
Supplement Agenda

Wednesday 20 July 2016

2.00 pm

Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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City Regions Transport Special Interest Group Annual Report

SIG Name:	City Regions Transport Special Interest Group
Lead Member:	Councillor Andrew Fender
Lead Officer:	Jonathan Bray

Aim

The principle aims and objectives of the Group during this period were:

- to provide a forum for lead Councillors from Combined Authority and ITA Transport Committees in metropolitan areas to develop policy and lobbying responses on the full range of transport issues they face; and
- to link with the LGA through its relevant boards on transport and related policy issues.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

The following principal topics have formed the core elements of our work in the past year:

- Developing and articulating the benefits of investing in transport in the city regions.
- Responding to the changing governance environment on transport in the city regions.
- Highlighting the need for investment in additional rolling stock and in key rail infrastructure investment.
- Making the case for further devolution of powers and responsibilities over local rail networks.
- Saving money through collaborative working, joint commissioning and subscriptions.
- Ensuring that reimbursement for concessionary travel is based on fair and accurate information.
- Making the case for a more effective set of powers for the city regions over bus services - up to and including the franchising of bus networks.
- Identifying funding opportunities from Europe and working to ensure that EU policy and regulation supports rather than undermines the work of the SIG.
- Maintaining and developing good relationships with key stakeholders.
- Exploring the potential for combined budgets and vehicle fleets across public transport, healthcare, social services, education sectors.
- reflecting the changing role of CAs on transport to encompass freight and logistics, active travel, transport and air quality, strategic highways.

Coastal Special Interest Group Annual Report

SIG Name:	LGA Coastal SIG
Lead Member:	Cllr Andy Smith
Lead Officer:	Mr Bill Parker

LGA Coastal SIG Mission Statement (<https://lgacoastalsig.com/about/mission-statement/>)

The LGA Coastal SIG will champion and take forward the coastal strategy and represent the collective interests of all maritime local authorities by:

- bringing pressure on the Government to achieve a step change in the level of funding to overcome present and future problems;
- use every opportunity to secure full involvement of local Government at all levels of policy formulation concerning the coast;
- strongly oppose any changes which take responsibility and decision-making powers out of the hands of local democratic leaders.

(ToR agreed 11 December 2007. Available at <https://lgacoastalsig.com/about/terms-of-reference/>)

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

Lobbying Government

Meeting with George Eustice MP, Minister for the Marine Environment, to request continuation of IFCA “New Burdens” funding. This was planned to end in 2016, but has now been agreed to 2020. Through combined work of the SIG and the IFCAs we believe that we influenced this outcome.

In the same meeting Andy Smith (Chairman) raised the issue of inconsistency in applications for Orders for management of specific fisheries (Several Orders), which saw widely varying levels of consultation around the country. The specific site that was in question is now consulting with local partners in a more effective manner. The SIG has also been invited to contribute to drafting of updated processes in this respect.

During 2014 the SIG successfully lobbied Government to give tax relief to businesses who contribute to flood and coastal erosion defences. In 2015 we worked with officials at the Treasury and EA head office to create an Information Note on the new tax relief to assist businesses, now endorsed by the EA. We hope that this will facilitate a significant increase in 3rd party funding to FCERM schemes, and hope to be able to measure money saved or reinvested in the coming years.

The Coastal Concordat (initiated by the SIG in 2013) has had limited affect on partners involved. The SIG Chairman has requested formal status for the Concordat within the planning system, in order to help stream line and speed up applications. We are lobbying DCLG, in concert with colleagues at the MMO.

The SIG are also in current discussions at Board level with the MMO in seeking ways to reduce the burden of the Marine Licensing regime on small scale, particularly voluntary led, estuary management and other projects.

Other work streams

In the past year the SIG has responded to five consultations on behalf of members.

The SIG has collated feedback from the Coastal Communities Teams and shared this with the team at DCLG, who are keen to further this collaboration.

