

## **CTS Board Draft Work Programme 2021/22**

For discussion.

### **Summary**

This paper sets out the priority actions, issues and commitments for the CTS Board over the next six months.

Members are invited to comment on the balance of the overall work programme and any suggestions for future work.

Is this report confidential? Yes ☐ No ☒

### **Recommendation/s**

That members agree the work programme and provide a steer on paragraphs 24 and 25.

### **Action/s**

Officers will progress the work programme as agreed by the Board.

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## **CTS Board Draft Work Programme 2021/22**

### **Background**

1. Over the 2020/2021 cycle, the priorities of the Culture, Tourism and Sport Board have necessarily been shaped by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Board has successfully led the LGA's work in responding to the severe pressure on sports and leisure and cultural services in particular, acting as the voice of local government in negotiations with Government and working closely with key partners.
2. Despite the strong focus on recovery and sustainability, the Board continued its efforts to shape the future of the sector through commissioned work, Parliamentary activity and media work, and engaging with Ministers and senior officials.
3. While work resulting from the pandemic will continue, we hope the pace of activity will slow and allow the resumption of work that had to be paused or delayed. This paper sets out a proposed work plan until the end of the financial year. Should priorities change, either in response to the pandemic or for other reasons, officers will work with the Board to re-allocate resources or amend planned timetables in the most appropriate way.
4. The policy work of the Board is led by Rebecca Cox, principal policy adviser; Ian Leete, senior adviser; and Lauren Lucas and Samantha Ramanah, advisers (job share). It is also supported by the member services, media, public affairs and digital communications teams as required. Its work is funded from the LGA's policy directorate budget.
5. This paper sets out planned work across the Board's remit, including cross-cutting issues. The CTS team will also contribute to core LGA work such as the Spending Review submission.

### **Core work of the Board**

6. **Political engagement** – The Board has made good progress in strengthening its relationships with Ministers and senior civil servants at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, securing regular meetings with the Secretary of State and senior civil servants. Working with public affairs colleagues, we will maintain levels of engagement with Ministers and civil servants in DCMS, MHCLG and the Office for Health Promotion as priorities, with additional contacts with Defra and BEIS as required. We will also seek to further develop connections with relevant All-Party Parliamentary Groups and their chairs, in light of positive developments over the past year.
7. **Advocating for councils** – During the pandemic it became clear that the data we had access to was not enough to give us a complete picture of current challenges and opportunities in the sector. Officers have commissioned an LGA survey to close gaps

identified in MHCLG data returns and develop a more complete picture of how councils have been investing in sport and cultural services and facilities throughout the pandemic. Survey. Results are expected by mid-September and we hope to be able to share early trends with the Board at its first meeting. Once the results are analysed, a suite of communication tools will be developed to showcase this work to the sector, Government, and the media.

8. **Supporting the sector** – The LGA continues to provide a strong improvement and support offer to councils. While day to day delivery of the Arts Council England and Sport England funded programmes has been successfully transferred to the LGA Improvement Team, the policy team will liaise regularly with the improvement team and funding bodies to ensure there is a strong connection between policy and improvement work, particularly around sharing of good practice and key policy developments like the refresh of Sporting Futures. This frees up the CTS policy team to focus on lobbying and engagement with Government in pursuit of our objectives for the sector and its services.
9. **Climate change and equalities** – These important themes will run throughout the CTS work programme and all of the Board's business. For instance, leisure centres can account for up to 40 per cent of a district council's direct carbon emissions, and this has been a major aspect of our lobbying work for investment in the leisure estate.
10. Access to sports, leisure and cultural opportunities remains unequal, and addressing this will be a core part of the Board's work. Each board report will include a section on equalities, diversity and inclusion issues. Every commissioned piece of work will require providers to set out how they will ensure a diverse range of perspective in their work. All press releases and media work will consider the implications for equality, diversity and inclusion. The LGA has also newly appointed Rupinder Parhar as Senior Adviser to lead on equality, diversity and inclusion issues and the Culture, Tourism and Sport team will meet with her to discuss the policy agenda and opportunities within it.

## **Sport and physical activity**

11. The Board's work on sport, leisure and physical activity has included a strong focus on the sustainability of services due to the impact of the pandemic. The LGA is working with key partners to set out the funding and service transformation needed. The LGA's new President, Baroness Grey-Thompson, will be an important advocate for this aspect of the Board's work.
12. **Securing the future of public leisure** – This commissioned piece of work in partnership with APSE and CLOA was launched at a Parliamentary reception on 14 September with over 100 delegates, including MPs, Peers, Councillors and officers. It has been developed following consultation with over 260 councils and multiple stakeholders. The

report has informed the LGA's Spending Review submission, and Sport England, UK Active, Swim England, the Lawn Tennis Association and District Councils Network have indicated support for the report's findings and the potential to include the asks in their own lobbying work. To maintain the momentum following the launch, and to introduce councils to the recommendations on how their own services can change, key messages will be integrated into the LGA/Sport England improvement programmes, as well as bulletins and other communications with the sector.

