

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title:	European & International Board
Date and time:	Monday 9 November 2012, 11.00 am
Venue:	The Biscuit Building, Mother Ltd, Shoreditch, London

Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chair	Dave Wilcox OBE	Derbyshire CC
Deputy Chair	Cllr Shirley Flint	North Kesteven DC
Deputy Chair	Gr. Uff. Marco Cereste OSSI OMRI	Peterborough City
Members	Guy Nicholson	Hackney LB
	Roger Lawrence	Wolverhampton City
	Sue Murphy	Manchester City
	Gordon Keymer CBE	Tandridge DC
	Keith Glazier	East Sussex CC
	Neil Clarke	Rushcliffe BC
	David Shakespeare OBE	Wycombe DC
	Joanne Beavis	Braintree DC
	Liz Eyre	Worcestershire CC
	Lord Graham Tople CBE	Sutton LB
	Nigel Mermagen	South Somerset DC
	Sian Reid	Cambridge City Council
Apologies	Sir Albert Bore	Birmingham City
	Cllr Richard Kemp OBE	Liverpool City
	Sandra Barnes MBE	South Northamptonshire DC
	Sherma Batson MBE DL	Stevenage BC
Speakers	Jeremy Smith	Director of Advocacy International
Officers	Ian Hughes, Richard Kitt, Dominic Rowels, Drago Djekovic and Frances Marshall	

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
1.	Welcome and Introductions	
	<p>The Chair opened the meeting by thanking Cllr Nicholson and Mother Ltd for hosting the meeting. He noted the apologies received and welcomed Jeremy Smith, the Director of International Advocacy.</p>	
2.	Peer Review of UK Local Democracy	
	<p>Jeremy Smith provided a verbal overview of the report which summarised the planned 2013 Council of Europe (CoE) peer review of local democracy in the UK. In doing so, he explained the background to development of the Council of Europe and its role in assessing the application of the European Charter of Local Self-Government. Drawing on previous work experience, he highlighted a number of articles within the Charter which were of particular interest to local government and some areas which he suggested the UK may wish to focus on. He emphasised the importance of partnership working and agreeing a strategy to inform the LGA's input to the review. Members were invited to consider how the LGA could engage in the process and comment on the recommendation that the LGA commission Jeremy Smith to prepare an evaluation of UK compliance with the Charter, with specific reference to English local government.</p>	
	<p>A detailed discussion arose in which Members made a number of comments, which were responded to by officers, relating to the following issues:</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members welcomed the opportunity the monitoring visit presented to review the relationship between local and central government and promote the localism agenda. In discussing the value of the scrutiny process, it was suggested that the review could be used as a lever for change as well as noting the implications for influencing international perceptions of the UK.• Member discussed the composition of the fact finding delegation and the implications this could have on the direction of the review. It was noted that the non-application of the Charter in Northern Ireland was likely to be one of the key focuses of the review.• In discussing how the LGA could engage in the process, Member emphasised the importance of taking a positive approach. It was suggested that City Regions, City Deals	

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and Community Budgets be highlighted as examples of where devolution is working effectively and used to make the case for further devolution in other areas.

- Members endorsed the proposal to commission Jeremy Smith to prepare an evaluation of UK compliance with the Charter, with specific reference to English local government. In doing so, they suggested that the report include European comparisons.

Decisions

That the Board:

- noted** the intention of the Council of Europe to scrutinise UK compliance with the Charter of Local Self-Government;
- endorsed** preparations to input to the scrutiny process, including commissioning an external evaluation; and
- asked** that their comments be taken into consideration in the progression of this work.

Actions

Take forward in line with Members' recommendations.

**Ian Hughes /
Richard Kitt**

3. EU Funds 2014 - 2020

Dominic Rowels (Advisor) summarised the report which had been requested by Members at their last meeting. He explained the role of the European Investment Bank (EIB) and financial instruments such as Jeremie, Jessica and Eleanor. In doing so, he highlighted the role of the LGA in raising Councils' awareness of new loan products. Ian Hughes (Head of Programme) drew attention to the tabled report which set out the LGA's draft position on delivery options for EU funds which maybe appropriate across England. He noted that at present, there were different lines of thought in the key Government Departments. Members were therefore encouraged to attend government roadshows on future EU funding as means of influencing the debate on future delivery arrangements in England.

