

Culture, Tourism and Sport Board

11 January 2010

Local Government House at 13.00

Present**Vice Chair (in the Chair):** Cllr Ian Mearns (Gateshead MBC, Labour Group)**Deputy Chairs:** Cllr Stephen Castle (Essex CC, Conservative Group), Cllr Andrew Cooper (Kirklees MBC, Independent Group)**Conservative:** Sir William Lawrence (Stratford-on-Avon DC), Cllr Trevor Thorne (Northumberland CC), Cllr Kevin Carroll (Torbay)**Labour:** Cllr Bryony Rudkin (Ipswich BC), Cllr Mark Hackett (Manchester City Council)**Liberal Democrat:** Cllr Flick Rea (Camden LB), Cllr John Commons (Manchester City)**In attendance:** James Berresford (Item 2 only); Loyd Grossman, Crispin Truman (Churches Conservation Trust) (Item 3 only); Paul Raynes, Laura Caton, Steven Skelton, Paul Johnston and Martyn Allison (LGA Group)**Apologies:** Cllr Chris White (Hertfordshire CC); Cllr Ken Maddock (Mendip DC); Cllr Geoffrey Theobald (Brighton & Hove); Cllr Henry Smith (West Sussex CC)**1. Notes of the last meeting**

The notes of the last meeting of the Board and of the Tourism Working Group were agreed as a correct record.

2. England's Tourism Strategy

The Board received a presentation from James Berresford (Chief Executive, Visit England) on the new England Tourism Strategy. James updated members on the further development of the strategy since he had last addressed members in September 2009. The strategy retained its focus on four key objectives: Great Destinations, Quality First, Competitive Marketing and Easy Access. Delivery plans linked to the strategic objectives would be continue to be developed in the coming months.

During their discussions, Members stressed the vital role of local government in supporting tourism delivery, and the need for joint working between Councils and local businesses in ensuring that each destination makes the most of its unique local assets. Members also discussed the role of Tourist Information Centres (TICs), job creation within the sector, and the potential for disjuncture between VisitLondon and

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VisitEngland in respect of the Home Counties. James replied that that he was conscious of this final point, and of the strategic importance of London to tourism in the wider South-East. He would ensure the two bodies worked closely on this.

Members also noted that the LGA was to shortly begin a piece of work, jointly with Visit England, exploring the value of tourism to rural economies.

Decision

The LGA to continue to engage with, and feed in Members' views to, the development of the England Tourism Strategy.

Action

Officers to circulate James' presentation to Members. **Paul Johnston**

Officers to bring a further item to the Board on the marketing of tourism opportunities linked to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, once the VisitBritain / VisitLondon strategy has been launched. **Steve Skelton**

3. Churches Conservation Trust

The Board received a presentation from Loyd Grossman, Chair of the Churches Conservation Trust and Crispin Truman, Chief Executive of the Trust. Loyd and Crispin outlined objectives shared by the LGA and CCT and outlined a number of case studies to the Board. These included work that the CCT was currently undertaking to transform All Souls Church, Bolton, into a modern, accessible community facility.

In response, Members agreed that church buildings were often a unique facility for community use. Members raised the importance of working with all faith communities. Crispin acknowledged this point, but described how the Trust was funded by the Church of England and bound by ecclesiastical legislation. Despite this, they were increasingly seeking to offer leadership within their sector to comparable organisation, such as the Historic Chapels Trust.

Members discussed the whether the Trust's work was environmentally and economically sustainable. An environmental sustainability strategy would be forthcoming, but this was complicated by the high grade of listing of many churches. With regard to funding, the CCT had to prioritise where it became involved with local churches, and also worked to increase the capacity of voluntary and community groups working in their sector.

Decision

- The Board agreed to use LGA channels, such as First Magazine and the Board e-bulletin, to communicate the work of the Trust with member Authorities.

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- The Board agreed for a Member to visit Bolton to see the work undertaken by the Trust at All Souls' Church.

Action

- Officers to make arrangements for a Board Member to visit All Souls' Church, Bolton. **Paul Johnston**
- Officers to circulate the CCT Annual Review, which contains further information on the geographical spread of those churches maintained by the Trust. **Paul Johnston**

4. Free Swimming

Officers informed the Board that the results of the third Active People survey had shown a significant decrease in the number of people swimming over the last 12 months.

Decision

The Board requested further information on the uptake and costs of the Free Swimming scheme.

Action

Officers to circulate a written briefing to Members on the funding and impact of the Free Swimming scheme to date. **Steven Skelton**

5. Libraries Modernisation Review

The Board approved the work currently undertaken by the LGA Group on the Government's libraries modernisation review, and did not feel that a further response to the current DCMS consultation document was necessary.

6. LGA Group Business Planning

Officers updated members on the introduction of an LGA Group wide business plan.

Action

Officers to circulate a short update on additional licensing powers for Councillors introduced as part of the Policing and Crime Reduction Act. **Paul Johnston**

7. Member feedback from outside bodies

Cllr Carroll stated that the next meeting of the Tourism Alliance would discuss the Government's proposals to repeal current rules on Furnished Holiday Lettings.

Cllr Commons said that a Board Member should attend the next meeting of the Local Authority World Heritage Forum.

Cllr Rea had attended a meeting of the National Youth Libraries Board.

8. Update on IDeA Culture and Sport Work Programme

The report was noted. Cllr Commons said that this issue was a key part of the Boards' remit, and looked forward to a full discussion of these issues at the March board meeting.

Decision

Members noted that this was an important strand of the Board's work and asked for regular update reports to be provided at future meetings.

9. 2012 Games Sports Legacy Plan for Local Government

The report was noted.

Decision

- The Board agreed that the LGA work with IDeA and the professional bodies to publish a sports legacy plan for local government.
- The Board agreed to work with the 2012 legacy beacon Councils, and the National Culture Forum, to capture their contribution to the sports legacy plan.

10. Sustainable Communities Act update

The report was noted.

11. Culture, Tourism and Sport Board – Update on current issues

The report was noted.

Decision

The Board requested further information on the National Year of Music.

Action

Officers to circulate a briefing note on the National Year of Music to Members. **Paul Johnston**