

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

LGA responses

1. Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson responded to the DCMS announcement of £250 million to be spent on cultural infrastructure, including £90 million for the Cultural Development Fund and £125 million for regional libraries and museums, saying that Government is right to recognise that culture is one of the key things that places need if they are to thrive and that the funding will help museums and libraries to continue to adapt and reach wider audiences, but that the Government should use the forthcoming Budget and Spending Review to simplify the funding for councils to allow them to maximise the impact of the money.
2. In response to the Government's announcement of a new Loneliness Fund, Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson said that councils are ideally placed to lead on social prescribing and tackling loneliness in partnership with voluntary sector organisations, that services including libraries, museums and public parks reduce the need for residents to use health services and that social prescribing relies on sustainable long-term funding for council services.
3. Sport England launched the results of their latest Active Lives survey, which showed that 1 million more people are now active than when the survey began in 2015. Responding, Cllr Vernon-Jackson said that these figures show that efforts by councils and Sport England to get people active are working, but that many of the facilities run by councils are ageing and could be updated to better meet the needs of communities and be more energy efficient and cost-effective to run. He noted that it is important that the Government looks to provide more funding for council-run facilities, in the same way that they have recently made important investments in cultural infrastructure, to ensure that councils can continue to provide excellent facilities and services for their residents.
4. In response to the Government's announcement of a heritage preservation campaign, Cllr Vernon-Jackson said that preserving heritage sites, including war memorials, ancient castles and houses, contributes to local priorities by boosting economies, attracting visitors, developing workforce skills, fostering community cohesion and regenerating of our town centres and high streets, but that it is vital that councils have the long-term, sustainable funding to protect and unlock the value of heritage sites for their communities.
5. Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson responded to the Government's announcement of £1.35 million funding for 'Pocket Parks', saying that in the face of the current childhood obesity epidemic, green spaces are a key resource which sit at the heart of local communities. He also noted that it is important councils can maintain these spaces and that the government should provide long-term sustainable funding for services like parks.
6. During the pre-election period an LGA spokesperson responded to Sport England's 'Active Lives, Children and Young People report' which showed an increased number of children engaging in physical activity the recommended 60 minutes or more a day. Our

response noted that the figures showed efforts by council to get children and young people active (including exercise referral schemes and free or reduced cost sports activities) are working, but that more needs to be done to reduce the gap between the most and least deprived.

Speaking engagements

Improvement Programme

7. Cllr Peter Golds spoke at our Leadership Essentials (sport) for councillors event on the 7th/8th November 2019.
8. Cllr Chris White introduced our Leadership Essentials (culture) event on the 9th 10th November 2019.
9. Cllr Peter Golds will be speaking at our Leadership Essentials (culture) event on the 30th and 31st January 2020.

UK Active Conference

10. Cllr Peter Golds spoke as part of a panel at the UK Active Conference on 'The role of activity and prevention in the NHS long-term plan' alongside Dr Steve Mann (Director of Physical Activity, Places for People Leisure), Simon Chapman (Deputy Director - Personalised Care Group, NHS England), Professor Helen Stokes Lampard (Chair, Royal College of General Practitioners) and Dr Davina Denizczyc (Charity and Primary Care Medical Director, Nuffield Health).

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