

LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition 2013

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report updates office holders on progress to date on the LGA Annual Conference, taking place in Manchester from 2-4 July 2013.

Recommendation

This report is for information and overview.

Action

Officers to progress in accordance with the Board's discussion.

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LGA annual conference and exhibition ‘the local government event of the year’

Conference programme structure and other information

1. Following on from an extensive review of the format and focus of the annual conference programme, work is now underway for this year’s conference.
2. The conference project group have this year designed the conference planning cycle around the business planning process in order to ensure a good fit with the LGA priorities for the year ahead and to provide good opportunities to share the work of the organisation at an appropriate time. The project group are working towards ensuring a timely, interesting and stimulating conference experience for our members.
3. Delegate numbers are so far at a comparable level to this time last year and so it is clear that this revised timetable has not impacted on the attendance figures or the place of the conference in our members’ awareness.
4. Feedback from Leadership Board, delegates and staff across the organisation showed that there was an appetite to try to streamline and/or theme the event in order to assist delegates in planning their time more effectively at the conference.
5. To this end we have included more focussed streaming of the plenary, sub plenary and workshop sessions around the organisation’s priorities: Independent Local Government, growth and jobs, social care, welfare reform, funding and Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) – and in addition to these priorities, community budgets and sector-led improvement and innovation will feature throughout the week. In particular, following recommendations from Leadership Board in September, we are working to ensure a dedicated improvement ‘offer’ as a key strand of the conference.
6. **The Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP** has confirmed to close the conference and invitations for the other political keynote speakers have been distributed to the **Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP** and the **Rt Hon Nick Clegg MP**.
7. Other keynote plenary speakers invited so far include: **Martine Aubry**, Mayor of Lille; **Lord Heseltine**; **Mark Carney**, incoming Governor of the Bank of England; **Bishop Justin Welby**, incoming Archbishop of Canterbury, on welfare reform and the impact of cuts on communities and the role that faith and community play in shaping local lives; **Angela Rippon**, on Dementia Friendly Communities and successful campaigning to raise awareness. This range of speakers also follows a recommendation of Leadership Board to look to speakers from a wider pool and those who can share the experiences of different sectors.

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8. We do not intend to have a LG Challenge plenary session this year and are in the process of identifying opportunities for the Challenge contestants to take part in a variety of challenges around the venue and as part of the conference.
9. This year's conference and, in particular, the venue allows for more opportunity for delegates to move around the venue and take part in drop-in type sessions or masterclasses without losing the opportunities for networking so appreciated by conference delegates.

Conclusion and next steps

10. The project group will work closely with the Political Group offices to finalise the proposed programme, invite and secure speakers and to work with the Communications teams to identify opportunities to promote member benefits, campaigns and priorities at the conference.