

LGA Annual Culture, Tourism and Sport Conference: update

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This paper provides an update on the LGA Annual Culture, Tourism and Sport conference, following the recent email update sent to the Board in early September. The Board is asked to note the paper and to share their views on the conference.

Is this report confidential? Yes ☐ No ☒

Recommendation/s

That CTS Board Members note the contents of the report and share their views on the conference.

Action/s

Officers will action as required.

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LGA Annual Culture, Tourism and Sport Conference

Background

1. The LGA annual Culture, Tourism and Sport (CTS) conference is the CTS Board's flagship event. It is an opportunity for elected members and officers with responsibility and an interest in culture, tourism and sport to come together and hear the latest policy thinking, share learning and network.
2. Prior to March 2021 the conference was held in March as an in-person event over one and a half days. This included an awards dinner celebrating the "Hearts for the Arts" awards on the first night. Traditionally, the annual conference focused on culture and tourism with a sports conference held separately.
3. In 2020 the Board took the decision to bring together the whole portfolio under a three-day online zoom event in March 2021 because of the implications and uncertainty from COVID-19.
4. Earlier this year a paper was taken to the Board to agree the format and theme of the conference for 2022. The Board agreed to hold a hybrid conference in October 2022 with the theme of recovery in the context of levelling up and tackling inequalities. Despite extensive efforts to promote the conference, take up was insufficient and the Board agreed to reschedule the event to March 2023 to enable further promotional work and to enable the conference to return to its original scheduling in the events calendar.

Update on conference planning

5. The 2023 annual CTS conference will be a hybrid event, held at 18 Smith Square, London on Wednesday 15 March 2023. This will allow delegates to attend either in person or online. A study tour of the London Coliseum will be held at the end of the conference for in-person attendees to share learning about its recent restoration.
6. To date 13 bookings have been made. Of these eight bookings are in-person and a further five people have booked on to attend virtually. At this stage our event colleagues have advised us that the current number of bookings is positive given the lead in time to the event.
7. We are really pleased to have secured the following high-profile speakers:
 - 1.1. Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, President, Local Government Association
 - 1.2. Baroness Lola Young, independent Crossbench member peer and Chair of the LGA Culture Commission
 - 1.3. Cllr Abi Brown, Leader, Stoke-on-Trent Council
 - 1.4. Alison McKenzie-Folan, Chief Executive, Wigan Council
 - 1.5. Deirdre Wells OBE, Chief Executive, Visit Herts and Visit Kent
 - 1.6. Paul Bristow, Director, Strategic Partnerships, Arts Council England
 - 1.7. Lisa Dodd-Mayne, Executive Director, Place, Sport England
 - 1.8. Nicola Greenan, Principle Cultural Partnership Manager, Bradford Council

8. The new date has been promoted and it will be a top story in the events bulletin at the end of the year. Policy colleagues continue to promote it through stakeholder networks and in the CTS bulletin. If it is needed closer to the time, there are further opportunities to promote the event via a direct bulletin to portfolio holders which may result in further bookings.
9. Board members are encouraged to [book onto the conference](#) and to promote it through their networks.
10. The cost of the event is:

LGA members in-person - £199 +VAT
LGA members online - £120 +VAT
Non-members in-person - £299 +VAT
Non-members online - £220 +VAT

Implications for Wales

11. Welsh authorities are eligible to register for the conference at the same rate as English member councils.

Implications for equality, diversity and inclusion

12. All councils now have established online communications technology, but many have travel bans in place and staff who are reluctant to travel, some of whom will have medical conditions making them particularly susceptible to Covid-19. A hybrid event will ensure the widest possible accessibility level for council officers, who typically make up around two-thirds of attendees.
13. A diverse range of speakers has been secured, ensuring a variety of perspectives and experiences are heard, and demonstrating a range of leadership roles.

Financial Implications

14. Costs for the event will need to be covered by delegate fees. Hosting the conference at Smith Square allows us to keep costs down to around £4,000, not including speaker expenses or other incidental costs.

Next steps

15. Officers will implement any actions arising from the Board meeting and will continue to promote the event.