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Strategic Commissioning – scoping an integrated offer to support the culture and sport sector

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

Local authority culture and sport services have contributed to improving the outcomes of individuals and communities; improving health and addressing health inequality, helping older and vulnerable people live independently and improving the life chances of our children and young people. However, some culture and sport services are missing out on opportunities to be commissioned either because they do not understand the process, are isolated from it or as providers are not properly equipped to compete as part of the commissioners' markets.

This report presents very early proposals for the development of an integrated offer of support to local authority culture and sport services. The proposals are being developed in partnership with Sport England, Arts Council England (ACE), Chief Leisure Officers Association (CLOA) and the LGA Healthy Communities Team.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Action

To be taken forward by officers, as directed by Members.

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Strategic Commissioning – Scoping an integrated offer to support the culture and sport sector

Background

- 1 At the CTS Programme Board meeting in July 2011, the Board identified strategic commissioning as an improvement priority. Sport England, ACE and CLOA have also agreed that there could be significant benefit if we joined-up and aligned work on commissioning to create an integrated offer to the sector.
- 2 Strategic commissioning describes the local process of matching limited resources to efficient providers who are able to deliver improved outcomes for individuals and communities. It is central to better public service delivery.
- 3 The opportunities for culture and sport to engage with this process and contribute to the delivery of better outcomes in health, adult social care and children and young people remains significant. Although there is good practice, it is not widespread across the sector.
- 4 Work undertaken by the LGA last year identified four key challenges for the culture and sport sector:-
 - 4.1 Increasing the level of awareness, understanding and skills across the sector about commissioning so that the sector can better engage with commissioners locally.
 - 4.2 The ability to create and support “brokerage” arrangements between strategic and local commissioners in an increasingly fragmented landscape of public, private, social enterprise and voluntary providers of culture and sport services.
 - 4.3 The ability to build capacity within these providers or in consortia of providers both to engage and compete in a commissioning process and to deliver high performing outputs as efficiently as possible.
 - 4.4 Bringing together and presenting the evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of the sector’s contribution to a range of social and economic outcomes. Increasingly this requires an ability to quantify the cost benefit relationships in terms of the sector’s intervention and savings likely to be made.

Developing a core offer of support to the culture and sport sector

- 5 Any offer of support needs to be focused on providing a range of core material which can be utilised in a variety of situations by councils, local improvement

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networks, professional bodies and Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs). The material needs to provide consistent information and advice that can be customised to suit a range of local needs and the needs of partners.

- 6 The potential audiences for this work include councillors with responsibility for culture and sport; managers and staff in councils and associated trusts and contractors.
- 7 We are at the very early stages of discussing what a core offer to councils might look like with CLOA, Sport England, ACE and the Healthy Communities Team. Depending upon resources, a core offer is emerging that could include:
 - 7.1 A simple web based good practice guide based on the learning from last year, which can be used to supplement the existing guide to strategic commissioning.
 - 7.2 A good practice guide to mapping commissioning opportunities including a working example and advice on carrying out the mapping locally.
 - 7.3 A framework for a two day training event including pre-prepared material and programme covering all aspects of the commissioning process including mapping, capacity building and relationship building. This would form the basis of events for individual councils or groups of councils and broker organisations to tweak to reflect local circumstances and audience.
- 8 The programme is designed to be delivered this financial year but in a way that can be built on and extended next year if and when further resources are available.

Conclusion and next steps

- 9 Following a steer from members of the CTS Programme Board, a more detailed proposal will be developed in consultation with CLOA, Sport England, ACE and the LGA Healthy Communities Team. This will include consultation with other relevant LGA programme teams.

Financial Implications

- 10 The proposals outlined in this report and any future additions will be delivered through a partnership between the LGA, CLOA, Sport England, ACE and the Healthy Communities Team. We are in discussions about the funding that can be aligned to this project.