

15 October 2013

**Item 5**

**Note of decisions taken and actions required**

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| <b>Title:</b>         | European & International Board                    |
| <b>Date and time:</b> | Thursday 11 July 2013, 11.00 am                   |
| <b>Venue:</b>         | Westminster Suite, Local Government House, London |

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**Attendance**

| <b>Position</b> | <b>Councillor</b>   | <b>Council</b>                  |
|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Chair           | Dave Wilcox OBE   | Derbyshire CC                   |
| Deputy Chair    | Gr. Uff. Marco Cereste OSSI OMRI  | Peterborough City               |
|                 | Richard Kemp CBE  | Liverpool City                  |
|                 | Cllr Shirley Flint  | North Kesteven DC               |
| Members         | Sherma Batson MBE DL  | Stevenage BC                    |
|                 | Roger Lawrence  | Wolverhampton City              |
|                 | David Shakespeare OBE   | Wycombe DC                      |
|                 | Joanne Beavis   | Braintree DC                    |
|                 | Sandra Barnes MBE   | South Northamptonshire DC       |
|                 | Sian Reid   | Cambridge City Council          |
|                 | Dave Allan  | Sunderland City                 |
|                 | Sue Whitaker  | Norfolk County Council          |
| Apologies       | Guy Nicholson   | Hackney LB                      |
|                 | Keith Glazier   | East Sussex CC                  |
|                 | Liz Eyre  | Worcestershire CC               |
|                 | Gordon Keymer CBE   | Tandridge DC                    |
|                 | Neil Clarke   | Rushcliffe CC                   |
|                 | Sir Albert Bore   | Birmingham City                 |
|                 | Sue Murphy  | Manchester City                 |
|                 | Lord Graham Tope CBE  | Sutton LB                       |
| Speakers        | Cat Evans   | Foreign and Commonwealth Office |
| Officers        | Ian Hughes, Jasbir Jhas, Russell Reefer, Rachael Donaldson & Frances Marshall |                                 |

| Item | Decisions and actions | Action by |
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## Welcome and Introductions

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present and noted the apologies that had been received.

### 1. EU Funds and Local Enterprise Partnerships

Jasbir Jhas (Senior Advisor) introduced the report which outlined a number of significant developments in the negotiation process for establishing the 2014 – 2020 EU funding programmes, as well as setting out what Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and local partners need to do to ensure arrangements for the new programme work in practice. She drew particular attention to the positive EU funding announcements as part of the recent Spending Review and highlighted the need for clarity on a number of details which could impact on the influence local partners have over spending. Members were invited to provide a steer in terms of next steps.

In discussing the report, Members made a number of comments, including:

- Whilst Members welcomed the Government's commitment to devolve the majority of spending decisions for England's EU Structural and Investment Funds to LEPs, the availability of sufficient match funding was raised as a key issue. With the Single Local Growth pot well below the £70 billion recommended by Lord Heseltine, there were concerned it would not offer sufficient critical match-funding for EU projects. Members asked that the LGA push for all local authority funding, including health funding, to be eligible to be used as match funding. It was agreed that a letter be sent to the Minister for Business and Enterprise and to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) raising these concerns as well as thanking them and their wider team for their constrictive dialogue with the sector throughout the process, which would be continued through the National Growth Board (NGB).
- In discussing whether the LGA should make a support offer to councils where there is a struggling LEP, a number of different views were expressed, in favour of and against the suggestion, as well as in terms of the type of support on offer. A number of suggestions were made, including: an economic growth peer reviews for geographical areas; signposting; increasing the role of other partners such as Universities; and the NGB undertaking a readiness and effectiveness role. Members were in agreement that following the publication of the Government's detailed guidance to LEPs, that the LGA produce a summary of the guidance which would include an accessible top up brief for the wider LGA membership.

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- With reference to the importance of transparency and accountability, members emphasised the importance that Government make the criteria used to calculate for LEP allocations publically available, as well as emphasising the importance that District Councils are able to engage with their local LEPs.

