

## Note of decisions taken and actions required

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<b>Title:</b>	European & International Board
<b>Date and time:</b>	Monday 17 September 2012, 11.00 am
<b>Venue:</b>	Smith Square Rooms 1&2, Local Government House, London

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### Attendance

<b>Position</b>	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Council</b>
Chair	Dave Wilcox OBE	Derbyshire CC
Vice Chair	CLlr Richard Kemp OBE	Liverpool City
Deputy Chair	CLlr Shirley Flint	North Kesteven DC
Members	Sherma Batson MBE DL	Stevenage BC
	Guy Nicholson	Hackney LB
	Roger Lawrence	Wolverhampton City
	Sue Murphy	Manchester City
	Gordon Keymer CBE	Tandridge DC
	Sandra Barnes MBE	South Northamptonshire DC
	Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC
	Phil Grove	Malvern Hills DC
	Neil Clarke	Rushcliffe BC
	Sir Simon Day	Devon CC
	David Shakespeare OBE	Wycombe DC
	Joanne Beavis	Braintree DC
	Lord Graham Tope CBE	Sutton LB
	Sian Reid	Cambridge City Council
Apologies	Marco Cereste	Peterborough City
	Liz Eyre	Worcestershire CC
	Sir Albert Bore	Birmingham City
Observer Officers	Nick Woolfenden	South East England Councils
	Ian Hughes, Jasbir Jhas, Nick Porter, Drago Djekovic and Frances Marshall	

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b></p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting with a round of introductions, noted the apologies received and welcomed everyone present. He noted his intention to write to former Board Members to thank them for their contribution and commitment to the work of the Board during their tenure.</p> <p>On behalf of the Board, the Chair congratulated Cllr Cereste whose wife had recently given birth to a baby boy.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Membership &amp; Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>The Board noted the report which set out its Terms of Reference for the 2012/13 meeting cycle.</p> <p><b><u>Decision</u></b></p> <p>That the Board <b>noted</b> the report.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Overview of the LGA's European and International Work</b></p> <p>Ian Hughes (Head of Programme) provided a verbal overview of the report which set out the European and International (E&amp;I) Board's offer to councils and the Board's priorities for the forth coming year. Members were asked to provide a steer on the Board's 2012/13 work programme.</p> <p>A detailed discussion arose in which Members made a number of comments, which were responded to by officers, relating to the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Members welcomed the recent amendment to the EU's Directive on Energy Efficiency which excluded local government buildings from the annual 3% renovation target for public buildings and thanked officers and Member for their lobbying work in this area.</li><li>• A discussion arose regarding mechanisms for supporting local authorities to secure investment from EU funds and the role of the LGA. With reference to the LGA's EU funding tracker service, Members asked that officers explore how best to promote this to all member councils and requested that E&amp;I Board Members receive funding tracker updates.</li></ul>	

- With reference to a recent LGA, UKTI and FCO joint event exploring Trade Opportunities in Mexico, the Board discussed the role of local authorities in promoting international trade and investment. In discussing the next steps for taking this work stream forward, it was suggested that the work of the E&I and Economy and Transport Board be joined up through the local growth campaign.
- In discussing the 2012 EU work programme, comments were made relating to: the role of civil society and local authorities in development; European Neighbourhood Policy and Eastern Partnership; and freedom of movement for workers. Members asked that a report be brought to a future meeting on the LGA's EU's lobbying priorities arising from the European Commission new work programme and that this include further detail on the role of civil society and local authorities in development.

### **Decisions**

That the Board:

- noted** the report; and
- asked** that officers develop the programme in line with the progress made and taking into account Members' comments.

### **Actions**

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| That a report be brought to a future meeting on the LGA's European Union lobbying priorities arising from the European Commission 2013 work programme.                 | Jasbir Jhas  |
| That the work of the E&I and Economy and Transport Board on the enhanced role of local authorities as an enabler of local economic growth be progressed and joined up. | Ian Hughes   |
| Explore how best to promote the LGA's EU tracker service to all member councils. Add E&I Board Members to the tracker email update mailing list.                       | George Moody |

#### **4. EU Funds update and Brussels lobby, September 2012**

Nick Porter (Advisor) outlined the report which provided background to the structural fund reforms and an update on the LGA's work on EU funds to date. With reference to a Member delegation to Brussels to lobby MEPs on future EU funding, the Board was asked to provide their views on the key issues to be raised during these meetings.

A detailed discussion arose in which Members made a number of comments, which were responded to by officers, relating to the following issues:

- The Board discussed the EU decision making framework, the ‘codecision’ decision-making procedure and the anticipated timescale for agreement of the EU budget and structural fund allocations. In doing so, a Member expressed the view that prior to the EU budgetary authority adopting the budget, the LGA’s lobbying activity should be predominantly Whitehall focused.
- A discussion arose regarding how best to manage EU funds to achieve the greatest impact, whilst minimising cost and risk. In doing so, Members asked for further clarity on the role of the EU investment Bank as well as the implications of new EU instruments such as Jessica and Jeremy. The emergence of different localised delivery models across different areas and how best to shape the LGA’s lobbying campaign given the different stages of development across the sector was discussed at length. Officers noted that these issues would be picked up as part of a wider report on future EU funding to the next Board meeting.

### **Decisions**

That the Board:

- i. **noted** the report; and
- ii. **asked** that officers develop the programme in line with the progress made and taking into account Members’ comments.

### **Action**

That a report be brought to a future meeting on future EU funding.

## **5. EU Financial Sanctions**

Jasbir Jhas (Senior Advisor) and Lord Tope introduced the report which provided an overview of the LGA’s work to influence the EU fines policy in the Localism Act. In doing so they highlighted the opportunity the legislation provided for local government to renew its partnership with Government in Parliament and Whitehall. Particular reference was made to the potential to raise the profile of the sector through building a relationship with parliamentarians in relevant scrutiny committees in the Commons and Lords.

In the discussion that followed, Members made a number of comments, which were responded to by officers, relating to the following issues:

- In discussing the value of regular meeting with key politicians, Members requested that the Minister for Europe be invited to attend an annual meeting with the LGA to discuss matters of common interest.
- The Board thanked Lord Tope for his lobbying efforts which helped secure key concessions to the Bill.
- A Member expressed the view that whilst it was important to engage with central Government given its role in negotiating, signing, and transposing EU laws, it was equally important to seek to influence the EU legislative decision-making bodies, particularly at the pre-legislative stage.

### **Decisions**

That the Board:

- i. **noted** the report;
- ii. **agreed** to lead a local/central EU summit with key Government departments focusing discussions on 2013 EU work programme proposals which most affect council services;
- iii. **agreed** to build a **relationship with parliamentarians** in relevant scrutiny committees in the Commons and Lords, with key Whitehall department with an interest in EU developments; and
- iv. **asked** that the Minister for Europe be invited to attend an annual meeting with Board representatives.

### **Action**

Circulate the membership of the relevant scrutiny committees in the Commons and Lords.

Frances Marshall

Officers to develop the programme in line with the Members' comments.

Jasbir Jhas

**6. European Bodies Update**

Ian Hughes briefly summarised the report which gave an overview of recent developments in Congress, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) and the Committee of the Regions. Particular reference was made to the renewal of the Congress mandate and plans to relocate CEMR to Brussels permanently.

**Decision**

That the Board **noted** the report.

**7. Notes of the last meeting**

The notes of the last meeting were **agreed**.

**8. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Friday 9 November 2012 at 11am in Hackney, London.