

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title:	LG Group Executive
Date and time:	Thursday 19 May, 10.00am
Venue:	The Westminster Suite, Local Government House

Attendance

An attendance list is **attached** as an Appendix A to this note.

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
	Part 1	
1	Report from Local Authority Pension Funds Forum The Executive received a presentation from Cllr Ian Greenwood, Chair of the Local Authority Pension Funds Forum, detailing the Forum's activities over the last year. Cllr Greenwood answered a number of questions from members on topics including <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the steps the Forum was taking to increase membership amongst LGA member authorities.• the potential for the General Power of Competence to be extended to local authorities' decision-making over investment in pension funds.• whether the Forum was sharing best practice on addressing local authorities' pension liabilities. Members thanked Cllr Greenwood for his presentation.	
2	Local Government Resource Review Stephen Jones introduced the report, informing Members that the LG Group had recently issued a consultation to member authorities on the Local Government Resource Review. Responses would be used to shape the Group's response to the Government's consultation. Stephen emphasised that the deadline for submission of responses to the LG Group reflected the government's timescales, but that member councils' views would continue to be included in the submission after the deadline.	

Members said that it was vital that the Group's response fully reflected views from across all member authorities. Officers said that the Group was constitutionally bound to representations being made on behalf of all members.

In response to a concern that the LG Group did not currently have a Board with responsibility for wider local government finance, John Ransford said it would be appropriate to consider this as part of the review of LG Group governance arrangements in the Autumn.

Members broadly supported the principle of greater local financial autonomy and Government proposals to reintroduce the localisation of business rates. However they raised the following issues:

- concern over the speed with which Government had introduced proposals within the Local Government Resource Review
- concern that Government did not fully understand implications for local authorities, particularly in two-tier areas.
- the need for further discussions with businesses and with the Confederation of Business Industry to address any opposition by the business sector to proposals for the relocalisation of business rates.
- the need to recognise in any proposals the economic disparity between and within regions
- the need to ensure that the new model for business rates helps reduce, rather than exacerbate, economic decline.
- that proposals should include means of encouraging incentives across wider geographical areas, and a mechanism to address the future treatment of new burdens.
- that policy emerging from the Review should be comprehensible and workable for local authorities.

Officers thanked Members for their comments, which would be used to help shape the LG Group's response to the Government consultation.

Action

Officers to formulate the LG Group response to the Local Government Resource Review in line with Members' steer.

**Stephen
Jones**

3 Review of LG Group governance – meeting timetable

It was **agreed** to defer this item to the next Executive meeting.

4 Getting Closer

Cllrs Gerald Vernon-Jackson, Robert Light, Gary Porter, Paul Bettison, Mayor Sir Steve Bullock, Ian Greenwood and Stephen Houghton CBE declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in this item.

John Ransford introduced the item, which would be the last report to the Executive under the “Getting Closer” banner. John thanked Members for setting the strategic direction for the Getting Closer process. He expressed particular thanks to those LG Group staff who had worked exceptionally hard to ensure that Getting Closer was delivered against very demanding timescales.

Members thanked all staff across the LG Group for their professionalism throughout what had been a difficult time for them. They stressed the importance now of focussing all our efforts on delivering services for member authorities.

Decision

*The Chairman **agreed** to write on behalf of the Executive to thank all Group staff for their work during the Getting Closer process.*

Action

Officers to arrange for the Chairman’s letter to be sent to all staff

**Claire
Holloway**

5 Local Elections and LGA proportionality

Members **noted** the report, subject to updated figures being circulated following discussion at Leadership Board.

Action

Officers to circulate updated proportionality figures for the LG Group member structures.

Cathy Boyle

6 LG Group proposed budget 2011 / 12

Cllrs Gerald Vernon-Jackson, Robert Light, Gary Porter, Paul Bettison, Mayor Sir Steve Bullock, Ian Greenwood and Stephen Houghton CBE declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in this item.

Cllr Keith Mitchell, Chair of the Resources Panel, introduced the report, which set out the first Group-wide budget. Cllr Mitchell said that a number of issues still needed to be addressed, including risk around staff pensions contributions, and the strategy for Layden House.

In response to Members' queries, officers said that Programme Boards would have the opportunity to consider their allocated budgets in due course.

Decisions

*Members **agreed** the LG Group budget 2011/12 and asked the Resources Panel to review progress towards achieving the planned substantial reduction in the LG Group's fixed overheads .*

Action

Officers to report to the next meeting of the Resources Panel on progress towards reducing fixed overheads.

**Stephen
Jones**

7 General Assembly Annual Meeting: motions

Members received a motion from Centro (West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority) on the issue of the impact of metal theft on local communities.

Decision

*Members **agreed** to receive the motion from Centro at General Assembly, and to prepare their own motion for full debate.*

Action

Officers to draft a motion in consultation with members of the Leadership Board

Jo Miller

8 Note of LGA Leadership Board

Members **noted** the minutes.

9 Note of last LG Group Executive meeting

Members **agreed** the notes of the last meeting.

Part 2 - confidential

10 Freedom of Information consultation – LG Group response

John Ransford introduced the report seeking Members' input into the response to Government consultation on whether the LG Group should be brought under Freedom of Information legislation.

Members made clear that while some specific LG Group functions – for example pay negotiations - would need to remain confidential, the Group be subject to the same Freedom of Information obligations as its member authorities.

The paper and the discussion would now be made public.

Decision

Members endorsed the position as set out in the paper.

Action

Officers to formulate and submit a response to Government.

Jo Miller

Appendix A

Attendance List

Position	Councillor	Council
Chairman	Baroness Eaton DBE	City of Bradford MDC
Vice chair	David Sparks OBE	Dudley MBC
Vice chair	David Shakespeare OBE	Buckinghamshire CC
Vice chair	Richard Kemp	Liverpool City
Vice chair	Keith Ross OBE	West Somerset Council
Deputy chair	Robert Light	Kirklees MBC
Deputy chair	Gerald Vernon-Jackson	Portsmouth City
Deputy chair	Gary Porter	South Holland DC
Deputy chair	Steve Reed	Lambeth LB
Deputy chair	Sharon Taylor	Stevenage BC
Members	Baroness Ritchie	Kensington & Chelsea RB
	Paul Bettison	Bracknell Forest BC
	William Nunn	Breckland Council
	Paul Carter	Kent CC
	Angus Campbell	Dorset CC
	Philip Atkins	Staffordshire CC
	Martin Hill OBE	Lincolnshire CC
	Keith Mitchell CBE	Oxfordshire CC
	Robert Gordon DL	Hertfordshire CC
	Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks DC
	Mayor Sir Steve Bullock	Lewisham LB
	Mehboob Khan	Kirklees MBC
	David Wilcox OBE	Derbyshire CC
	Roger Stone OBE	Rotherham MBC
	Sir Richard Leese CBE	Manchester City
	Stephen Houghton CBE	Barnsley MBC
	Chris White	Hertfordshire CC
	David Rogers OBE	East Sussex CC
	Edward Lord JP	City of London
Substitutes	Simon Henig	Durham CC
	Claire Kober	Haringey LB



Ian Greenwood

Bradford MBC

Apologies

David Parsons CBE

John Davies

Lord Peter Smith

Mayor Jules Pipe

Leicestershire CC

Pembrokeshire BC

Wigan MBC

Hackney LB