

Item 2

Chairman's Update
3 October 2011 – 28 October 2011

LGA business

1. It's been another busy month; on 12 October I chaired our **Leadership Board**. There were a number of items for discussion including community budgets and the localism programme and we were pleased to be joined by Clive Betts MP, Chairman of the Local Government Select Committee.
2. I also welcomed Greg Clark MP to **Councillors' Forum** where he spoke about his new role as Cities Minister and earlier that day I met with regional representatives on Executive Board to discuss improving the strength of partnerships of local government at the national and sub-national level.
3. The **LGA Executive** considered items including the Local Government Resource Review, localising council tax reliefs, universal credit and directly elected police and crime commissioners and we also took the decision that we will no longer be using the name LG Group; as we are now one organisation we will, therefore, only be using the name Local Government Association (LGA).
4. We also held our **employee conference** enabling me to communicate to staff at the LGA my vision for building a trusted, reliable and efficient organisation that promotes and leads local government.
5. I was delighted to hear the decision by the Icelandic Supreme Court to award councils priority creditor status for the deposits they had in **Icelandic banks**. Securing priority creditor status in the test cases means the 145 local authorities with investments in the Icelandic banks are likely to recover almost all of the more than £1 billion they had on deposit with the four Icelandic banks. The outcome is the culmination of more than two years of extremely hard work resulting in an £470 million victory for councils and local residents.
6. The month drew to a close with my **Chairman's Summit – Challenging violence and strengthening communities: the local government response to civil disorder**. I spoke alongside Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, putting forward the LGA perspective on the recent disturbances and thoughts on the way forward.
7. On 31 October, along with many from local government, I attended a service of thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey for Sir Simon Milton, former Chairman of the Local Government Association; my friend and neighbour who died so young but having achieved so much.

Ministerial/Parliamentary business

8. At the Conservative Party Conference I met with the Prime Minister, Secretary of State, Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP and other Ministers to discuss the future role of

local government and our vision for change. I also held further meetings with MPs and some of our public and private sector partners to discuss future working and spoke at a number of fringe events.

9. Following the conference the LGA Group leaders and I held a further productive meeting with Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, focusing on the Local Government Resource Review, council tax localisation and riot recovery.
10. I also attended a community budgets political leadership meeting hosted by Baroness Hanham at Eland House and spoke further on community budgets alongside Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP and Tim Loughton MP at a joint LGA/CLG/Department for Education conference.
11. I was pleased to catch up with Louise Casey, Victims' Commissioner, recently appointed by the Prime Minister to lead the Government's response to the recent civil disturbances and I will be meeting with her again shortly to discuss councils' work through community budgets.
12. I also met with Grant Shapps MP and attended a Total Environment Summit at DEFRA and spoke alongside Richard Benyon MP – Parliamentary Under Secretary for Natural Environment and Fisheries.

Meetings with other organisations and individuals

13. I've attended a range of events this month including a joint meeting with the British Property Federation looking at ways to work together to support local priorities for investment and growth; and a public property debate alongside Rt Hon Francis Maude MP, which explored the potential for increasing the efficiency of the Public Sector Estate and the benefits of collaboration to both the public and private sectors.
14. I enjoyed addressing the National Children and Adult Service conference and spoke at an event in the House of Commons alongside Dr Stella Creasy MP and Tessy Britton focusing on effective participation in civic society.
15. I also met with Lord Chris Smith and Dr Paul Leinster, Chairman and Chief Executive of the Environment Agency, discussion focused on the progress councils are making in respect to their new responsibilities under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

Meeting with councillors and member councils

16. I held a productive meeting with Cllr Peter Martin, Leader, Essex County council and Joanna Killian, Chief Executive to discuss future financing of local government.
17. I also met with Cllr Teresa O'Neill, Leader, London Borough of Bexley and Cllr James Alexander, Leader, City of York council.
18. Towards the end of the month I attended our Peer Information & Development Day in Brixton. I was delighted to meet many peers and to have the opportunity to outline to them my vision for the LGA.