

## Note of last Culture, Tourism & Sport Board meeting

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**Title:** Culture, Tourism & Sport Board  
**Date:** Wednesday 22 September 2021  
**Venue:** Beecham Room, 7th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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### Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note.

Item	Decisions and actions
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<b>1</b>	<b>Chair's Welcome, Introductions, Apologies/Substitutes and Declarations of Interest</b>
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The Chair welcomed Members, officers, and guests to the meeting and asked everyone present to introduce themselves.

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Brigid Jones, Muhammed Butt, Chris Penberthy, Dhanisha Patel, Geoff Knight, Bradley Thomas, Guy Nicholson and Barry Lewis.

Cllrs Neil Jory and Mandy Chilcott attended the meeting as substitutes.

No declarations of interest had been received.

The Chair thanked Cllr Clare Coghill for her hard work and dedication to supporting the work of the Board and asked that this be formally minuted. Members of the Board supported this.

<b>2</b>	<b>Terms of Reference and Outside Bodies</b>
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Cllr Golds nominated Cllr Seeva to be appointed as the Board's Creative Industries Council representative. Members of the Board supported this.

Cllr German requested that the Terms of Reference be amended to include more information related to Equalities and Climate Change.

**Decision:**

- Members of the Board noted the report and supported the suggested changes.

**Action:**

- Officers to amend the Terms of Reference to include Equalities and Climate Change.

<b>3</b>	<b>CTS Board Draft Work Programme 2021/22</b>
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The Chair briefly updated Members of the Board on the recent engagements with DCMS Ministers and expressed the need to continue to push for further engagement with DCMS colleagues.

Members of the Board made the following comments:

- Cllr Seeva commended the positive engagement work with DCMS colleagues that had already taken place and emphasised the importance of sharing best practice and using Members' influences.
- The Chair confirmed that whilst an invitation to a future CTS Board meeting had already been sent to the Secretary of State, a follow-up letter would be sent by officers on behalf of CTS Lead Members.
- Cllr German said that it was important to ensure that housing and preventative health services were included in conversations with DCMS Ministers.
- Cllr German referred to paragraph 21 within the report and emphasised the importance of social prescribing and the relationship between culture and sport in supporting physical and mental wellbeing.
- Cllr Tom Hollis emphasised the importance of linking previous and existing work to new work and lobbying collectively as a Board.
- Cllr Howell said that starting and finishing leisure/sporting activities from home should be promoted to prevent people driving to and from gyms, leisure centres etc.
- Cllr Western emphasised the importance of pooling information intelligence to assist councils and referred to the significant opportunity with regards to the levelling-up fund and sharing best practice.
- Cllr Welburn said that public footpaths needed to be improved across the country to ensure that natural facilities were enhanced.

Ian Leete, Senior Adviser, responded to Members' comments:

- The CTS team had received DLUHC improvement funding to develop case studies on Levelling Up/Covid recovery and the creative industries.
- Decarbonisation continued to be a topic discussed regularly. The CTS team is working to ensure that services can access LGA decarbonisation initiatives and learn from best practice in the culture and leisure sector.
- Much work had already been undertaken in relation to identifying best practice in the culture and leisure sector. Work co-commissioned with Arts Council, APSE, CLOA and other partners includes case studies and themed publications, most recently on the future of public sport and leisure provision. A series of roundtables with the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arts Council England and Historic England with regards to accessing funding for place-based collaboration initiatives would take place through the Autumn.
- The LGA's report on social prescribing, which was due to be launched in April 2020 and delayed by the pandemic is being refreshed to reflect the impact of COVID-19 on social prescribing and to include new case studies.

**Decision:**

- Members of the Board noted the report.

**Action:**

Officers to send a follow-up letter to the Secretary of State, on behalf CTS Lead Members.

#### **4 CTS Board Draft forward plan**

The Chair briefly introduced the item and informed Board Members that in response to Board members' requests for more in-depth discussion of key policy issues, informal stakeholder meetings would be organised by officers in the coming months to meet with key speakers and organisations outside of the formal Board meeting schedule.. These meetings would be put in place to allow detailed discussion on key topics of interest to the Board and better engagement with stakeholders.

