

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title:	LG Group European & International Programme Board
Date and time:	Thursday 2 June 2011, 11.30am
Venue:	Council Chamber, Exeter, Devon

Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chair	Dave Wilcox OBE	Derbyshire CC
Deputy Chair	Linda Gillham	Runnymede BC
Members	Gordon Keymer CBE	Tandridge DC
	Liz Eyre	Worcestershire CC
	Sir Albert Bore	Birmingham City
	Lord Graham Tope CBE	Sutton LB
	Paula Baker	Basingstoke & Deane BC
Apologies	Richard Kemp CBE	Liverpool City
	Sandra Barnes MBE	South Northants DC
	Roger Phillips	Herefordshire CC
	David Lloyd	Hertfordshire CC
	Dr Andrew Povey	Surrey CC
	Peter Box CBE	Wakefield City
	Nilgun Canver	Haringey LB

Officers: Ian Hughes, Jasbir Jhas, Nick Porter, Paul Johnston (LG Group)

Members agreed that the Chair write to Jonathan Bell to congratulate him on his appointment as Junior Minister in the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister in the Northern Ireland Assembly. Members also agreed that the Chair write to John Commons to thank him for his service to the Board.

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
1	Minutes of last meeting	
	The notes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.	

2 Getting Closer – Update to Programme Board

Officers outlined the implications of the Getting Closer process on the Board's future activity and on the Local Government Group more widely. Officers stressed that the Group would continue to have European and international issues as a point of focus, and would continue to provide support to Councillors involved in European and international work.

Members thanked officers for their work during the period of reorganisation, and conveyed their best wishes to those officers who had recently left the organisation.

Members considered how to communicate the benefits of LG Group membership in a more robust way. This issue would be addressed through a revived membership offer and a refreshed website which would be launched at LG Conference.

Decision

Members noted the outcomes of the Getting Closer programme, and requested that information be circulated to the Board on future European and International activity and officer support.

Action

Officers to provide a report detailing future European and International activity and a list of future officer support for European and international activity.

Ian Hughes

3 Possible EU proposals on VAT and public authorities

Members discussed potential EU proposals on VAT and public authorities arising from the Commission's current review on the issue.

Member agreed that the Committee of the Regions should have early involvement in the formulation of the proposals. Officers said that CoR involvement would be examined.

Decision

Members agreed the next steps as outlined in the report.

Action

Officers to prepare a report for the next Board meeting outlining further detail on the proposals, including a comparison of VAT issues in other EU states and how CoR can develop its work in this area.

Jasbir Jhas

4 Modernisation of EU procurement rules

Officers introduced the report and set out current lobbying activity.

Members said that the Group's response needed to reflect concerns around the European Commission's consultation process, and that the criteria in public contracts relating to environmental and social benefits should be encouraged but not mandated.

Decision

Members agreed the next steps as outlined in the report.

Action

Officers to reflect Members' comments within the Group's response.

Dominic Rowles

5 Congress of the Council of Europe

Members noted the key messages in the LGA / UK aims for the UK Chairmanship, and said that some consideration needed to be given to the 2012 Games and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Members noted the forthcoming international peer review of UK local democracy in 2012 and asked about sign-up to the European Charter of Local Self-Government and applicability of the Charter to Northern Ireland.

Action

Officers to prepare a note to the Chair on NILGA issues regarding the Charter of Local Self-Government.

Richard Kitt

6 Update on international work

Officers informed Members that a Group-wide approach would be taken to progress a number of international projects.

Decision

Members agreed that a report be prepared for the next Board meeting detailing each international project.

Action

Officers to prepare a report for the next Board meeting detailing each international project.

**Ivor Wells /
Drago Djekovic**

7 General update

Members noted the report and requested further details on the LG Group's survey of local authorities on the lack of match-funding, and details on the LG Group's Brussels offer.

Action

Officers to prepare a report for the next Board meeting on the Group's Brussels offer.

Richard Kitt

Officers to prepare a note to Members on the results of the LG Group's match-funding survey.

Nick Porter