

23 May 2012

Item 2

**Culture, Tourism and Sport Conference Evaluation 2012
and look ahead to 2013**

Purpose of report

For decision.

Summary

144 delegates and exhibitors attended the CTS Conference at Cardiff in March 2012, which was supported by CLOA. This report summarises delegate feedback and asks Members to agree a format for next year.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the delegate feedback and comment on the format of next year's event – in particular **Appendix A**.

Action

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

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**Culture, Tourism and Sport Conference Evaluation 2012
 and look ahead to 2013**

Summary of financial position

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>
Delegate income	£28,702	£29,689
Conference expenses	£18,665	£22,035
Surplus	£10,037	£8,081
Sponsorship:	£3,000	£6,250
TOTAL:	£13,037	£14,331

Summary of attendance

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Total attendance:	144	123	21
Paying delegates:			
Entire conf.	91	78	13
Only Dinner or One day	0	19	-19
Total	91	97	-6
LGA Members:	88	77	11
Non-LGA members:	3	20	-17
Exhibition stands:	6	6	0
Exhibitors/Sponsors:	11	15	-4
Speakers:	39	42	3

Breakdown of paid delegates

- 47 councils in LGA membership sent a paid delegate to the 2012 conference, meaning the conference reached 13% of the LGA's membership. Some councils sent multiple delegates, resulting in a total of 91 paid delegates. Of these, 34 were councillors and 57 were officers. The table below and overleaf shows which part of the country they came from:

East Midlands	10
West Midlands	8
London	11
South East	7
South West	15
North East	2
North West	13

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East of England	10
Yorkshire & Humber	5
Wales	6
Scotland	2
Don't know / other	2

Notes on financial and attendance figures

- The attendance figures show a slight increase in LGA members' attendance at the conference in 2012 and reduction in non-LGA member/one day delegates and sponsorship income, reflecting the impact of the spending cuts on the wider culture, tourism and sport sectors. The net figures reflect more than a 50% drop in sponsorship income, which were partially off set by tighter cost control.
- Our two main sponsors last year - Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund - were unable to sponsor the event this year and it was very challenging to secure the level of support that we did achieve.
- This was anticipated by the events team who ensured that maximum flexibility and considerably lower rates were negotiated with the venue and all suppliers in advance. As a result the Events team ensured that the reduction in revenue did not affect the bottom-line figures proportionally, or the delegate experience.
- Below is an indicative breakdown of the significant saving achieved on costs:

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Hotel cost per attendee*	£76.29	£111.70	-£35.21

*includes catering, room hire, dinner (in 2011), drinks (in 2012) for all delegates including non-paying

Delegate online survey – summary of main points

- Respondents:** We had one of the highest feedback levels – 38%, which is a reasonably representative proportion of delegates 33% (11) of respondents were councillors, 49% (16) were officers and the remaining were exhibitors). Below are some highlights of responses received:
 - Overall satisfaction:
 Overall, 88% of respondents were satisfied with the conference. Only 3% of respondents were dissatisfied and the remaining were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This compares favourably with last year when 70% of respondents were satisfied and 12% dissatisfied.
 - 40% of respondents attended the conference for the first time, while 60% had attended it two or more times previously.

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- 6.3 78% of respondents said that they would attend the conference again. This is very favourable compared to last year, when 59% of respondents said that they would attend the conference again.
7. **Venue and Drinks reception:** Cardiff was deemed a successful destination to hold the conference. 94% of respondents said that they were either fairly satisfied or very satisfied and 6% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. 82.8% rated the Cardiff Mercure Hotel as a satisfactory venue/location for the conference.
- 7.1 77% were satisfied with the hotel as an *accommodation* venue. 9% were dissatisfied. This is good feedback if we factor in the disturbances on the evening of 7 March.
- 7.2 27% of respondents did not attend the drinks reception. Of those who did attend, 42% were satisfied, 9% were dissatisfied and the remaining neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.
8. **Speakers and programme:** Over 90% of respondents rated David Moorcroft's plenary address as satisfactory. The other plenary speakers – Hugh Robertson MP, Dame Jenny Abramsky and Harriet Harman MP, all achieved satisfactory ratings of over 70%.
- 8.1 The only plenary that got below 70% satisfaction level was the Panel discussion (42.4% satisfied and 36% dissatisfied).
- 8.2 This is in sharp contrast with last year when the only plenary speaker that was rated as satisfactory by above 60% of the respondents was Lloyd Grossman.
9. **Study Tours:** Not a single delegate was dissatisfied with the study tours. Sport – the road to 2012 was the most popular. However, one third of the delegates did not attend the study tours.
10. **Workshops:** Boosting the Visitor Economy was the highest scoring workshop in terms of satisfaction level. Superfast Broadband and Improving Museums were the only workshops with one or two (respectively) unsatisfied delegates. All the other workshops achieved 100% satisfactory ratings.
11. **Conference content, organisation and exhibition:**
- 11.1 93.7% of respondents were very or fairly satisfied with the organisation and running of the event.
- 11.2 63.6% of respondents were satisfied with the content and structure of the programme for the conference. 27% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and only two respondents were dissatisfied. This is quite similar to last year's satisfaction levels.

