

20 June 2005

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## **Planning for an LGA sustainable communities event in February 2006**

### **Decisions**

1. **Members are asked to suggest a small number of themes that they would like to put forward for the LGA's Sustainable Communities event in February 2006 and to identify any Board products that could be launched at the event.**

### **Actions Required**

2. **Secretariat to take forward suggestions into the event programme and planning activities**

**Action by: Secretariat**

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## **Planning for an LGA sustainable communities event in February 2006**

### **Summary**

- 1. Members may be aware of the recent “Sustainable Communities Summit” hosted by ODPM in Manchester (31 January – 2 February). The LGA had worked very hard behind the scenes to get a good level of representation for local government and for the LGA at the Summit. At an equivalent, ‘urban summit’, event two years ago local government was relatively poorly represented. At this more recent ‘summit’, not only were a high proportion of delegates from local authorities, but we were also very well represented in the series of workshops, master classes and fringe events in addition to taking part in keynote plenary sessions.**
- 2. A suggestion by the LGA that it organises a follow up sustainable communities event jointly with Government next February has been enthusiastically received by Ministers. This represents an excellent opportunity for the LGA to push its key messages, exert pressure on Government Departments to integrate its activities around a shared agenda and showcase local authority good practice. Given the wide remit of the subject all LGA boards are being asked to put forward suggestions for themes and priorities that they would like covered and for products that could be promoted at the event.**

### **Background**

- 3. At its meeting on 24 February, the LGA Executive, with the support of the chairs of the Regeneration and Environment Boards and of the Urban Commission, agreed that the Association should plan to host a major follow-up event to the summit ‘one year on’.**
- 4. The arrangements developed so far are that the event will take place on 13-15 February 2006 at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham. It will aim to attract between 500-1000 delegates from the public, private and voluntary sector and include a mixture of plenary sessions, policy debates and smaller practice-focused workshops.**
- 5. It has also been agreed that such a major event should be cross-LGA, with significant input from each of the Boards as well as from partner organisations. A cross-LGA project team has been established to coordinate the planning of the event. External organisations will be invited to bid to run sessions, including a large number of fringe meetings.**
- 6. The event will provide local government with another major opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to the sustainable communities agenda, to assess**

Government's progress on actions over the preceding twelve months and to showcase local government's continuing achievements. A number of parts of the LGA, including this Board, could aim to time major relevant announcements and project outputs to coincide with the event. The breadth of the concept of 'sustainable communities' means that there will be an excellent opportunity to make strategic connections between key priorities of all the boards.

7. It would be helpful if the Board could agree a small number of themes to put forward as suggestions for sessions at the Sustainable Communities Summit. Officers are working to identify potential products from the work programme which could be launched or promoted at the event. Some suggestions for workshops include:

- **Community Safety** – this session could explore the broad theme of community safety in building sustainable communities. In its post-election briefing to Ministers, the LGA has asked the government to acknowledge the key role played by local government in reducing crime and anti social behaviour. Subject to members agreeing to set up a corporate project on community safety and it's contents (as set out in item 1 at this meeting), the session could focus on this work;
- **Prostitution** – the aim of this session would be to promote the LGA's policy line and ACPO policy; increase understanding of the nature of prostitution and the cost to local authorities of inaction; and allow scope to share good practice and discuss issues/provide advice;
- **Gambling and casinos** - this session would look at the opportunities for regeneration that could be provided by large casino developments, as well as the possible impact on problem gambling of deregulation; and
- **Building Control** – this would focus on the contribution of building regulations to safety and sustainable communities. It will include consideration of Approved Document 'L', which provides guidance on the conservation of fuel and power in dwellings. It could also look at the LGA's longer term work, in partnership with ODPM, to bring forward any necessary changes to the Building Regulations arising from the Secure and Sustainable Buildings Act 2004 as part of the rolling review of the Regulations. However, this session would is dependent on the timing of review.  
However, at the 8 June Board Office holders meeting, members expressed support for a workshop which would focus on how building control can contribute to safe and sustainable environment.

## **Implications for Wales**

8. The event will be of interest to Member authorities in Wales.

## **Financial/Resource Implications**

9. Events management is contained within existing budgets.

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