

Chairman's update 6 January 2011 to 4 February 2011

1. On 11 January, I met with Age UK Chairman, Dianne Jeffrey to discuss their priorities for the next year. Later that day I met with Peter Wanless, Chief Executive, Big Lottery Fund and Interim Chair Anna Southall to discuss their work with local government. I met Julian Smith MP for Skipton and Ripon to discuss the Localism Bill and the Greater Ripon Improvement Partnership. I also attended a meeting with a local authority officer involved in Member development services to discuss Member development improvement.
2. In the afternoon I, together with Councillor Chris White, met with John Penrose MP, Minister for Tourism and Heritage to discuss the changing tourism landscape and the future of councils' heritage conservation work.
3. On 12 January in the morning, I met with Ms Rita Stringfellow to discuss her work in the voluntary sector. In the afternoon I chaired the LGA Leadership Board.
4. Later that day, I attended a meeting with Group Leaders and Stephen Jones, Group Finance Director with Bob Neill MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government at Eland House to discuss the Local Government Finance Settlement. This formal meeting was supplemented by a number of other discussions with Ministers about the Settlement.
5. On the morning of 13 January, I chaired LG Group Executive and Councillors' Forum. In the afternoon I met with Rt Hon Theresa May MP, Home Secretary to discuss the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill and put the case for changes to the Police and Crime Panels and some of the licensing provisions. That evening I attended the Lord Mayor's Local Government Dinner at Mansion House.
6. On 17 January, I visited the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead with Jo Miller, Deputy Chief Executive to meet with Cllr. David Burbage, Leader of the Council. In the evening I attended and spoke at the LG Group's annual parliamentary reception in Westminster themed around the Localism Bill.

7. On 19 January, I met with Rt Hon Caroline Spelman MP, Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to discuss delivering local government efficiency and lean engineering in the public sector.
8. In the afternoon, I visited the London Borough of Hackney and participated in a tour of Dalston with Deputy Mayor Cllr Karen Alcock and officers. They showed me what Hackney is achieving to bring a very impressive housing, public realm and cultural offer to this part of London.
9. On Monday 24 January, I appeared before the Communities and Local Government Select Committee at the House of Commons and gave oral evidence regarding their Localism inquiry.
10. On 25 January, I was interviewed by the Local Government Channel, looking at the challenges ahead over the next year for local government.