

# European and International Programme Board

Agenda

Thursday 2 June 2011  
11.30am

Council Chamber  
County Hall  
Topsham Road  
EXETER  
Devon  
EX2 4QU

**To:** Members of the European and International Programme Board  
**cc:** Named officers for briefing purposes

**LG Group European and International Programme Board**  
2 June 2011

---

The **European and International Programme Board** meeting will be held on **Thursday 2 June 2011 at 11.30am**, in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Devon, EXETER, EX2 4QU.

A sandwich lunch will be provided following the meeting.

**Apologies**

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting, so that a substitute can be arranged and catering numbers adjusted, if necessary.

**Labour:** Aicha Less: 020 7664 3263 email: [aicha.less@local.gov.uk](mailto:aicha.less@local.gov.uk)  
**Conservative:** Angela Page: 020 7664 3264 email: [angela.page@local.gov.uk](mailto:angela.page@local.gov.uk)  
**Liberal Democrat:** Evelyn Mark: 020 7664 3235 email: [libdem@local.gov.uk](mailto:libdem@local.gov.uk)  
**Independent:** Group Office: 020 7664 3224 email: [independent.group@local.gov.uk](mailto:independent.group@local.gov.uk)

**Attendance Sheet**

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

**Location**

A map showing the location of the County Hall is printed on the back cover.

**Contact**

Paul Johnston (Tel: 020 7664 3031, email: [paul.johnston@local.gov.uk](mailto:paul.johnston@local.gov.uk) )

**Carers' Allowance:** As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme, a Carers' Allowance of up to £5.93 per hour is available to cover the cost of dependents (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

## European & International Programme Board - Membership 2010-2011

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Authority</b>	<b>Role</b>
<b>Conservative (6)</b>		
Gordon Keymer CBE	Tandridge DC	European rep (CoR)
Sandra Barnes ( <b>Deputy Chair</b> )	South Northants DC	LGIB Board
Roger Phillips	Herefordshire	Workforce PB
Liz Eyre	Worcestershire CC	Community Wellbeing PB
David Lloyd	Hertfordshire CC	Culture, Tourism & Sport PB
Andrew Povey	Surrey CC	Improvement PB
<b>Substitutes</b>		
Clare Whelan	Lambeth LB	
Joanna Spicer	Suffolk CC	
Jim Harker	Northamptonshire CC	
<b>Labour (4)</b>		
Dave Wilcox ( <b>Chair</b> )	Derbyshire CC	LGIB Board
Sir Albert Bore	Birmingham City	European rep (CoR)
Peter Box CBE	Wakefield City	Economy & Transport PB
Nilgun Canver	Haringey LB	Safer & Stronger Communities PB
<b>Substitutes</b>		
Clyde Loakes	Waltham Forest LB	
Caitlin Bisknell	High Peak BC	
Derek Bateman	Cheshire West & Chester	
Tim Cheetham	Barnsley MBC	
Dave Allan	Sunderland City	
<b>Liberal Democrat (3)</b>		
Richard Kemp ( <b>Vice-Chair</b> )	Liverpool City	LGIB Board
Lord Tope CBE	Sutton LB	European rep (CoR)
Paula Baker	Basingstoke & Deane BC	Environment & Housing PB
<b>Substitutes</b>		
Zoe Patrick	Oxfordshire CC	
Richard Knowles	Oldham MBC	
Duwayne Brooks	Lewisham LB	
Steve Comer	Bristol City	
<b>Independent (1)</b>		
Linda Gillham ( <b>Deputy Chair</b> )	Runnymede BC	LGIB Board

## LG Group European and International Programme Board Attendance 2010 -2011

<b>Councillors</b>	<b>26/11/10</b>	<b>20/01/11</b>	<b>02/06/11</b>	<b>19/07/11</b>
<b>Conservative Group</b>				
Gordon Keymer CBE	NO	YES		
Sandra Barnes ( <b>Deputy Chair</b> )	YES	NO		
Roger Phillips	YES	NO		
Liz Eyre	YES	NO		
David Lloyd	YES	NO		
Andrew Povey	NO	NO		
<b>Labour Group</b>				
Dave Wilcox ( <b>Chair</b> )	YES	YES		
Sir Albert Bore	YES	YES		
Peter Box CBE	NO	NO		
Nilgun Canver	NO	YES		
<b>Lib Dem Group</b>				
Richard Kemp ( <b>Vice-Chair</b> )	YES	NO		
Lord Tope CBE	NO	NO		
Paula Baker	NO	NO		
<b>Independent</b>				
Linda Gillham ( <b>Deputy Chair</b> )	YES	YES		
<b>Substitutes</b>				
Clare Whelan	YES			
John Commons	YES	YES		
Steve Comer	YES			

## Agenda

---

**Meeting title** European and International Programme Board

**Meeting date** 2 June 2011

**Meeting time** 11.30am

**Meeting venue** Council Chamber, County Hall, Exeter, EX2 4QU

---

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Page</b>
1.	<b>Minutes of last meeting</b>	<b>3</b>
2.	<b>Getting Closer – Update to Programme Board</b>	<b>9</b>
3.	<b>Possible EU proposals on VAT and public authorities</b>	<b>15</b>
4.	<b>Modernisation of EU Procurement Rules</b>	<b>19</b>
5.	<b>Congress of the Council of Europe</b>	<b>31</b>
6.	<b>Update on international work</b>	<b>37</b>
7.	<b>General Update</b>	<b>43</b>

**Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday 19 July 2011, 2.00pm



## Note of decisions taken and actions required

---

<b>Title:</b>	LG Group European and International Programme Board
<b>Date and time:</b>	Thursday 20 January 2011, 11.00am
<b>Venue:</b>	Loxley House, Nottingham

---

### Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chairman	Cllr Dave Wilcox	Derbyshire CC
Deputy chair	Cllr Linda Gillham	Runnymede BC
Members	Cllr Gordon Keymer CBE	Tandridge DC
	Cllr Sir Albert Bore	Birmingham City
	Cllr Nilgun Canver	Haringey LB
	Cllr John Commons	Manchester City
Apologies	Cllr Richard Kemp (Vice Chair)	Liverpool City
	Cllr Sandra Barnes (Deputy Chair)	South Northants DC
	Cllr Liz Eyre	Worcestershire CC
	Cllr David Lloyd	Hertfordshire CC
	Cllr Andrew Povey	Surrey CC
	Cllr Peter Box CBE	Wakefield City
	Lord Tope CBE	Sutton LB
	Cllr Paula Baker	Basingstoke & Deane BC

