**LGA Governance Arrangements for EU and International Work**

**Purpose of report**

For decision.

**Summary**

At the February Board meeting, Members considered a report on how the LGA’s European lobbying work and wider international agenda could be coordinated at a political level within the new governance arrangements of the LGA. Members asked for a more detailed and refined proposal to be brought to the April Board for agreement, and then for recommendation to the LGA Leadership Board.

The Lead Members of the European and International Board have subsequently met and agreed a set of principles upon which the new arrangements could operate. These are set out in this report for the Board’s consideration.

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| **Recommendation** That the Board agree a recommendation to the LGA Leadership Board setting out how the European lobbying and international work could be coordinated at a political level from September 2014. **Action** Officers to take action as directed by Members. |

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**LGA Governance Arrangements for EU and International Work**

**Background**

1. On 23 January, a special meeting of the LGA’s General Assembly agreed a series of changes to the Association’s governance arrangements.
2. The changes included that from September 2014, the European and International Board will cease to exist. European funding issues will be dealt with by a new Resources Board and, as at present, individual policy boards will consider specific policy issues, such as environmental regulation. The LGA Executive will be responsible for strategic lobbying issues, such as the LGA’s annual lobbying objectives as a result of the EU Work Programme.

**Member Feedback: 26 February Board**

1. At the February meeting of the Board, Member discussed outline proposals for how the LGA’s European lobbying and wider international agenda could be coordinated at a political level within the new governance arrangements. This is attached at **Appendix A** for information.

1. The proposal was based upon the appointment of a single senior LGA Executive spokesperson with overall responsibility and accountability for E&I issues, supported by an ad hoc Member reference group to ensure a clear connection to formal E&I local government delegations.
2. The Board was supportive of these two principles, however raised a number of concerns regarding the need for clarity on the detail how this might work in practice. Members comments are detailed more fully under the minutes of the previous meeting (see Item 5 on the agenda).

**Lead Member Recommendations**

1. The European and International Board Lead Members met on 17 March and agreed a number of principles which seek to address the concerns of the Board and provide a basis for a recommendation to the Leadership Board.

LGA Executive Spokesperson

1. It is proposed that the Executive spokesperson role be either undertaken by the LGA Chairman, or for the Chairman to delegate it to another Office Holder of the Association[[1]](#footnote-1), providing the Officer Holder is not also a Board Chair.
2. This will ensure that the E&I issues are: sufficiently high profile; linked into the work of the LGA Leadership; and ensure that the spokesperson does not have two competing portfolios.

Reference Group Membership

1. It is suggested that the membership of the reference group comprise of the following roles: the Executive Spokesperson (Chair); the Resources Board Chair; and the delegation leaders of Committee of the Regions (CoR), Congress of the Council of Europe (Congress), Committee of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). It would be the intention that as and when a specific policy issues arises, the group would call on the expertise of the relevant LGA Board Chair, as well as the President of CEEP UK as and when appropriate.
2. This membership would: provide a formal link to Executive from the E+I delegations to ensure a coordination of policy lines and a formal link for delegation leaders into the LGA Leadership; avoid fragmentation of E&I work by the inclusion of the Resources Board Chair; and provide a formal mechanism to ensure that domestic Boards are given early warning about EU policy issues and learning from international practice.

Ways of working

1. It is intended that the reference group would meet at least twice a year.
2. This is in keeping with the guiding principles of the changes agreed by the General Assembly, providing a more flexible way of working, with less reliance on formal meetings and greater emphasis on of lead members outside the formal Board structures.
3. The arrangements are also compatible with: the resource and capacity of the organisation post restructure; and the position of the reference group, being outside of the formal structures of the LGA, with no associated allowance.

**Next Steps**

1. The European & International Board is not itself empowered to agree or create such a structure. Members are invited to discuss the principles set out above, with a view to agreeing a recommendation to the LGA Leadership Board, should there be agreement on a way forward.

**Financial Implications**

1. The proposal set out will be contained within existing budgets.
1. Office Holders of the Association are Members of the Leadership Board and the LGA Executive. They are appointment annually by the LGA General Assembly. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)