The SIG worked with the National Trust on their re-launch of “Shifting Shores”, to ensure local planning and coast defence issues were properly represented.

[Coastal adaptation and planning guidance](#) has been produced by East Riding of Yorkshire council, endorsed by the SIG and has been well received.

Plans to roll out the national coast path were accelerated by Government last autumn. The path is to be completed by 2020 and the SIG have been keeping communications open with Natural England to learn and assist where possible.

Coastal SIG Field Trip and AGM last year took place with Blackpool Council. Learning included building assets on top of sea defences from which funding can be put back into the asset. [Resumé available on the SIG website.](#)

As part of the SIG’s communication plan to make the SIG the first point of call for coastal authority issues, key messages have been developed.

Co-operative Councils Innovation Network SIG Annual Report

SIG Name:	Co-operative Councils Innovation Network
Lead Member:	Andrew Burns, Leader of Edinburgh Council and Chair of the CCIN
Lead Officer:	Jonathan Downs, Principal Policy Officer

Aim

The Cooperative Councils Innovation Network is a collaboration between local authorities who are committed to finding better ways of working for, and with, local people for the benefit of their local community.

Our work recognises the need to define a new model for local government built on civic leadership, with councils working in equal partnership with local people to shape and strengthen communities.

This means a new role for local authorities that replaces traditional models of top down governance and service delivery with local leadership, genuine co-operation, and a new approach built on the founding traditions of the co-operative movement: collective action, co-operation, empowerment and enterprise. We provide a national voice for cooperative councils, informed by real experience and practice, with the aim of drawing on, influencing and framing national policy and political debates about the future of public services, local democracy, and communities across the country.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

Moving the delivery of the Network in-house

In June 2015 the CCIN Executive Oversight Committee agreed to move the delivery of the network in-house, securing the CCIN's future as a member-driven organisation able to capitalise on the strong foundation that we have built over the last three years. We were delighted at the support we received from our members during this transition, as well as the fantastic suggestions submitted for delivering the network in the future. The EOC also agreed that the CCIN should have four regional representatives, to administer CCIN business at a regional level; provide regional support to members; as well as actively undertaking regional member recruitment.

LGA 2015

In June 2015 the CCIN hosted a fringe event at the annual LGA conference in Harrogate. The event gave attendees the opportunity to hear how a cooperative approach to devolution – built on genuine partnership with citizens – can create economic growth but also reinvigorate local democracy and foster more prosperous and empowered communities. We had a panel of fantastic speakers, including Andrew Burns (Leader of Edinburgh Council and Chair of the CCIN); Carolyn Wilkins (Chief Executive of Oldham Council) and Gareth Swarbrick (Chief Executive of Rochdale Boroughwide Housing). We will be attending the LGA conference again in 2016, so watch this space. Why not come along and join us?

CCIN AGM 2015

The CCIN AGM was held in September at the Rochdale Pioneers Museum (the home of co-operation in Greater Manchester). Steve Reed, honorary president of the CCIN, attended the AGM to speak about the importance of co-operative working and reinforced the important role that CCIN members play in driving forward change across local government, as well as influencing central government thinking and policy. Cllr. Andrew Burns, Leader of Edinburgh City Council, was also re-elected as Chair of the CCIN.

Re-launch of the CCIN Values and Principles Board

This year we have re-launched the CCIN's Values & Principles Board, which now has responsibility for maintaining the coherence of the Networks work programme, as well as ensuring the Network's approach is consistent with its co-operative values and principles. The Board has continued to build and promote co-operative good practice by collating and co-ordinating evidence submissions to parliamentary committees and international summits such as the climate change summit in Paris.

The Board has also been busy developing, maintaining and building links with the wider co-operative movement, including the Co-operative Party and Co-operative College. The board has also attended various events, sharing the CCIN's expertise and knowledge, as well as showcasing some of our members fantastic work.