**Officers:** Ian Hughes, Richard Kitt, Ian Hughes, James Beadle, Jasbir Jhas, Paul Johnston (all LG Group).





Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
1	<p><b>Note of previous meeting</b></p> <p>Members agreed the note of the previous meeting as a correct record.</p>	
2	<p><b>LG Group Business Plan 2011 - 12</b></p> <p>Members agreed the European and International Programme Board's contribution to the 2011 – 12 LG Group Business Plan, subject to the following comments:</p> <p>Members asked about the linkage between the European and International Programme Board and other Boards. Officers said that the linkages varied depending on the policy agenda; for example, due to the UK's current opt-out from European policies concerning justice and home affairs, the European and International Unit largely held only a "watching brief" of Safer and Stronger Communities Programme Board activity. However, there were very strong links with the Environment and Housing Board as so much environmental policy started in Brussels.</p> <p>Members asked for more emphasis on statutory EU Committees and UK local government representation to highlight the influence that these bodies had in Brussels.</p> <p>Members also asked for further information on the potential of LGA's Brussels Office working closer with, and providing greater support to, regional offices and other bodies, such as the NHS, in Brussels.</p> <p>Members said the benefits to Councils from the international development work by the Unit should be highlighted and the revenue-raising work</p>	
	<p><b>Decision</b></p> <p>Members agreed the European and International Programme Board's contribution to the 2011 – 12 LG Group Business Plan.</p>	
3	<p><b>EU procurement policy update</b></p> <p>Officers introduced the report, noting that the European Union</p>	

would announce later in the year a major review of EU procurement rules, and that current rules were overly complicated and burdensome for local authorities.

Members said that it was important for the LG Group to try and influence the outcomes of the review at the earliest possible stage, and that this could be achieved through greater work in the Committee of the Regions and CEMR.

### ***Decision***

*Members approved the lobbying strategy set out in paragraph 16 of the report.*

## **4 International Project update**

Officers updated Members on recent successful international projects.

Members agreed that the Peer Clearing House mechanism be used as a first option to identify member and officer experts for future project activities.

## **5 EU funding update**

Officers updated Member on current issues in the delivery of EU structural funds and work toward establishing the 2014 – 2020 programme.

Members said that any possible differences in strategy and process between the European Social Fund and European Regional Development Fund was concerning, and work needed to be undertaken with DWP to ensure that the variety of EU funds could be joined up at a local level.

### **Action**

Officers to compile an anecdotal evidence base of best practice among local authorities in accessing EU structural funds.

## **6 Current and forthcoming priority issues**

Members noted the report.

**7 AOB**

Officers updated the Board on proposals within part 2 of the Localism Bill to give Ministers the power to force local authorities in England to pay a part of any fine passed down by the European Union onto the UK, and said that the LG Group was lobbying against these proposals.

Officer agreed to update the Board on a regular basis on progress on this lobbying activity.

**Action**

Officers to circulate the LGA briefing on the Localism Bill, and to update the Board at regular intervals on progress on lobbying activity in this area.

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 24 May 2011**



## **Getting Closer (the LG Group reorganisation programme)**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

This report, which summarises the outcomes of the LG Group reorganisation programme (Getting Closer), was considered by the LG Group Executive on 19 May 2011. The Executive agreed that the Getting Closer programme had now delivered what it had set out to do, and invited the LGA Leadership Board to make recommendations to the September Group Executive meeting on how the Group continually improves its performance to provide effective national added value to the sector.

Please note that officers will report orally to the Board on how E&I services will be delivered under the new structure.

### **Recommendations**

The European & International Programme Board is asked to:

1. Note the outcomes of the Getting Closer programme
2. Note that the new integrated organisation will be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> June.

**Contact officer:** John Ransford  
**Position:** Chief Executive  
**Phone no:** 020 7664 3236  
**E-mail:** [john.ransford@local.gov.uk](mailto:john.ransford@local.gov.uk)



## **Getting Closer (the LG Group reorganisation programme)**

### **Background**

1. In January 2009, the former LGA Executive agreed to institute a Getting Closer programme, to succeed the development strategy which had been established the previous year to take forward the outcomes of the 2007 Best review. Getting Closer has always had two overarching aims:
  - 1.1 To ensure that the LG Group is more focussed on Councils and Councillors
  - 1.2 Further integrating the work of the organisations in the Group (known then as the Central Bodies) to create greater coherence, optimise efficiencies, reduce costs and improve the quality and flexibility of services.
2. Over the past two years all major milestones have been approved by the LGA Executive and subsequently the Group Executive. A schedule summarising the main achievements is attached at Appendix 1.
3. The requirement to create an integrated, streamlined and affordable organisation to deliver the Groups priorities has been based on two fundamental factors. The first is a drive to substantially reduce membership subscriptions for Councils and other local government bodies. The second is a substantial reduction in top-sliced funding from the RSG. Although the Secretary of State for CLG agreed far greater flexibility for use of top slice, so it could be directed at the sector's priorities, funding will be reduced by 38% over the next four years. Specific contract funding for particular projects is still available, but at a greatly reduced level. So the aim has been to create a sustainable and affordable core structure.
4. In terms of staffing numbers, the establishment of the LGA and former central bodies in 2010 was 447 full time employees (excluding staff working on specific contracts). The establishment of the new LG Group from 1<sup>st</sup> June will be 269 FTEs. To date there have been 90 voluntary and 87 compulsory redundancies. The rest of the reduction has been achieved by natural wastage eg vacancy management, short term contracts.
5. So as a result of Getting Closer:-
  - 5.1 There are new Group wide political governance arrangements (due to be reviewed by the Group Executive from September 2011)
  - 5.2 A new LG Group brand
  - 5.3 Harmonised pay and conditions for all Group staff

**Item 2**

- 5.4 An integrated organisation with staff costs reduced by 45%
- 5.5 All group staff located in Local Government House, or designated as remote workers, freeing up Layden house for commercial income as determined by the Resource Panel and Property Companies

**What next?**

- 6. At its meeting in March, the Group Executive agreed to commission an independent reviews of members remuneration, convened by the President, Lord Best. The Independent Panel present its findings in July.
- 7. When the current political governance arrangements were introduced in 2010 it was decided to review their operation after 12 months. The review will commence in September.
- 8. Following a review of websites across the Group, a new LG Group website is due to be launched at the Annual Conference in Birmingham at the end of June.
- 9. In the medium term a decision will have to be made on whether the current pattern of an integrated organisation serving the LGA and its company structure is sustainable or whether full integration of the LG Group should be considered. This step would require constitutional amendment, so it seems sensible to establish how the current changes operate in practice before this is considered.
- 10. In one sense the Getting Closer programme is now complete. However, the twin objectives of ensuring that the Group is more focussed on Councils and Councillors and ensuring the Group operates in a coherent manner remain as important challenges. We must continually demonstrate that we offer and provide real national added value to the sector. The Leadership Board should determine how this is best achieved and report back to this Executive at the first meeting in the new 'LGA' year in September.
- 11. Meanwhile, the Getting Closer label should cease to be used from 31<sup>st</sup> May. That phase of our work is now complete.

