

## **Culture, Tourism and Sport Board Chair's Report to Councillors' Forum February 2016**

### The Visitor Economy

1. I gave a keynote address at Inside Government's tourism conference on 9 February, which was attended by local government, central government and industry. My speech highlighted local government's role creating the conditions for the visitor economy to thrive, opportunities to boost tourism through devolution and the importance of the Discover England Fund complementing local growth priorities.
2. The LGA and councils attended VisitBritain regional events to hear more about the Discover England Fund and I am meeting Sally Balcombe, VisitBritain Chief Executive on 17 March, to discuss this further. It is also vital that English destinations continue to have a strong voice in the new governance arrangements for VisitBritain and VisitEngland.

### Culture

3. I was delighted to meet Diane Lees, Chair of the National Museum Directors' Council and Director General of the Imperial War Museum, on 3 February. We discussed the challenges and opportunities facing museums, the importance of partnerships between national and local museums to support capacity and the potential impact of devolution. Ms Lees will share some new case studies and we agreed to keep in touch about the potential impact on museums of localised business rates.
4. I was pleased to meet Councillor Guy Nicholson, London Council's lead member for economy, tourism and culture, on 3 February. We took stock of the implication of the Spending Review for culture and highlighted the importance of our partnerships with Arts Council England. We will continue to work with London Councils as we take forward our culture work programme.
5. Also on 3 February, I met Emma Stewart, Senior Production Manager at Creative England. Creative England supports councils who want to attract production companies to shoot film and TV programmes. We agreed to share new case studies which show how location filming can boost the local economy.
6. The Museums Association annual cuts survey on 13 January attracted considerable media coverage. The LGA's response highlighted that councils recognise the tremendous economic and social benefits museums help to deliver and the imaginative ways in which many councils have responded to budget pressures. However, the scale of financial challenge means that tough decisions have to be made about funding museums.

Sport and Physical Activity

7. Following a number of significant wins for the LGA in the Government's new sports strategy, Sport England is consulting on how it will take forward the recommendations and distribute lottery funding. The LGA and councils attended regional consultation events. The LGA's response highlights councils' strong track record supporting people to get active and how re-balancing funding away from national interventions and towards local approaches will help to ensure the least active are targeted and money saved by improving wellbeing and preventing ill-health. We also highlight the fragmentation of sport and physical activity funding across government departments and press for this to be brought together to support integrated approaches and minimise bureaucracy, in line with other policy areas.
8. A press release linked to the LGA's Annual Culture, Tourism and Sport Conference highlighted how increasing activity can help to reduce premature deaths and how the potential economic and social benefits would be maximised by a locally-led approach to sport and physical activity.

Libraries

9. Councils across the country marked National Libraries Day on 6 February by highlighting the range of activities that take place in libraries. The LGA issued a supportive press release.

Magna Carta and Historic Anniversaries

10. Councillor Peter Golds CBE attended the final Magna Carta 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee reception on 7 January. Sir Robert Worcester, Chairman of the Committee, thanked partners including local government for a successful series of events and commemorative activities across the country.
11. I was pleased to attend the 2016 Anniversaries "Parliament in the Making" final event on 21 January. Hosted by the Rt Hon John Bercow MP, Speaker of the House of Commons, the purpose was to reflect on the many projects and events held to mark the Magna Carta and De Montfort Parliament anniversaries. The LGA's contribution, and that of councils across the country, was highlighted in the commemorative publication.

Culture, Tourism and Sport Annual Conference 24-25 February, Leicester

12. We are looking forward to welcoming over 150 delegates to this year's event. Keynote speakers include Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson (Chair ukactive), Stella Duffy (Co-Director Fun Palaces), Penelope Viscountess Cobham (Chairman VisitEngland), Jennie Price (Chief Executive Sport England) and Sir Laurie Magnus, Chairman of Historic England. Workshop topics including transforming libraries, wellbeing and devolution. The Culture Tourism and Sport Board is meeting on 25 February to hear from Leicester City Council about their excellent work and to discuss the implications of planning reform for cultural heritage and landscape.