

Culture, Tourism and Sport Board – Report from Cllr Flick Rea MBE (Chair)

Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee Inquiry on ACE

1. The LGA submitted written evidence to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee's short inquiry on the Work of the Arts Council (England) (ACE). The inquiry is investigating the scope, scale and remit of ACE and is examining the economic and artistic criteria that underpins its funding decisions and views on the fairness of the geographical distribution of its funding.
2. The LGA's evidence to the Committee emphasised that that the relationship between councils and ACE is important in helping councils achieve their ambitions for attractive places that provide a high quality of life, and drew attention to the agreement between the LGA and ACE about local joint working on places' cultural offers.

LGA Betting Commission

3. I attended the first meeting of a landmark taskforce between councils and the 'Big Five' betting companies to try and address concerns around clustering of betting shops and problem gambling. Coral, Ladbrokes, Paddy Power, William Hill and BetFred joined the LGA, government officials and the Association of British Bookmakers around the table for the first time ever to discuss the issues in play.
4. The first meeting of the Commission provided the opportunity to get key issues on the table and to understand different perspectives. Although there are a number of complex and interrelated issues which are challenging to resolve, the discussions were constructive and there is a willingness to engage in dialogue. In advance of the next meeting of the Commission, which will take place in June, the LGA is seeking examples of local agreements between councils and betting shops, whether these have worked or been unsuccessful.
5. Anyone with examples or who wishes to find out more about the Commission should contact ellie.greenwood@local.gov.uk

Farrell Review

6. Sir Terry Farrell was commissioned in June last year by DCMS Ministers to report on architecture and the built environment. Members saw the review as relevant both to the LGA's agenda on planning and to our work on making attractive places, tourism and the heritage. Sir Terry's team attended a meeting of the Culture Tourism and Sport Board in September and the LGA subsequently submitted evidence, arguing that the review needed to go beyond its narrow terms of reference and consider the role of planning in improving design.

7. The final review reflects the Board's input. It argues, as the LGA does, for an approach to planning based on a vision for a place. There are also a number of recommendations in the Review that bear directly on councils, councillors and the LGA itself. They include:
 - 7.1. several ideas for creating local champions and spaces for debate about design;
 - 7.2. introducing design training as part of elected members' planning training;
 - 7.3. the LGA to work with the Design Network to draft a template for local partnership agreements between built environment practices and neighbourhoods, villages and towns;
 - 7.4. the LGA, as part of the wider group of agencies with an interest, to research the feasibility of "urban rooms" which would be public spaces in which a place's spatial and design vision could be viewed and debated by the community.
8. Our response to the review was broadly positive.

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