

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title: LGA Leadership Board
Date and time: 12 October 2011
Venue: Smith Square Rooms 1 & 2

Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chairman	Sir Merrick Cockell	RB of Kensington & Chelsea
Vice-chairman	David Sparks OBE	Dudley MBC
Vice-chairman	Gary Porter	South Holland DC
Vice-chairman	Gerald Vernon-Jackson	Portsmouth City
Vice chairman	Marianne Overton	Lincolnshire CC
Deputy chairman	Andrew Lewer	Derbyshire CC
Deputy chairman	Robert Gordon DL	Hertfordshire CC
Deputy chairman	Robert Light	Kirklees Council
Deputy chairman	Sharon Taylor	Stevenage BC
Observer	Edward Lord OBE JP	City of London Corporation
Apologies	Steve Reed	Lambeth LB
	Mayor Dorothy Thornhill MBE	Watford BC

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
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1. Community Budgets

Paul Raynes, Head of Programmes (Localism and Finance) introduced a report which asked the Leadership Board to consider and discuss the significant further developments that have taken place regarding community budgets aimed at families with complex needs and the development of “whole-place” community budgets.

Paul Raynes referred to the announcement made by the Prime Minister today that Louise Casey, the Victims’ Commissioner, had been appointed to head the Government’s broad response to the summer riots. Ms Casey is to work as a Director-General in the CLG, where she will lead a new unit overseeing issues raised by the

riots, including problem families. The Unit will report to the Secretary of State to take forward the Government's role in this work.

Paul Raynes outlined a number of risks for local government associated with this work and said that the Group would be engaging with CLG to manage these risks.

Leadership Board Members made a number of comments which were noted by officers.

Decision

*The LGA Leadership Board **agreed** that the Group's approach to the next stages of the community budgets project should be:*

- *to continue to press our model of sector-led programme management for the wider roll-out of community budgets for troubled families, and for a role for the new CLG unit that is consistent with that;*
- *to offer what help and support is most useful to councils involved in developing "whole-place" community budgets, but keep our main focus on pressing for what they develop to be available, within a relatively short timescale, to others in the sector who want it.*

*The LGA Leadership Board also **agreed** the need to provide sufficient council evidence to support the case for community budgets for troubled families.*

Action

Officers to action in accordance with the Leadership Board's decisions.

Paul Raynes

2. Localism Programme

Paul Raynes introduced a report which set out the proposed work of the Localism Programme and sought Members' guidance.

Leadership Board members discussed the issues set out in the report and their comments were noted by officers.

Decision

*The Leadership Board **noted** the report and **confirmed**, subject to their comments, that the scope and aims of the Localism Programme were what they had hoped to see.*

Action

To take forward in accordance with the Leadership Board's discussion.

Paul Raynes

3. LG Group governance arrangements

Claire Holloway, Head of Corporate Governance, introduced a report which built on the discussions of the Leadership Board on 14 September and the Executive on 15 September.

Decisions

*The Leadership Board **agreed***

- *a final amendment to the LGA governance structures diagram, for inclusion in the next report to the Executive;*
- *to recommend to the Executive that from 2012, the chair of the Safer & Stronger Communities Programme Board also chairs the LACORS (LGR) company board;*
- *to commission a review of the respective Terms of Reference, roles and responsibilities of the LGA Leadership Board, Executive and programme boards, taking into consideration the establishment of the Finance Programme Board;*
- *subject to work on the role and responsibilities of the Leadership Board, Executive and Programme Boards, to recommend to the LG Group Executive that a new Finance Programme Board is set up with a remit to lead, oversee and report back on local government finance policy, including the spending review, pre-budget report and budget;*
- *that the Chairman and Group Leaders would meet with representatives of the Fire & Rescue Authorities as soon as possible to discuss the Chairmanship of the Fire Commission and Fire Services Management Committee from 2012;*
- *that the LGA should continue discussions on a potential membership package for Police & Crime Commissioners, based on the models set out in the report.*
- *to establish an LGA New Leaders Forum.*

Action

Office to take forward decisions and prepare further work and a report to the LG Group Executive as required.

**Claire
Holloway**

4. Clive Betts MP – Chairman of the Communities and Local Government Select Committee

Councillor Sir Merrick Cockell, Chairman, welcomed Clive Betts MP, Chairman of the Communities and Local Government Select Committee to the meeting

Clive Betts was interested in finding out potential future areas of work that the Committee could look at, subject to the limits set by time and resources.

Clive Betts explained that the Selected Committee undertook a number of inquiries every year. Recent CLG Select Committees inquiries have included;

- Abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies;
- Audit and Inspection of Local Authorities;
- Regeneration (report to be published in November)
- Localisation issues in welfare reform (report to be published on 13 October)
- Finance of new housing supply

Clive Betts outlined the work that the Committee is doing on welfare reform and localisation issues. He stressed the importance of it being seen that local authorities are at the heart of the localisation of benefits.

On the funding of new housing supply, Clive Betts said that he would welcome any evidence that councils could provide to support the Committee's work on this issue.

Members had a useful discussion with Clive Betts and said that the areas that they would like to see taken on by the Committee, in the coming months included:

- Empty Homes;
- Personal Social Care and the combining of budgets;
- Local Democracy – how to attract people;
- Reform of Housing Revenue Account

Clive Betts explained that health and social care fell within the remit of the Health Select Committee, chaired by Stephen Dorrell MP,

whilst local democracy fell under the Select Committee on Political and Constitution Reform, chaired by Graham Allen MP.

5. Communications report and media monitoring

Decision

John Ransford, Chief Executive introduced this item. John reported that the LGA presence in the press had been intensive over the past few weeks, with 850 media hits. The top three stories were:

- The so-called “death tax”;
- Stockpiling grit and salt
- the LGA’s pension reform proposals

The LGA had also featured on the Radio 4’s “Today” programme (3) and other premium outlets.

John Ransford reported that following recent announcements on weekly bin collections, Right to Buy and the proposed Council Tax freeze, on which the LGA had received no warning, officers were reviewing current protocols and practice to ensure that the LGA was able to respond quickly where appropriate, even where political consensus was difficult to achieve. This work was being undertaken within the framework set by the Leadership Team at their Awayday.

Members discussed the current approach and agreed that they needed a much fuller discussion on what is a critical issue for the LGA.

Decision

*The Leadership Board **agreed***

- *to receive a draft media strategy as the main agenda item at its next meeting, supported by case studies, and proposals for the presentation of the LGA’s press releases;*

Officers to provide a full report to the next Board meeting on an LGA media strategy for discussion and decision. Luke Blair to attend the meeting.

Jo Miller/Luke Blair

6. LG Group Executive agenda for 13 October 2011

John Ransford, Chief Executive, took the Leadership Board through

the LG Group Executive agenda for the following day.

7. Note of the Last Leadership Board meeting

Decision

*The Leadership Board **agreed** the note of the last meeting*