

Minutes

Annual Meeting of the General Assembly

3 July 2007

International Convention Centre, Birmingham

Present

334 authorities in full membership and **24** authorities in corporate membership were represented at the meeting.

1. Appointment of President and Vice-Presidents

The Chief Executive welcomed representatives to the meeting and invited nominations for the position of President of the Association.

It was moved by Cllr Sir Jeremy Beecham (Newcastle upon Tyne City Council), seconded by Councillor Margaret Eaton OBE (Bradford MBC) and **agreed** that Lord Best be elected President of the Association until the next Annual Meeting.

Lord Best then addressed delegates, focussing in particular on the recently published report of the Independent Commission (which he had chaired) on the review of LGA relationships.

Lord Best then invited the Assembly to consider the appointment of Vice-Presidents for the coming year. The Assembly **agreed** to the appointment of the following persons as Vice-Presidents of the LGA for 2007/8:

MPs

Conservatives

Christopher Chope OBE MP
The Rt Hon David Curry MP
Andrew Lansley CBE MP
Eric Pickles MP
Caroline Spelman MP
Alistair Burt MP

Labour

Clive Betts MP
Mary Creagh MP
The Rt. Hon Nick Raynsford MP
Barry Sheerman MP

Liberal Democrat

Lynne Featherstone MP
Julia Goldsworthy MP

Paul Rowen MP
Andrew Stunell OBE MP

Peers

Conservative

Baroness Hanham CBE
Lord Hanningfield DL
The Rt Hon The Lord Jenkin of Roding
Lord Bruce-Lockhart of the Weald

Labour

Lord Harris of Haringey
Baroness Hollis
Lord Peter Smith
Lord Whitty

Liberal Democrat

Baroness Barker
Lord Bradshaw
Lord Dholakia
Baroness Maddock
Lord Roger Roberts

Cross Benchers

Lord Ouseley
Lord Walpole
Lord Laming
Baroness Howarth of Breckland
Baroness Prashar CBE

MEPs

Labour

Richard Howitt MEP

Conservative

Edward McMillan-Scott MEP

Liberal Democrat

Andrew Duff MEP
Fiona Hall MEP
Saj Karim MEP

2. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen

Chairman

The President invited nominations for the position of Chairman of the Association for 2007/2008. It was moved, seconded and **agreed** that Councillor Sir Simon Milton (Westminster City Council) be elected Chairman of the LGA until the next Annual Meeting.

Sir Simon thanked Lord Best for all that he had done over the past year for the Association, in particular in his role as Chairman of the Independent Commission. Sir Simon went on to thank the outgoing Chairman, Lord Bruce-Lockhart of the Weald, on behalf of all members of the Association, for serving local government with such distinction over a number of years.

Vice-Chairmen

The Chairman invited nominations for the two positions of Vice-Chairmen of the Association for 2007/2008. The following nominations were moved and duly seconded:

Councillor Sir Jeremy Beecham (Newcastle upon Tyne City Council)
Councillor Margaret Eaton OBE (Bradford MBC)

Councillor Sir Jeremy Beecham and Councillor Margaret Eaton OBE were **elected** as Vice-Chairmen of the Association until the next Annual Meeting.

Deputy Chairmen

The following were **elected** as Deputy Chairs until the next Annual Meeting.

- Cllr Richard Kemp (Liverpool City Council)
- Cllr David Shakespeare OBE (Buckinghamshire County Council)
- Cllr Keith Ross (West Somerset DC)
- Cllr Ian Swithenbank CBE (Northumberland County Council)

3. Minutes of the General Assembly Meeting held on 14 December 2006

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

4. LGA Annual Report 2007

The Chairman invited Lord Bruce-Lockhart to speak to the LGA's Annual Report 2007. Lord Bruce-Lockhart opened his presentation with a note of congratulations to Sir Simon Milton on his election as the new Chairman of the Association.

Lord Bruce-Lockhart highlighted the work of the LGA over the past year – setting out its achievements and looking towards the challenges ahead. Lord Bruce-Lockhart stressed the important steps forward that the Association had taken towards the democratic case for devolution.

The General Assembly **received** the Annual Report.

5. LGA Prospectus

Sir Simon Milton delivered his inaugural address to the Assembly and introduced a report, providing members with the prospectus for local government and the LGA response to the Independent Commission.

Sir Simon congratulated all those local authorities who had worked so tirelessly in their response to the recent floods, particularly the frontline council workers who were providing vital assistance and support to the people affected.

Each of the LGA's Group leaders responded to Sir Simon's address.

The General Assembly **endorsed** the direction set down in *Our future – a prospectus for local government* and the *LGA response to the conclusions and recommendations of the Independent Commission*.

6. Audit Accounts

Paul Coen, Chief Executive, presented the Audit Accounts for 2006/2007 to the General Assembly.

The General Assembly **agreed** to receive the accounts.

7. Dates of Future Meetings

The General Assembly **noted** dates for future meetings as follows:

Wednesday, 12 December 2007 (Venue: QEII Conference Centre – London)

Tuesday, 1 July 2008 (Venue: Bournemouth International Centre)

8. Ministerial Address

The Rt Hon John Healy, Minister of State, Department of Communities and Local Government addressed General Assembly members, on his second day in his current ministerial role.

Mr Healy began by paying tribute to the tremendous work being carried out by local government

in response to the flooding situation around the country and its aftermath. Mr Healy also referred to the very strong leadership displayed by local authorities in the wake of recent terrorist threats, helping to deal rapidly and reassuringly with dangerous and difficult incidents and in helping to building cohesion in our communities.

Mr Healy acknowledged the enormous contribution that Lord Sandy Bruce-Lockhart has made to local government and its communities. He added that he looked forward to working with Sir Simon Milton, the new Chairman, in the months ahead.

Mr Healy responded to several questions put to him by delegates in relation to i) local government reorganisation, (ii) concessionary fares, and (iii) the RSG funding formula.