

Headlines of the work programme 2011 - 12

Purpose of the report

This report provides members with the headlines of the 2011-12 work programme of the Board.

Summary

This report sets out the headlines of the Board's work in 2011-12. Members are asked to discuss and confirm the work priorities. Members should note that there will be a performance report against the work priorities which will be reported to the Board every quarter.

Recommendation

For Members to note activities and the 2011-12 reporting process.

Action

As agreed by the Board.

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Economy

1. The headline work programme will be:

- 1.1 A campaign to emphasis councils' role in stimulating economic growth, through a series of town hall meetings across England. These events will be jointly branded and run with host authorities. The events will be focussed on specific themes relevant to the area in which they are taking place, for example: solutions to economic diversity across England, international comparisons and local cohesion in the context of global markets.
- 1.2 A programme of support to councils and partners on economic development will be developed.
- 1.3 The focus on worklessness continues with the development of the *Hidden Talents* campaign on engaging young people more effectively in work, learning and volunteering. We will also look at the opportunities for greater localism in welfare reform as universal credit and the Work Programme is rolled out.
- 1.4 Our work on EU funds continues and the current focus is our campaign to maximise UK take up of regeneration funds under EU budget review, and to ensure local delivery of those funds.
- 1.5 We maintain a watching brief on the BIS High Street review; HE/FE input into skills debate, and the future of Post Offices.

Transport

2. The headline work programme will be:

- 2.1 Our programme of work on localising transport delivery has focussed recently on developing a discussion with the Department for Transport (DfT) on the most effective form of delivery, after localism was given a green light on rail by the McNulty report that was published in May, and on buses and roads via the Competition Commissioner. We also anticipate devolution in other areas such as the Local Major Transport Scheme funding. Work in this area will concentrate on getting councils to help model new ways of delivery jointly with the DfT to ensure that greater devolution of transport is achieved.

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- 2.2 We will keep the wider transport policy debate alive, for example, through lobbying DfT and a series of papers to enhance our arguments examining the benefits of a more localist approach to transport delivery.
- 2.3 A programme of support to councils on transport will be developed, especially looking at the opportunities and risks of local management of roads and rail.
- 2.4 We continue to keep a watching brief on; roads maintenance, winter weather and salt provision, and the highways efficiency review.

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