

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date:	Thursday 30th April 2026
Place:	Via Teams
Times:	0930 - 1300
Participants:	CLOA Executive – Caroline O’Neill, Caroline Rae, Dan Buck, Donna Pentelow, Grant Taylor, Hagan Lewisman, Ian Jones; Jayne Knight, Jon Finch, Jonathan Cochrane, Kate Price, Mark Allman, Paula Redway, Penny Greenwood-Pearsons, Shane Williams, Thorsten Dreyer, Tom Gubbins, Val Birchall, Vincent Paliczka, Zsuzsi Lindsay, CLOA Business Manager – Heidi Bellamy LGA Observer – Ian Leete from agenda item 1
Apologies:	CLOA Executive – Julie Russell, Robert Campbell, Bobsie Robinson

	Item Description	Relevant business considered, facts noted, decisions taken and actions agreed
		<p>Prior to the official business of the CLOA Executive there was a meeting with consultant Stephen King to discuss the findings of the Review of Membership (report circulated in advance).</p> <p>SK reiterated that CLOA has strong foundations, high goodwill, and a credible brand, and that the review is about future readiness, not organisational weakness.</p> <p>He outlined his evidence base: stakeholder interviews, additional conversations in the North East, the member survey (65 responses), and the extensive documentation provided. He noted that findings were consistent across all sources.</p> <p>Key Themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Membership Model: The current model has evolved but no longer reflects the sector’s leadership landscape. SK stressed the need to widen access, particularly for emerging leaders, and to consider CLOA’s position alongside other bodies. 2. Communications & External Influence: CLOA produces a lot of valued communication, especially the e-bulletin. His comments about strategic communications relate to external visibility and influence, not day-to-day delivery.

		<p>3. Capacity: Stephen stressed that CLOA’s ambition exceeds its historic support model. He noted reliance on a very small part-time team and volunteer Executive capacity.</p> <p>4. National & Regional positioning: He reflected on the Welsh model—strong engagement and policy access, but no administrative capacity. He suggested CLOA could support devolved nations and English regions as a coordinating body.</p> <p>5. Strategic Options: He outlined three options: Consolidate, Evolve, or Reposition. He recommended Evolve, with a planned trajectory.</p> <p>The Executive Committee posed a number of questions during the discussion that followed about evolving toward repositioning, focusing on England with strong UK relationships, the need for stronger sector championing, and challenges devolution and LGR.</p> <p>Actions: Instigate a working group led by DP to explore the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and agree CLOA’s strategic ambition. • Consider the future membership model. • Clarify CLOA’s national/regional identity. • Explore capacity requirements for future ambitions. • Review potential income streams. <p>Report back to the full Executive Committee in September 26. Action – Executive members volunteering to participate and support DP; PR, ZL, MA, VP, VB. Others welcomed</p>
1	Minutes & matters arising	<p>The minutes from the meeting on 29 January 2026 were reviewed and agreed to be an accurate record.</p> <p>No matters arising were noted.</p>
2	Sport & Physical Activity sub-group update	<p>PGP – gave the update and advised that the Sport & Physical Activity sub-group met in March; action plan is progressing.</p> <p>Sport England reorganisation ongoing; operational plan due in June. In the interim, seeking to build relationships with key Sport England officers.</p> <p>In Wales Culture for Future Generations – A Culture Act for Wales: Green Paper proposes statutory status for culture and leisure.</p> <p>In England the Culture Media and Sport Committee report Game On: Community & School Sport report recommends statutory leisure provision in England.</p> <p>JR - represented CLOA on DCMS facilities and leisure working groups; national governing bodies are currently dominating discussions.</p> <p>HL - the Swim Alliance is lobbying strongly on facilities and school swimming; CLOA submitted evidence to the APPG inquiry around swimming.</p> <p>GT – is now sharing the Moving Communities responsibility with PGP to provide for additional resilience.</p>