CCIN Officer Network Workshops

Over the last twelve months we have held a series of Officer Network Workshops, focused on helping officers think about how co-operative principles can influence service delivery across local government, from co-operative approaches to energy to delivering good local economic growth.

Launch of the CCIN Policy Labs and Policy Prototypes

In January 2016 we launched two co-operative funding opportunities: CCIN Policy Labs and CCIN Policy Prototypes. Policy Labs are bigger collaborative pieces of work that CCIN members will work on together, while Policy Prototypes are smaller projects that you may want to deliver in your locality on behalf of the network.

The CCIN work programme for the next twelve months will be member-led and owned by putting you, our network members, firmly in the driving seat. We are inviting you to propose work areas that you want the CCIN to focus on over the next 12 months. This could be anything from co-operative housing commissions to initiatives that put communities back at the heart of local decision making. We are open to all ideas, the more innovative the better!

County Councils Network Annual Report to LGA Leadership Board

SIG Name:	County Councils Network
Lead Member:	Cllr Paul Carter - CCN Chairman
Lead Officer:	Simon Edwards - Director CCN

Aim

Overview

The CCN Business Plan 2015/16 set out the vision, aims and objectives of the organisation and policy priorities

Vision

To ensure CCN is an influential and respected network, advocating innovative policy solutions on the challenges facing local government and the wider public sector.

Aim

Ensure Counties have the powers and resources to meet the needs and aspirations of their residents on issues of particular importance to our councils and their communities.

CCN Core Functions

The 2015/16 business plan set out the 'core business' and activity that CCN delivers on behalf of our member councils as a special interest group (SIG) of the LGA, including;

National Advocacy & Representation

Our network acts as the informed and representative voice for County Councils and Unitary Counties in England. We represent and advocate on behalf our members within the LGA; make direct representations to Whitehall departments; and collaborate closely with national stakeholders.

Research & Policy Development

Combining our national level expertise and our members' frontline policy experience we produce and commission sector-based, forward thinking, research on behalf of our members and the wider public sector to provide innovative policy solutions to key challenges facing our residents.

Sharing & Promoting Best Practice

Through various platforms, including an Annual Conference, workshops, seminars, publications, research and reports we identify and share best practice across our network to enable our members, and wider public sector, to tackle the economic and social problems faced by local communities.

National Collaboration and Commissioning

The CCN works with a wide network of industry stakeholders. This includes the LGA, ACCE, SCT, ADASS, DCN and Professional Associations, as well as think-tanks, private and public sector local government partners. We seek to commission work to support our research,

policy and advocacy to supplement key skills of the CCN team.

Communications & Public Affairs

CCN acts to raise the profile of the network and represent County and County Unitary Councils in the broadcast, online and print media; articulating members’ views, showcasing best practice, neutralising general threats to our members’ reputation. CCN seeks to influence national stakeholders through a comprehensive public affairs strategy -engaging civil servants, Ministers and other key influencers.

CCN’s 2016/17 business plan will be approved by CCN Executive in July 2016.

Political Leadership

Each Council in CCN membership nominates four elected members to serve on the **CCN Council**, and each member council has a guaranteed place on the **CCN Executive Committee**. Top up places are used to ensure proportionality on both CCN Council and Executive Committees.

The CCN Council AGM elects the **CCN Management Committee** which comprises the Chairman and a Vice Chairman from each of the political groups. The members of the CCN Management Committee elected at the AGM September 2014 are:

- **Chairman**
 Cllr Paul Carter (Kent County Council)
- **Vice Chairmen**
 Cllr Mark Hawthorne (Gloucestershire County Council),
 Cllr David Borrow (Lancashire County Council),
 Cllr Ross Henley (Somerset County Council)

CCN also has eight Spokesmen who have been appointed to lead on specific issues in relation to the CCN work programme.

CCN Officer Team

The work of the network is supported by a small core team based in Local Government House in Westminster.

