

**Item 8**

**Update on Current Issues**

**Purpose of report**

For information.

**Summary**

This report updates Members on current issues of interest to the Board which are not covered elsewhere in the agenda. Updates are included on:

1. 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games
2. Sport
3. Superfast broadband

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the update.

**Action**

Secretariat / CLOA Advisory Panel as appropriate

**Contact officer:** Justine Wharton  
**Position:** Adviser  
**Phone no:** 020 7664 3198  
**E-mail:** [justine.wharton@local.gov.uk](mailto:justine.wharton@local.gov.uk)

**Item 8**

**Update on current issues**

**2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games**

1. The 2012 Olympic Games were a huge success and at the time of writing the country is getting ready to host an equally fantastic Paralympic Games. From the thousands of people who lined the streets to see the Torch Relay, to the volunteers who helped everything to run smoothly, street parties and crowds who gathered to watch the sporting action in civic spaces, the Games reached every corner of the UK and local councils were central to the success.
2. Since the UK won the bid to host the Games in 2005, the LGA has supported councils across the country to get involved and represented their interests to the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG). The LGA's 2012 Games Task and Finish Group, chaired by Councillor Stephen Castle, has ensured that the LGA Boards supported councils to contribute to the success of the Games and that councils had the latest information and shared experiences and knowledge of local operational issues.
3. During the Olympic Games the National Local Authority Olympic Resilience Programme, which is supported by the LGA, London Councils, London Fire Brigade and funded by the Home Office, continued to provide advice to councils on operational issues and was a core part of the Olympic Secretariat, supporting the Cabinet Committee for the Olympics. Overall, operational plans went very well and emerging issues, such as the higher than anticipated numbers for unticketed events, were quickly and effectively responded to. The Resilience Programme will continue to support councils during the Paralympic Games.
4. As is to be expected there is much focus now on securing a lasting legacy from the Olympics. From the outset the LGA has supported councils across the country to use the inspiration of the Games to encourage participation in sporting and cultural activities, to engage young people and to boost the economy through increased tourism. The LGA is therefore in a strong position to ensure that councils are fully involved in national discussions on legacy. The Prime Minister has appointed Lord Coe, LOCOG Chairman, as Legacy Ambassador to advise on how best to secure longer-term sporting, economic and cultural benefits from the Games and the LGA looks forward to continuing to work with him.
5. The LGA's 2012 Games Task and Finish Group has its final meeting on 8 November and securing legacy benefits for the whole country will be a main agenda item at the November CTS Board.

**Sport**

6. In response to the Prime Minister's comments about the opportunity to secure a sporting legacy from the 2012 Games, the LGA Chairman wrote to emphasise councils'

10 September 2012

### **Item 8**

commitment to making the most of the Olympic sporting legacy. As councils are the biggest public sector funder of community sport, spending £1.8 billion a year, they are uniquely placed to encourage greater connectivity locally between National Governing Bodies, County Sport Partnerships, voluntary sports clubs and schools. Councils across the country are reporting increased visitor numbers to leisure centres, sports pitches, cycle tracks and beach volleyball courts as residents continue to be enthused by the Olympics and are working with local sports clubs and others to convert enthusiasm into participation and involvement.

7. Councils have also got behind the Join In Local Sport project which resulted in over 5,000 events taking place in communities across the country in the run-up to and over the weekend 18 / 19 August with the aim of sparking new interest in sport and helping local sports clubs. David Moorcroft, Olympian and Director of the Join In Trust, presented to the Board in July about Join In Local Sport which it is hoped will become a continued focus for sporting and cultural legacy.
8. The LGA responded to media coverage about the sale of playing fields by highlighting the need for a transparent and objective process that is open to public scrutiny and applies to all schools, including Academies. The LGA's press release is available on the website: [http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/media-releases/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3685902/NEWS-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/media-releases/-/journal_content/56/10171/3685902/NEWS-TEMPLATE)

### **Superfast Broadband**

9. On Monday 20 August Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport gave a keynote speech on the rollout of superfast broadband. A full transcript is available on the DCMS website: [http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/ministers\\_speeches/9299.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/ministers_speeches/9299.aspx).
10. The key points were as follows:
  - 10.1 Councils are making excellent progress through the rural programme putting in place plans for superfast broadband to reach at least 90% of the population by 2015. Procurement is expected to be completed across the whole country by July 2013.
  - 10.2 The £150 million urban broadband fund will mean that around 15% of the UK population will have access to speeds of 80-120 Mbps along with universal high speed wi-fi.
  - 10.3 An extra £300 million will be made available to enable access to superfast broadband to be greater than 90%.
  - 10.4 Ministers are confident of securing state aid clearance this Autumn.
11. Officers are seeking urgent clarification from DCMS on the timing, purpose and process for allocating the extra funding. In July the Chair of the Board wrote to the Secretary of State to highlight the impact of the delay caused by the absence of state aid clearance on councils' plans.