**Financial Implications**

- 12. The LG Group now has a sustainable and affordable organisation to take forward its priority tasks. The budget for 2011/12 is presented to the Executive elsewhere on this agenda.



<b>DATE</b>	<b>MILESTONE</b>
15 January 2009	Development Strategy relaunched as 'Getting Closer' Overall direction and aims of Getting Closer agreed by LGA Executive
19 March 2009	First integrated LG Group Business Plan and LG Group Financial Strategy approved by LGA Executive
21 May 2009	Initial review of branding across the Group complete Next steps agreed by LGA Executive
June 2009	LG Group pay harmonisation complete
19 November 2009	LGA Executive agree new LG Group branding
30 November 2009	Communications review complete and final proposals published
January 2010	LGA Executive agree new LG Group governance arrangements
1 April 2010	Launch of new integrated communications function
May 2010	Review of LG Group websites complete
July 2010	Review of Business Support complete
30 June 2010	CLG confirms outcome of RSG topslice bid
6 July 2010	New LGA Constitution approved by the General Assembly New branding launched at Annual Conference
1 September 2010	New LG Group governance arrangements come into effect
16 September 2010	New LG Group Executive agree principles for reshaping LG Group
30 November 2010	Launch of staff consultation on Getting Closer restructure
13 January 2011	LG Group Executive agree LG Group business plan 2011/12
4 March 2011	Staff consultation ends
11 March 2011	Final structure published
17 March 2011	LG Group Executive agree provisional LG Group budget 2011/12
w/c 18 April 2011	Job offers and redundancy notices issued to all affected staff
19 May 2011	Final LG Group budget presented to LG Group Executive
1 June 2011	New integrated LG Group comes into effect
28 June 2011	Launch of new LG Group website at Annual Conference 2011



**Item 3**

**Possible EU proposals on VAT and public authorities**

**Purpose of report**

For discussion / direction.

**Summary**

The report highlights the need for early LGA action ahead of any EU proposals in 2012 to reform the VAT treatment of public bodies.

**Recommendations**

Members are asked to discuss the issue, consider the key messages (paragraph 9) and to agree next steps (paragraphs 11-12).

**Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

**Contact officer:** Dominic Rowles  
**Position:** Policy & Public Affairs Coordinator (Brussels), LG Group  
**Phone no:** 00 32 2502 3680  
**E-mail:** [dominic.rowles@local.gov.uk](mailto:dominic.rowles@local.gov.uk)



**Item 3**

## **Possible EU proposals on VAT and public authorities**

### **Background**

1. The European Commission has launched a major review of the current VAT system as applied across the EU. From an EU perspective, the system was developed over 40 years ago and many complexities have built up over the years including a patchwork of exemptions and different VAT rates.
2. The EU's aim is to simplify the VAT rules by more closely aligning national VAT regimes with each other.
3. As part of the review the Commission has announced it may bring forward specific proposals in 2012 on the VAT treatment of public bodies. This is the aspect of the review which has the potential to impact upon local authorities.
4. Different EU countries currently treat VAT costs incurred by public bodies in different ways. In the UK for example local authorities can normally reclaim from government (HMRC) each month the VAT they pay when *purchasing* goods and services: anything from office supplies to major construction contracts.
5. The *provision* of certain public services by local authorities is subject to different VAT rules in different EU countries. For example the provision of car parks by local authorities has different VAT treatment across the EU. Where VAT is charged this raises the cost of the service for the customer.
6. Local authorities are also increasingly providing public services in the same market as the private sector e.g. crèche services, adult education and training, sports facilities, car parks, letting of business units. This creates additional VAT complexities and, from an EU perspective, the possible distortions of competition. (The provision of statutory public service functions such as education or social services are outside the scope of VAT by virtue of them not being considered economic activities).
7. The EU has not yet developed the details of what might be proposed in 2012 as regards public bodies and VAT. The impact on local authorities is therefore currently unknown. Any proposals have the potential, however, to diminish local authorities' ability to reclaim VAT, perhaps particularly in relation to their services in the same market as private sector providers.

### **Key messages**

**Item 3**

8. Given the potential importance of the issue, the LGA would propose making some early representations to the EU.
9. The UK Local Authority VAT group brings together VAT managers from local authorities. They have submitted a response to the EU which makes a strong case for maintaining the status quo as regards the VAT treatment of public authorities. Their paper contains the following messages which members are asked to consider:
  - 9.1 VAT should not be a financial burden on public bodies undertaking their public service functions. Any future EU proposals affecting public bodies should not diminish local authorities' ability to reclaim VAT.
  - 9.2 The ability for local authorities to reclaim VAT stops it falling as a cost passed onto the tax payer in the form of increased council tax.
  - 9.3 Any moves towards a common VAT regime for public bodies must meet the LGA's objectives to reduce administrative burdens on local authorities; promote efficient use of public resources; and provide financial flexibilities at the local level.
  - 9.4 Key public service activities must remain free from VAT at the point of delivery. The state should not levy VAT on public services as they are already funded through taxation.
10. The full response of the UK Local Authority VAT group will be made available at the Board meeting.

**Next steps**

11. Consideration of the above key messages will provide LGA with a mandate to engage with Whitehall and the European Institutions on this topic to set down some early markers ahead of any potential proposals in 2012.
12. This is a potentially complex and technical topic. A full report can be brought to the board in future as and when the EU begins to define the scope of its proposals, and more is known about their potential impact on local authorities.

**Item 4**

## **Modernisation of EU public procurement rules**

### **Summary**

Following discussion at the January board meeting, this report updates members on work the LG Group is undertaking to influence revised EU procurement directives expected in late 2011 or early 2012.

### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to discuss the issues highlighted by our member authorities within the LG Group response, consider any further issues which should be incorporated into our lobbying (paragraph 11) and to agree next steps (paragraph 12).

### **Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

**Contact officer:** Dominic Rowles  
**Position:** Policy & Public Affairs Coordinator (Brussels), LG Group  
**Phone no:** 00 32 2502 3680  
**E-mail:** dominic.rowles@local.gov.uk





## **Modernisation of EU public procurement rules**

### **Background**

1. EU procurement rules directly govern how councils buy their supplies and services. All procurements above a certain value (normally £156,442) must follow relatively complex and lengthy EU procedures to ensure providers from across the EU get a chance to compete for councils' contracts.
2. LG Group's work on simplifying procurement rules supports the Group's 'productivity programme' which supports local government efficiencies in the face of budget cuts.
3. This paper follows discussions at the January 2011 European and International Board meeting in Nottingham. As outlined at that meeting, the Group is working with the EU and Whitehall to influence new EU public procurement legislation to be proposed in late 2011 or early 2012. The process of agreeing new rules at EU level followed by implementation into UK law will take several years.
4. The Improvement Board also endorsed this work at its 17 May 2011 meeting.

