

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title:	LGA Leadership Board
Date and time:	13 July 2011
Venue:	Smith Square Rooms 3 & 4, Local Government House 2.30pm

Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chairman	Sir Merrick Cockell	RB of Kensington & Chelsea
Vice chairman	Gary Porter	South Holland DC
Vice chairman	Richard Kemp CBE	Liverpool City
Vice chairman	Marianne Overton	Lincolnshire CC
Deputy chairman	Andrew Lewer	Derbyshire CC
Deputy chairman	Robert Gordon D	Hertfordshire CC
Deputy chairman	Robert Light	Kirklees
Deputy chairman	Sharon Taylor	Stevenage BC
Deputy chairman	Steve Reed	Lambeth LB
Deputy chairman	Gerald Vernon-Jackson	Portsmouth City
Apologies	David Sparks OBE	Dudley MBC

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
------	-----------------------	-----------

Cllr Sir Merrick Cockell, Chairman, **welcomed** the LGA Leadership Board and, in particular, new Office Holders – Councillor Marianne Overton, Vice-Chairman and Leader of the Independent Group (Lincolnshire CC), Cllr Andrew Lewer, Deputy Chairman, (Derbyshire CC) and Cllr Robert Gordon DL, Deputy Chairman, (Hertfordshire CC).

The Chairman informed members that it was Cllr Richard Kemp's last meeting as he would shortly stand down as an LGA Office Holder and Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group. Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson, currently Deputy Chairman of the Association, had been returned unopposed as Leader of the LGA's Liberal Democrat Group and would assume his new role from 1 September 2011.

The Chairman said that he was looking forward to working with the Leadership Board during what he considered to be an exciting time to be in local government. It was an opportunity for the LGA to lead the sector and play a fundamental part in changing the way the country is governed.

Cllr Sharon Taylor, on behalf of the Labour Group, congratulated Sir Merrick and the other new appointees on their new roles. Cllr Taylor commended the former Chairman, Baroness Eaton, on leading the LGA through a very difficult period.

Cllr Taylor raised the issue of gender balance on the Association's member structures and suggested that there was work to do to encourage more female councillors to participate in LGA activities.

The Chairman endorsed the need for a greater gender balance in local government generally, and highlighted the need to ensure that no member is precluded from participation because of their financial circumstances.

Councillor Marianne Overton thanked the Chairman for his encouraging words.

1. Annual Conference 2011

Jo Miller, Deputy Chief Executive, gave headline feedback on this year's Annual Conference in Birmingham (28-30 June 2011). Although delegate numbers were down on last year, they were not significantly lower. Jo informed members that they would shortly need to consider the theme for next year and suggested as an example "Going for Growth" (the role of the public sector and local government).

Roberta Henry, Senior Events Manager added that 305 local authorities had sent delegates (compared with 330 in 2010). General feedback from delegates indicated that they felt it was a useful networking opportunity. A number had indicated that the Wednesday programme was less useful than the Tuesday and Thursday. Roberta Henry thanked the Office Holders in post at the time for their support during the lead up to the Conference.

The Leadership Board were unanimous that this year's Annual Conference had been an exceptionally well organised and highly professional event, and congratulated the Events team.

The Leadership Board made a number of comments on the 2011 Conference, which were noted by officers. Members suggested

themes for the 2012 Conference, around “Localism, just doing it” and suggested that the theme should be broadened to include help to deliver localism, health reforms and the police reform Bill.

The Chairman stressed the importance of Annual Conference and for members to be fully engaged with its planning. He referred to the need for the LGA to have a strategic Forward Plan. He suggested that a member from each of the political groups be nominated to take this work forward, including providing member input into the planning of the Annual Conference.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board

- **noted** feedback from this year’s Annual Conference;
- **agreed** that one nomination from each group be sought to take this work forward.

Action

Officers to take forward in accordance with the Board’s comments.

