**LGA Governance Arrangements: Report to 26 February Board**

**Purpose**

For discussion.

**Summary**

This report considers how our European lobbying work and our wider international agenda can be coordinated at a political level within the new governance arrangements of the LGA.

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| **Recommendation**  The European and International Board discuss the report.   Action Officers to relay Members’ comments to the LGA Executive. |

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| **Contact officer:** | Ian Hughes |
| **Position:** | Head of Programme (European and International) |
| **Phone no:** | 020 7664 3101 |
| **E-mail:** | [Ian.Hughes@local.gov.uk](mailto:Ian.Hughes@local.gov.uk) |

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**Background**

1. On 23 January, the LGA’s General Assembly meeting agreed a series of changes to the Association’s governance arrangements. The report that was agreed by the General Assembly and details all the agreed changes is attached at **Appendix A** for information.
2. A new City Regions Board and People and Places Board will be created with immediate effect, with first meetings expected to take place in March/April 2014. From September, 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.
3. In terms of delivering the new arrangements, members of the European & International Board that there was consideration of a proposal to ensure the coordination of the political and lobbying activities undertaken by the LGA domestic leadership and those who represent our interests on formal European bodies, such as the Committee of the Regions.

**ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

1. One of the guiding principles behind the new governance arrangements is a more flexible way of working, with less reliance on formal meetings and greater emphasis on the role of lead members outside the formal Board structures.
2. In considering future arrangements, this Board may want to consider the legacy tasks and areas of work that, post September, will not naturally fit into the formal structures of the Resources Board, the individual Policy Boards or the Executive, and will therefore need some coordinating arrangements.
3. For example, these might include:
   1. There needs to be proactive coordination and communications between the leadership of the LGA in London and those of COR and CEMR. As the EU lobbying agenda is wide-ranging and dynamic, a yearly report on the EU legislative programme is unlikely to achieve the detailed discussion that is required.
   2. It is likely that the Congress report on UK local democracy will create the need for a dialogue with Whitehall by the LGA Executive and in Strasbourg with the Congress leadership. We need a formal place to coordinate this work as it is likely to be contentious and fast-moving.
   3. Our wider international work is developed through formal LGA representatives on UCLG (the global LGA) and CLGF (the Commonwealth LGA). These bodies tend to be the places where we address the demand from councils in developing nations for UK support. This work needs to be discussed with LGA leadership to ensure that they are aware of the demand and to ensure that calls upon councils are realistic.
4. These are three examples of our work which suggest the need for a small group of members, made up of a lead member from the LGA Executive, along with representatives from the leadership of our delegations to COR, Congress, CEMR, UCLG and CLGF, to meet regularly to coordinate our work and ensure that key issues are addressed at the right level at the LGA. In essence, this will bring together representatives of the LGA’s London leadership with those who lead councils’ collective interests in Brussels, Strasbourg and beyond.
5. It is proposed that the group is convened by LGA’s Executive lead member, who would be responsible for calling and leading meetings and ensuring that EU and international matters were addressed quickly across the LGA
6. The remit of the group should reflect the issues above. Objectives could include to support and join up the work of the LGA and its international delegations, to ensure that there is clear early warning to domestic boards of future EU legislative issues and to ensure that our international links bring learning to our domestic agenda.
7. The European & International Board is not itself empowered to agree or create such a structure. However members may wish to make recommendations, to the LGA Leadership Board, for implementation in September.
8. As the European & International Board will complete its work at the end of the LGA year, there will be no meeting of the Board after LGA Conference in July. A meeting of Board lead members will be scheduled to ensure that all legacy projects and work are properly transferred to the appropriate successor arrangements.