

Note of last People & Places Board meeting

Title: People & Places Board
Date: Tuesday 12 June 2018
Venue: Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions
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1	Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest
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The Chairman welcomed members to the Board.

The Chairman noted the apologies received, and welcomed Substitute Members.

No Declarations of Interests were made.

2	Industrial Strategy
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The Chairman invited Alex Thomson, Principal Policy Adviser, to introduce the item.

Alex stated that Alexandra Jones, Director of Industrial Strategy at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) was in attendance to present an update on the design and implementation of the key place-based policies announced in the Industrial Strategy White Paper. Prior to Alexandra's entrance, Alex drew Members' attention to the appended briefing for Members which highlighted key issues facing local areas relating to the Industrial Strategy and possible questions that Members may wish to put to Alexandra.

Alex stated that there had been no guidance to date from Government on Local Industrial Strategies, nor has there been any commitment from Government that every area will have a Local Industrial Strategy.

The Chairman thanked Alex for his update and welcomed Alexandra Jones to the Board. During her presentation, Alexandra highlighted the following points:

- Place is at the heart of the Industrial Strategy; this was in line with the feedback received nationwide during the Green Paper consultation.
- Alexandra gave a broad update on progress with the Industrial Strategy before focusing on key place-based policies.
- Alexandra thanked the LGA for their contribution to the LEP Review which she anticipated would conclude soon and that a series of reforms would be published prior to the summer recess.
- Alexandra then spoke to Local Industrial Strategies, acknowledging that many areas are developing distinctive proposals for their own LIS and that it has been encouraging to see the emphasis on the evidence base.

- Further information on Local Industrial Strategies will be made available 'in the next few weeks' and work is being undertaken to ensure that a cross-Whitehall approach to these is being fostered.
- Alexandra offered the view that Ministers would strongly encourage areas outside of trailblazers to begin developing a LIS but could not provide any commitment on Departmental support or level of engagement.
- Alexandra confirmed that a consultation on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund would take place later in the year.

The Chairman thanked Alexandra for her update and invited members to comment and ask questions:

- Members expressed disappointment at the lack of commitment to nationwide coverage of Local Industrial Strategies and concern at the lack of resources available to support their development. Members stated that it was vital that all parts of the country are covered by a Local Industrial Strategy.
- Members noted that a failure to ensure LIS coverage across the whole country would result in missed opportunities on issues such as infrastructure, particularly in neighbouring places.
- Members discussed the detrimental effects of cuts to local authorities and the effect this has had on local services and specifically infrastructure development, which places more emphasis on the need for all areas to have a Local Industrial Strategy.
- Members highlighted the risk of a two-speed economy with prominence given to cities, with rural areas and the issues facing them not being considered.
- Members sought clarity on the design and structure of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and highlighted the importance of decisions being made at a local level in relation to the UKSPF.
- Members also raised questions related to the approach to roll out Skills Advisory Panels and the role of sub-national transport bodies in the Industrial Strategy.

In response, Alexandra noted members' comments and stated that she would take the messages back to BEIS, and further information should be available on a number of the issues raised prior to the summer recess. Alexandra also encouraged everyone to contribute to the UKSPF Green Paper consultation later this year.

The Chairman thanked Alexandra for her time.

Action:

- **The Chairman proposed a letter to the BEIS Secretary of State expressing disappointment at the lack of commitment to all areas agreeing a Local Industrial Strategy.**

3 The Post-Brexit England Commission – Interim Report

The Chairman invited Daniel Shamplin-Hall, Adviser, to introduce the item.

Daniel stated that the paper presented the Post-Brexit England Commission's interim report for formal approval by the People and Places Board.

Daniel further explained that the paper detailed the upcoming launch of the Commission's interim report at LGA Annual Conference, outlined the dates of the next set of roadshows and sets out how officers will collate feedback on the interim report to inform the next phase of the Commission's work.

Alex Thomson, Principal Policy Adviser, also stated that the next set of focus groups to feed into the Board's work on Fiscal devolution is taking place later in the week, and that he will attend. Alex stated that there will be a fiscal devolution seminar in July for lead members of the People and Places, City Regions and Resources Board, to update members on findings and current work progress.

Alex finished by stating that the Chairman will be in attendance at an Industrial Strategy plenary session at Conference, which will present an opportunity to promote the work of the Commission. There will also be an evening fringe event taking place to formally launch the PBEC Interim Report.

The Chairman thanked Daniel and Alex for the update and invited members to comment:

- Members expressed support for the Interim Report and provided comments on a number of areas including:
 - The importance of building to meet housing need, including discussions over the types of properties that are built, and the need to give more powers to local authorities.
 - Strengthening the digital connectivity asked in the report, for example giving local authorities the power to decline planning applications if there is not fibre at the premises.
 - Focus on developing next steps for public affairs work related to the Commission and, in particular, focusing on MPs in non-metropolitan areas.
 - Social mobility and services – the need for local amenities, doctor and health surgeries, and the need for good public transport.

The Chairman thanked members for their comments, and reminded them that this is still a work-in-progress. The Chairman also stated that it may be beneficial for the Chairman of the LGA's Brexit Task & Finish Group to be invited to a future Board meeting to discuss the Groups work.

Actions:

- **Officers to follow up on member comments through both the interim report and in developing the next steps for the Commission.**
- **Proposed that the Chairman of the Brexit Task & Finish Group is invited to the next Board to update on their work.**

4 Higher Education

The Chairman invited Daniel Gardiner, Adviser, to introduce the item. Daniel explained that the paper was structured in two parts.

The first part outlined engagement with national higher education stakeholders to explore the contribution higher education institutions (HEI's) can make to place based

growth, collaborative civic leadership and public service reform through the Industrial Strategy.

The second part looked at the contributions of student populations to local public services and this was also due to be considered by the LGA's Resources Board and the City Regions Board.

The Chairman thanked Daniel for the update and invited members to comment:

- Members agreed to the recommendations laid out in part one of the report, relating to collaboration with the higher education sector.
- Members discussed the benefits of building a working partnership between local authorities and HEIs.
- Members expressed a clear consensus that any work on the financial contributions of students to public services should not be progressed.

Action:

- **Members noted the report. Officers to feedback at the next City Regions and Resources Board.**

5 **Employment and Skills Update**

The Chairman invited Jasbir Jhas, Senior Adviser, to introduce the item.

Jasbir updated members on the following:

- The meeting that took place between the Chairman, Sir Richard Leese (Chair, City Regions Board) and the Minister for Skills and Employment. This was a positive meeting in which the next steps of the strategic partnership with the Department of Education were discussed.
- The development of the LGA Skills Taskforce, which was currently ongoing.

The Chairman thanked Jasbir for the update.

Action

- **Members noted the report.**

6 **End of Year Board Report**

The Chairman invited Benn Cain, Member Services Officer to introduce the item.

Benn thanked the Chairman, and stated the report was in two parts:

- Part One of the report outlined the achievements against the board's priorities set at the beginning of 2017/18; and
- Part Two noted the boards proposed priority areas for 2018/19.

The Chairman thanked Benn for the update.

Action

- **Members noted the report and agreed to the 2018/19 board priorities.**

7 Note of the Last People & Places Board Meeting

In the notes of the previous board, members stated that an agreed action was to circulate information on the Bright Futures campaign, which was not completed and requested this be completed after the Board.

Other than this, Members agreed to the notes of the previous People and Places Board on 22 March 2018.

Action

- **Information on the Bright Futures Campaign to be circulated after the meeting of the People and Places Board.**

8 Devolution Improvement Support Offer

The Chairman invited Ami Beeton, Senior Adviser, to introduce the item.

Ami stated that the paper provided an overview of the LGA's devolution support offer in light of the current devolution policy landscape and asked members to consider how this might best meet the needs of rural and non-metropolitan authorities. Ami also stated the paper provided an update on the support provided to combined authorities and the LGA's engagement with the seven combined authority mayors.

The Chairman thanked Ami for the update and invited members to comment:

- Members noted the update and Lead Member Cllr Anne Western gave the board a brief update on the last meeting of the LEP Review.

Action:

- **Members noted the update and agreed that any further comments on the LEP Review should be shared with Lead Members.**

9 Trade and Investment Update

The Chairman invited Philip Clifford, Senior Adviser, to introduce the item.

Philip stated that following a discussion with members at the previous Board meeting, the paper set out the headline elements of a survey of councils' trade and investment activity and asked members to agree next steps regarding timing and output.

The Chairman thanked Philip for his update.

Action:

- **Members noted the report.**
- **Officers to present results of survey to future board meeting**

10 The Rural Digital Connectivity Working Group Update

The Chairman invited Daniel Shamplin-Hall, Adviser, to introduce the item.

Daniel stated that the paper outlined the priorities and planned activity of the Working Group and updated members on its work to date.

The Chairman thanked Daniel for the update and invited members to comment:

- Members discussed the idea of expanding the geographical coverage of 4G. Members expressed an interest in mapping where 4G coverage can stream videos in real-time.
- Members discussed mapping infrastructure and bringing new and innovative ideas on installing masts.
- Members discussed engagement and the improved relations with Ofcom. The Chairman agreed that this was an excellent starting point.

Action

- **Members asked for a steer to be provided in September on when the Ofcom CEO should be invited back to the Board.**

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Gillian Brown OBE	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 Peter Jackson	Northumberland Council
	Cllr Harvey Siggs	Mendip District Council
	Cllr Rob Waltham MBE	North Lincolnshire Council
	Cllr Steve Count	Cambridgeshire County Council
	Cllr Vince Maple	Medway Council
	Cllr Leigh Redman	Somerset County Council
	Cllr Sarah Osborne	Lewes District Council
	Cllr Helen Grant	North Yorkshire County Council
Apologies	Cllr Azhar Ali	Lancashire County Council