

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

### **Recovery**

1. The CTS Board's culture and sport improvement programmes for officers and councillors have been redesigned from the bottom up to support councils as these services respond to the challenges of Covid.
2. The Board has published advice notes on supporting leisure providers, information on the impact of Covid-19 on CTS services, and will shortly be publishing a guide illustrating on how these services have responded and the positive impact this has had for communities.
3. The CTS Board has also produced paper on supporting the visitor economy which was presented to the Ministerial Economic Recovery Working Group. This paper was developed in partnership with DCN, CCN, Core Cities, Key Cities and The LEP Network.

### **Culture and libraries**

4. **Response to the Cultural Recovery Fund.** Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson responded to the Government's £1.57 billion support package to help protect the futures of UK theatres, galleries, museums and other cultural venues on the 6<sup>th</sup> July, welcoming the funding, pointing out that councils spend more than £1bn on culture each year and calling for councils to be given a role in the emergency fund's distribution.
5. **Response to £500 million kickstart fund.** On the 29<sup>th</sup> July, responding to the Government's funding scheme to kickstart film and television production struggling to secure insurance for COVID-19 related costs, Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson, said the fund recognised the important economic role of the creative industries and noted "we need to ensure that this funding gets to those places most at risk of losing their cultural organisations; sometimes the only ones in that area."
6. **Meeting with Neil Mendoza.** Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson met with Neil Mendoza in his capacity as Commissioner for Cultural Recovery and Renewal, supporting the sector to recover from the pandemic on the 31<sup>st</sup> July. They discussed the vital role played by local government in culture, both in running cultural services and in investing over £1bn a year in the sector, and the importance of a place-based approach in investing the Cultural Recovery Fund.
7. **Creative Places report.** Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson chaired the launch of the LGA's report '*Creative Places: supporting your local creative economy*' on the 5<sup>th</sup> August in an event featuring presentations from the CE of the Creative Industries Federation, the Audience Agency and case studies from Leeds City Council and Kent County Council. The publication is designed to help councils understand the creative sector, illustrated by

examples and case studies and with tips from councils across England. His quote in the accompanying press release was featured in a BBC article on the creative industries.

8. **Speech at APPG on Arts, Health and Wellbeing.** Cllr Julian German gave a presentation to the APPG on Arts, Health and Wellbeing on the August, describing Cornwall Council's work in using culture to support vulnerable communities and outlining some of the work of the LGA Culture, Tourism and Sport Team during COVID-19.
9. **First Magazine article on libraries.** Cllr Gerald Vernon Jackson produced an article in First Magazine on the 29<sup>th</sup> September, highlighting the ways in which libraries can contribute to economic recovery and the levelling up agenda.

### **Tourism**

10. **Response to tourism funding announcement.** Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson responded to the announcement of a £10 million funding pot for tourism, saying that councils are best-placed to boost visitor economies and are trying to find innovative ways of supporting culture and heritage.
11. **Response to DCMS report on sport and leisure.** On the 23<sup>rd</sup> July, Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson issued a response to a DCMS report on the impact of COVID-19 on sport and leisure, saying "in light of the continuing impact of the coronavirus pandemic, particularly on tourism, we agree with the Committee's recommendation that specific support deals are continued, including workforce measures to support freelancers and small companies. If funded properly, our cultural and leisure services can play a critical role in the nation's recovery and the Government should therefore urgently consider these recommendations.

### **Leisure and parks**

12. **Response to leisure centre reopening.** On the 9<sup>th</sup> July, Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson responded to the reopening announcement for gyms and leisure centres, noting that some facilities might take time to reopen and calling for emergency funding for the sector.
13. **Letter to Secretary of State.** On the 10<sup>th</sup> July, Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson wrote to Secretary of State Oliver Dowden, about the future survival of leisure services and offering to meet to discuss how the LGA and DCMS could work together on the issue.
14. **Press release on sport and leisure.** On the 20<sup>th</sup> July, Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson was quoted in an LGA press release warning that hundreds of leisure facilities could close permanently or be unable to reopen without urgent funding. "the Government urgently needs to provide funding to ensure leisure facilities stay open to all communities and recognises their role in the fight against obesity, inactivity and poor mental health, which in turn will help to save the NHS being overburdened in the future."
15. **Response to park litter campaign.** Responding to a campaign by Keep Britain Tidy on the 24<sup>th</sup> July, Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson said "Littering is always unacceptable – it is unsightly, tarnishes our local environments and council taxpayers are left to pick up the

costs to clear it up. Councils run a range of awareness and clean-up campaigns, but fines can be issued to people who persistently ignore warnings.”

16. **Physical activity sector letter.** On the 21<sup>st</sup> September the LGA co-signed and responded to a physical activity sector letter to the Prime Minister which highlighted the financial challenges facing the sector. Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson noted the importance of securing the financial future of the sector, saying, “the LGA has been making the case for long-term funding to ensure leisure facilities can continue to provide vital services for low income communities.” Cllr Vernon-Jackson also represents local government on the Ministerial Sport Working Group.
17. **First Magazine article.** On the 29<sup>th</sup> September, Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson published an article in First Magazine highlighting the vital contribution made by sport and physical activity to people’s health and wellbeing and the fragility of the sector as a result of the pandemic. It called for emergency funding support and the need for a longer-term vision for the leisure sector.

<b>Contact officer:</b>	Ian Leete
<b>Position:</b>	Senior Adviser
<b>Phone number:</b>	02076643143
<b>E-mail:</b>	ian.leete@local.gov.uk