Positions as of May 2016:

Director	Simon Edwards
Head of Policy & Communications	James Maker
Senior Policy Officer	Elizabeth Hunter-Gray
Senior Policy Officer	Michael Chard
Media & Communications Officer	Ian Burbidge
Policy Officer (starting 13th June)	Victoria Moloney
Business Support Officer	Sara Brouillette

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

CCN has undertaken or commissioned a wide-range of proactive work to raise the profile of county and county unitary authorities, with a particular focus on economic growth, devolution, governance, health and social care, and public service reform. The main

documents for this work include:

- **CCN:** *Our Plan for Government 2015-20*
- **CCN:** *Our Plan for Government 2015-20: County Devolution Reports*
- **CCN & LGiU:** *The State of Care in Counties: The integration imperative*
- **CCN & LaingBuisson:** *County Care Markets: Care Market Sustainability & the Care Act*
- **CCN:** *Spending Review Submission*
- **CCN & IPPR:** *Empowering Counties, Unlocking County Devolution Deals*
- **CCN & LG Futures:** *Health & Social Care in Counties: Funding, Demand & Cost Pressures*

A key focus of our work has been to influence Government in the design and implementation of policy around health and social care, devolution, governance and funding. CCN's policy development and campaigning has had considerable impact across Government.

The most vivid illustration of the success of CCN was working with partner organisations and MPs to secure substantial changes to this year's local government settlement. CCN's evidence-based approach to influencing MPs, DCLG Ministers and the Treasury helped secure an additional £292m of transitional funding for CCN member councils over the next two years. In addition, CCN's core recommendation for a needs-based funding review has been adopted. DCLG specifically cited CCN's recommendations when announcing the transitional funding and needs-based review.¹

On devolution, our advocacy has changed the narrative of government policy and raised the profile of county devolution. A recent paper published by the House of Commons library explicitly credits CCN above other stakeholders with helping to broaden the narrative beyond city areas.² County Deals are now progressing across the country.

On health and social care, CCN's ground-breaking LaingBuisson study was highly influential in the decision to delay part two of the Care Act and has focused attention on the funding crisis facing the residential and nursing care home sector in England.

2016/17 Policy, Communications & Public Affairs Strategy

In March 2016 CCN Council agreed a new policy, communications and public affairs strategy which included proposals to significantly increase CCN's policy, research and public affairs capacity to better represent member councils, respond to the emerging challenges and opportunities and influence Government policy.

CCN Work Programme 2016/17

Over the coming period, the organisation will dedicate increased resources to expand its existing portfolio of policy and development and research across the six priority areas (see CCN Business Plan). This will ensure that CCN is able to both respond to national policy developments and significantly upscale our internal research and data analysis capacity. Over the coming period CCN will also expand our internal and external communications, increase public affairs and Parliamentary activity and increase our commissioning budget.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/greg-clark-confirms-historic-4-year-settlement-for-local-government>.

²

As part of the work-programme CCN have identified three core areas in response to the national developments where the additional resource of the commissioning budget will be initially focused: Needs-Based Funding Review; Business Rates Retention; and Future of Public Services in Counties (County Devolution, Governance & Public Service Reform).

CCN Management Committee believe that with enhanced resources CCN will be able to deliver more effective research, policy, support and advocacy for member councils in an efficient and cost effective manner.

Councils with ALMOs Group Annual Report

SIG Name:	Councils with ALMOs Group
Lead Member:	Manchester City Council
Lead Officer:	Kenny Aitchison (CWAG Chair)

Aim

CWAG is the representative body of stock owning authorities where the housing stock is managed by Arm's Length Management Organisations (ALMOs).

The Group aims to provide an effective link between member authorities and government departments, and others with a national policy and operational remit affecting councils with ALMOs.

CWAG aims to have an active role in influencing the national policy agenda, particularly in respect of ALMOs.

