

West of England Partnership  
11 September 2009

## Report of the Culture, Leisure and Tourism Group

### Purpose of report

To update the Partnership Board on the work of the Group and to set out the proposed Work Programme for 2009/10, in response to the discussion at the Board's June meeting (see minutes, page 2, "Diary of proposed meetings and venues").

### Background

1. The Group was established in 2004 and reviewed in 2007. Membership consists of up to 2 members from each unitary authority and a representative from each of the following partner organisations: Arts Council England, South West; Museum, Libraries and Archives Council, Sport England, South West Tourism, South West Screen, WESPORT, Government Office for the South West and South West Regional Development Agency.
2. The Group operates under the constitution of the Partnership, with the purpose to:
  - i) Advise and act in support of the West of England Partnership and the local authorities on sub-regional Culture, Leisure and Tourism matters;
  - ii) Recommend joint action on these issues to the Partnership and secure the outcomes approved;
  - iii) Advocate responses on sub-regional Culture, Leisure and Tourism to influence regional and national policy and resource allocation;
  - iv) Work with the other specialist groups of the Partnership on issues of common interest;
  - v) Initiate areas of co-operative working to further the interests of the West of England.
3. The Group meets quarterly, with administrative support provided by the West of England Partnership Office.

### Context

4. There has been awareness within the Group that the sub-regional cultural and sporting offer underpins the West of England's economic success. Not only does this mean attracting visitors and their spending power through, for example, festivals and events, but also ensuring a good quality of life for its residents, thereby making it an attractive location for businesses. Indeed Invest West has confirmed that the sub-region's attractive quality of life is strong factor for organisations which have decided to relocate to the sub-region.

5. Following the Hodge Review of the regional cultural infrastructure there have been major changes in the support available at regional level for the range of cultural activities. Culture South West ceased operations in March and there is now a duty on Arts Council England, Sport England, English Heritage and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to work together to jointly deliver a core set of shared priorities. Combined with a restructuring of the MLA, this means reduced support at a regional level, highlighting the need for more co-ordination and added value at sub-regional level.
6. The authorities have been keen to build on the successful sub-regional co-operation they have enjoyed in some areas; for example, the 2008 UK Schools Games (which an Economic Impact Study estimated generated £2.4m of spend) and libraries, which also involves Somerset County Council. The councils also use the meetings to share good practice and have particularly wanted to share strategies and other documents which support their Core Strategies, eg in relation to parks and green spaces. There is an aspiration to move towards joint standards where this is practical, to assist in reaching any future s106 agreements. In the shorter term, there is a recognition that sub-regional co-operation will be one way of maximising cultural and sporting opportunities while budgets are very tight.
7. Agenda items have reflect the themes set out below.

## Themes

8. **Leading the implementation of People, Places and Spaces in the West of England**  
 The West of England was identified as one of ten 'Planning Areas for Culture' in *People, Places and Spaces*, the regional cultural infrastructure development strategy. With the importance of culture to the sub-regional economy in mind, the Culture, Leisure and Tourism Group agreed that it should take on the role of progressing this agenda. This will involve detailed discussions with the regional agencies before priorities can be finalised. The Government Office for the South West recently confirmed that the West of England was a priority area and that the Arts Council, the lead body for *People, Places and Spaces* implementation, wanted to know what the West of England's priorities were.
9. **Developing a sub-regional cultural strategy**  
 A first stage in this process is to identify the current cultural proposals for the sub-region, and will review how these fit with *People, Places and Spaces*, remembering that this is a medium to long term strategy, and should not be therefore be over restricted by the current economic climate. This should take into account the current cultural and sporting provision and reflect the further need which will be generated by the anticipated growth in population. Additional provision will be required both to address the requirements for facilities which serve the whole of the sub-region and for the community facilities which will be required as part of new housing developments.

10. **Ensuring planning for growth includes appropriate culture and leisure facilities**  
There have been several discussions about getting the best out of s106 agreements for culture and leisure facilities. An officer workshop earlier this year used a case study to highlight the culture and leisure implications of housing growth across or near boundaries between authorities and showed the weakness of some assumptions made about the facilities needed by previous studies. These concerns have been fed into the latest study being undertaken by Roger Tym.
11. **Olympics 2012, Cultural Olympiad and Legacy**  
The aims of the Cultural Olympiad, which encourages involvement from communities across the UK, include: showcasing excellence in the performing arts and creative industries, as well as sport; introducing young people to the UK's many artistic communities; heightening economic regeneration and encourage tourism through the work of the creative industries; and leaving a lasting legacy that improves cultural life. The Group is concerned to ensure that the West of England draws down any resources available and plays a full role in the Cultural Olympiad. Members have had presentations from the south west leads on these issues and have been of the opinion that joining up with the current work of the authorities will be the key to making this happen. One example has been that, following a presentation on Relays, a Cultural Olympiad programme, to the Group by the regional lead, Wesport (the sub-regional sports agency) and others have worked with Relays staff to ensure that the available resources complement existing work in the sub-region.
12. **Active card**  
The authorities are very keen to build on the excellent work done in South Gloucestershire Council in developing their Active card, which enables South Gloucestershire's residents to access to their sporting facilities and can be used as a marketing tool directed at particular age groups or residents in particular locations. There is an agreed long term aspiration to introduce such a card across the sub-region, and ultimately to tie it in with a travel card, since transport to facilities is frequently highlighted as an issue, especially by young people. This has great potential for use in addressing areas and populations which experience poor health. There is a recognition that authorities will need to join at their own pace, but when their current technology is replaced, it is important that the new systems are compatible.
13. **Tourism and Destination Management**  
A Tourism Development Plan, agreed in 2006, has been largely implemented and is due to be reviewed in the autumn. The next stages will then be considered.

#### **Priorities for 2009/10**

14. The Group agreed in June that their priorities for the remainder of 2009/10 would be:
  - Report on 2012 Olympics (Following relaunch of Team West of England on 11 September)
  - Cross-boundary planning
  - Active card
  - Sub-regional facilities

- (If it gets through the first stage) World Cup bid – Agenda of March 2010.

15. Objectives for 2009/10 and a work programme are attached in Appendix 1.

**Recommendation:**

Members are asked to note the Group's proposed 2009/10 objectives and work programme.

Appendix 1: Culture, Leisure and Tourism Group draft work programme.

To be presented by:

David Lawrence, Assistant Director - Culture, Leisure and Tourism, Bath & North East Somerset Council

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## West of England Partnership

### Culture, Leisure and Tourism Draft Work Programme 2009/10

#### 16 October 2009

- Revised objectives and work programme
- Developing Active card:
  - Update on transport card
  - Costing of separate systems
  - Renewal dates
  - Plans of individual authorities
- Attractions to be publicised sub-regionally
- Progressing:
  - Cross boundary culture planning issues
  - Implementation of PP&S
- Team West of England Business Plan
- Work with the PCTs
- Programme of West of England Partnership meetings: for information

#### 10 December 2009

- 2012 Olympics:
  - Update
  - Programmes of Activity of the four unitary authorities
- Progressing:
  - Cross boundary culture planning issues
  - Implementation of PP&S
- Tourism Plan and Destination Management Plans review and identification of shared actions

#### 4 March 2010

- Acting consistently and common service standards
- (If England is successful in December) World Cup bid
- Progressing:
  - Cross boundary culture planning issues
  - Implementation of PP&S
- Rugby World Cup: Implications for the West of England