

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

1. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Task and Finish Group had its second meeting on 18 January 2012. The Group has been set up by the LGA Executive to make sure that the LGA is supporting councils to play their part in hosting a successful Olympic and Paralympic Games and to ensure that councils have the latest information and share experience and knowledge of local operational issues. The Task Group is keen to ensure that links with all relevant services are identified and that the role of councils in delivering the Games is understood by key stakeholders.

### **Transport and the Games**

2. Members had a presentation from London Councils' corporate director, Nick Lester, who set out some of the key transport issues. Transport is an absolute fundamental to making the Olympic Games a success. The biggest impact of the Games will be felt across London and around competition venues, where Games competitions and planned parallel events will affect the surrounding areas. In addition to the London venues, significant Games activity is also taking place in Weymouth and Portland, Dorset; Eton Dorney, Buckinghamshire; Broxbourne, Hertfordshire; and Hadleigh Farm, Essex. The football competition is taking place at stadia in Cardiff, Coventry, Glasgow, Manchester and Newcastle, as well as London.
3. There will be huge numbers of ticket holders - eight million - travelling to events and there will be a wide range of Games-related activity occurring across UK during 2012 that will have an impact on roads and rail services, including Olympic Torch Relay events, Live Sites and other cultural events. It is expected that around 80 per cent of spectators attending events in Greater London will travel by rail (including the London Underground and Docklands Light Railway), placing extra demand on an already very busy network. There will be significant capacity issues for public transport operators, particularly in London and in surrounding areas which will be used as transport hubs. There is likely to be a big impact on the travelling public, and this could also have major implications for councils, for example in addressing any resulting parking issues.

### **Freight deliveries**

4. The Task Group discussed the fact that freight operations in London will be much more difficult during Games time. This could have a potential impact on businesses anywhere in the UK that do business and make deliveries in London. The importance of getting the message across to business is crucial and the Task Group recommended that this issue should be discussed at the next meeting of the LGA Economy and Transport Board. The Task Group was informed that the Board has good relationships with stakeholders including the

Chambers of Commerce and councils would be encouraged to get the message out to local businesses wherever they were located.

### **LGA workforce guidance**

5. The Task Group also discussed LGA workforce guidance for councils for local government employees and a checklist that had been drawn up by London Councils. The guidance and checklist include a range of issues for councils to consider, including planning travel to work, annual leave, volunteering and business continuity plans to sustain priority services during Games time. The guidance and checklist are being published on the LGA website by the LGA Workforce Board to coincide with the 'six-months to go' milestone for the Games: <http://www.local.gov.uk/topic-2012-games>

### **'Get Fit for the Olympics'**

6. At the same time, LGA is also spearheading a 'Get Fit for the Olympics' initiative for local government employees on getting fit and increasing activity as part of the build-up to the 2012 Games and beyond. The resource is web-based and will provide tips for a healthy lifestyle which in turn should improve employee well-being and engagement. Those who log onto the site every month will benefit from updated fitness tips and will be able to link into the NHS Active site in order to participate in team events and promote public sector health. The NHS has set a challenge to increase physical activity amongst its staff.

### **Joint working**

7. On 17 January Cllr Stephen Castle and Cllr Simon Henig (Deputy Chair of the Culture Tourism and Sport Board) met with officials from the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games, the Nations and Regions Group and the Government Olympic Executive to discuss progress on the joint working between our organisations. This meeting had a much stronger focus on operational issues than previously. Issues raised included emergency planning and work underway to provide advice and guidance for councils through the National Local Authority Resilience Programme, supporting councils who are hosting the Torch Relay, and communications - including a proposal for a media 'toolkit' which would include generic articles for councils to use in their own communications with local people to tell the story of the Games.

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