As a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association (LGA), CWAG is keen to work with the LGA to inform and influence policy activity on housing so it reflects the needs and concerns of Councils with ALMOs.

CWAG aims to develop positive partnerships with ALMOs and the National Federation of ALMOs to ensure best outcome for tenants / leaseholders.

The Group is also a forum for member authorities, providing mutual support, facilitating the exchange of ideas and sharing best practice between members.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

During the past year the CWAG work programme has focussed on the following areas:

Responding to the National Policy Agenda

The past 12 months have witnessed a significant shift in housing policy with far reaching implications for the future of council housing. CWAG continues to work with the Local Government Association (LGA), Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH) and the National Federation of ALMOs (NFA) to share information and co-ordinate policy responses.

Examples

- There are regular 'catch up' meetings with LGA Policy Advisers, ARCH and the NFA.
- Joint ARCH / CWAG survey (June 2015) to gather an initial assessment of the implications of the compulsory sale of high value council housing.
- CWAG consultation response on 'Pay to Stay'
- Providing feedback to Professor Ian Cole to inform his paper for the CLG Select Committee covering the impact, on ALMOs and local authorities, of extending the RTB to housing associations and other measures in the Summer Budget.

General Meetings and Workshops

CWAG continues to offer a programme of General Meetings and workshops. Topics are identified from member feedback and the programme during the past 12 months has included briefings on housing policy changes as well as a range of topics relating to ALMO structures and activities.

Topics covered in the last 12 months

- Workshop for CWAG members with TMOs – April 2015
- LGA Policy briefing on the implications of the Summer Budget - Caroline Green - June 2015
- ALMOs as Registered Providers – Roger Jarman – Associate HQN
- Housing Policy Overview by Professor Ian Cole – Sheffield Hallam University – Sept 2015
- Challenges of Diversification - Jon Slade – Campbell Tickell
- Business Planning Workshop -Jeremy Cookson and Keith Finch - Capita – December 2105
- Policy Briefing – Housing and Planning Bill and Welfare Reform and Work Bill – Nick Porter - March 2016
- Legal Issues arising from the Housing and Planning Bill and the Welfare Reform and Work Bill - Catherine Hand - Senior Partner Trowers and Hamlins - March 2016
- Joint CWAG /NFA Benchmarking Workshop – March 2016
- The Devolution Agenda including case study from Greater Manchester – March 2015

Member Services

CWAG continues to provide practical support and opportunities for members to network, exchange information and share expertise.

Examples

- The CWAG website (<http://www.councilswithalmo.org.uk>) includes a 'members' area with noticeboard, discussion forum, document library and topic areas for sharing information and good practice.
- Specialist workshops provide an opportunity for local authority officers to discuss key issues and concerns with sector experts and peers.

Looking Forward

CWAG will continue to represent the interests of councils with ALMOs, working through the established partnership with the LGA. The immediate priority is to work with members, the LGA and other partners to highlight the implications and unintended consequences of current housing policy.

District Councils Network Annual Report

SIG Name:	District Councils' Network
Lead Member:	Cllr Neil Clarke, Leader, Rushcliffe Borough Council
Lead Officer:	Sandra Dinneen, Chief Executive, South Norfolk Council

Aim

The aim of the District Councils' Network is to be the national voice of District Councils, working with our authorities, partners and government to deliver national growth and prosperity and services at a scale that make sense to local communities.