	<p>Active Wellbeing Leadership Network update</p> <p>Draft position statement for Sport, Physical Activity and Active Wellbeing</p>	<p>Active Wellbeing Leadership Network has launched a new website with support from Alliance Leisure; conference focusing on Reducing inequalities and inequity in physical activity scheduled for 22–23 June; strong early uptake.</p> <p>There’s an opportunity to rebuild relationship with ukactive under new CEO, David Stalker. He has already agreed to engage with CLOA through the AWLN conference.</p> <p>DP – added that Peter Bundy (GLL) chairs ukactive’s Public Sector Board and is keen to reconnect</p> <p>Action – PGP to explore reconnection with ukactive’s public sector group.</p> <p>In reviewing the draft position statement for Sport, Physical Activity and Active Wellbeing, the Committee discussed the need to include reference to cross-cutting themes of EDI and sustainability. It was agreed that position statements should share a consistent structure and core messages.</p> <p>GT – talked about referring to ‘Health Creation’ rather than prevention, as part of the new language.</p> <p>IL – suggested adding in statistics from the Sport and Recreation Alliance regarding grassroots clubs relying on public facilities to operate. Currently the draft only references Sport England, with no mention of Wales.</p> <p>Action – PGP to liaise with IJ to incorporate Welsh bodies.</p> <p>Action – PGP to revise the position statement to strengthen references to partnership working, health, EDI, sustainability, community reliance on public facilities and CLOA’s leadership role.</p> <p>Action – PGP to share revised draft for alignment across all statements.</p>
3	Culture sub-group update	<p>VB – advised that, with IL, had a meeting with DCMS to talk about proposal from Hodge Review to create regional boards. Another level of decision-making on funding is not supported by CLOA.</p> <p>Also met DCMS to talk about their Library Strategy, inc what the Library Development function might be. Now preparing final input from CLOA; key messages include stronger recognition of libraries as local government services, integration with wider delivery, alignment with cultural data work, recognition of digital delivery costs, end to competitive schemes, full cost recovery for prison libraries.</p> <p>Action - Members with library expertise to send final comments to VB.</p> <p>VB – also met David Johnson from ACE, they are in the final stages of agreeing what should be a priority place. He is pushing for archives alongside museums to be included.</p> <p>National Cultural Framework, commissioned with LGA, a hackathon has been held and the consultants are now preparing a final draft. This will need to go through approval processes of both CLOA/ACE.</p>

	<p>Draft position statements for Museums, LGR & Devolution, Tourism</p>	<p>TD – added that the National Cultural Observatory have launched a blueprint and are now seeking to secure funding from research councils. VP and TD seeking for CLOA to become funded partners in this initiative. TD has been invited to attend the launch in June and will be a panellist, he will draw on the CLOA Data position statement in his address.</p> <p>JF – had provided a position statement for Museums in advance of the meeting using AI to generate an overview from the existing documents. It is currently worded to look at museums more broadly, as many LA museums are now run at arms-length.</p> <p>Action – Executive to further share thoughts with JF for update.</p> <p>TD - had provided a position statement for Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution, also a co-pilot creation taking relevant elements from the other agreed position statements.</p> <p>HB – advised that the previously agreed position statements for Arts and Data now each have their own entry https://cloa.org.uk/category/key-issues/ and have also been added as pdf's onto the Resources section of the website.</p> <p>RC - had provided a position statement for Tourism. This was in a lengthier format than the other topics, so it was agreed to delegate back to the culture sub-group for revision.</p> <p>Action – Culture sub-group to consider the Tourism position statement and circulate a revised version.</p> <p>Action – HB to put this in the standard format once finalised.</p> <p>Action - In order for all these position statements to be signed off and published, a deadline of 15 May 26 was agreed for amends to be sent to the relevant author</p>
4	<p>Update on Aspiring Leader Awards</p>	<p>ZL –provided an update on the Aspiring Leadership Awards, the shortlisted nominations are as follows: -</p> <p>For Culture, Creativity & Heritage Category - Abul Kashim, Meliha Hussain-Marchbank and Zoe Loake</p> <p>For Leisure and Physical Activity (including parks & open spaces) - Nathania Minard, Tom Oliver, Ryan Ansell</p> <p>Only 1 nomination was received for Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and the candidate withdrew and none was nominated under the category of Sustainability.</p> <p>Interviews took place earlier this month and we are currently running a comms campaign to profile each of those shortlisted on LinkedIn.</p> <p>Action – In liaison with ZL, HB to continue supporting the comms campaign to profile those shortlisted and the winners.</p> <p>Action – 2 winners to be announced at the June 26 AGM.</p> <p>There was some discussion regarding whether the awards should be continued next year, or become a bi-annual feature. Maybe alternating with the Honorary members awards, which is currently annual.</p> <p>Action – Executive Committee to further consider award timetables.</p>