### **Modernisation of EU procurement rules**

5. LG Group has undertaken significant consultation on this topic:
  - 5.1 detailed feedback from 141 local authority procurement managers via a recent LG Group survey (Dec 2010)
  - 5.2 a consultation event in Brighton attended by over 50 procurement managers (Nov 2010)
  - 5.3 close engagement with the society of procurement officers (SOPO), experts from the sector, and procurement advisors from Local Partnerships and LGID.
6. The feedback shows that the legislation in its current form is too detailed and complex. Much time and resources are being spent by procurement managers to follow the rules, yet almost no contracts are finally awarded to suppliers based abroad. A more proportionate approach from the EU is required.
7. LG Group has also:

**Item 4**

- 7.1 produced a series of case studies outlining costs and burdens associated with EU procurement rules
  - 7.2 introduced relevant EU case law into the 'shared services' guidance recently published as part of the Group's 'productivity' work
  - 7.3 brought local authority procurement experts to Brussels to give evidence to an EU hearing (Nov 2010, May 2011)
  - 7.4 had early meetings with those responsible for drafting the legislation in the European Commission, engaged with MEPs, as well as those responsible in Whitehall
  - 7.5 chaired the responsible local authority working group at EU level to ensure LGAs from across the EU are promoting common messages.
8. Cllrs Wilcox and Parsons have recently secured amendments on this topic via the Committee of the Regions. The amendments push for a more streamlined EU procurement regime and ensure that local and regional governments EU-wide call for:
- 8.1 certain services such as health and social services to remain excluded from the principal requirements of the Directive
  - 8.2 simpler procedures when awarding contracts, including greater use of negotiation between the public authority and the provider
  - 8.3 significantly higher financial thresholds before the EU rules become applicable.

**LG Group response to Green Paper**

9. Based on feedback received, the Group has submitted a response to an EU Green Paper consultation exercise on procurement modernisation which closed 18 April 2011 (summary in **attached** Annex). It was agreed via email by office holders of the European & International Programme Board and of the Improvement Board in April.
10. The response suggests that more coherent, consistent and above all significantly simplified EU legislation is required, in line with council's needs to make efficiency savings.

**Developing key lobbying messages**

11. Members are asked to discuss the issues highlighted by our member authorities within the LG Group response, the main elements of which are highlighted below, and to consider any further issues which should be incorporated into our lobbying:

**Item 4**

- 11.1 significant overall simplification of the regime (reformed award procedures leading to greater use of negotiation with suppliers, more flexibilities around selection and award criteria, higher thresholds)
- 11.2 clear exclusion for public-public cooperation contracts in the new Directive which would free up councils to share services between each other without going out to tender
- 11.3 reduction of legal uncertainties and legal challenges from failed bidders
- 11.4 significant raising of thresholds to a level which makes cross-border competition economically viable for the supplier, and justifies the time spent on the procurement procedure by the public authority
- 11.5 criteria in public contracts relating to environmental benefits, innovation, SME promotion and social responsibilities should be the decision of national governments and individual councils. The EU should encourage but not mandate such practices. The main aim of procurement must continue to be a focus on best value.

**Next steps**

- 12. Members are also asked to endorse the next steps:
  - 12.1 LG Group continues a close dialogue with those responsible in Whitehall including CLG, the Office of Government Commerce (OGC), and the Cabinet Office (CO) Efficiency and Reform Group (ERG)
  - 12.2 address EU procurement concerns through a specific workshop at the LG Group annual conference in June
  - 12.3 the Group via the Brussels Office promotes its key messages to the EU
  - 12.4 the Group continues its work with the Committee of the Regions and via the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR).



## **Annex – Modernisation of EU procurement rules**

### **Summary of LG Group initial response to EU**

1. This paper is the Local Government Group's response to the European Commission's initial consultation on the future modernisation of EU Public Procurement Directives 2004/18/EC and 2004/17/EC.
2. The response has been produced in collaboration with Local Government Improvement and Development (LGID) and Local Partnerships (LP): the two UK organisations who advise local authorities on procurement matters.
3. In our response we answer a selection of questions from the Green Paper particularly relevant to local government.
4. The LG Group welcomes the European Commission's initiative to review the Directives governing public procurement, recognising the need for increased efficiency and effectiveness of the public procurement system. Such aims are consistent with the pressing need to enable savings in public finances.
5. Whilst the LG Group supports the idea of a certain element of coordination at EU level as regards public procurement activities, the legislation in its current form is too detailed and complex. It is not achieving its stated aim of promoting EU-wide competition and has several other short-comings.
6. Overall the review should result in more coherent, consistent and above all **significantly simplified legislation** in line with, and not going beyond, the EU's international commitments under the WTO Government Procurement Agreement (GPA).
7. The primary objective should be that Directive 2004/18 in its future format will simply implement the EU's international obligations to ensure a basic level of fair competition in line with Treaty principles and not over-regulate or micro-manage procurement arrangements within the member states.
8. Additional provisions in the Directive beyond international commitments should be included only when absolutely essential to ensure respect of the Treaties, ECJ case law, or current practices within member states.
9. A recent LG Group survey<sup>1</sup> among 141 local authority procurement managers in England and Wales together with findings from previous consultations enables us to identify aspects of Directive 2004/18 which are particularly difficult or costly to

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/procurement-consultation>

**Item 4**

implement, while also outlining recommendations for change in the future. Evidence used in this response is based on the results of this survey.

10. Our response does not attempt to answer each of the 114 questions the Commission asks in its Green Paper but instead focuses on the issues most relevant to local authorities:

1. Cost and efficiency
2. Public-public cooperation
3. Thresholds & A/B services
4. Award procedures
5. Procurement as a policy tool
6. Service Concessions
7. Procurement expertise & access to information
8. Remedies Directive (not part of the EU's review)
9. Other issues

**Cost and efficiency**

11. 66% of procurement managers agree that despite benefits of increased competition, the Directive (2004/18) has brought increased procurement process costs and administrative burdens, creating a more complex procurement process overall.

12. Recommendation: EU procedural and administrative requirements, particularly detailed award procedures, must be reduced by simplifying the Directive and increasing flexibility for local authorities. The focus at EU level should be to ensure the Treaty principles of equality, transparency and non-discrimination are respected, but not going beyond that.