The DCN strives to support the development of innovative and collaborative solutions for people and places. We do this through:

- Collaboration and Networking
- Influencing national policy
- Commissioning evidence based research and developing new ways of working with our member organisations and partners
- Using our connections to our communities to give real-life, real-time perspectives

The DCN has four priority areas:

- Driving national growth and prosperity - making sure Districts are best placed and incentivised to drive national productivity through business and housing growth
- Devolution and public sector reform - Putting Districts at the heart of devolution and the transformation of public sector delivery, delivering those services that matter to residents the most.
- Improving the health and wellbeing of our communities - ensuring Districts have a key role in the integration of health and social care and delivering preventative services.
- Resourcing a new local government sector- Transforming local government finance to support local decision making, enhanced self-sufficiency and freedoms, flexibilities to generate new income streams, and providing incentives for growth.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

In the last year the DCN has grown in strength and influence, highlighting the vital social and economic contribution that district councils make at local level to the nation's prosperity. We could not have achieved this without the support of all of our 201 district council members who make up the DCN. Highlights for the DCN for the past year include:

Research:

King's Fund Report identifies District Councils as the 'sleeping giants' of public health and social care- We published a timely and warmly-welcomed report commissioned from renowned health think-tank **The King's Fund** exploring the role of districts in driving both public health and health and social care integration. As a result of the report, the DCN is establishing a Taskforce with organisational leaders from the health and social care sector, to implement the key recommendations. You can [click here](#) to view the report and the infographics summary can be found [here](#).

Inlogov Report 'Building better collaboration' published- We published a [research paper](#) from local government experts at the University of Birmingham's INLOGOV centre on new ways of working to highlight effective collaborative working at a district level and outline the leading role that District Councils should play in devolution.

Influencing National Policy:

Local Plans Expert Group The DCN has been commended for its work on simplifying local plans by the Local Plans Expert Group, which has taken on many of the network's recommendations and whose [findings](#) were published in March.

The DCN takes a pro-active role in influencing national policy to ensure that District Councils can continue to deliver national growth and prosperity and services at a scale that make sense to local communities. We have...

Provided formal evidence to;

- Commons Select Committee on Business Rates
- Commons Select Committee on Housing
- LGA Housing Commission
- The APPG on Decentralisation and Devolution
- CIL Panel

Provided responses to key Government Consultations including:

- New Homes Bonus reforms
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Business Rates appeals procedures
- Electoral Fraud
- Community Infrastructure Levy
- Apprenticeships
- Sunday Trading

Worked with government ministers and civil servants on issues including:

- Removing negative RSG
- Additional freedoms to increase council tax by 2% or £5 for all districts
- Planning reform
- Business rates reform and retention
- New Homes Bonus
- Changes to Local Land Charge Functions
- Fees and Charges

Our service to our Members:

The DCN has increased its regular communications and hosted a number of events for our members including:

- Monthly newsletters for our Members
- New policy briefings
- Four National Assembly Conferences (with speakers including Communities Secretary Greg Clark, Northern Powerhouse Minister James Wharton and Shadow ministers)
- Regular DCN Member Board Meetings for our regional Member Leads
- Regular DCN Chief Executive Group Meeting for our regional Chief Executive Leads
- Regular Twitter/Facebook updates

Staff Development Programme

We have again this year delivered our Staff Development Programme for 60 ambitious district council officers at the start of their local government careers. The four national conferences help equip participants with the knowledge and skills they need in order to seize opportunities in an evolving local government landscape. We will be launching the next cohort of the DCN Staff Development Programme over the next couple of months.

The DCN's work programme for 2016/17 can be found by following this link:
<http://districtcouncils.info/files/2016/04/DCN-Work-Programme-2016-17.docx>

F40 Group Annual Report

SIG Name:	f40
Lead Member:	Leicestershire
Lead Officer:	Doug Allan, Secretary

Aim

To organise an all-party campaign for fairer funding for schools in the worst funded authorities in England.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

f40's central aim is to influence a significant change in the way the government allocates funding to local authorities and schools. The allocations for primary and secondary pupils in the authorities in the f40 group are among the lowest in the country.

Minor adjustments to the formula have failed to address the fundamental problems inherent in the antiquated and dysfunctional system. Whilst f40 has welcomed some additional resources allocated to education in recent years, this has not dealt with the core unfairness associated with per pupil funding. The reality is that despite certain changes to the funding system, the gap between the 'haves' and 'have nots' has widened.