Ian noted that the Board had previously expressed an interest in holding a meeting outside London. Members from Coventry and Derbyshire had both expressed an interest in hosting a future meeting.

Members of the Board made the following comments:

- In relation to the stakeholder meetings, Cllr Cross asked whether a session could be had with the hospitality industry to discuss sustainable workforce and what local government could do to support the industry.
- Cllr Henry said that the stakeholder meetings needed to have benefit to the Board and emphasised the importance of putting pressure on government to better understand current positions and roles.
- Cllr Golds agreed to the prospect of Coventry or Derbyshire hosting a future meeting of the Board.

**Decision:**

- Members of the Board noted the report.

**Action:**

- Officers to liaise with Cllr Lewis and Cllr Ridley re hosting a future meeting in Coventry/Derbyshire.
- Officers to continue to arrange informal stakeholder meetings.

#### **5 Update on the report "Securing the Future of Public Sport and Leisure Services"**

The Chair invited Sam Ramanah, Adviser, to introduce the report.

Sam introduced the report which set out the views of local government,

leisure providers and wider key stakeholders on the key actions and changes needed at a national and local level so that public sport and leisure services could operate sustainably and deliver the best outcomes for communities.

Members made the following comments:

- Cllr Henry and Cllr Kelly emphasised the importance of the value of sport, leisure and culture in terms of mental health recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Cllr Cross referred to the key findings and report recommendations set out within the report, the working relationship between DCMS and DLUHC and financial support for local authorities.

The Chair asked officers to write letters of thanks on behalf of the Board to the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE), the Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association (CLOA) and Mark Allman, recognising their contribution and joint achievements on the “Securing the future of public sport and leisure services” report.

**Decision:**

- Members of the Board noted the report.

**Action:**

- Officers to write letters of thanks on behalf of the Board to APSE, CLOA and Mark Allman.

## **6 Sports participation and community leisure discussion with Tanni Grey-Thompson**

The Chair welcomed Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson to the meeting and invited her to introduce herself.

Baroness Grey-Thompson introduced herself as LGA president, Paralympian and Crossbench Peer in the House of Lords and made the following points:

- National Fitness Day 2021 would take place on Wednesday 22 September and was a chance to highlight the role that physical activity played across the UK.
- Baroness Grey-Thompson’s Paralympic career started in 1984 and overall, she competed in five Paralympic Games. In total in her Paralympic career, she won 16 medals and also 13 World Championship medals.
- Baroness Grey-Thompson emphasised the importance of sport and physical activity and the vital role that the physical activity sector plays in supporting mental health and wellbeing. She was interested in better understanding how physical activity could be promoted and highlighting the benefits of physical activity to government departments.
- In Baroness Grey-Thompson’s role as LGA president, she was looking forward to working with people that shared her passions

and learning more about the Board's aims and objectives.

The Chair briefly updated Baroness Grey-Thompson on the recent engagements with DCMS Ministers and expressed the need to continue to push for further engagement with DCMS colleagues and help them to better understand all that local government do in the culture, tourism and sporting sectors at a strategic level.

Members of the Board made the following comments:

- The Chair said that the series of slides presented to DCMS at a recent Board meeting would also be sent to Baroness Grey-Thompson.
- Cllr German and Cllr Kelly emphasised the importance of access to leisure facilities and ensuring that rural communities were not disadvantaged by the potential leisure centre closures, and the joining up of leisure and health through Integrated Care Systems (ICS).
- Cllr Henry emphasised the importance of ensuring that Ministers and relevant government departments understood the interconnection between sport, leisure and culture and the benefits of promoting positive mental and physical health.
- Cllr Chilcott asked that Baroness Grey-Thompson emphasise the importance of interdependency between health, leisure and sport and the vital need for community services to aid the NHS.
- The Chair said that without suitable services in place to support mental and physical wellbeing, the pressure on the NHS would rise.