**Public-public cooperation**

13. Legal uncertainty around pooling or sharing services between public authorities is the single biggest issue. It has been identified by 64% of procurement managers as an obstacle to sound procurement practice. It hampers the efficiency drive in the public sector and adds to local authorities' legal costs.

14. Recommendation: Administrative reorganisations within the public sector and contracts between contracting authorities should be clearly excluded from the scope of the Directive in line with current practices in member states and recent Court rulings.<sup>2</sup>

**Thresholds & A/B services**

15. The current financial thresholds are significantly beneath levels at which cross-border competition becomes viable. The situation is therefore one where many local

---

<sup>2</sup> Case C480/06 *Commission v Germany* ('Hamburg' judgement) 2009.

**Item 4**

authority contracts are awarded following an EU procedure, but only 1% of authorities 'sometimes' actually award a contract to EU suppliers without a UK base.

16. Recommendation: The thresholds need to be raised significantly to a level which makes cross-border competition economically viable for the supplier, and justifies the time spent on the procurement procedure by the public authority. International commitments should be renegotiated if necessary.

The distinction between 'part A' and 'part B' services should remain. In particular part B services such as health and social services must remain excluded from the principal requirements of the Directive.

**Award procedures**

17. Procedural requirements are complex and costly for bidders and contracting authorities alike, particularly the competitive dialogue procedure. In addition, it does not appear to be used consistently across member states.

18. Recommendation: The aim should be to ensure that local authorities can negotiate draft contracts with participants in the procurement phase without undue constraint through detailed procedural requirements. The revision should consider how to reduce costs and timescales involved in all award processes by simplifying or removing award procedure requirements, and introducing a greater ability to freely negotiate contracts. This may require replacing current award procedures with a new standard negotiated procedure. Public procurement laws need to be enforced equally across member states.

**Procurement as a policy tool**

19. Local authorities fully support environmental and social improvement but are concerned about EU efforts to use procurement to address such policy goals via their inclusion as award criteria in public contracts.

20. Recommendation: The EU regime already allows for full consideration of these 'non-economic' policy requirements in public procurements. EU requirements to include green, social, or other policy criteria in procurements must remain voluntary to allow local authorities to focus on best-value. Member States should be encouraged to support eco-friendly and responsible procurement practices. There is also a need for guidance on how local policy priorities such as supporting local businesses and promoting local employment can be included in award criteria whilst working within the scope of the Directives and the Treaty.

**Service Concessions**

21. Our evidence suggests 21% of local authorities have awarded at least one contract as a service concession, often following an EU compliant competitive

**Item 4**

tendering procedure 'just to be sure' despite there currently being no requirement at EU level to do so.

22. Recommendation: There is no need for any new EU regulation governing service concessions. If there must be EU proposals on service concessions they should continue to exclude such arrangements from EU award procedures, and should not go beyond a basic prior advertising requirement to ensure transparency. Concessions should be considered as part of the review of Directive 2004/18 and not as a separate directive which would add further to the complex legal framework governing public procurement.

**Procurement expertise & access to guidance**

23. Whilst the general level of expertise seemed high among our survey respondents, we believe the level of expertise across local authorities as a whole varies significantly.

24. Regarding access to information such as guidance, 46% of procurement managers stated that while they know where to find relevant information it is often hard to access or that insufficient information is provided.

25. Recommendation: Guidance on specific areas of procurement alongside professional capacity building is needed. The EU should set up and promote web-based tools for structured knowledge sharing, training, and for the promotion of models of good practice. Initiatives such as the PROGRESS programme supporting procurement capacity building should be enhanced.

**Remedies Directive** (not part of EU review)

26. The rising risk of legal challenge and the perceived legal bias in favour of the supplier is leading to cautious, risk averse procurement practice, stifling innovation and reducing cashable savings. Local authorities are also facing increased legal costs to deal with actual and potential challenges at times of financial cutbacks.

27. Recommendation: the Remedies Directive must be reviewed to make clear under which circumstances local authorities can be challenged. Such a determination should not be left to varied interpretation by the courts. Under the Directive, unsuccessful bidders should require stronger grounds to challenge the legitimate award of a public contract.

**Other issues**

28. The full response<sup>3</sup> deals with a range of other issues: smaller contracting authorities, collaborative purchasing/demand aggregation, SME policies, sub-

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pagelid=18013723>



**Item 4**

threshold contracts, subcontracting, major changes to contract, favouring local suppliers, language requirements and quality standards in social services.



**Item 5**

**Congress of the Council of Europe**

**Purpose of report**

For discussion.

**Summary**

The report summarises the UK Delegation approach to the forthcoming UK presidency of the Council of Europe, and informs the board on a forthcoming peer review on UK compliance with the Charter of Local Self-Government.

**Recommendations**

Members are asked to consider the key messages in the LGA/UK aims for the UK Chairmanship (paragraph 5) and to note the forthcoming international peer review of UK local democracy in 2012 (paragraphs 9-11).

**Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

**Contact officer:** Richard Kitt  
**Position:** Senior Adviser (European & International)  
**Phone no:** 00 32 2502 3680  
**E-mail:** [Richard.kitt@local.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.kitt@local.gov.uk)



## **Congress of the Council of Europe**

### **Background**

1. This paper summarises the UK Delegation approach to the forthcoming UK presidency of the Council of Europe (CoE), and informs the board on a forthcoming peer review on UK compliance with the Charter of Local Self-Government.

### **About the Council of Europe**

2. Founded in London in 1949 on the initiative of Sir Winston Churchill, the Council of Europe was established to ensure that the suffering of the two world wars would never be repeated. Its main remit is to uphold human rights and to defend democratic values through good governance. It has introduced new international treaties to tackle issues such as cybercrime, international terrorism, racism & xenophobia, people-trafficking, and most recently on domestic violence.
3. The Congress of the CoE comprises local councillors from across Europe, to which the LGA sends a delegation of 14 full members and their substitutes. It is the guardian of the Charter of Local Self-Government: it monitors national compliance with the Charter, promotes democratic values and good local governance, and observes local elections across Europe. It achieves its goals through peer pressure and exchange of good practice.

