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**Culture, Tourism and Sport Improvement Offer**

**Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

**Summary**

Councils need a strong improvement offer from the LG Group if they are going to meet the significant financial challenges they face and continue to deliver better outcomes for communities. This report suggests an improvement offer for culture, tourism and sport that reflects the new economic and political landscape, drawing upon the LG Group's approach to sector led improvement (Taking the Lead) and building upon A Passion for Excellence (the national culture and sport improvement programme that ended in March 2011).

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to comment on and agree an outline culture, tourism and sport improvement offer for councils, as set out in paragraphs **7, 8 and 14**.

**Action**

To be taken forward by officers as directed by Members.

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## **Culture, Tourism and Sport Improvement Offer**

### **Background**

1. In September 2010 Programme Boards were given specific responsibility for political oversight of improvement in their policy areas, as well as lobbying and policy development. The new structure for the LG Group brings together policy and improvement staff to work in programme teams that are providing a more joined-up offer to Member councils. This reflects the continuum between improvement and policy and the fact that they are mutually reinforcing.
2. The LG Group's overall approach to improvement is set out in **Taking the Lead**, a light-touch system of self-regulation and improvement, designed to replace the centrally-imposed national targets and bureaucratic accountability which the LG Group successfully lobbied against. The principles underlying Taking the Lead are that:
  - 2.1 councils are responsible for their own performance
  - 2.2 stronger accountability to local people drives further improvement
  - 2.3 councils have a collective responsibility for performance in the sector as a whole
  - 2.4 the role of the LG Group is to provide support and assistance.
3. Councils need a strong improvement offer from the LG Group if they are going to meet the significant financial challenges they face and continue to deliver better outcomes for communities. It is no longer about 'doing more for less' but about supporting councils to transform how they provide services and developing radical new ways of leading local services in partnerships with a range of providers. A strong improvement offer is also essential if councils are going to exploit the equally significant opportunities presented by localism, the Big Society agenda, Community Budgets and local government's bigger role in public health.

### **A new culture, tourism and sport landscape**

4. The improvement offer suggested in this paper builds on **A Passion for Excellence**, the national culture and sport improvement programme delivered through a partnership including the LG Group, DCMS, Arts Council, MLA, Sport England and English Heritage, which ended in March 2011 after six years. A

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summary of outcomes from the final year of this programme is **attached** at **Annex 1**.

5. The culture and sport landscape is significantly different now and the LG Group's improvement offer needs to respond to this. Recent developments in culture, tourism and sport policy which will shape our 2011/12 improvement programme include:
  - 5.1 **New models of service delivery** – the culture and sport sector has pioneered the use of social enterprise and trust models to find more efficient ways of delivering services. In many ways the sector already represents and delivers a “Big Society”;
  - 5.2 **A place based approach to investing in culture and sport** – councils such as Birmingham are leading the way with developing a radical new way to spending money locally on culture and sport;
  - 5.3 **Local improvement networks** – in some parts of the country councils and partners have developed local networks to drive self improvement and efficiency in culture and sport. However, budget pressures mean that the future of these networks is very uncertain. CLOA will lead working with local improvement networks as far as its resources allow. Further information is provided by CLOA as part of item 8;
  - 5.4 **A changing nationally funded improvement landscape** - the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) is being abolished by April 2012. Its responsibilities for museums and libraries will be transferred to the Arts Council from October 2011. The national leadership role for the archives sector is transferring to The National Archives from April 2012. The Arts Council and the other major DCMS public bodies – Sport England, English Heritage and VisitEngland – have experienced budget cuts of around one third each, which will mean a much reduced regional presence and less resource to support joint work with us on improvement;
  - 5.5 **Strategic commissioning** – culture and sport services are increasingly becoming providers of services commissioned by others, and commissioning others to deliver on their behalf.

**An emerging improvement offer**

6. During June officer-level transition meetings were held between the LG Group and each of the key public bodies, DCMS, CLOA and the National Culture Forum. This culminated in a roundtable on 23 June. The purpose of these meetings was to test support for a continued joint improvement offer that builds on A Passion for Excellence and responds to the new culture and sport landscape.

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7. At the roundtable discussion, there was strong agreement, reflecting feedback from councils, that there are a number of cross cutting priorities and learning needs which could form the basis of shared improvement activity in 2011/12. These are:
- 7.1 **Member and officer leadership** - supporting strong leadership and the positioning of culture, tourism and sport corporately;
  - 7.2 **Commissioning** - supporting senior managers to operate in a commissioning landscape, sharing the learning and influencing the commissioners;
  - 7.3 **Efficiency** - helping councils to find efficiency savings that are more transformational in their nature;
  - 7.4 **Capacity building in the civil society sector** – supporting councils to forge new relationships and delivery models with the civil society;
  - 7.5 **Evidence and data** - making sure decision-makers are aware of evidence and data that is available and supported in how they use it;
  - 7.6 **Benchmarking and service standards** – supporting councils to identify the key indicators which they want to benchmark their performance against and raising awareness about benchmarking tools for culture and sport;
  - 7.7 **Skills and competencies** – supporting professional development in partnership with the professional bodies and the National Culture Forum.