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11.3 81% of respondents visited the exhibition stands. Of these, 38% were satisfied with the exhibition, 12% were dissatisfied and the remaining were neutral.

12. Summary of delegate suggestions for topics to cover at next year's conference:

12.1 Raising finance to fund a non-statutory service.

12.2 Low carbon transition. Leisure services is the carbon hungriest service - opportunities to reflect upon innovation capable of providing opportunities for fun at a low carbon cost.

12.3 Localism and its impact on leisure.

12.4 Olympic Legacy post 2012.

12.5 The various models for providing leisure and cultural services – social enterprises, trusts.

12.6 Impact of public health and health reforms.

12.7 Case studies and sharing success stories and learning.

LGA residential conferences

13. The other LGA residential conferences are the Annual Conference, Fire, Rural and the National Children and Adult Services Conference (held with the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services). These are either much bigger than CTS (attracting over 1,000 delegates) or, in the case of fire, are regarded as the definitive event for the sector with over 90% of fire authorities attending. This represents 219 paid delegates.

14. Apart from fire, the other LGA boards have focussed on a programme of paid and free one-day events.

Options for next year

15. Although the 2012 conference was very well-received by those who attended, the size and financial position mean that Members may wish to consider an alternative format for next year's event that retains the most popular elements of the two-day format but is more cost effective and could attract more delegates. In turn this would make the event more attractive to potential sponsors.

Attached at Appendix A is an example programme for Members' feedback.

Estimated budget

16. The 2012 conference achieved a £13,000 surplus for the LGA. Assuming a similar number of paid delegates attend in 2013, the estimated surplus for 2013 is £8,397. This reflects the fact that the events team secured an exceptional deal last year that is no longer available and audio visual costs are projected to increase.

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17. By comparison a one-day event attended by a similar number of paid delegates could achieve a surplus of approximately £10,000, which is in line with other one-day LGA events held at external venues, and would require significantly less staff time from the events and programmes teams.

Format and venue

18. The CTS Board could meet the day before the CTS Conference and an early evening dinner arranged, so that Board Members retain an important networking opportunity.
19. We could host the conference at a major culture and/or sport destination with an opportunity to experience it after the conference. The geographic breakdown suggests London or the Midlands would be the most convenient location for the majority of delegates – for example, the British Library, the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in Coventry or the Nottingham Contemporary.
20. During registration and the lunch break, as well as traditional exhibition stands, we could secure interactive demonstrations from organisations who work in partnership with councils and will be keen to raise their profile, such as StreetGames.

Delegate interaction

21. To help make the event more interactive, we could involve the sector much more in the run-up to the conference. For example, by:
 - 21.1 Identifying hot topics for the Open Sessions. We could encourage these to be more cross-cutting and less silo based;
 - 21.2 Posing key discussion questions that will feature throughout the event;
 - 21.3 Making better use of the CTS Twitter account in advance of and during the conference;
 - 21.4 Giving delegates a visible way of sharing their ideas / comments with other delegates during the conference, such as a rolling Twitter feed displayed on a big screen (with access to a computer for those who need it);
 - 21.5 Working with an expert facilitator to provide some immediate feedback / observations to share at the end of the conference (a small-scale version of Alain de Botton's 'author in residence' experiments);
 - 21.6 Producing a post-conference report that acts as a manifesto for our sector with key 'asks' of government.

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Next Steps

22. In order to secure the best possible deal and to maximise promotional time, it is suggested that we need to book a venue by the end of May.
23. Further milestones are suggested as:
 - 23.1 Lead Members agree overarching topic for conference – by end of May.
 - 23.2 Start promotion – early June.
 - 23.3 Secure headline speakers – by end June.
 - 23.4 Promote full programme with speakers – by early July.

**2013 Culture, Tourism and Sport Annual Conference (title to be confirmed)
The British Library / Herbert Art Gallery and Museum / Nottingham
Contemporary (or similar venue)**

The morning programme

- 09.45–10.30am Registration and refreshments
- 10.30–10.45am Chair's welcome
Chair Local Government Association's Culture, Tourism and
Sport Board
- 10.45–11.05am **Ministerial Address**
- 11.05–11.15am **Questions and discussion**
- 11:15 -11:40am **Big name cultural commentator speaking on hot topic with
Q&A**
- 11:40am – 12:45pm **Open sessions Round 1**
Top four issues for CTS services
- 12:45 – 13:45pm **LUNCH and NETWORKING**

The afternoon programme

- 13:45 – 14:15pm **Beyond CTS**
Three short thought provoking speeches from outside perspectives, such as health
and the private sector, to challenge new thinking in CTS
- 14:15 – 14:25pm **Questions and Discussion**
- 14:25 – 15:30pm **Open sessions Round 2** (refreshments in the workshops)
Top four issues for CTS services
- 15:30 - 16:00pm **Where next for CTS?**
Using feedback from Open Sessions discussion, questions posted at plenary
sessions, Twitter feed etc. an expert facilitator offers a very brief analysis of key
points from the conference, followed by final Q&A and closing remarks from the Chair
- 16.00pm **Conference close and tour of British Library / Herbert Art
Gallery and Museum / Nottingham Contemporary**