### **The UK Chairmanship of the Council of Europe (Winter 2011-12)**

4. The Council of Europe is managed by a Committee of Ministers, comprising the foreign ministers of all the member states. The Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers rotates every six months, and gives that country the possibility to steer the direction of the whole Council. The UK will take over from November 2011 to May 2012.
5. The LGA, through its Congress members, is seeking to influence the UK agenda for its Chairmanship. Our position is that:
  - 5.1 we support the intention of the UK Chairmanship to promote reform of the Court of Human Rights: it has a huge backlog of cases that causes unnecessary frustration and upset to all parties, whilst its large budget is

**Item 5**

- squeezing the valuable work on democratic values and good governance in other parts of the Council.
- 5.2 linked to this, we want the UK Chairmanship to review the budget of the Council of Europe and the Congress share of it.
  - 5.3 we believe there is a need to give a local dimension to all work of the UK Chairmanship, with particular reference to the Charter of Local Self-Government and to promoting European Local Democracy Week.
  - 5.4 we demand a more “team UK” approach to the Council of Europe, bringing together UK Ministers, diplomats, civil servants, parliamentarians and local politicians to deliver a more coherent, joined-up approach to the Council.
  - 5.5 more generally, we want to use the Chairmanship to promote greater awareness in the UK of the Council of Europe generally, and Congress specifically.
6. In this connection, the UK Delegation has met with the UK Ambassador to the Council of Europe, Mrs Eleanor Fuller, on several occasions, and has written to the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government to seek a meeting to discuss this and other matters of relevance to the Delegation. Although the Secretary of State responded positively, no meeting date has yet been offered.
  7. In practical terms, the LGA is not resourced to host meetings of the Congress during the period of the UK Chairmanship, although that would be standard practice. However it is understood that the President of Congress, Cllr Keith Whitmore, is looking into hosting a meeting of the Congress Bureau (management committee) in Manchester, with the assistance of the local authority and other sponsors.
  8. The LGA could consider how it might use the period to promote the principles and achievements of the Congress, for example through a temporary webpage dedicated to the Congress, promotion of European Local Democracy Week, and a short publication on the Congress and CoE for dissemination to local councils.

**CoE peer review of UK local democracy**

9. An important role of the Congress is to monitor how each country implements its obligations under the European Charter of Local Self-Government. There are many important provisions, including the freedom of action without excessive central control, and the provision of adequate financial resources. There is a helpful overview of the Charter, with link to the full text, at:

[http://www.coe.int/t/congress/Texts/conventions/charte\\_autonomie\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/congress/Texts/conventions/charte_autonomie_en.asp)

**Item 5**

10. The Convention has the weight of an international treaty, which means that it is not actionable in law but is enforced chiefly through collective peer evaluation: no government relishes public censure from abroad.
11. To this end, periodically the Congress publishes individual country reports. The next UK report will be researched either side of Christmas and reported to the Council of Europe during 2012, during which time Cllr Keith Whitmore from Manchester City Council will continue to be the Congress President. The LG Group will engage constructively with the Congress monitoring mission when they visit the UK, and offers will report to the Board in advance of their visit as details and dates become known.





## **Update on international work**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

This report sets out the international work undertaken by the LG Group since the last Board meeting in January.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note and consider the recommendations about recruiting peers.

### **Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

**Contact officer:**

Ivor Wells

**Position:**

European & International Partnerships & Programmes  
Officer

**Phone no:**

020 7664 3119

**E-mail:**

[ivor.wells@local.gov.uk](mailto:ivor.wells@local.gov.uk)



**Item 6**

## **Update on international work**

### **International Activities**

1. The demand upon UK councils for support to the developing world is increasing and there continues to be a parallel demand for leadership from the LG Group to support and advocate for UK councils active in this work. In this difficult financial climate, the leadership required for the LG Group includes raising additional resources to support this work to ensure that councils are able to meet the demand for support from abroad.
2. This demand for support from sister LGAs tends to come directly to the LGA as our counterparts want to ensure that any support is from local government practitioners rather than expensive consultants.
3. The LG Groups's international service will continue to be a strong, central feature of the work of the organisation. A number of externally funded programmes are currently running and we are working closely with partners, external funders and other key agencies to ensure that momentum is increased as the transition to a new organisation continues.

### **Update on existing work**

#### **4. *UCLGA Pan-African Peer Review Project***

The LG Group is embarking upon a pioneering pan-African peer review project with the pan-African LGA (UCLGA). This work is funded by the government of Luxembourg. The project will be delivered over an 18 month period will pilot one peer review in each of UCLGA's regions (north, south, east, west and central). The African participants in each of the five peer reviews will be selected through UCLGA's internal political processes, but there is flexibility around whether the reviews are between two LGAs or two councils within a region. To take one region as an example, this could mean that the "eastern pilot" could be a peer review between either the Kenyan and Ugandan LGAs, or the cities of Nairobi and Kampala. For the local authority reviews, there is also flexibility to include both urban and rural authorities.

5. The project will be delivered in two stages. 1) initial training and capacity building delivered by the LG Group to the UCLGA Secretariat on facilitating and supporting peer learning, and 2) delivery of five peer reviews with each peer review team being an equal mix of African and UK peers.

**Item 6**

6. The process for the selection of African member peers will be addressed in the initial training stage of the project and broadly modelled on the peer accreditation mechanism used for UK peer reviews (adaptations of course will need to be made to take into account differences in political and leadership structures and local and regional contexts). It is proposed that the selection process for UK member peers is carried out along the same procedures as current UK peer reviews whereby members participating in reviews must be 1) accredited peers and 2) selected by the four national member peers. In addition to this however, given the international dimension of this project, it is also suggested that the Chair of the European & International Programme Board play an active role in the selection process for member peers.

7. *Kosovo*

DFID funded project “Strengthening Financial and Administrative Systems for the Decentralisation of the Social Care Services Programme” started in January 2011. The LG Group is delivering the project together with the lead partner, COFFEY International and two other implementing partners from Kosovo and Slovenia. LG Group has made a significant contribution to work budget and finance reform and is now working on a detailed implementation plan.

8. *South Africa*

The project with South African LGA (SALGA) – funded by the Commonwealth LGA (CLGF) - comes to an end in September and there is one more phase of activities planned to wrap up the project. Local government elections were held in South Africa on 18 May and SALGA has naturally been preoccupied in recent months. However, the final activities will take forward some of the recommendations of the peer review carried out by UK local government practitioners in 2010 to ensure that the issues raised are provided to the new political leadership of SALGA.

9. *Pakistan*

Like the South Africa project, our work with the Local Councils Association of Punjab (LCAP) is also funded by the CLGF and will be coming to an end in September. The strategic planning workshop held in January has resulted in a new national campaign to strengthen elected local government, while also mobilising more funding. The final activity programme will focus on capacity building and dates are being finalised.

10. *Zimbabwe*

The EU-funded project with the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe is ongoing, despite significant delays at the Zimbabwe end. All but one of UCAZ

## Item 6

member councils are controlled by the Movement for Democratic Reform. By mid June we expect to have a clear indication of the LG Group's contribution to the project, which is focussing on strategic business review of the association, stakeholder engagement with members and a leadership training programme.

