

Culture Tourism & Sport Board – Report from Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Chair)

Sport

1. On 17 March we met with the Minister for Sport to discuss the challenges facing public leisure centres and to set out the significance of the council contribution to both grassroots and elite sport in this country.
2. Provision of public sport remains in a perilous state in this country, notwithstanding the welcome reopening of most facilities. We continue to campaign with partners for a further investment through the National Leisure Recovery Fund. And because we know some providers will probably not survive, sadly, we have published a guide to support councils if they need to rapidly insource their services to ensure their preservation for the community.
3. We have also worked closely with Sport England on the development of the Moving Communities platform. While this has been developed as the evaluation and monitoring tool for the National Leisure Recovery Fund, it offers far greater potential and significantly enhances our evidence base for the unique contribution that public leisure brings in our communities, calculating the social impact on education, reduced crime rates and enhanced wellbeing from visits to our leisure centres. All councils should now have received your first reports – I do hope that you've found them useful. Let us know how you are using them.
4. Finally, we are developing a research paper on the future of public leisure, summarising the state of play and identifying opportunities for future delivery. It will offer a blueprint for councils looking to focus and enhance their delivery of sport and physical activity services, in light of the challenges we all face.

Culture and heritage

5. On 24 March, we met with Neil Mendoza, the Commissioner for Cultural Recovery and held a constructive conversation about what culture can do to help level up areas, and identified a need to work closely together to ensure councils can develop strong bids for the levelling up and UK shared prosperity funds.
6. We are also in discussion with the National Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic England about the support they provide to councils, and will shortly be running some regional workshops to support you to access their funding and advice and identify what training needs could be addressed through a joint programme with the LGA. If you have ideas, please let us know.

Events and parkrun

7. More recently we have been working with the events industry to support large scale events return safely. On 4 June, I chaired a webinar on the mass events pilots attended by 658 delegates, sharing learning from Liverpool, Gateshead and Doncaster councils, as well as the Chief Operating Officer of Parkrun. We have been working closely with parkrun and I am delighted that most of their parkruns will be able to resume on 26 June.

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