13. **Influencing national policy** – Sport England's new Implementation Plan and DCMS' refresh of 'Sporting Futures' will govern investment into sport and physical activity for between five and 10 years. It is therefore crucial that the needs of councils and their communities are effectively reflected in them. Lobbying work will build on the engagement undertaken for 'Securing the future', which has laid the groundwork with these partners.
14. **Supporting the sector** – The strategic and operational context for sport and leisure services has changed fundamentally during the past two years and is expected to continue evolving over the next 18 months as the sector recovers. The CTS team will prepare a suite of briefings for the sector summarising key developments and highlighting good or innovative practice.

### **Culture and creative industries**

15. As with sport, the financial pressures from the pandemic and the changed societal consumption of culture have prompted reflections on the nature of councils' involvement in cultural delivery, as well as a reaffirmation from councils about the value that these services contribute to their communities.
16. **The role of culture in economic recovery** – Officers are continuing to develop case studies to highlight the role of culture in economic and regeneration, keeping this opportunity at the forefront of minds as councils and communities seek to rebuild their economies after the pandemic. They will highlight the role of cultural institutions and anchors in the levelling up agenda, as well as innovative financing offers being developed to support the creative industries by combined authorities.
17. **Local government leadership of culture** – In recent years the Board has rightly focussed on articulating the local value of culture – both socially and economically. We have sought to share good practice and improve the knowledge and skills across the sector, and have built up a good set of resources for councils to access. The time is now right to look at the future role of local government and local places in cultural provision and improve local government's profile in the wider cultural sector. A separate paper for lead members sets out our proposals for a culture commission as a vehicle to achieve this.

### **Tourism and events**

18. The Board's work on tourism and events has been dominated by supporting councils in managing events locally through the various pandemic restrictions, and on the Government-led review of destination management organisations (DMOs). Both elements of this work will need to be resourced through the new Board cycle.
19. **Support and steer the implementation of the DMO review** – The [Independent Review](#) launched in March 2021 and has included an interview with Cllr Vernon-Jackson as well as an open call for evidence which has been signposted to councils. The reviews recommendations have been submitted to DCMS and are awaiting a response. Once the review is published, the LGA will work to provide a response on behalf of councils and support any transitional work that may be required.
20. **Managing events under endemic Covid-19** – The events industry has faced significant challenges in restarting due to localised outbreaks of Covid-19, which are expected to continue for the foreseeable future. The LGA lent its weight to lobbying for Government backed insurance for events, which has now been announced. However, this work has revealed a lack of coordination, sharing of best practice, and training for councils and public bodies supporting events, particularly Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs). While it will not be the LGA's responsibility to lead this work or produce advice, we can play an important support and communications role in discussions between the industry, DCMS, the police, and our member councils.

## **Other issues**

21. **Delivery of social prescribing handbook** – The Board commissioned this handbook in 2019 for launch in 2020 given the rise in interest in the opportunities for social prescribing and the importance of culture, sport and leisure provision for delivery. Unfortunately, this piece of work had to be delayed due to lockdown prohibiting all of the activities. As restrictions cease, the time is right to revisit the document and update it for a post-Covid context and recovery.
22. **Council involvement in 2022 celebrations** – 2022 is scheduled to feature a number of key celebrations and commemorations, including Festival UK 22, the Commonwealth Games, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Falklands 40 and annual events such as the Get Creative Festival. Many of the organisers will be arranging country-wide events, but have not previously had the experience of engaging with local authorities. The CTS team will engage with the DCMS events team and organisers to ensure local government is kept informed of activities and engaged as a partner for delivering local elements of the festivals and events.

## **Events**

23. **Conferences and webinars** – throughout 2020/21, the team held a series of highly successful events, bringing together the sector to discuss key issues, announcements, and to influence strategies such as Sport England's 10-year plan. The Annual Culture, Tourism and Sport conference also reached an unprecedented 800 delegates, from a much wider range of areas than in-person events. A conference paper will be brought to the December Board with proposals for the 2022 conference. It is expected that the majority of events will remain online to attract wider audiences, but there is also a strong appetite for in-person meetings and a chance to rebuild networks.

24. The Board are invited to suggest ways of addressing this, with suggestions to date including smaller study tours, virtual tours, and small scale networking events. All activity will need to be undertaken by the CTS team, alongside the wider work-programme.

25. The Board are also invited to suggest hot topics that could form the basis of webinars.

## **Implications for Wales**

26. The majority of culture, tourism and sport funding and policy is devolved. However, there are cross-overs in terms of best practice in delivery, and on some policy areas such as introducing a tourism levy where sharing of progress will be undertaken.

## **Implications for inclusion, diversity and equality**

27. Each piece of commissioned work will incorporate considerations for inclusion, diversity and equality. The Board and team will seek to highlight the importance of equality and inclusion at every opportunity, in particular sharing examples of initiatives that actively seek to address this imbalance.

## **Financial Implications**

28. The proposed work programme can be delivered within the Board's budget.

## **Next steps**

29. The CTS team will further develop the individual elements within this work programme, bringing proposals and progress reports to the Board.