		Action – roundtable featuring case studies from those awarded and shortlisted as Aspiring Leaders to be planned for September 26.
5	Draft Budget 26/27 - to discuss, propose amendments and approve	<p>VP - talked through the budget projection, which is based on a reduction in Individual membership and a slight increase in Corporate and income from three sponsors. The loss of XN Leisure sponsorship creates projected £3,233 operational deficit.</p> <p>The Executive were encouraged to identify alternative sponsorship opportunities.</p> <p>HB – advised that there is a sponsorship package available and that any introductions to key contacts would be welcome.</p> <p>Action - All the Executive to think about who we might approach as sponsors.</p> <p>There was a discussion regarding the allocation of funding for member research to allow for further support following on from the Membership Review; a modest allocation was agreed.</p> <p>It was noted that travel/expenses budget was significantly underspent (£30 spent of £750).</p> <p>Action - VP to review underspent budget lines and adjust projected budget for 26/27.</p> <p>The budget needs to be formally agreed at the AGM, so it will need to be circulated to members registering to attend 1 week in advance.</p> <p>Action – HB to circulate the budget along with final event details.</p>
6	Update on the roundtable programme	<p>HB – advised that since the last Executive meeting a roundtable on Exploring the opportunities and realities of the Visitor Levy in partnership with LGA and Core Cities has taken place – 36 people attended.</p> <p>On May 6 a virtual roundtable Chaired by GT will explore how culture, heritage and active wellbeing can strengthen identity, resilience and pride in place within the Government’s Pride in Place (PiP).</p> <p>There are also two informal meetings to find out more about join the Executive coming up hosted by DP.</p> <p>Monday 6 May (2 people booked)</p> <p>Monday 13 May (2 people booked)</p> <p>The date for the next Devolution & LGR peer network meeting is 4 June 26, it will be a case study-led meeting in partnership with Community Leisure UK.</p> <p>PR – advised that a Creative Industries roundtable is still intended and is in development pending case studies.</p> <p>Action – PR to liaise with HB so that timely promotion and support can be offered.</p> <p>JC – suggested a New Towns roundtable and put forward Wayne Hemingway as a potential speaker.</p> <p>VP – confirmed that a Workforce roundtable is being planned for autumn; sustainable tourism and libraries strategy sessions are also in pipeline.</p>

	<p>Draft AGM programme – for information</p>	<p>IL – suggested one on Neighbourhood Health Hubs and indicated there was potential to offer this in partnership with LGA.</p> <p>HB – gave an update on the conference programme, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Two high calibre keynote speakers have been secured: - Professor Sir Michael Marmot and Professor Daisy Fancourt.</p> <p>There is one confirmed panellist - Cllr Julie Jones-Evans in her role as LGA CTS Board Chair who will offer insight into the pressures facing local government, the opportunities for strategic investment, and the case for protecting these essential services.</p> <p>Harman Saggar, Head Economist for Arts, Heritage, Tourism and Culture & Heritage Capital at DCMS has been approached to talk about how the economic evidence base can strengthen advocacy and inform long term investment decisions; we are awaiting his final response; initially he was cautious as a civil servant the topic for the session touches on funding decisions and could be seen as political.</p> <p>IL – suggested approaching Adala Leeson, chief economist, at Historic England as an alternative.</p> <p>TD- suggested that the Cultural & Heritage Data Observatory project provides a suitable, non-political topic for DCMS economist Harry Sagar to speak about at the AGM, should he prefer to avoid funding-related commentary.</p> <p>Action – In liaison with HB, TD to contact Harry Saggar and explore whether he would be willing to offer a pre-recorded address.</p> <p>Action – HB to liaise with the AGM working group to finalise panel speakers and agenda.</p> <p>Action – All Executive to put date in calendars and self-register to attend the event.</p> <p>A call has been put out for showcase examples; two strong examples have been received from Medway and Bath & North East Somerset. There is provision for a further two examples.</p> <p>Action – Executive Committee to consider whether they are able to contribute.</p> <p>Action – HB to circulate a reminder to the whole membership</p>
7	<p>General Updates: LGA Update</p>	<p>IL - provided an update on current LGA activity and priorities in the run-up to the local elections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGA officers have been preparing one-page briefings for political groups on priority topics, such as Libraries, particularly around statutory duty and the tourism levy, which has become a point of political interest ahead of elections. • Two new publications are being commissioned: Guidance for sport, leisure, and physical activity services on local government reorganisation. It will cover both the transition of leisure services through LGR and how to position them as wellbeing services linked to

		<p>social care. Also, a refresh of the LGA’s Cultural Strategy in a Box, updating language to reflect levelling up, community cohesion, equity of power, and other emerging themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning is underway for an event on 10 September 26 on the role of culture and the creative industries in driving economic growth, this links to the LGA’s publication A Force for Growth • The new Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Fellow, Dr Joseph Owen, has started in post. He will be producing a policy briefing and toolkits on how visual arts can support wider council policymaking and engagement. JC will be representing CLOA on the advisory board. • LGA is undertaking a 40-year futures project exploring long-term pressures and opportunities for local government. Invitations have been issued to a wide range of stakeholders, including CLOA members, to ensure culture, tourism and sport perspectives are represented.
8	A.O.B	<p>Timetable and process for elections to CLOA Executive Committee HB – advised that nominations forms will be circulated on 5 May detailing the process for re-election to the Executive Committee. Deadline is 19 May.</p> <p>DP – asked the Executive to give early notification if they were planning on stepping down in June, from a workforce planning perspective so we can understand where the skills and experience gaps are particularly in terms of specific sectors.</p>
	Dates of next meetings	<p>Dates of next Executive mtgs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGM and members conference – Tuesday 16th June 26 <p>Future dates tba after the AGM</p>