### Future work

11. The new LG structure provides opportunities to deliver the LG Group's international programme in more creative ways, drawing on expertise from across the Group: from the programmes, the peer review and leadership teams. Discussions regarding both the fundraising and delivery of programmes are being held with those companies that have a strong record in delivering DFID commissions and who wish to have a strong public service input into the delivery of their programmes. We also continue to approach aid agencies on behalf of sister LGAs to support the demand for UK local government expertise. As a national LGA, we are able to lead this work to ensure that we continue to deliver high quality programmes and capture the benefits of international engagement for the LG Group and our member councils as much as possible.
12. Thus we are seeking to strengthen this area of work in the new organisation. Example of planned work includes:
13. *Falkland Islands:* The LG Group has been working on the capacity building of the Falkland Island Government (FIG) over the past year. The project has come to an end and the government of Falkland Islands are looking into acquiring further funds for continuation of the project. Future work will focus on the review of the established appraisal system and succession mechanism within the FIG.
14. *Israel:* The LG Group has submitted a project proposal to the British Embassy in Israel at the request of Israeli municipalities with a majority Arab population to support capacity building on urban planning. This bid build on past work which was supported by the FCO.
15. *Kenya:* We are awaiting news from the World Bank on an expression of interest lead by HTSPE (an aid organisation) for a "Supporting Local Government Institutional Strengthening in Kenya". The 18 month project is part of a wider programme administered by the World Bank.



**Item 7**

**General update**

**Purpose of report**

For information.

**Summary**

This report updates members on progress on 1) EU funding; 2) work on government proposals to pass EU fines onto councils under the Localism Bill; 3) mainstreaming the upcoming EU Waste Review into wider LG Group work; 4) CEMR; 5) implications of 5 May elections.

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to note and comment on the report.

**Action**

Officers to progress as appropriate.

**Contact officer:** Ian Hughes  
**Position:** European & International Programme Director, LGA  
**Phone no:** 020 7664 3101  
**E-mail:** [ian.hughes@local.gov.uk](mailto:ian.hughes@local.gov.uk)





## **General update**

### **(1) EU funding update**

1. EU structural funds are worth €9.4 billion over the 2007-14 period, typically funding economic and skills development activity, further funding opportunities are available to councils through a range of thematic EU funds. The debate on the future of the funds is now entering a critical point, both for the current programmes, which run to 2013, and in the establishment of the next programmes, which run from 2014-2020.

#### Developments in England

2. **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2011-13.** There remains £1.3 billion in the English ERDF programmes until 2013 which, following the abolition of the Regional Development Agencies, requires new managing arrangements. DCLG have outlined proposals to transfer existing RDA ERDF secretariat teams into DCLG from 1 July 2011, which will continue to operate as they do now. These transition proposals also include stronger measures to take into account local views in spending decisions, such as reforming current Programme Monitoring Committees into Local Management Committees, and creating a new local Deputy Chair to oversee spending. The proposals are generally positive, given the limitations on changing arrangements dramatically mid-programme, but some concerns remain, particularly with regards the availability of match-funding to draw down ERDF. The LGA has just launched a survey of all local authorities to gather evidence of how local projects have been affected by the lack of match-funding, and members of the Economy and Transport Board will be meeting Baroness Hanham in June to express these concerns.
3. **European Social Fund (ESF) 2011-13.** LG Group is lobbying to shape the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)'s policy to spend £200m European Social Fund (ESF) to help support the employment prospects of families with multiple problems. With invitations to tender set to go out at the end of May with contracts live in autumn, timing is tight. We have been pressing DWP to develop a local engagement process that will result in local councils being engaged effectively in commissioning ESF decisions across the country. However their local engagement proposal falls short of the engagement LG Group wishes, i.e. going beyond referral. Our "ask" includes: ESF be pooled or closely aligned into Community Budget pilot areas, which the Minister described as virtual pooling, and for those local councils not proposing to subcontract ESF, that they are equal partners in commissioning ESF decisions. This is essential if the ESF

**Item 7**

provision is to be targeted locally and aligned closely with existing local provision. This has been expressed at officer and political level.

4. **Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) 2011-13.** In February 2011 Government announced changes to the socio-economic elements of the RDPE, which are currently managed by the RDAs, these include: a reduction in funding; centralised management arrangements following the abolition of RDAs, and; a focus on a fewer number of national priorities. The LGA is concerned that the narrowing of priorities and centralisation of management will restrict the programmes responsiveness to local need. The chair of the LGA Rural Commission wrote to Ministers to express these concerns, and following a reply, officers are working with officials to try and ensure RPDE arrangements are more locally responsive.
5. **Towards EU funds 2014-2020.** In working towards the 2014-20 EU funding programmes, officers have initiated a cross-Government working group to consider how there could be more local control of the management and delivery of EU funds in the future. As part of this work the group will commission a number of local areas to explore the issues in greater depth, making a series of recommendations back to government, and forming a central part of the local government lobbying effort.

Developments in Brussels, EU funding from 2014-2020

6. The debate on the future of EU funds from 2014-2020 is now entering a critical point in Brussels, as regulations on the future EU Budget and the future of Cohesion Policy are expected in spring 2011. Key issues under debate include: the amount of resources allocated to structural funds and to the CAP, the range and type of priorities that EU funds might support; and the role of local partners in supporting European programmes meet local and European objectives.
7. Officers continue to work closely with the full range of partners, in particular the European Commission and increasingly the European Parliament. Over the course of May MEPs are voting on 3 significant reports with implications for the future operations of the major European programmes in England and Wales, on: the future of the EU Budget, the future of Cohesion Policy, and the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Officers will continue to engage with MEPs, both directly and jointly with the pan-European LGA (CEMR), to propose and secure amendments that are in the interests of local government.

**(2) Localism Bill – EU fines update**

8. **Background** The Localism Bill before Parliament proposes 'EU fines clauses' giving Ministers a power to devolve to local authorities, all or part-payment of any fine passed down from the European Court of Justice (ECJ) for the UK's failure to

**Item 7**

comply with legal obligations under the EU Treaty. The clause would apply to all EU Directives and future ones. The LGA opposes this clause and has called for its complete removal from the Bill, on the grounds that it is unfair, unworkable, dangerous for local economies and unconstitutional. Instead, the LGA believes a far more sensible and level-headed approach would be to adopt a more collaborative approach between central and local government when negotiating EU laws.

9. **LGA lobbying.** The Bill now passes from the Commons to the Lords. During the Commons stage, the LGA and councils from across England stated their fundamental opposition to this policy. In addition, LGA elected members have written to, and discussed the issue with Ministers many times. The Government response has not adequately addressed the sector's concerns.
10. **Next steps** As the debate moves into the Lords, the LGA has already held briefing sessions with peers on our policy position. An oral update will be provided at the meeting.

