

Key issues on the CLOA agenda

John Bell explains what CLOA, the professional association for leaders in culture and leisure, has on its agenda.

During 2010 CLOA will be working with the Local Government Association (LGA) culture tourism and sport board to address the key issues that confront our sector in this election year. This contribution will cover three themes that will recur.

First, the challenges. The budget settlements over the coming two or three years will be very challenging for local government. Recent survey information from CLOA reveals that the culture, tourism and sport sector may well face budget reductions of up to 20% during this period. Even where the budget position is stable our sector will need to evidence efficient operations and value for money. Effectiveness in addressing the key priorities of the local strategic partnerships (LSP) will need to be evidenced: priorities such as reducing health inequalities, community cohesion, adult social care.

Second, the theme of opportunities. Our sector has significant opportunities over the next two years. London 2012 will provide a global focus on Britain, not just at the Olympic and Paralympic Games but through culture and opportunities to showcase our country for tourism. The LGA has grasped these opportunities. In sport, for example, the culture tourism and sport board has agreed to work with bodies like the IDeA and CLOA and publish a sports legacy plan for local government. The opportunity to contribute to health objectives such as the prevention of heart disease, reducing obesity and improving mental health is one to grasp. The present secretary of state for health, Andy Burnham, in a speech at the 2009 CLOA AGM gave a personal commitment to promoting the health benefits of physical activity and sport in the Department of Health.

Third is the issue of leadership. In order to address the challenges and opportunities outlined above the culture, tourism and sport sector needs outstanding political and managerial leadership. CLOA has played a major role in supporting the National Culture Forum, which helps create a coherent message for our sector. CLOA has also supported the Leading Learning programme, which has seen first-class leadership training being made available to nearly 60 senior officers in two programmes.

CLOA members have been active in the regional networks for cultural services improvement and efficiency set up following the publication of A Passion for Excellence in 2007/8. Skillbank, a new CLOA initiative, has been launched to assist local authorities in tackling the improvement and efficiency agenda. Skillbank draws on the knowledge and experience of recently retired chief officers who are CLOA members. They will be selected by the CLOA executive and their expertise will be available for specific projects, probably related to the improvement agenda. The contract will be between the individual Skillbank member and the local authority or trust who engages them, with CLOA benefitting from an introduction fee.

John Bell is the honorary secretary of the Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association (CLOA)

The Leisure Review, May 2010

© Copyright of all material on this site is retained by *The Leisure Review* or the individual contributors where stated. Contact *The Leisure Review* for details.



London 2012 will provide a global focus

“The budget settlements over the coming two or three years will be very challenging for local government. Recent survey information from CLOA reveals that the culture, tourism and sport sector may well face budget reductions of up to 20% during this period.”

The Leisure Review is supported by:



The Leisure Review is written, designed and published by:

