

Company Number 11177145

Minutes of last LGA Leadership Board meeting

Title: LGA Leadership Board
Date: Wednesday 6 March 2019
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

1 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

There were no apologies for absence and no declarations of interest.

Cllr Overton paid tribute to Cllr Clarence Barrett who passed away on Friday 2 March. Cllr Barrett was the Leader of the Upminster and Cranham Residents Association at London Borough of Havering, Treasurer of the LGA Independent Group, and a Deputy Chair of a number of LGA structures including the City Regions Board, the Commercial Advisory Board, and the LGA's Property Companies. He had also held positions on the LGA's Brexit Task Force and the Further Business Rates Retention and Fair Funding Task and Finish Group. He had been closely involved with LGA work for the last 10 years, and had previously held the positions of Chair of the European and International Board, and Deputy Chair of the Resources Board.

2 Brexit - Verbal Update

Cllr Kevin Bentley, Chairman of the LGA's Brexit Task Force, updated Members on the LGA's work on Brexit since the previous meeting. He highlighted that post-Brexit funding for regulatory services had been distributed to councils. He outlined plans in key areas to pool the resources between councils in two-tier areas to be spent on resourcing, procurement and training.

European nationals who had been in the country for more than five years and had a salary of £30,000 would be eligible to register and apply for settled status. However the LGA was continuing to lobby hard for workers who have skills in other key areas, such as health, tourism or agriculture, but may be paid less than £30,000, to be considered for settled status.

In the discussion which followed Members raised the following points:

- Regarding the Shared Prosperity Fund, the Government had previously said that a consultation would be ready in the autumn, but this had not yet been published. This was a separate issue to the Spending Review and should be progressed.
- In response to a question on workers' rights, it was confirmed that local authorities would have to present evidence of those in lower paid roles where

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recruitment could be a challenge. This would be discussed with Home Office officials at the earliest opportunity.

- Regarding potential European Parliament elections should there be a delay to Brexit. Contingency plans for these elections, if needed, had been discussed by the Task Force.
- It was confirmed that local resilience forums were updated regularly by MHCLG on national planning assumptions.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board **noted** the update.

3 LG Group Budget 2019/20

Jonathan Gratte, Strategic Finance Manager, introduced the LG Group Budget for 2019/20 which was available in the public domain. Members noted that the full LG Group Budget contained information which was confidential at this stage, and would be considered fully in Part 2 of the agenda.

Decisions

The LGA Leadership Board:

1. **Agreed** the LG group's Budget for 2019/20 for recommendation to the LGA Executive; and
2. **Delegated approval** to make necessary budgetary adjustments to reflect the final grant notification from MHCLG to the LGA Chairman and Group leaders, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive.

4 Fair Funding Review and Business Rates Retention Update

Nicola Morton, Head of Local Government Finance, introduced the report which provided a summary of LGA work on the Fair Funding Review and Business Rates Retention since the previous meeting. Members noted the consultation responses which had been considered at the previous meeting in January had been submitted. A number of successful regional events had also been held. Next steps included reconvening the officer level group with MHCLG, and the Further Business Rates Retention and Fair Funding Review Task and Finish Group would meet the following day to discuss relevant issues. Two further consultations on: the Fair Funding Review; and Further Business Rates Retention would hopefully be published before the 2019 summer recess, with final policy decisions expected as part of the 2020/21 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement expected in December 2019.

It was confirmed that all policy related to further Business Rates Retention and the Fair Finding Review would be discussed in detail by the Task and Finish Group in the first instance and then be brought to Leadership Board and Executive for consideration. Regarding the alternative model of Business Rates Retention, it is the Government's intention that it will compensate for appeals and allow growth to come through to local authorities. The LGA was pressing MHCLG to ensure that the whole system was as simple and transparent as possible. The LGA has commissioned LGFutures Ltd to produce a model on this to assist member authorities and the LGA.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board **noted** the report and **agreed** that delegated authority be

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given to the Chairman and Group Leaders to sign off the LGA commissioned model of the alternative administration of Business Rates Retention as outlined in the report.

5 Chief Executive's Report - March 2019

Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive, introduced the report which set out the LGA's main achievements against the Business Plan since the previous meeting in January 2019.

In particular he highlighted the LGA's work in preparation for the Spring Statement the following week, the Government's forthcoming Adult Social Care Green Paper, the investment to councils through the One Public Estate programme jointly run between the LGA and the Cabinet Office, and ongoing work in the sector to prepare for Brexit including around ports and airports, support for small and medium enterprises, workforce, and community cohesion. Members also noted that DEFRA had recently published consultations on waste management which would have consequences for councils, and the LGA would be inviting a number of councils to come together in early April to inform a response.

In the discussion which followed Members raised the following points:

- Regarding a question over District Council elections in Northamptonshire, it was confirmed following the meeting that legislation had been laid to cancel the elections.
- Members noted that applications for places on the NHS Assembly would close today. The LGA had not been approached for a nomination, but at least two senior local government figures were known to have applied.
- Regarding the £1.6 billion in town deals which had been announced by the Government on Sunday, the LGA was awaiting final confirmation of distribution arrangements.
- Regarding schools expansion, it was noted that the LGA was undertaking work as part of the Spending Review work on capital funding, and more information on this would be available in due course.
- It was agreed that the apprenticeship levy had not achieved its goals as the number of apprentices had fallen since the introduction of the levy. The LGA would continue work with councils and the Government on this issue.
- It was agreed that detail around funding for fire authorities be included in the 'Funding for Local Government' section of the report in future.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board **noted** the Chief Executive's report for March 2019.

6 LGA Forward Plan

The Chairman introduced the Forward Plan, which set out the agendas for the LGA Leadership Board, LGA Executive, and Councillors' Forum for the next three months.

It was agreed that a report on the Chancellor's Spring Statement be brought forward to the April meeting.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board **agreed** the Forward Plan.

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Action

Forward Plan to be updated as agreed (**Paul Goodchild**).

7 Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 23 January 2019

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board **agreed** the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 January 2019.

8 Note of the last Commercial Advisory Board

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board **noted** the minutes of the Commercial Advisory Board held on 14 January 2019.

9 LG Group Budget 2019/20

Jonathan Gratte, Strategic Finance Manager, introduced the report and highlighted that the Budget for 2019/20 had been prepared under the assumptions which had been noted at the previous meeting in January 2019. The final Budget was presented for agreement and recommendation to the LGA Executive the following day.

There followed a confidential discussion.

Decisions

The LGA Leadership Board:

1. **Agreed** the LG Group's Budget for 2019/20 for recommendation to the LGA Executive;
2. **Agreed** the Budget for 2019/20 should only be published once the MHCLG funding was confirmed for the year, with the Three Year Financial Plan remaining an internal confidential document; and
3. **Delegated approval** to make necessary budgetary adjustments to reflect the final grant notification from MHCLG to the LGA Chairman and Group Leaders, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive.

Action

Budget to be presented to LGA Executive for approval on 7 March 2019 (**Jonathan Gratte**).

10 LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition 2019

David Holdstock, Director of Communications, and Amanda Spicer, Deputy Head of Events, introduced the report which updated the Leadership Board on progress made to date with arrangements for the LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition which would take place in Bournemouth from 2 July to 4 July 2019.

There followed a confidential discussion.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board **approved** the emerging programme and activities for the

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LGA Conference and Exhibition 2019.

11 Spending Review Update on Planning and Activity

Sarah Pickup, Deputy Chief Executive, introduced the report which provided an update on the LGA's planned activity ahead of the 2019 Spending Review. This included policy and research work, campaign work, and current and future planned engagement with both the sector and Government.

There followed a confidential discussion.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board:

1. **Noted** the report; and
2. **Agreed** that research into variation of spend in Children's Services between councils be published in line with the timetable of work set out in the report.

Action

Spending Review work to continue as set out in the report (**Sarah Pickup**).

12 Automatic Fire Suppression Systems

Mark Norris, Principal Policy Adviser, and Charles Loft, Senior Adviser, introduced the report which summarised the recommendations of the LGA Fire Commission's automatic fire suppression systems working group. The recommendations were supported by the LGA Fire Commission and the Fire Services Management Committee, and included recommendations for new buildings, retrofitting of older buildings, and buildings where vulnerable people slept unsupervised.

There followed a confidential discussion.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board **supported** the recommendations of the Fire Commission's automatic fire suppression systems working group as set out in the report, subject to their comments and the comments of the LGA Executive which would consider the report the following day.

13 United Kingdom Municipal Bonds Agency Plc (UKMBA) Update

Sarah Pickup, Deputy Chief Executive, introduced the report which updated Members on the current operational and financial position of the United Kingdom Municipal Bonds Agency (UKMBA), and presented options for how to progress UKMBA work.

There followed a confidential discussion.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board **agreed** to adopt Option C as set out in the report, with regular updates on progress to be reported to the Commercial Advisory Board and further reports to the Leadership Board at key decision points.

Action

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Officers to engage with UKMBA to take forward Option C, and further reports to be considered by the Commercial Advisory Board and Leadership Board in due course (**Sarah Pickup**).

14 Re-registration of LGA (Properties) Ltd and Resignation of the LGA as Member

Claire Holloway, Head of Corporate Services, introduced the report which set out proposed actions regarding the re-registration of LGA Properties as an unlimited company with share capital. This was the next step in the restructure of the LGA and its property companies agreed by the General Assembly on 4 July 2017.

In response to a question Claire confirmed that the former ACC's interest in the building would be maintained.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board:

1. **Approved** the Form of Assent, the Written Resolutions, the Draft Articles, and the Notice of Resignation, and authorised the Chairman to sign the documents; and
2. **Authorised** the Company Secretary to submit the documents to Companies House together with the required filing fee for registration.

Action

Documents to be submitted to Companies House as agreed (**Claire Holloway**).

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Lord Porter of Spalding CBE	South Holland District Council
Senior Vice-Chair	Cllr Nick Forbes CBE (by teleconference)	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr James Jamieson	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Cllr Howard Sykes MBE	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Deputy-Chairmen	Cllr Marianne Overton MBE	Lincolnshire County Council
	Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr Paul Carter CBE	Kent County Council
	Cllr David Simmonds CBE	Hillingdon London Borough Council
	Cllr Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
	Cllr Michael Payne	Gedling Borough Council
	Cllr Anne Western CBE	Derbyshire County Council
In attendance	Cllr Peter Box CBE	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE	Sutton London Borough Council
	Cllr Clive Woodbridge	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
In attendance	Cllr Kevin Bentley	Essex County Council