

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

1. The lead Members of the Task Group attended a meeting with Hugh Robertson MP Minister for Sport and the Olympics at DCMS and Bob Neill MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at DCLG on 2 May 2012 to discuss how preparations for staging the torch relay are progressing and how councils are using the opportunity to promote their localities.
2. Members said that there was much enthusiasm to make the torch relay a success, but there were there were different challenges in hosting the relay in different parts of the country and some concerns around increasing costs. It was suggested that the torch relay sponsors also need to engage fully with councils and make sure that they have all the information they need to stage successful events for the public. The recent dress rehearsal on the route from Leicester to Peterborough gave councils a taste of what to expect and the opportunity to test their own traffic management systems and crowd control. The rehearsal also showed the need for good communication between councils. When the torch relay is underway, we are making sure that a process is put in place for learning from the start of the journey to be shared with councils that are later on the route. The LGA is keen to ensure that councils have all the support required to ensure that the torch relay and events run smoothly.
3. Councillor Castle and Councillor Henig (via conference call) met the Head of Nations and Regions, Angela Salt and Government Relations Manager Sarah Bartholomew on 17 April 2012, as one of a regular series of meetings that have been held with officials from the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG),. Progress on joint working was discussed, including the torch relay, emergency planning and resilience. Also discussed were the plans for sessions on the Games at the LGA Annual Conference in June.

Emergency Planning

4. As the final preparations for the Olympic Games are made, there have been a number of test events including the third and final large scale multi-agency exercise testing the joint approach to mitigating any risk to the Olympics which took place on 24 – 26 April. The National Local Authority Olympic Resilience Team, which is supported by the LGA, London Councils and London Fire, played an active part in the exercise. The focus over the three days was on a number of fictional incidents around London including transport disruption at London airports, a diplomatic incident and an explosion at a fuel facility.

5. The LGA was represented at official level Olympic Committee meetings by the Chief Executives of the London Boroughs of Merton and Barnet. The Team provided the same briefings to Greater London Authority attendees to ensure our lines were consistent and immediately following the meetings we gave the London Operations Centre a full brief on decisions and actions, to ensure a joined-up approach was maintained.

London 2012 Sustainability Conference

6. Cllr Castle attended the annual London 2012 Sustainability Conference on 24 April. The London bid for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games promised that London would be 'the first sustainable Olympic and Paralympic Games'. Sustainability has underpinned all London 2012 activities, from the most sustainable Olympic Stadium ever built to a commitment to a 'zero waste to landfill' target. The full pre-Games Sustainability report (See link: http://www.london2012.com/mm/Document/Publications/Sustainability/01/25/43/65/pre-games-sustainability-report_Neutral.pdf) which was published to coincide with the conference, focuses on performance up to April 2012, three months before the start of the Games. It sets out the achievements on the key themes including carbon reduction and waste. The LGA Environment and Housing Board will be discussing the Games and Sustainability at their May meeting and there will be a report on sustainability to the next meeting of the Task and Finish Group.

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