. This Programme is also supporting the national representation of local government during the Games, for example in the Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms (COBR) Olympic Coordination Group (OCG). This builds upon existing

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working (the LGA routinely attends COBR when relevant issues arise) but reinforces the current arrangements by providing continuous support to the National Representative for Local Government (either a Member or a Chief Executive, depending on the nature of the meeting being convened). Cllr Stephen Castle represented the LGA at COBR at a national exercise held in December 2011 and demonstrated that councils have much to contribute to the success of the Games in 2012. Cllr Chris White will represent the LGA at the next exercise which is due to be held in the Spring which will look at a significant civil contingencies scenario. Subject to diary commitments, a rota of senior members will be needed for COBR OGC during the Games.

6. The next meeting of the Task and Finish Group will be on 18 January 2012.

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