**(3) EU 2012 Waste Review**

11. The 2012 Waste Review is an example of how EU policy and lobbying activity is mainstreamed into wider Programme Board work. The Environment and Housing Board's waste portfolio holders endorsed key LGA messages on the review in March and links have also been made with work to influence the current UK waste review.
12. The review provides an important opportunity to stress to EU and UK decision makers the potential impact on local authorities from possible changes to waste law. Any changes must be proportionate and help councils to improve methods to recycle and reuse waste; councils must not be faced with additional administrative or financial burdens.
13. The review also provides opportunities to highlight what councils actually *want* from future waste laws and how light touch legislation could enable councils to innovate to meet local waste management needs. The LGA is compiling a report which will inform this lobbying work.

**(4) Council of European Municipalities & Regions (CEMR – European LGA)**

14. **CEMR reform.** The CEMR has its biannual Policy Committee on 20-21 June, when it will take final decisions to implement its reform process. There is much support for the UK approach of getting CEMR to focus more exclusively on lobbying on EU law in priority areas, with officer-level meetings always taking

**Item 7**

place in Brussels. Final proposals for organisational change will be published at the beginning of June.

15. **LGA subscriptions:** the CEMR are very sympathetic to the case put by the LGA for a 20% reduction in fees in view of its reduction in subscription income and top-slice funding, although CEMR are understandably concerned at the possibility of contagion, with the Italian LGA also requesting cuts of the same amount (20%). However it is thought very likely that the LGA reduction will be endorsed, and the CEMR Secretary-General is already working to a 'shadow budget' that assumes these reductions.

**(5) Local elections**

16. The 5 May elections in English local authorities and devolved assemblies had a small impact on the UK Delegations to international bodies: Members who are nominated by LGA to places on EU Committee of the Regions and Congress lose their place if they retire or are not elected in local elections.

As a result of local elections in May 2011, the following members have lost their Congress & CoR places:

Congress

- Sarita Bush (Liberal democrat, Kingston-upon-Hull Council): lost mandate
- Frank McAveety (Labour, Scottish Parliament): lost mandate
- Sean Neeson (Liberal Democrat, NI Assembly): did not stand
- David Perkins (Liberal Democrat, Northampton Council): lost mandate

Committee of the Regions:

- Jonathan Bell MLA (DUP, Ards Council): did not stand
  - Ted Brocklebank (Conservative, Scottish Parliament): did not stand
  - Irene Oldfather (Labour, Scottish Parliament): lost mandate
  - Nichol Stephen (Liberal Democrat, Scottish Parliament): did not stand
17. Congress members have six months continuing membership to allow the nominating bodies to select a replacement, whereas CoR members lose their seat immediately on loss of electoral mandate. There is a continuing dialogue with the Cabinet Office regarding whether returning members of the devolved assemblies should be obliged to be renominated, but this does not affect local councillors in the same position.
18. **Congress vacancies:** the Scottish and NI places will be filled by their respective assemblies. Concerning the two English places, which are both substitutes, the UK co-ordinator (Richard Kitt, LGA) will work with the LGA political groups to fill

**Item 7**

these vacancies promptly within the six month notice period, having reviewed the new political balance and taking into account the need to restore gender balance.

19. **CoR vacancies:** these will be filled by the devolved administrations and NILGA (submission already made).
20. There is an outstanding issue concerning the replacement of Cllr Iain Malcolm, who wishes to stand down from CoR and be replaced by a councillor from his region. The nomination was submitted to CLG in Autumn 2010 but has not yet been processed by Whitehall. Whilst LGA substitution arrangements for CoR have mitigated the practical effect of this delay, it is irritating for the members concerned and their region, and is symptomatic of the slow way in which UK nominations are processed. Repeated contacts at officer level have so far failed to accelerate the appointment, so the matter is now being taken up at political level with the Minister for Europe.



## **Travelling to County Hall**

### **Cycle facilities**

Cycle stands are available outside County Hall main reception and Lucombe House.

### **Bus services**

Services K, R, S and T operate from Exeter High Street to Topsham Road (for County Hall).

### **Park and Ride**

PR 6 is a direct service to County Hall on every day that County Hall is open, from the Sowton P & R site on Sidmouth Rd. and is available to visitors.

Other P & R facilities are located at Honiton Rd adjacent to Great Moor roundabout and at Marsh Barton on Matford Pk Rd. Regular buses run from all three of sites direct to the City Centre.

### **Train services**

Main line and Branch line train services operate to and from Exeter St Davids Station, Exeter St Thomas Station and Exeter Central Station.

For further information about local public transport and timetables contact Traveline on 0871 200 2233.

### **Walking**

#### **From Exeter St David's Station (2.1 miles)**

Turn right onto Bonhay Road and keep going until you reach the Mill on the Exe public house. Turn right before the public house and cross the river using the pedestrian bridges (Millers Crossing). Turn left and follow the pedestrian path along the river, past Cricklepit Bridge and the quay until you reach the first lock. Turn left across the lock and follow the path until you reach the next bridge. Cross both bridges and continue to follow the path until you reach Bungalow Lane. At the top of Bungalow Lane cross at the pedestrian crossing and turn right along Topsham Road. County Hall is on your left.

#### **From Exeter Central Station (1.6 miles)**

Turn left out of the station and walk down Queen Street. Cross the High Street and walk down the pedestrian alley opposite that leads to the Cathedral Close. Carry straight on, cross Southernhay and turn left on Southernhay East then right down Barnfield Road. Cross at the pedestrian crossing and continue along Barnfield Road. Turn right into Denmark Road and left into Magdelene Road. Cross at the traffic lights and walk down St Leonards Road, turning left into Wonford Road and then right into Matford Lane. Walk through the County Hall campus to main reception.

#### **From Exeter St Thomas Station (1.5 miles)**

Come out of the station and turn right onto Cowick Street. Walk through the shopping complex to the pedestrian underpass. This brings you out on the pedestrian path along the river. Walk past the Malthouse public house towards Cricklepit Bridge and follow the instructions from St David's Station from that point on.

### **Driving**

View map above for driving.

### **Car Parking**

There is a pay and display car park for visitors, entered via Topsham Road. This car park is for the exclusive use of visitors only and should not be used by staff. There are 51 spaces, which includes 2 disabled spaces. This is normally sufficient but parking cannot be guaranteed and visitors should allow themselves enough time to find alternative parking if necessary.

There are two disabled parking bays within the visitor car park. Additional disabled parking bays are available in the staff car park. These can be accessed via the intercom at the entrance barrier to the staff car park.





