

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title:	LG Group European and International Programme Board
Date and time:	Thursday 20 January 2011, 11.00am
Venue:	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>Note of previous meeting</p> <p>Members agreed the note of the previous meeting as a correct record.</p>	
2	<p>LG Group Business Plan 2011 - 12</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>Decision</p> <p>Members agreed the European and International Programme Board's contribution to the 2011 – 12 LG Group Business Plan.</p>	
3	<p>EU procurement policy update</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