

**Item 3(I)**

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

1. The Task and Finish Group held its final meeting on 8 November 2012 to discuss recommendations and suggested focus for LGA activity, to help secure the long term benefits from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
2. The task group was set up by the LGA Executive in November 2011 to make sure that the LGA supported councils to play their part in hosting a successful Games and to ensure that councils had the latest information and shared experience and knowledge of local operational issues. The Culture, Tourism and Sport Board was represented on the task group and continued to have policy oversight of community sports participation and tourism, promoting the UK wide calendar of events, and the Games legacy. Members of the Task and Finish Group were all LGA Board members and the task group encouraged each LGA Board to consider what needed to be addressed to support councils in the period before and during the Games.
3. The strong leadership role of councils in bringing local areas together to keep the country moving and ensure the safety of events was absolutely fundamental to the success of the Games and the torch relay. The task group focused on key issues for councils all over the country hosting the Olympic torch relay and competition venues in and outside of London. Dialogue was maintained with LGA Boards to support information and guidance on a wide range of issues, including advice on transport and workforce that were shared with LGA membership.
4. Emergency Planning was a standing item on the agenda, with regular reports from the National Local Authority Olympic Resilience Programme which was a strategic partnership between the Home Office, the London Fire Brigade, the LGA and London Councils. At the final meeting of the task group Mary Ney, Chief Executive of Greenwich and Lead Chief Executive for Olympic Resilience and Security suggested that the key to success was the communication structure that was established and supported by Andrew Huddart. This ran from practitioner level right up to the Cabinet Committee for the Olympics meetings where chief executives and members were well briefed and supported. The task group agreed that a similar communication structure might prove to be a useful model for other resilience issues in the future.

**Games legacy – recommendations**

5. Working to secure the long term benefits of the Games was always an integral part of the bid to host London 2012 and a lot of attention is now being focused on ensuring that efforts to secure the legacy remain on track. From the outset, the LGA has supported councils to use the inspiration of the Games to encourage participation in sporting and cultural activities, to engage young people and to boost the economy through increased tourism.
6. The LGA is therefore in a strong position to ensure that councils are fully involved in national discussions on legacy. Councils all over the country were involved in the Nations and Regions Group that co-ordinated activity from 2005 onwards in the English regions and in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, with the dismantling of the nations and regions structure after the Games, only local government is in a position to ensure that the legacy of the Games continues and is delivered on the ground in local areas.

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7. The Prime Minister has appointed Lord Coe as Legacy Ambassador to advise on how best to secure longer-term sporting, economic and cultural benefits from the Games. He will be supported by an Olympics and Paralympics Legacy unit in the Cabinet Office. The unit will also support a new Games Legacy Cabinet Committee which is being set up to oversee the Government's plans for the legacy which will focus on four areas identified in the government's legacy plan published in 2010: sport and physical activity, economic growth, community engagement and the regeneration of East London.
8. In pursuit of the legacy objectives, a large number of policies and initiatives continue to be developed and implemented by a range of organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors. In order to avoid the risk of fragmentation, the task group agreed at its final meeting to recommend that the LGA should have a clear focus on: sport and increasing physical activity, boosting economic growth through the visitor economy and promoting community engagement. These were all at the core of the winning bid and the plans that were developed over the last seven years with legacy in mind.
9. The LGA's Culture, Tourism and Sport Board has already agreed that the sporting legacy and the visitor economy are priorities for the year ahead. The task group recommends that the LGA's work should form part of the local government 'offer' to the new Cabinet Office legacy unit to ensure that the vital contribution of councils is recognised and national legacy programmes are developed in a coordinated way that enhances existing local activity.
10. A report is being taken to the November meeting of the LGA Executive which also recommends that the LGA should share the learning from the resurgence in popularity of community events and volunteering in order to shape involvement in future national occasions and celebrations.
11. A conversation is being arranged between the LGA Chairman, Sir Merrick Cockell, Chair of the Task Group, Cllr Stephen Castle and Lord Coe. Ahead of this, an LGA briefing has been submitted to officials in the new unit to make sure they understand that councils have invested in facilities and in partnerships and have the democratic mandate to rally support for local legacy priorities.

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