This can clearly be demonstrated in league tables showing the funding of all authorities in England, which show how disadvantaged the poorest funded authorities are compared with those who are better funded.

f40 has always maintained that it wants to see a system which recognises the needs of all LAs whether they are in urban, rural or London locations.

As highlighted in earlier reports to the LGA, the enormously costly Pupil Premium, introduced in April 2011, has not created the shift in allocations of funding required to fundamentally change the position of the poorest funded authorities and schools. There continues to be inequity and unfairness in the system.

The former government (dissolved in early April 2015) recognised that a new, fairer and more transparent school funding system is needed. This was clearly spelled out in various key reports and announcements, but regrettably action to introduce a new national funding formula was delayed until after the May 2015 election. We welcomed an interim allocation of £390million for 2015-16 shared between authorities identified as being among the poorest funded. Of this amount, £210million was allocated to f40 authorities. However, f40 expressed concern that the allocation of the extra cash was based on the use of inappropriate data and we argued that different calculations could and should have been used. The extra cash has now been baselined into the schools budget, which is very welcome.

We have worked closely with the Department for Education on proposals for a new formula. f40's Finance Managers Research Team, made up of finance experts from member authorities, has developed a set of proposals for a new national funding formula and these have been presented to the DfE. MPs representing f40 constituencies have been very supportive and we have worked harder than ever to develop our campaign through links with the LGA, CCN, individual local authorities, schools, governors, schools forums and education professional organisations including the NAHT, ASCL and NGA.

We have maintained our media relations at both national and regional levels. There has been extensive coverage of our activities on television and in the press.

In the Spring of 2016 the government launched the first part of a two-stage consultation on school funding. This element was essentially concerned with the principles of a new national funding formula. f40, along with local authorities and schools across the country, submitted a detailed response. It is anticipated that Stage 2, which will deal with specific financial considerations, will be launched before the end of May 2016.

Key Cities Special Interest Group Annual Report to LGA Leadership Board

SIG Name:	Key Cities Group
Lead Member:	Cllr Paul Watson, Sunderland City Council
Lead Officer:	Jill Laverick, Sunderland City Council

Aim

The purpose of Key Cities is to provide focus, collaboration of learning and a unified voice to ensure that those cities within the group are more visible and consistently represented in economic policy-making at a national level in order to help create vibrant cities which can compete across Europe and the globe for business and growth.

To achieve these ambitions Key Cities will:

1. **Influence:** Set a new cities agenda that focuses on local economic growth and adapting policies to local needs;
2. **Impact:** Provide its members with a stronger lobbying voice to influence national and local policy, with a focus on early and tangible 'wins'; and
3. **Innovate:** Provide a platform to share knowledge, exchange best practice and develop new thinking in order to influence both local and national policy.

The key roles of Key Cities will be:

- To tackle common issues and provide a single voice;
- To lobby Government on issues of importance to the cities;
- To influence key national and international strategies;
- To raise the profile of the cities with businesses and investors;
- To commit to working across local administrative boundaries to develop and share knowledge, ideas, and information;
- To recognise the diversity of the group and ensure the strengths of individual cities are maximised

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

Power, People and Places: a manifesto for devolution to Britain's Key Cities, May 2015

Launched just ahead of the General Election, this joint report with Respublica was intended as an interim ahead of the full report due in the Autumn but caught the attention of the national media including Radio 4's Today programme. The report argued that local control of taxes ranging from VAT to stamp duty and council tax combined with five year funding settlements over a range of policy areas including transport, housing and skills, would save the Government £2.5 billion every year. Key statistics from the report included:

- With a combined GVA of £163 billion and a population of 7.9 million, the Key Cities make up 11% of the UK economy.
- In terms of GVA Key Cities are growing at a faster rate than larger cities with almost

half of all Key Cities performing above the national average.

