

24 January 2019

## **Culture, Tourism and Sport Board – from Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Chair)**

### **LGA Annual Sports Conference**

1. I hosted the LGA Annual Sports Conference, which took place on the 5 December in Bevin Hall, 18 Smith Square. The conference entertained 35 delegates and saw a range of interesting speakers, such as Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, 12 Gold-Medal Winning Paralympian, and Chris Perks, Director of Local Delivery for Sport England, provide examples of best practise across the sector and inspirational stories of the transformational power of sports within communities and individuals.

### **Libraries Taskforce**

2. Cllr Peter Golds attended the Libraries Taskforce meeting on 11 December at Colliers Wood Library, London. The focus of the meeting was on the future of the taskforce, including the transition of the secretariat from DCMS to ACE. Cllr Golds expressed concern that the budgets and MOU had not been discussed more widely before the meeting.

### **NICE consultation**

3. I was quoted in a press release issued by the LGA in response to new draft guidance by NICE on improving physical activity. This noted the importance of activity taking place outside of swimming pools and gyms, the value of high quality services such as parks and green spaces, alongside work by council to develop planning structures which take walking and cycling routes into account.

### **The Times Libraries Budget Cut Inquires**

4. We also responded to an inquiry from The Times concerning the impact of budget cuts on libraries. My response was quoted in full in both The Times and The Express. Our response recognised the ingenuity among staff and volunteers in keeping services open and innovating, but highlighted the impact of losing £15 billion from council budgets.

### **Tourism**

5. Cllr David Jeffels represented the board at the Visit England/Visit Britain Destination Forum. The forum had a wide range of speakers from Visit England (VE)/Visit Britain (VB), who outlined current plans and initiatives to boost the tourism industry in England, and especially to encourage more overseas visitors.

### **Theatres**

6. The Board's Theatre Champion Cllr Faye Abbott met with the Theatres Trust for a general introduction and to learn more about their work. A similar meeting is being arranged with UK Theatre.

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### **Leadership Essentials Courses**

7. Since the last Councillors Forum, we have held several of our Sports and Physical Activity Leadership Essentials (LE) courses, delivered in partnership with SE and one of our Culture LE courses, delivered with ACE. Cllr Peter Golds, Cllr Richard Henry and Cllr Faye Abbott all contributed sessions to make these events a success. These courses continue to be well received and command positive feedback from attendees.

### **Library and Culture Peer Challenge Launch**

8. Since the last Councillors forum, we have conducted the first round of applications for the ten library peer challenges or the three cultural services peer challenges we are offering to councils, funded by our contract with ACE.
9. We received four expressions of interest in the Library Peer Challenges and one for the Cultural Services, so decided to implement a second round of applications for the peer challenges, which closes on the 31 January.
10. We have also refreshed and expanded our pool of peers and peer challenge managers to conduct the challenges and will be hosting a training event for them on the 30 January.

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