

Chairman's Update

2 June – 29 June 2012

LGA business

1. During the June **Leadership Board** we considered items including improving commissioning for better public services, our full year performance report for 2011/2012 and the Independent Local Government Campaign.
2. I was pleased to accept an invitation from the Association of North East Authorities along with Graham Allen MP, Chair of the Political and Constitutional Reform Select Committee, to discuss the Independent Local Government Campaign at an event in Sunderland. We also discussed the campaign further at **LGA Executive** alongside welfare reform, Hidden Talents, sustainable funding and the Local Government Resource Review.
3. Mid June I was delighted to attend the **MJ Achievement Awards** and to celebrate the hard work taking place everyday across the country.
4. At the end of the month we held our **LGA annual conference** in Birmingham. I was delighted that Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, Rt Hon Ed Balls MP and Rt Hon Ed Davey were able to attend and address over 1,150 delegates, speakers, exhibitors, sponsors and press present. I took part in a number of excellent plenaries focusing on local governance, community budgets, the 'Be a Councillor' campaign and Police and Crime Commissioners.
5. I hope that those of you who attended in Birmingham enjoyed the annual conference. Those of you who heard me speak will have heard that I have hugely enjoyed the last twelve months, since I became your Chairman and express that I believe we need fundamental change and we need it now – a change in Government thinking, a change in the relationship between national and local government and, most critically, a shift in the balance of power from Whitehall to town halls, from centralised solutions to local solutions. My message to Government is that we can do much of what you ask of us but that means you need to change your approach so that you do things differently. Unprecedented and fundamental change is what is needed, and we must work together to achieve it.
6. We also launched a report at our conference last week - **Funding outlook for councils from 2010/11 to 2019/20**. The report sets out an analysis of the service provision that councils could be expected to be able to sustain, if their revenue base were to be constrained within the spending levels set out in the 2012 Budget. In the report, we have modelled future service spending demand over the next decade, giving councils a picture of likely spending pressures over that period.

Ministerial/Parliamentary business

7. I met with **Rt Hon Edward Davey**, Secretary of State for the Department of Energy and Climate Change to discuss the Green Deal - the Government's energy efficiency programme, Climate Local – a new tool coordinated by the LGA to help councils get most value out of tackling climate change, and Collective Energy Purchasing – how organisations and consumers are banding together to negotiate better energy deals. We also discussed future working between the LGA and DECC under our Memorandum of Understanding.
8. I also met **Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP** to discuss the DWP's programme of European Social Fund spending on families with complex needs and the role of councils within that.

Meetings with other organisations and individuals

9. I was pleased to meet with **John Cridland, Director General of the CBI** to discuss our Local Growth Campaign and to develop markers for future LGA/CBI work.
10. I took part in the **ACEVO** 'Learning with Leaders' event chaired by Dr Peter Kyle, Deputy Chief Executive of ACEVO. We discussed shared experiences of leading public service delivery and alleviating spending restraints through collaboration and innovation.
11. I attended the **NHS Confederation Annual Conference** in Manchester and chaired the keynote session on Health and Wellbeing Partnerships – integrating across the whole system. The panel session looked at what's happening across other services and local government, the implications for the NHS and how organisations can work together differently in the new system to ensure improved outcomes.
12. I also launched a series of new resources for Health and Wellbeing Boards at the Confederation conference that have been co-produced by the NHS, the NHS Confederation, the Department of Health and the LGA. They cover a range of issues including children and young people, making the best use of shared resources, patient and public engagement and how to use health impact assessments.

Meetings with councillors and member councils

13. I visited **Surrey County Council** and attended a meeting with District Leaders. It was very helpful to discuss the various issues currently affecting Surrey and particularly Districts and the Boroughs.
14. I visited **Peterborough City Council** and met with the Leader Cllr Gr. Uff. Marco Cereste to discuss future working with the LGA.
15. I visited **Somerset** and was pleased to meet with Leader of the Somerset County Council Cllr John Osman, Leader of North Somerset Council, Cllr Nigel Ashton, Sedgemoor District Council Leader Cllr Duncan McGinty and West Somerset District Council Leader Cllr Tim Taylor. It was particularly helpful and interesting to have an in-depth discussion about the development of Hinkley Point C, potentially the first of the new nuclear power stations and the issues which are arising for the councils and the communities in the local area.