

## **Culture, Tourism and Sport Board – report from Cllr Flick Rea (Chair)**

### **Visitor Economy**

Cllr Lewer and I chaired the LGA / VisitEngland visitor economy seminar on 19 October, which was attended by over twenty councillors and industry representatives. The seminar kick-started the CTS Board's year of focus on supporting councils to boost the economy through tourism. Councillors emphasised that they are closer to tourism businesses than any other part of the state and so are ideally positioned to take a lead role in joining up support for and listening to industry, providing information and reflecting their role within local strategic planning and priority setting. We will be developing further a visitor economy contribution to the LGA's growth campaign.

### **Arts Council England**

CTS Board Lead Members met Alan Davey, Chief Executive of Arts Council England, on 18 October. We reinforced to ACE how important it is that its priorities and ways of working should reflect the fact ACE and councils are, together, this country's biggest public investors in the arts, libraries and museums. We agreed a shared focus on seeking out and sharing innovation, supporting local political leaders to drive economic growth through culture and encouraging greater collaboration between libraries, museums and the arts. To take this forward we have agreed a statement of purpose that commits us to supporting national and local collaboration and helping councils to boost growth through culture.

### **Sport and 2012 Games Legacy**

I spoke at the LGA / Sport England leadership academy on 10 November. The event supported 15 portfolio holders for sport to develop further their understanding of the opportunities and challenges faced by local government funded and supported sport. This is the fourth leadership academy we have hosted with Sport England and again we received very positive feedback from delegates.

Cllr Henig and I attended the final meeting of the LGA's 2012 Games Task and Finish Group on 8 November, where Members noted the huge role councils played in ensuring the Games were such a success. The CTS Board will lead the LGA's work supporting councils to secure a sporting, tourism and community engagement legacy from the Games.

### **Commissioning**

As part of our political leadership offer on culture and sport, twelve councillors attended a commissioning workshop on 17 October. Its purpose was to support councillors to understand better the commissioning landscape and how to enable their culture and sport services to better engage with the commissioning process locally.

### **Libraries**

I spoke at the latest in a series of joint LGA / Arts Council leadership seminars for library portfolio holders on 5 November. Fifteen councillors attended and shared innovative delivery

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models. The seminar increased awareness of how members can re-design their libraries, alongside a better understanding of the tools and support available to help them from the LGA and Arts Council. We are on track to support nearly all library portfolio holders through seminars or peer support by the end of this financial year.

The LGA responded to the Culture, Media and Sport Committee's inquiry into library closures by highlighting the impressive level of innovation and commitment shown by councils. We also said the LGA has been and will continue to work closely with its members, the Arts Council and central government to encourage and support further improvement and innovation. The future of libraries is best served by councils continuing to innovate and work with their communities to come up with services which meet local needs.

**Heritage**

I attended the Magna Carta 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Stakeholder Event on 26 October. From specially commissioned symphonies to Magna Carta tours, BBC dramas and local street parties; organisers hope there will be hundreds of events – big and small – taking place across the whole country in 2015. The Magna Carta towns, where key events took place and/or original or later copies survive, are already very advanced in their local planning. I emphasised that councils across the country will be extremely keen to engage with the celebrations, and the Committee agreed to work with the LGA to achieve this. As well as leading libraries, museums and archives services, councils are very experienced at convening the local partners who will be essential to local celebrations and learning opportunities.

I was delighted to address over eighty councillors at English Heritage's annual conference for heritage champions on 12 November. I led a session on how councillors can ensure heritage services are engaged more effectively in the priorities of councils and delivered more efficiently in the future. We are looking forward to discussing how the LGA and English Heritage can build upon this when Baroness Andrews, Chair of English Heritage, attends the CTS Board on 21 November.

**London CLOA**

I gave the keynote address at the annual meeting of London Borough Directors of Sport, Tourism and Culture on 6 November. My speech was an opportunity to highlight the work of the LGA representing councils' interests nationally and to emphasise the importance of positioning culture and sport as central to achieving wider political priorities, especially economic growth.

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