**Members are asked to comment on whether these issues capture the cross-cutting improvement needs of councillors and professionals who are leading local culture, tourism and sport services.**

8. In addition, there are a number of service specific areas where there is a strong case for developing improvement activity, in response to the need to modernise services and improve efficiencies. These are:
- 8.1 **Libraries** – The Future Libraries Programme (FLP) provided targeted support to help one quarter of library authorities find new and more efficient ways to deliver library services. There is a strong level of demand from other councils for support and we are working with the Arts Council to scope the second phase of the programme. We have consistently argued that in the context of continued financial pressures on councils the best way to continue to protect frontline library services, and avoid getting into the territory of statutory inquiries, must be through expanding the sector-led improvement approach pioneered by FLP.

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- 8.2 **2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Sport** - With one year to go until the start of the Games, the LG Group is supporting councils to maximise the wider social, cultural and economic legacy benefits from the 2012 Games through a national network of officers responsible for the Games in their area, targeted peer mentoring for councillors and sharing good practice through online resources and events. Sport England is keen to work with us on a Member leadership offer to support portfolio holders with responsibility for sport to position the services they lead in the new public health landscape.
- 8.3 **Heritage Modernisation** - The LG Group is working with English Heritage to help local historic environment conservation services adapt, modernise and continue to improve through a time of budget reductions. The programme is currently supporting five pilot areas. In Phase 2 the learning will be shared with other areas through a publication, a seminar, online resources and peer-to-peer contact.
- 8.4 **Museums and Archives** - The Arts Council is re-designing the £43.4 million Renaissance programme which will be a major funding source for local museums improvement. The LG Group has developed a proposal for Local Museum Partnerships whereby councils would be invited to form local museum partnerships, where they don't already exist, to drive locally appropriate solutions for improving performance and to ensure that resources are devolved to the frontline to keep museums accessible to the public. We are also working with The National Archives and the Arts Council to ensure that local archives services are fully integrated into the new programme.
- 8.5 **Digital inclusion and superfast broadband** - The Government is investing £530 million in superfast broadband infrastructure where it is not commercially viable. The LG Group is working with Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) to ensure that local government's leading role is recognised, to support councils with procuring broadband infrastructure in the pilot areas and to ensure that the lessons from the pilots are widely shared across the sector.
- 8.6 **Tourism** - Discussions are taking place with Visit England to consider how they may wish to get involved with joint improvement activity. This will focus on how support can best be provided to help councils use the benefits of tourism to improve place and generate improved economic and social outcomes in the new visitor economy landscape. There is read across to the Economy and Transport Programme Board on the issue of skills.

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**Members are asked to comment on whether improvement activity in these specific areas would support councils to address key culture, tourism and sport challenges and opportunities.**

**Work Programme and Resources**

9. The Programme Board's improvement priorities will be taken forward in a number of ways. The Programme Board has a budget of £50,000 to support policy and improvement work. Members have previously agreed that we commission an Associate to lead our improvement work. In addition, we are leveraging in up to £173,000 from DCMS and the key public bodies, to further strengthen our improvement offer.
10. To assist with taking forward the cross cutting improvement priorities and learning needs with DCMS and the key public bodies, a sum of £23,000 has been retained and transferred from last year's programme.
11. In addition, there are a number of areas where individual partners have indicated a desire to maintain bilateral relationships with the LG Group where projects or initiatives are less generic and more reflective of their own current priorities expertise and budgets. These are: libraries, museums and archives, sport, and heritage. The LG Group is also working with BDUK to support the superfast broadband pilots and has a well-established programme of work to support councils with getting ready to host the 2012 Games.
12. Where these are developed as specific programmes it will be important to continue to share learning across the wider improvement programme and to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort so that we continue to present a coherent offer to councils.
13. The improvement offer will be delivered in a number of different ways, including:
  - 13.1 **Leadership support** - through a continued offer of member leadership academies and officer leadership delivered in partnership with professional bodies and NDPBs.
  - 13.2 **Data and transparency** - through access to a knowledge hub containing up to date information, tools and examples of good practice to support councils with sector-led improvement. A core offer could include content covering:
    - 13.1.1 The service specific improvement offers, such as libraries and heritage;
    - 13.1.2 Content relevant to specific topics, such as library reform, school sport, parks, future funding of the arts;

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- 13.1.3 Content that helps councils address particular areas of need or weakness such as performance management, partnership working, commissioning and contributing to wider outcomes.
  - 13.3 **Peer challenge and support** - by access to a pool of member and officer peers and where required consultancy support.
  - 13.4 **Local improvement networks** – to provide the capacity to support the needs of individual councils and groups of councils.
14. The table opposite this page suggests priority actions to move us from scoping the improvement offer during July and August to the delivery phase from September to end of March 2012.

