LGA Business Plan and Priorities 2012/13

Purpose of report

For review and direction.

Summary

This paper outlines current work on the 2012/13 LGA Business Plan and asks Members to agree the Culture Tourism and Sport Programme Board's contribution to it.

Recommendation

To provide a steer on priorities for culture, tourism and sport services for 2012/13 in the light of the direction of travel for local government and the LGA presented in the outline business plan.

Action

To feedback the Programme Board discussion to Leadership Board, to inform the final business plan which is due to be signed off by the LGA Executive in March.

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LGA Business Plan and Priorities 2012/13

Introduction

1. Work is currently underway on the LGA's Business Plan for 2012/13. As part of this, each of the Programme Boards is asked to identify the headline priorities for their areas of work for next year in the light of the LGA's overall direction of travel.

2. An outline business plan, attached as **Appendix B** to this paper, was presented for initial review at the January Executive. This was developed in discussions at Leadership Board and through the political group offices. This work has informed the statement of our vision for local government and, given this, initial proposals as to where the LGA can have most impact.

3. Six priorities have emerged as the focus for the LGA's work in 2012/13:

   3.1 Public Service Reform
   3.2 Growth and Prosperity
   3.3 Funding for local government
   3.4 Efficiency and Productivity
   3.5 Sector-led Improvement
   3.6 The LGA's own effectiveness and efficiency.

4. Heads of Programmes have provided the known priorities for their area in the light of the Programme Board issues identified by Members in September 2011. For the Culture, Tourism and Sport Board, these were:

   4.1 The 2012 Games
   4.2 Libraries
   4.3 The visitor economy
   4.4 Superfast broadband
   4.5 Improvement

5. At the time Members agreed that these were the biggest culture, tourism and sport issues facing councils, but the Board continues to oversee work across its remit.

6. Programme Boards are asked to review these business plan priorities for 2012/13. It is suggested that these priorities are still the biggest issues for the

CTS Board and Members are asked to comment on the following for the 2012/13 business plan:

6.1   Supporting councils in hosting and engaging communities in a safe and exciting 2012 Games, to deliver wider benefits for the whole country.

6.2   Supporting councils to modernise and improve public libraries and improvement programmes for culture, tourism and sport services.

6.3   Promoting and developing councils' role in the visitor economy.

6.4   Supporting councils as they lead the national roll-out of superfast broadband.

7.   **Appendix A** gives Members some background information about each suggested priority, drawing upon the priorities paper that Members considered at the September Board.

Appendix A

Background information on suggested culture, tourism and sport priorities for 2012/13

2012 Games – with just six months to go until the 2012 Games, this continues to be a priority issue for councils. We have a significant programme of work to support councils to play their part in hosting an exciting and safe Games that deliver sporting, economic and social benefits for the whole country. We represent councils' interests on key issues such as the Torch Relay to the Organising Committee and keep councils informed about vital operational information in the run-up to the Games.

Libraries - councils spend over £1 billion providing public libraries. Continued budget pressures mean that LGA has a key role to play supporting councils to improve frontline provision whilst making savings. The Board has argued consistently that the best way to protect frontline library services and to avoid getting into the territory of statutory inquiries is innovation, led by the energy and expertise of councils themselves. With Arts Council England (ACE) we recently launched the Libraries Development Initiative – a £200,000 fund to build upon our already highly successful Future Libraries Programme.   We have received over 100 expressions of interest. Projects will explore new and more efficient ways of delivering library services with LGA capturing and sharing the learning.

Improvement – In common with all council services, culture, tourism and sport services are adapting and making significant savings. Priorities are to strengthen local political leadership, support professionals to develop new ways of working and help the sector to maximise the opportunities and respond to the challenges posed by wider public sector reform, including the Localism Act, the commissioning landscape and health reforms. We achieve this through a range of improvement tools, including leadership events and training, peer support and access to learning networks.

The Visitor Economy – tourism is this country's fifth biggest industry. Councils are the largest public funder of the industry, investing £120m per year in business support, visitor information and destination marketing. They also provide the core infrastructure of places, such as transport facilities and clean, safe and attractive public spaces, that the visitor economy relies upon. We are supporting councils to respond to recent changes in the visitor economy landscape, which include Local Enterprise Partnerships playing a bigger role, and to develop and share new approaches to investment, such as Tourism Business Improvement Districts.

Superfast broadband – the Government is investing £530 million in the national rollout of superfast broadband and this year will be critical. Councils are required to develop local broadband plans by the end of February 2012 and complete procurement by December 2012. This has huge potential to improve people's quality

of life, grow our economy and increase choice in public services. Councils are leading the roll out locally and helping residents to get online, supported by the LGA.