Baroness Grey-Thompson responded to Members' comments:

- Work was being undertaken with DCMS colleagues to ensure that they understood the size and scale of the culture, tourism and sport sector and the vital role that local government plays. The work included linking up to the Department for Health and new government departments re the levelling up agenda and working in partnership with government.
- Work was being undertaken in relation to accessibility and ensuring that appropriate infrastructure was in place to allow people to use public space for exercise.
- Conversations needed to be had with providers re the cost of leisure centres and swimming pools to ensure that all people could access the facilities.
- Baroness Grey-Thompson provided her e-mail address within the Microsoft Teams chat to Members of the Board.

**Decision:**

- Members of the Board noted Baroness Grey-Thompson's update.

**Action:**

- Officers to send the series of slides presented to DCMS at a recent Board meeting to Baroness Grey-Thompson.

## **7 Verbal update on sector survey results**

The Chair invited Lauren Lucas, Adviser, to provide a sector survey results update to Members of the Board. Lauren made the following points:

- The sector survey had been sent to the Heads of Culture and Leisure and was promoted via CLOAs network and the LGA bulletin.
- There were 70 responses to the survey which represented approximately 20% of authorities, the results had not yet been analysed in detail.
- The survey sample highlighted the extent to which councils financially supported their providers throughout the Covid-19 pandemic: 39% of councils had used core council funds to provide emergency support to their leisure provider and 16% had done the same for culture services. About 40% had waived a sum due to be paid to them by a leisure contractor. Immediate impact on budgets does not appear to have been as bad as feared, but there is still significant cause for concern, particularly in the longer term. 7 councils reported having to permanently close or mothball facilities, a third of councils expected their revenue budget to reduce next financial year and loss of income was seen as a major barrier to delivering service objectives. Approximately 30% of councils reported having a recovery plan for culture already in place and another 30% of councils had one in development.
- Approximately 40% of councils reported having a recovery plan for leisure already in place and a third of councils had one in development.
- Supporting economic growth and levelling up featured as strong priorities in the culture strategies, and 100% of culture respondents said that supporting local economic growth was the top priority for their culture recovery strategy. Leisure strategies saw supporting local economic growth as a slightly lower priority, with a stronger focus on increasing participation and supporting mental health strategies.
- Further analysis of the sector survey results would soon take place

Members of the Board made the following comments:

- Cllr Hollis asked about the work that was taking place with Swim England with regards to swimming pools that were not currently fit for purpose. The Chair confirmed that the LGA were working closely with Swim England. Cllr Vernon-Jackson had issued a media response to the publication of their report and undertaken several radio interviews on this topic in which he argued that approximately 60% of leisure centres needed to be re-built or refurbished. He said that unless government took real action, there would be a significant reduction in the number of leisure centres available across the country over the next decade.

### **Decision:**

- Members of the Board noted the verbal update.

## 8 Any other business

None.

## 9 Commission on Culture and Local Government

The Chair invited Lauren Lucas to introduce the report and invited Members of the Board to comment.

### Decision:

Members of the Board noted the report.

## 10 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meetings held on 2 June 2021 and 28 July 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

### Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE	Portsmouth City Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Julian German	Cornwall Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Peter Golds CBE Cllr Andrew Western	Tower Hamlets Council Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Members	Cllr Steve Hastings Cllr Gary Ridley Cllr Phil Seeva Cllr Anne Welburn Cllr Peter Kelly Cllr Richard Henry Cllr Amy Cross Cllr Chris White Cllr Tom Hollis	Isle of Wight Council Coventry City Council Cornwall Council West Lindsey District Council Preston City Council Stevenage Borough Council Blackpool Council Hertfordshire County Council Ashfield District Council
Apologies	Cllr Barry Lewis Cllr Bradley Thomas Cllr Brigid Jones Cllr Muhammed Butt Cllr Dhanisha Patel	Derbyshire County Council Wychavon District Council Birmingham City Council Brent Council Bridgend County Borough Council
In Attendance	Cllr Natalie McVey Cllr Mark Howell Cllr Neil Jory Cllr Jonathan Simpson, MBE Cllr Mandy Chilcott	Malvern Hills District Council Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council West Devon Borough Council Camden London Borough Council Somerset County Council