

Chairman's Update (2 September 2010 – 4 October 2010)

1. On 17 September, I met with senior officials from the Commonwealth Local Government Forum to discuss the reform of the organisation and how we ensured that UK councils were supported in international work.
2. On 21 September, I met with Lord Howell, Minister of State, at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with responsibility for the Commonwealth to discuss the role of councils in supporting local government in other Commonwealth nations.
3. On 22 September I spoke at a meeting of the British Council of Shopping Centres about the importance of partnership working between local government and business, and the opportunity local enterprise partnerships offer to build on existing partnerships.
4. I then visited Clarence House and met with Manon Williams, Private Secretary to HRH The Prince of Wales) and Ros Kerslake, Chief Executive of The Prince's Regeneration Trust to discuss the ways in which local authorities can help protect heritage buildings and dispose of heritage assets effectively.
5. In the afternoon, I attended the Senior Women in Public Leadership lunch at the House of Lords and returned and addressed the UK Alliance for International Development seminar in Bevin Hall and discussed how we should respond to increasing demand from the developing world for the skills of UK local government.
6. That evening I attended the British Retail Consortium's Annual dinner along with over 1200 key decision makers from the retail sector, government and civil service.
7. On 28 September I met with Greg Wood, Local Government correspondent at the BBC and discussed the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review and our offer around place based budgets. In the afternoon I had a very useful meeting with Mark Prisk MP, Minister of State for Business and Enterprise where we discussed local enterprise partnerships, skills policy, and transitional arrangements for RDA assets.

8. On 29 September I met with Tom Riordan, Chief Executive of Leeds City Council to discuss ongoing issues regarding Leeds and place based budgets.
9. That afternoon I met with Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Education to discuss local authority role in education and the Education White Paper.
10. On 30 September I met with Lord Best, President of the Association, to discuss the report he is producing for Grant Shapps and me on the council role in development. Later that day I met with Lady Cobham and James Berresford of Visit England to discuss the future of public sector support for the tourism industry.
11. From 3 to 6 October I attended Conservative Party conference in Birmingham. I attended a number of very interesting fringe events and debates and met with Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Minister of State, Communities & Local Government; Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government; Justine Greening MP, Economic Secretary to the Treasury; Lord Wei, Cabinet Office adviser on Big Society; Oliver Letwin MP, Minister of State - Cabinet Office; Rt Hon Caroline Spelman MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP, Minister of State for Housing and Local Government; James Morris MP; Eric Ollerenshaw MP and John Howell MP.