

Note of last People & Places Board meeting

Title: People & Places Board
Date: Thursday 21 September 2017
Venue: Rooms A&B, Ground Floor, Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street,
London, EC1M 5LG

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Welcome, Introductions and Declarations of Interest The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and listed apologies.	
2	Minutes of the Last Meeting The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate summary of the discussion.	
3	Membership and Terms of Reference 2017/2018 The board agreed its membership and terms of reference for 2017/2018.	
4	Work Programme and Policy Direction Rebecca Cox, Principal Policy Advisor, introduced the item. She outlined the work programme for 2017/2018, discussing key area of focus including skills and employment, digital connectivity, higher education, Brexit and the industrial strategy. She briefly discussed new challenges facing non-metropolitan England, including the potential for areas in England to trade on a more global scale after Brexit. The Chairman highlighted work which could be done to influence the direction of government policy in non-metropolitan areas, particularly in the context of Brexit. For example, it was important to communicate that local government was a ready and willing partner in managing and delivering legislation returning from Europe. He asked members to feedback thoughts and ideas on this. In the discussion which followed, members made the following points:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Concerns were raised that non-metropolitan areas interested in devolution were working with a model which was designed with metropolitan areas in mind. Members emphasised they would welcome a model more compatible with the priorities of rural areas.	

- There were concerns that the work programme paper did not cover all key issues in rural areas. It was suggested that the economy in rural areas should be considered in more detail including the potential impact once EU funding streams were withdrawn.
- This point was expanded upon, and members suggested that the board should look in more detail at issues such as housing, transport, and the problems of encouraging more workers to settle in areas where there was a housing shortage. The impact of EU nationals leaving the UK on agriculture and tourism in rural areas following Brexit was also raised, and members discussed how to ensure this was on the government's agenda.
- There was a brief discussion on the Committee of the Regions and what would replace this following Brexit. Officers advised that civil servants were considering this, and it was requested that members raise this issue at party conferences. It was agreed that the board would receive a regular update on this.
- Members discussed how to encourage people to build skills and stay within rural areas. The importance of encouraging businesses to stay in non-metropolitan areas was also highlighted.
- Fast data coverage in rural areas was emphasised as essential. As the installation of fibre would not happen in many rural areas due to cost, particular focus had to be placed on rolling out 4G and 5G.
- Encouraging universities to think about place as well as product was highlighted as important for the improvement of local economies.
- It was suggested that the board could potentially take more of a lead on industrial strategy work. This would be suggested in a discussion between the Chairman and the Chairman of the EEHT board.
- It was agreed that the points made in the above discussion would be used to create two to three work streams going forward. Lead members would consider all points made at the next lead member meeting.

Decision:

1. The board **agreed** the proposed workstreams.

Action:

1. Officers to take forward work as directed by members.
2. An update on the Committee of the Regions at future board meetings to be made.

5 Work Local Campaign

Jasbir Jhas, Senior Adviser, introduced the item. She updated members on the progress of LGA employment and skills lobbying work, and the negotiations with Whitehall departments on the role of local government in skills in local areas going forward.

She set out the key findings of the Learning and Work Institute's report and advised that based on these, the LGA's vision for an integrated and devolved employment and skills service 'Work Local' had been developed. Officers had now written to MPs on how to take work forward, and fringe events would be held at party conferences to promote the project.

In the discussion which followed, members made the following points:

- There was a discussion on the impact of mobility for the workforce, and the continuous need for individuals to reskill as the job market changed. As people lived longer, they would have numerous careers over their lifetime. Case studies on the impact of this should be considered going forward.
- It was suggested that the solutions Work Local presented should be piloted in one area, in order to demonstrate how it would make a difference and to engage the imagination of the public and MPs.
- It was requested that the impact of skills gaps in more traditional industries, such as agriculture, should also be considered.
- The design programme set up by the Lincolnshire LEP to work with schools was highlighted as a good initiative for developing skills.
- Members emphasised that it would be helpful to talk to the government about the cost of the failure of the current system. Examples of barriers facing individuals, such as trouble acquiring literacy skills, were discussed.

Decision:

1. The board **noted** the report.

Action:

1. Officers to take forward work as directed by members.

6 Trade and Investment

Philip Clifford, Senior Adviser, introduced the item, outlining research produced by consultants *Value Adage* (commissioned by the City Regions and People and Places Boards in early 2017) to review the national trade and investment policy landscape with a view to understanding the potential for a strengthened sub-national approach. He discussed how work could be taken forward.

In the discussion which followed, members made the following points:

- Members highlighted that rural industries needed to be considered as part of this work. Bodies such as the NFU would be able to give specific views on the area.
- There was a brief discussion on exploring alternative business view points from other countries.
- Members highlighted there needed to be better ways of identifying companies with potential and creating opportunities for them to build.

Decision

1. Members **agreed** the proposed work streams set out in paragraph 8.

Action

1. Officers to take forward work as directed by members.
 - a) Appendix A - Strengthening Sub National Trade and Investment Policy Final Report

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Gillian Brown	Arun District Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Anne Western CBE	Derbyshire County Council
	Cllr Heather Kidd	Shropshire Council
	Cllr Bob Jennings	Epping Forest District Council
Members	Cllr Ralph Bagge	South Bucks District Council
	Cllr Derek Bastiman	Scarborough Borough Council
	Cllr Deborah Croney	North Dorset District Council
	Cllr Tom Fitzpatrick	North Norfolk District Council
	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
	Cllr Charlotte Haitham Taylor	Wokingham Borough Council
	Cllr Ian Hudspeth	Oxfordshire County Council
	Cllr Daniel Humphreys	Worthing Borough Council
	Cllr Harvey Siggs	Mendip District Council
	Cllr Rob Waltham MBE	North Lincolnshire Council
Cllr Steve Count	Cambridgeshire County Council	

Cllr Vince Maple
Cllr Leigh Redman
Cllr Azhar Ali
Cllr Sarah Osborne
Cllr Helen Grant

Medway Council
Somerset County Council
Lancashire County Council
Lewes District Council
North Yorkshire County Council

Apologies

Cllr Peter Jackson

Northumberland Council

In Attendance

LGA Officers