

Outside bodies feedback from Members

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This paper provides Members with the opportunity to feedback on recent meetings of outside bodies at which they have represented the Board.

The latest Chair's report is attached as **Annex A**.

Recommendation

Members currently representing the Board on outside bodies are asked to **provide any appropriate feedback** from recent meetings, details of which are enclosed.

Actions

Subject to comments from the Board, officers to take forward any suggested actions.

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Outside bodies feedback from Members

Recent

Purpose	Key points discussed	Outcome
Councillor Flick Rea spoke at the LGA / Sport England Sport Leadership Academy on 10 November		
To develop and strengthen political leadership amongst councillors with a portfolio for sport in local government.	The Academy provided councillors with an understanding of the new landscape facing councils and community sport and how effective political leadership can enhance the delivery of local sport by councils.	14 councillors attended the Academy and provided very positive feedback on what they had learnt. Greater awareness of the tools and advice available to councils from Sport England.
Councillor Sonja Crisp attended Tourism Alliance meeting on 15 November		
To represent the local government perspective to tourism industry national representative bodies.	Attendees discussed a number of issues of concern to the tourism industry, including visas, brown signs and destination management. Cllr Crisp emphasised the positive ways in which councils' leadership role of the visitor economy can help grow the sector.	Greater awareness amongst industry about councils' positive contribution to growing the visitor economy.
Councillor Flick Rea met Megg Munn MP, the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and Tennis for Free (TFF) on 20 November		
To discuss how LTA and TFF are working with councils to increase participation in grass roots tennis.	Cllr Rea emphasised the importance of early engagement with councils who, despite budget pressures, are committed to supporting participation and key to strengthening local connectivity.	LTA and TFF have a better understanding of the huge financial pressures council face. LGA to work with LTA and TFF to share good practice examples of councils working with TFF to help increase participation in grass roots tennis.

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Councillor Sir William Lawrence attended the World Heritage for Tomorrow Conference on 1 December		
To represent the LGA at this event bringing together local, national and international organisations with an interest in world heritage sites.	Keynote speakers included Baroness Andrews, Chair of English Heritage. A series of workshops enabled delegates to discuss key issues for world heritage, including the economic, social and environment benefits of world heritage sites, engaging communities and international collaboration.	Raised awareness about the LGA's work on growth and the visitor economy.
Councillor Flick Rea and Councillor Doreen Stephenson met with Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) on 4 December		
To highlight councils' concerns about upcoming changes to the criteria for the Blue Flag scheme.	Councillors Rea and Stephenson said that councils are very concerned about the potential economic impact of losing the coveted Blue Flag status. They also highlighted the importance of raising awareness about the changes amongst councillors. KBT said that they could not delay implementation further because they administer the scheme on behalf of the Foundation for Environmental Education, although they are keen to work with the LGA to mitigate the potential negative impact on visitor numbers and growth.	The LGA and KBT to jointly communicate the changes to the scheme and mitigating action to councillors and share examples of councils, the Environment Agency and water companies working together to improve bathing water quality. The LGA to arrange appropriate councillor involvement in the development of the new 'Seaside Award' to ensure that it promotes growth.
Councillor Flick Rea chaired LGA / Arts Council England libraries political leadership seminar on 12 December		
To share good practice and debate the big issues facing public library authorities.	Councillors shared innovative models for library services and the opportunities and challenges inherent in them. Delegates debated a number of key issues including reaching young people,	12 portfolio holders attended and left with increased awareness of how they can re-design their services, alongside a better understanding of

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	improving the efficiency of library buildings, compliance with the 1964 Act and positioning libraries to achieve wider political outcomes.	the tools and support available from the LGA and Arts Council.
Councillor Geoff Knight attended British Destinations Board meeting on 13 December		
To represent the LGA and seek wider input from this group of councils with a particularly strong interest in tourism and their destination management partners.	<p>Change of Use Class Orders in England dominated the discussion. The tourism sector is very concerned that the removal of restrictions on Change of Use may pave the way for the change of redundant hotels and agricultural buildings into housing.</p> <p>The LGA encourages the tourism sector to make their case to councillors who have the democratic mandate to balance the different economic, social and environmental needs of a place, and to put in place a local plan that reflects this.</p>	Raised awareness of the work the LGA is leading nationally on the visitor economy.
Councillor Peter Golds attended Local Authority World Heritage Forum (LAWHF) Annual general meeting on 17 December		
To support the LAWHF to relate its work to broader policy agendas and to offer appropriate support from the LGA, to complement the more detailed perspectives of other Forum Members.	<p>Hugo Swire, MP for East Devon, and Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office made a keynote speech sharing good practice on how councils, Natural England, the National Trust, large private estates, the Ministry of Defence, the Crown Estate, and small landowners work together to maximise the economic, cultural and educational benefits of a World Heritage Site in his constituency of East Devon.</p> <p>LAWHF are carrying out an audit of all LAWH sites and the way they</p>	<p>Updated the meeting on the LGA's position in relation to cultural services and local historic environment.</p> <p>The LGA are keen to explore synergies in our and LAWHF's lobbying of government on issues such as planning and heritage protection.</p>