**Decision**

That the Board **noted** the report and **asked** that their comments inform the future development of the work programme.

**Actions**

Write to the Minister for Business and Enterprise and to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Department for Communities and Local Government.

**Nick Porter**

Develop a top up brief following the publication of Government's detailed guidance to LEPs.

**Nick Porter /  
Jasbir Jhas**

**2. Local-Central Relations on EU work and Government's EU Review on Balance of Competencies**

Cat Evans, the Deputy Head for the Balance of EU Competences Review (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) provided a PowerPoint presentation on the background to and aims of the Government's review. In doing so, she explained that the impetus behind the review was to provide a balanced, evidence based analysis to inform political parties and the public's thinking on Europe, and assured members that the findings would not be used as a vehicle for policy recommendations. In outlining the timescale for the two year review, Cat recommended that should the LGA choose to submitted one overarching response, that it be submitted early on in the process to ensure that the cross cutting themes could feed into to the 32 individual policy reports.

Jasbir Jhas briefly spoke to the report which, in addition to providing context to Cat's presentation, also set out LGA's plans to improve central-local relations on EU lobbying. In doing so, she invited Members to provide a steer as to the LGA's response to the review and invited them to review the agreed principles on the LGA approach to EU legislation and policy, its implementation in the UK, and impact on local authorities.

In discussing Cat's presentation, Members asked a number of questions relating to the objectivity of the evidence, how the review was being promoted to the wider public and the balance between complexity and comprehension in the published reports.

Members agreed the principles upon which the LGA's single response would be founded. It would concentrate on the role of local government in delivering EU regulation and the need to consider a wider view than central

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government-EU relations.

A draft response to the review would be submitted to the LGA Political Group Offices and European and International Board lead members for approval.

**Decisions**

That the Board:

- i. **noted** the report and presentation; and
- ii. **endorsed** that proposal to submit a single response to the EU Competences Review from the LGA which captures the broad principles of how the LGA approach EU legislation and its implementation into UK legislation.

**Actions**

Submit the LGA's overarching response to the competencies review to the LGA Political Group Offices and European and International Board lead members for approval.

Jasbir Jhas /  
Richard Kitt

**3. International Trade and Cooperation Activities**

Ian Hughes (Head of Programmes) and Russell Reefer (Advisor) jointly presented the report which provided an update on the LGA's international cooperation work, as well as its support to councils in promoting trade and investment. In particular they drew attention to two key successes: firstly, the EU Commission's recent recognition of local government as a critical partner in delivering the EU's future development commitments, which the LGA had lobbied in favour of for a long time; and secondly, Lord Green's (Minister of State for Trade and Investment) endorsement that UKTI support the local government sector in a more systematic manner, leading to the development of a six-point action plan for council/UKTI collaboration.

Members welcomed the new EU Aid Statement, however highlighted the need for it to be backed up by the EU Commission with action and resources.

**Decision**

That the Board noted the report.

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**4. European and International Board Annual Review: 2012/13**

The Board's annual review of the year report was moved without further comment.

**Decision**

That the Board **endorsed** to annual report for submission to the LGA Executive on 18 July.

**5. Round-up of activity: Board EU lobbying priorities, institutions and international activities**

The Chair briefly summarised the report which gave an overview of recent developments: in the Board's key priority topic areas; in the European and international bodies to which the Board nominates members; and the LGA's international activities.

Members noted progress with a number of Committee of Regions appointments, the United Cities of Local Government nomination process and the appointment of Cllr Roger Stone as Committee of the Regions' Rapporteur on Roma.

**Decision**

That the Board **noted** the report.

**6. EU Fines: Independent Advisory Panel – Local Government Nominations**

Frances Marshall (Member Services) briefly introduced the report which updated Members on the establishment of a pool of experts from within the sector to be drawn upon in the event that an independent advisory panel on EU fines is required.

**Decision**

That the Board **noted** the report.

**7. Notes of the last meeting**

The notes of the last meeting were **agreed** as a correct record.

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

Tuesday 15 October 2013 at 11am, Local Government House, London.