

6 March 2012

Item 1

Delivering our lobbying priorities

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

At the last Board meeting, Members agreed a set of EU lobbying priorities for the LGA to pursue. This paper takes forward Members' comments and recommendations from the last meeting.

It sets out the draft corporate priorities of the LGA (through the business planning process) as a context for our EU lobbying and wider work. It confirms the lobbying priorities and maps LGA Members, Boards, MEPs and lead Whitehall departments which have influence over the development of EU policy in our priority areas.

Recommendation

That Members consider the report and recommend any priorities in our lobbying campaign.

Contact officer: Jas Jhas
Position: Senior Advisor
Phone no: 020 7664 3114
E-mail: Jasbir.Jhas@local.gov.uk

Delivering our lobbying priorities

Background

1. At the last meeting, Members agreed a short-list of EU lobbying priorities for 2012. These arise from the 2012 EU work programme published last October, plus ongoing work from previous years.
2. Whilst Members agreed the list of EU policy initiatives, they made clear the need for our EU work to be driven by, or integrated with LGA corporate priorities.
3. This report sets out two issues for Members:
 - 3.1 the role European and International work will play in delivering emerging 2012 corporate priorities for the LGA, and
 - 3.2 ways in which the LGA can use its influence at home and in Brussels to get the best deal for councils from EU legislative developments established at the last meeting.

LGA Business Planning

4. There is currently widespread consultation on the draft LGA business plan and, at their last meeting; Board Members gave a clear steer to the Executive on their views. The minutes set out this feedback. The business plan is still in development and will be finalised at the Executive meeting in late March.
5. There are currently clear themes emerging. Firstly, there will be clear corporate priorities which are likely to be:
 - 5.1 public service reform
 - 5.2 growth and prosperity
 - 5.3 local government funding
 - 5.4 efficiency and productivity
 - 5.5 sector-led improvement; and
 - 5.6 our own effectiveness and efficiency.
6. Secondly, there will be campaigns attached to these priorities. For example, the work on public service reform will be supported by a campaign to secure the future of adult social care.

Item 1

7. European and International work will support the development of the business plan in a number of ways:
 - 7.1 There is a clear line under the “Public Service Reform” chapter which sets the context for our EU lobbying. Under this chapter the LGA will ensure that “future EU regulation minimises burdens and maximises opportunities for councils”.
 - 7.2 Once the priorities and campaigns have been established, we can consider the most effective international comparisons to develop our work. For example, there is a clear European angle in the adult care campaign through international comparisons and need to lobby against the proposal to bring social services within EU procurement rules.
 - 7.3 The business plan has yet to be finalised, so Members may wish to discuss any issues to influence the final plan. Members may also wish to consider how best to develop European and International work within the context of these emerging corporate priorities.

EU lobbying priorities

8. At the last Board meeting Members endorsed the draft LGA EU lobbying priorities for 2012 ranking them as priority (proactive and intense resource) and watching brief (reactive).
9. In addition, Members requested more information about how the LGA could tackle these priorities and requested a mapping exercise, which could enable Members to discuss how these are managed internally and how we could organise ourselves externally to influence the outcome both in Brussels and here in London.
10. This is presented in the attached table **Annex 1**. This includes:
 - 10.1 ***Lead LGA programme boards***, which following mainstreaming EU work across the organisation, could lead detailed EU lobbying campaigns. Board chairs are also identified. **European and International Board (EIB) Members may wish to highlight where potential linkages can be made between this and lead Boards.**
 - 10.2 ***The lead Whitehall department(s)*** expected to lead on specific EU issues. Contact with Whitehall is important because they will develop a UK position on draft EU laws before it negotiates in Brussels. As part of the EU fines debate with Government, we expect more structured involvement with Government in advance of developing a UK position in the future. LGA officers will take forward discussions with Whitehall

6 March 2012

Item 1

officials. **Annex 2** highlights the relevant Secretaries of State and shadow Cabinet Members. **Members may wish to pinpoint where they have contacts with these Ministers or Shadow Ministers and where contact could be made easily.**

10.3 **Key players in Brussels** including lead European Parliament committee and lead CoR commission. **Annex 2** provides detail highlighting MEPs and CoR members.

11. In addition to this, on most campaigns on priority issues, the LGA works with CEMR (the European LGA) working groups and sister associations; UK regional offices; UKREP desk officers; UK public sector bodies (eg NHS Brussels Office), UK private sector lobbyists (eg CBI Brussels Office); and various European NGOs and special interest groups.

12. **Members are invited to suggest ways to support the work of lead LGA Boards and ways in which to we could support making the case in Whitehall and Brussels.**

Contact officer: Jas Jhas
Position: Senior Advisor
Phone no: 020 7664 3114
E-mail: Jasbir.Jhas@local.gov.uk