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	are managed. The LGA are interested to be kept informed of the results to contribute to the overall picture of how councils are investing in the historic environment in face of budget pressures.	
Councillor Flick Rea met with Ed Vaizey MP, Culture and Heritage Minister on 19 December		
To discuss key issues facing council cultural and heritage services.	Cllr Rea and the Minister discussed the importance of positioning public libraries as central to the government's digital agenda and the implementation of Universal Credit, and the role of the arts in driving growth. Cllr Rea also raised councils' serious concerns about the progress of the ultra-fast broadband programme.	LGA to draft a paper on the role of arts in economic growth. DCMS to keep LGA informed on progress of the urban broadband programme. LGA and DCMS to press DWP on the role of public libraries in Universal Credit.

Forthcoming

Title	Date	Attendees
Meeting with Tennis for Free	16 January 2013	Councillor Flick Rea
LGA / Arts Council England Museums Leadership Academy	23 / 24 January	Councillor Flick Rea Councillor Andrew Lewer
Tourism Alliance Meeting	25 January	Councillor Caitlin Bisknell
LGA/Sport England Sport Leadership Academy	5/6 February 2013	Councillor Flick Rea
Meeting with Yinnon Ezra MBE, Department for Culture, Media and Sport advisor on the public library service	13 February 2013	Lead Members
CTS Annual Conference	7 / 8 March 2013	All board members

ANNEX A

Culture, Tourism and Sport Board – report from Cllr Flick Rea (Chair), January 2013

Meeting Ed Vaizey MP, Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries

1. I met Ed Vaizey MP, Culture Minister, on 19 December for the latest in our regular series of meetings. We discussed the importance of positioning public libraries as central to encouraging more people to get on-line and the implementation of Universal Credit. I also raised councils' serious concerns about the progress of the ultra-fast broadband programme and secured the Minister's agreement to work with us to resolve blockages and keep the programme on track. We also discussed the centrality of the arts to economic development and the visitor economy and agreed to work together on advocacy for the arts within government.

Visitor Economy

2. On 4 December Cllr Doreen Stephenson and I met the Chief Executive of Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) to discuss councils' serious concerns about changes to the Blue Flag Scheme, which could result in 30% of beaches currently in the scheme losing the coveted status in 2013. We emphasised that councils are very concerned about the potential impact this may have on the visitor economy at a time when many local businesses and communities are facing economic hardship. We secured KBT's agreement to work more closely with the LGA on communicating the changes to councillors and supporting them to improve bathing water quality in partnership with the Environment Agency and water companies.

Heritage and growth

3. I was delighted to welcome Baroness Andrews, Chair of English Heritage, to the November Culture, Tourism and Sport Board. We had a very positive discussion about how we can support councils to maximise the economic impact of their investment in heritage – UK heritage tourism accounts for £4.3 billion of GDP and creates employment for 113,000 people. We agreed a new partnership with English Heritage that will see us developing a leadership offer for portfolio holders and heritage champions, and sharing different and more efficient ways of delivering local historic environmental services.

Libraries

4. I spoke at the latest in a series of joint LGA / Arts Council leadership seminars for library portfolio holders on 12 December. 10 councillors attended and shared

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innovative delivery models. The seminar increased awareness of how members can re-design their libraries, alongside a better understanding of the tools and support available to help them from the LGA and Arts Council. We are on track to support nearly all library portfolio holders through seminars or peer support by the end of this financial year.

Sport

5. At the invitation of Meg Munn MP, a strong advocate for increasing participation in tennis, I met the Lawn Tennis Association (LTS) and Tennis for Free (TFF) on 20 November to discuss strengthening local partnerships with councils. The number of people playing tennis at a grassroots level has been falling. I emphasised the importance of early engagement with councils who, despite budget pressures, are committed to supporting participation and key to strengthening local connectivity. We also agreed to share examples of councils who are signed-up to Tennis for Free and the outcomes it has achieved.