

European and International Programme Board update

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This paper outlines the recent LGA international work and updates Members on current projects taking place.

Recommendation

Members are requested to consider the update and offer any comments.

Action

LGA Officers to take forward any work identified by Members.

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European and International Programme Board update

Election monitoring

1. Through our membership of the Council of Europe's Congress, UK members play an important role in observing local elections in different countries predominantly in Eastern Europe. As part of our work with Council of Europe, the LGA is involved in training for election observation.
2. To ensure that there are a number of qualified UK observers, the next training session will take place in London on 13 February 2012. The training will be carried out by Congress officials, an elected member from Austria (Gudrun Mosler-Törnström, first Vice-Chair of the Congress Monitoring Committee) and Cllr Keith Whitmore, President of the Congress.

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) World Council Meeting

3. UCLG represents and promotes local government on the world stage, and is the united voice for democratic local self-government, promoting its values, objectives and interests. The World Council is the principle policy-making body of UCLG and meets once a year. The 2011 meeting was attended by Cllrs Dave Wilcox and Richard Kemp.
4. As well as setting out UCLG's priorities for the coming six years, the 2011 World Council also addressed important issues such as the tightening fiscal climate and the contribution of local and regional authorities to sustainable development in the run up to Rio +20 being held later this year in Brazil. The UCLG 2010-2016 Strategy and 2012 Work Plan were adopted, as well as an agreement to engage national governments on ensuring 'observer status' for UCLG at the United Nations.
5. The LGA was also represented at a meeting of UCLG's Capacity and Institution Building (CIB) Working Group which brings together professional practitioners from other LGAs and individual authorities active in the field of international development. This has become a valuable professional network for collaboration and exchange with local government partners from across Europe and now more increasingly developing countries. As part of its participation in the CIB Working Group the LGA is the lead association on coordinating programming and donor engagement in Zimbabwe.

UK delegation meeting of Congress and Committee of Regions (CoR)

6. The annual meeting of the UK delegations to Congress and CoR took place on 9 January 2012. The leaders of the two delegations will give an oral update on the meeting at the Board.