

Update on current issues

Purpose of report

For information/ noting.

Summary

This report updates Members on current issues of interest to the Board which are not covered elsewhere in the agenda. Updates are included on:

- Tourism and Visitor Economy
- Heritage
- Broadband and Digital Inclusion
- Sport and Physical Activity

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the update.

Action

Officers to action as appropriate.

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Update on current issues

Tourism and Visitor Economy

Tourism fund for the North

1. The Government has announced Regional Growth Funding of £10 million to back proposals for a clear tourism strategy in the North at a Northern Futures Summit in November 2014.
2. The summit brought together participants – from those charged with leading northern cities, to the businesses driving their economies, and the young people who will shape them in the future – to discuss a new vision for the north of England.
3. The LGA has called for devolved funding to support all places to drive growth through tourism.
4. For further information on the Summit, please go to <http://tinyurl.com/lzcn8dr>

Inquiry into visitor economy

5. The LGA submitted written evidence to the Culture, Media and Sport Committee's Inquiry into the visitor economy.
6. The LGA submission argued that future growth from tourism will be unlocked by supporting industry to improve the quality of its offer so that visitors stay longer and spend more in destinations.
7. The LGA also said that the Triennial Review of VisitBritain and VisitEngland is a timely opportunity to ensure that future national structural arrangements reflect the wider debate about the right governance arrangements for the UK following the Scottish referendum.

Heritage

Historic England's draft corporate plan

8. Councillor Ian Stephens has written to Sir Laurie Magnus, Chair of English Heritage commenting on Historic England's draft corporate plan. Councillor Stephens said that the Plan sets out a positive and exciting framework which the LGA are supportive of.
9. The plan also gives a strong and balanced account of this country's heritage sector, and recognises the leadership role of local government and proposes continued focus on supporting new local delivery models.
10. The LGA's work with councils has shown the huge potential of cultural heritage and the historic built environment to drive growth locally by creating attractive.

11. The letter is attached at **Annex A**.

Broadband and Digital Inclusion

Rural broadband enquiry

12. The LGA has submitted a response to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee's inquiry into broadband in rural areas. The submission emphasised that fast and reliable broadband is vital to supporting growth in rural areas, given the employment and business patterns in these areas, and the importance of the visitor economy.

13. Further details of the enquiry at <http://tinyurl.com/mjf3wg5>

Transforming local public services, using technology and digital tools and approaches

14. The LGA commissioned research to capture examples of where councils have used technology and digital tools and approaches to deliver services that are better target and more efficient. The use of technology and digital tools in the public sector is far from new. Local government in particular has shown a consistent desire to exploit information and communications technology (ICT) in its day-to-day operations.

15. There are over 50 examples highlighted in this report showing over £41 million of direct savings. There are also separate case studies for 13 of the projects featured in the report and a series of vox pop videos which provide more detail about the tools or approach they applied, as well as the benefits this resulted in for customers and the council.

16. This report demonstrates not only that there is significant technological innovation in local government, but also that it is being applied with real skill and thoughtfulness. Councils have learned lessons from technology projects in the past, and are increasingly using agile and flexible project management approaches to implementation, belying the myth that the public sector cannot effectively implement change supported by information technology.

17. Read the report at <http://tinyurl.com/og33tb4>

Sport and Physical Activity

'Everybody active, every day'

18. Public Health England (PHE) has published, 'Everybody active, every day', a framework for national and local action to address the national physical inactivity epidemic, responsible for 1 in 6 deaths and costing the country an estimated £7.4 billion a year.

19. To facilitate cross-sector collaboration, PHE has co-produced the framework with over 1,000 national and local leaders in physical activity and is calling for action from providers and commissioners in: health, social care, transportation, planning, education, sport and leisure, culture, the voluntary and community sector, as well as public and private employers.
20. To make active lifestyles a reality for all, the framework's 4 areas for action will:
- change the social 'norm' to make physical activity the expectation
 - develop expertise and leadership within professionals and volunteers
 - create environments to support active lives
 - identify and up-scale successful programmes nationwide.
21. Read the report at <http://tinyurl.com/kodc2h2>

Sport England 'This Girl Can' campaign

22. Sport England has recently launched a marketing campaign 'This Girl Can', which aims to tackle the rising gender gap between the number of men and women playing sport.
23. The campaign seeks to liberate women from fear of judgement about taking part in sport and exercise. The tone will be positive, inclusive and a little bit sassy. It aims to forge new positive social attitudes to and around women and girls playing sport and being active, breaking down a key barrier so that they feel more comfortable exercising.
24. Sport England wants to work with councils to help them make the most of the campaign and is developing a toolkit of resources to do this.
25. The LGA has been working closely with Sport England over the last few years to jointly deliver the sport leadership programme, which has included Leadership Academies, workshops and peer challenges. All of which aim to enable Portfolio Holders to lead transformational change within the councils to boost participation rates amongst all sections of their population.
26. For more information on the campaign, go to <http://www.thisgirlcan.co.uk/about-us/> .