**Jo Miller
Roberta Henry,
HGOs**

2. LG Group Transition Costs

Stephen Jones, Director of Finance and Resources, introduced this report. He informed the Board that the LG Group and the LGA budgets for 2011/2012 had been approved at the May meetings of the Leadership Board and Executive, when the costs of transition to the new structure were still being assessed. This report provides an update on the anticipated transition costs.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board

- 2.1 **noted** the overall level of transition costs;
- 2.2 **confirmed** that they are content for transition costs for which provision had not already been made to be covered from reserves.

Action

Officers to progress as set out in the report.

Stephen Jones

3. LGA Membership

Claire Holloway, Head of Corporate Governance, introduced a report which updated the Leadership Board on LGA membership and our current membership offer.

Members made some detailed comments on the report which were noted by officers.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board

- **agreed** to have a detailed discussion on membership of the Association in September to steer and shape our future approaches.

Action

Officers to submit a further report on membership for the September meeting of the Board.

**Claire
Holloway**

4. Setting priorities – member governance arrangements

Claire Holloway introduced a report which provided background on the member governance arrangements that came into effect on 1 September 2010, as part of the Getting Closer arrangements. It was intended as a starting point for a broader discussion, prior to those arrangements being reviewed by the LG Group Executive in the autumn.

Members made a number of detailed comments, including:

- the role of the Programme Boards in providing strategic direction on major policy issues in their remit;
- the need for the LGA to have a strategic forward plan
- the need to consider the respective roles and remits of the LGA Leadership Board and LG Group Executive;

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board

4.1 **noted** the report;

4.2 **agreed** to have a full discussion on setting priorities and

governance arrangements at the Board's September meeting

Action

Officers to submit a further report to the Board's September meeting.

**Claire
Holloway**

5. Timing of Meetings in 2011-2012

John Ransford informed members that, based on feedback, this report proposed a new timetable for meetings of the LGA Leadership Board, LG Group Executive and Councillors' Forum from September 2011 to July 2012.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board

5.1 **agreed** the proposed revised timings for LGA Leadership Board, LG Group Executive, Councillors' Forum and Group Meetings

5.2 **noted** the lists of dates for the LGA Leadership Board, LG Group Executive and the Councillors' Forum in 2011-2012.

Action

Officers to put in place the revised arrangements to take effect from September 2011.

Cathy Boyle

6. General Discussion

As this was the first meeting of the new LGA Leadership Board, this item offered an opportunity to raise any other issues not covered elsewhere.

Board members suggested that the Association needed to reconsider its current name as the use of LGA and LG Group was confusing.

Members raised was the need for the LGA to work with local authorities to assist in the delivery of:

- education policy;
- benefit changes;
- health reform;

- planning change

7. LG Group Executive Agenda – 14 July 2011

John Ransford took the Leadership Board through the LG Group Executive agenda for the following day.

Members Allowances

The Chairman informed the Board that Lord Best was unable to attend the Executive meeting to present the Independent Panel report as he would be in the House of Lords. He suggested that the Leadership Board meet Lord Best and the Panel to ensure that the Panel had the comments of the new Leadership team prior to detailed consideration by the Group Executive. This would give those new members on the Board time to understand some of the background issues around members' allowances.

Decision

The LGA Leadership Board

- **agreed** to defer consideration of this report until after the the Board had met the Independent Panel;

Action

Officers to arrange for the Leadership Board to meet Lord Best and the Independent Panel to discuss their report.

**Claire
Holloway**

EU Fines

The Chairman informed the Board that he had met Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, the previous day to discuss EU fines. The Localism Bill would make it possible for Ministers to force councils to pay fines levied by the EU against the UK Government for missing national targets which it agreed to on issues like improving air quality and boosting recycling.

The Secretary of State had agreed to come back to the LGA on this issue. The LGA will work with Earl Attlee, who will discuss the issue with interested bodies next week, on an amendment to the Bill and would report back in due course.

Councillor Richard Kemp added that he and other Liberal Democrat councillors had met Eric Pickles MP and Andrew Stunell MP

recently to press hard on this issue.

The Chairman informed the Board that agreement had been reached with Secretary of State, Eric Pickles, that he would meet the Association's Group Leaders four times a year

Action

Officers to follow up arrangements for the Association's Group Leaders to meet with the Secretary of State four times a year.

**Executive
Office**