**Members are asked to comment on the outline improvement offer and whether it supports and promotes sector led improvement, develops member and officer leadership and facilitates the sharing of good practice on key CTS priorities.**

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<b>Project</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Link to Business Plan Priorities</b>
Scope and deliver FLP 2 with Arts Council	More councils participating in Future Libraries Programme phase 2 and modernising their libraries. Case studies and new publication.	Launch Sept	£100,000 MLA	Support councils to modernise libraries
Scope and deliver sport & public health joint improvement programme with Sport England	Member leadership offer on sport and public health; likely to comprise leadership academies and peer mentoring	Launch Sept	Up to £50,000 Sport England.	A new approach to community sport
Scope and deliver museums & archives joint improvement programme with Arts Council and The National Archives	A sector led improvement model for museums and local archives	Launch Oct	Arts Councils resources TBC	Sector-led improvement in museums and archives
Support, advise and share good practice examples of Member-led local learning networks for culture & sport	A sustainable solution to the issue of national and local learning and support networks for culture and sport	Ongoing	Staff time	Strong political leadership
Advise English Heritage on the heritage modernisation programme and support dissemination of learning; strengthen network of heritage champions.	Learning products and case studies from the pilot projects and events / communications to share learning	Share learning from Sept	£5,000 to support dissemination	Improved local performance
Support superfast broadband pilot areas to roll out through LA procurement and join this up with digital inclusion	Learning products from superfast broadband pilots and events / communications to share learning	Ongoing	Local Partnerships is providing day-to-day support	Improved local performance
Support councils to maximise the wider social, cultural and economic legacy benefits from the 2012 Games	Re-invigorated national 2012 Games network, new case studies, publication, peer mentoring	Ongoing	Staff time	Helping councils to play their part in a safe and exciting Games
Work with VisitEngland to support councils and LEPs in the new visitor economy landscape	Support sharing of good practice on destination management through case studies and economic value of tourism	To be confirmed	Staff time	Strong local economies
Scope joint improvement activity with DCMS, Arts Council, MLA, English Heritage and Sport England	Currently scoping the outcomes. Will reflect the cross cutting priorities set out in paragraph 7.	Launch Sept	Up to £23,000 of funding from last year's programme	Ensure the new quango landscape understands and works well with councils



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**Governance**

15. The Board is responsible for providing political oversight of the LG Group's culture, tourism and sport improvement offer. It is suggested that this is achieved through standing updates to Lead Member meetings and 6-monthly progress updates to the full Board.
16. In addition, it is suggested that we set up a project group with DCMS, the key public bodies, CLOA and the NCF, to oversee joint improvement activity and the residual joint funding. It is suggested that Helen Johnston, Head of Programmes, chairs the project group and is accountable for progress to Members.
17. This group could also be a forum for sharing the learning that emerges from the specific improvement projects and identifying further common issues and challenges, but it would not have formal oversight of these projects, which would be performance managed through a direct relationship between the LG Group and the relevant public body.
18. Members may also wish to express a view on the National Culture Forum where we need to form a position on whether we tackle skills and competencies, leadership and peer capacity through a relationship with the individual bodies or the NCF collectively.

**Members are asked to comment on and agree the suggested governance arrangements for improvement activity undertaken in partnership with DCMS, the key public bodies, CLOA and the NCF.**

**Conclusion and next steps**

19. Subject to Members' steer, it is suggested that next steps are:
  - 19.1 Officers to scope the detail of the improvement offer, working with partners as appropriate, by end of August 2011;
  - 19.2 A short publication for councils that sets out the LG Group's improvement offer for culture, tourism and sport in September 2011;
  - 19.3 Meeting of the project group to finalise the joint improvement activity w/b 12 September;
  - 19.4 Delivery of improvement offer from September 2011 onwards.

**Financial Implications**

20. The improvement offer can be taken forward within the £50,000 programme budget agreed by Members. In addition, we are leveraging in up to £173,000 through joint improvement activity with DCMS and the culture public bodies.

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**Annex 1 Culture & Sport Improvement Programme 2010/11**

**Annual Report**

**Summary of outputs**

The focus in 2010/11 programme was on supporting the sector to make the transition from the previous performance and improvement arrangements to those that emerged post election and spending review.

A total of £420,000 of funding was channelled through the programme in 2010/11 and generated and supported the following outputs.

- 1 member leadership academy attended by 11 elected members.
- A third leading learning programme attended by 14 future officer leaders.
- The launch of a new culture and sport outcomes framework along with 10 training events attended by 150 people.
- A variety of training and development programmes on commissioning attended by 179 council officers, elected members and staff from NDPBs and DCMS.
- A tailored support programme on strategic commissioning involving 11 councils and NW Renaissance.
- A new efficiency benchmark for CSIT and two new guides on new delivery models and asset transfer.
- A major piece of research into the capacity building needs of the culture and sport civil society organisations and the concept of brokerage.
- Updated guidance on performance management, strategic commissioning and an updated version of the Culture and sport improvement toolkit.
- Attendance at 22 conference and events, communication with 65% of councils through a regular newsletter and average use of the Knowledge website with 5,770 hits a month.
- Support to the Future Libraries programme and ongoing advice to DCMS, NDPBs and the LGA.
- Support to the National Cultural forum and individual professional bodies and support and guidance to numerous individual councils.