A detailed discussion arose in which Members made a number of comments, which were responded to by officers, relating to the following issues:

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- In discussing the varied application and performance of different EIB financial instruments across the country, it was suggested that sharing examples of how these instruments have been used successfully by councils would be useful. It was noted that the performance of projects funded through EIB financial instruments was in part dependent upon the type and management arrangements of the particular loan management scheme.
- A Member drew attention to the role of rural areas in the growth agenda and highlighted the importance that this role in growth promotion was emphasised alongside the more commonly recognised role of urban areas.
- A number of detailed and technical questions were asked regarding different EIB loan schemes. Given the level of interest in this issue, it was suggested that it would be useful to have a more detailed operational overview of EIB loan schemes from a practitioner.

Decisions

That the Board:

- i. **noted** the report; and
- ii. **endorsed** the LGA's draft position on delivery options for EU funds, asking that their comments be taken into consideration.

Action

Arrange for a European Investment Bank loan scheme practitioner to attend a future meeting of the Board.

Dominic Rowles

4. European Commission 2013 Work Programme

The Chair briefly introduced the report which set out the LGA's EU lobbying programme for 2012/13 and invited Members' comments on the policy priorities identified in paragraphs 9 – 11. A report by the Leadership Board, which provided a high level steer on the LGA's priorities business plan priorities for 2013-14, had also been tabled for Members' comments.

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In the discussion that followed, Members made a number of comments, which were responded to by officers, relating to the following issues:

- A question was asked regarding the prioritisation processes and the role of a 'watching brief'.
- Members discussed the importance of raising the profile of the LGA's EU lobbying programme throughout the LGA and ensuring that sufficient resource are available to deliver it effectively.
- It was noted that the 'Working Time Directive Review' was an ongoing priority from the 2012 work programme and would be added to paragraph 10 of the report.

Decisions

That the Board:

- agreed** the policy priorities outlined at paragraphs 9 – 11; and
- asked** that their comments about the shape of the LGA Business Plan for 2013/14 inform the business planning process.

Action

Include the 'Working Time Directive Review' in the list of ongoing priorities from the 2012 programme.

Richard Kitt

To feed the Board's views into the development of the LGA Business Plan for 2013/14.

Ian Hughes

5. Round-up of activity: Board EU lobbying priorities, institutions and international activities

Ian Hughes briefly summarised the report which gave an overview of recent developments on: each of our key priority topics; in the European and international bodies to which the Board nominates members; and the LGA's international activities. He drew particular attention to significant developments in the work stream looking at the role of local authorities in promoting international trade and investment. Following on from a number of activates around trade

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opportunities in Mexico, the LGA was currently in discussions with UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) about expanding this work to explore other international comparisons. This work stream, which would be brought to a future Board meeting for approval, would involve inter-Board collaboration as it cut across the remit of the E&I and Economy and Transport Board.

Members expressed their support for the proposed collaboration with UKTI to further explore role of local authorities in promoting international trade and investment and thanked Cllr Kemp for his work in this area so far. Members highlighted a number of examples from their home authorities where a council's international links had facilitated commercial opportunities.

Decision

That the Board **noted** the report.

7. Notes of the last meeting

The notes of the last meeting were **agreed**.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 7 February 2013 at 11am, Local Government House,
London, SW1P 3HZ

Part 2 – The London Borough of Hackney, growth and social media

9. An informal presentation and discussion session took place after the meeting. Cllr Nicholson provided a presentation and short video exploring the Hackney's recent economic development and how the Borough has sought to maximise the economic potential of the Olympic Games.
10. Dylan Williams (Partner), Matt Hardisty (Joint Head of Strategy) and Aice McGinn (Strategist) from Mother Advertising Limited, an independent advertising agency based in Shoreditch, gave an interactive presentation on the role of social media and mobile technologies as platform for promotion and communication and the wider implications for these tools for community engagement.