

## **Culture, Tourism and Sport Board – report from Cllr Ian Stephens (Chair)**

### **Libraries**

1. We continue to support the proposals set out in the report 'Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016 to 2021' by the Libraries Taskforce to ensure funding is made available to help libraries transform. The joint LGA and DCMS Taskforce was set up to create a vision for the future of library services and prepare them to meet the needs of communities of the future, as well as place them on a more sustainable footing.

### **Sport and Physical Activity**

2. Working closely with Sport England on the delivery of their strategy 'Towards An Active Nation 2016-2021', we are ensuring that councils and local partners are central to their plans to tackle inactivity, and to re-balance funding away from national organisations and towards local bodies.
3. I met with Robert Sullivan, Strategy & Communications Director at the Football Association, on the 17 January, to discuss the Parklife football hub programme and the common goals between local government and the FA, including encouraging more people to take up the playing of sport.
4. I also responded to the CLG select committee on public parks, published on 11 February. This made some welcome recommendations about not putting parks on a statutory footing, supporting alternative models of delivery, and councils' ability to charge for some types of park use. However, I cautioned against proposals to require councils to publish formal strategies on parks.

### **Culture**

5. Cllr Faye Abbott attended the British Board of Film Classification's meeting on the 10 February as the CTS board's representative. The board watched the film ELLE and discussed classifying depictions of sexual violence.
6. I will be attending the launch of Coastal Culture Network in Parliament on 27 February. This network will help connect arts and cultural organisations, local authorities, Coastal Community Teams and others to increase the number of cultural events and activities taking place in seaside towns. It will share information and opportunities, and encourage the role of culture in regeneration.
7. I will be launching a new publication on the role of culture in placemaking at the CTS conference on 23 February. This publication, jointly developed with the Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association, showcase ten examples of where councils have used arts and culture to tackle key local problems, such as homelessness, civic engagement, skills and public health.

### **Tourism and the Visitor Economy**

8. Cllr Paul Bettison gave evidence on rural tourism at the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee in Parliament on the 11 January, with a specific focus on council

and LEP support for/promotion of tourism as a key sector providing rural economic growth. He advised the Committee of the need for councils to have access to the right powers in order to create the conditions for the growth of the visitor economy - one of the country's fastest growing sectors.

9. Cllr Colin Organ attended the Tourism Alliance Board meeting on 30 January, which explored a number of key issues currently impacting the tourism industry. In particular, there has been a focus on the possible implications of the exit from the European Union, coupled with an analysis of the positive figures from last quarter's visitor numbers.

### **Historic Anniversaries**

10. The Women's Local Government Society (WLGS) is working with Buckinghamshire County Council and the LGA on a national project to mark the centenary of women's suffrage in 2018. Volunteers will find and pay tribute to 100 pioneers who fought for universal suffrage and then participated in public life. Representatives from the WLGS and Buckinghamshire County Council met with the LGA Chairman and Deputy Chief Executive on the 26 January. The project's website will launch on the 8 March (International Women's Day).

### **CTS political leadership offer 2016-17**

11. I am delighted that the next CTS Annual Conference will take place on 22-23 February 2017 in Bristol. Keynote speakers for 2017 will include: Dame Kelly Holmes DBE, Tracey Crouch MP (Under Secretary of State for Sport, Tourism and Heritage) and Viscountess Penelope Cobham CBE (Visit-England), Sheila Healey (Arts Council England) and Duncan Wilson (Chief Executive of Historic England).

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