- Key Cities are also performing better than larger cities across a range of other indicators with generally higher skills levels and lower unemployment.
- Key Cities public expenditure is £7,310 per person which is below the average (£8,535) in England and Wales. However tax revenues per person are at £6,428 compared to the national average of £7,739 in England and Wales.
- In 2012/13 total public expenditure in Key Cities exceeded revenues by £7 billion or 12.2%. This is greater than the gap between tax and spend in England and Wales as a whole, where in the same year expenditure exceeded revenue by over £43 billion or 9.3%.
- Overall, nine out of the 26 Key Cities generate tax revenues greater than the total amount of public sector expenditure within their area.
- Savings from public service integration could reduce Key Cities' borrowing requirements, cutting their annual 'budget deficit' from £7 billion to between £3.5 billion and £5.2 billion.
- Assuming that half of these savings are reinvested in local initiatives, economic growth in Key Cities could be boosted by nearly one percentage point (worth approximately £1.7 billion) per year.

<http://www.keycities.co.uk/key-cities-launches-blueprint-city-devolution>

Key Cities Review, June 2015

Produced for the Group's inaugural AGM, the Review provides a timeline of key milestones from the Group's inception to April 2015.

<http://www.keycities.co.uk/sites/default/files/publications/oce20498%20Key%20Cities%20Review%202013%20to%20Present%20840x420mm.pdf>

The Missing Multipliers: Devolution to Britain's Mid-sized Cities, October 2015

The full report in partnership with ResPublica was released at an event hosted by Greg Clark MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, at the 2015 Conservative Party Conference. It built upon the interim version with more specific asks of Government, including some which were offered as amendments to the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill:

- Flexibility for devolution on varying scales and footprints but should not link quanta of devolution to the size of recipient.
- Freedom for Local Authorities to work on a wider economic footprint where applicable but for other services (schools, children's services, health and social care) powers could be devolved to a city or neighbourhood level. Double devolution.
- Allow cities the facility to fashion alternative governance models not currently on the statute books.
- Creation of an independent devolutionary body such as a Devolution Agency to agree a funding settlement with cities and provide a joint framework between cities and central government departments.

http://www.keycities.co.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Devolution%20to%20Britain%27s%20Key%20Cities_0.pdf

Local Authority Pension Fund Forum Annual Report

SIG Name:	Local Authority Pension Fund Forum
Lead Member:	LAPFF Executive Committee
Lead Officer:	Councillor Kieran Quinn, LAPFF chair

LAPFF's last financial year ran from April 2015 to March 2016, and this will be the reporting period considered in this document.

Aim

The Local Authority Pension Fund Forum (LAPFF) is the UK's leading collaborative shareholder engagement group. Formed in 1990, LAPFF brings together 70 local authority pension funds from across the UK with combined assets of over £175 billion, representing a majority of funds under management by local authorities.

LAPFF exists to promote the investment interests of local authority pension funds in the UK, and to maximise their influence as shareholders to promote corporate social responsibility and high standards of corporate governance amongst the companies in which they invest.

The Forum meets quarterly to discuss and debate a broad range of investment issues concerned with shareholder responsibilities and engagement activities. During the year, the Forum discusses papers on a wide range of topics. Agendas are constructed by members of the Forum themselves, and meetings are serviced by PIRC Limited, as the appointed research and engagement partner to the Forum. Keith Bray, formerly County Treasurer at South Glamorgan County Council and Director of Finance at the City of Cardiff Council, is the Forum officer with the role of promoting the work of LAPFF generally and amongst existing and prospective members.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

LAPFF provides a unique opportunity for discussion of investment issues and shareholder engagement by Britain's local authority pension funds. Local authority pension fund investment policies have important implications for their beneficiaries, local communities, council tax payers and the wider economy. The powerful influence gained by such funds acting together on issues of common concern has considerable potential in relation to the companies in which they invest.

- During the year under review, LAPFF has participated in over one hundred company engagements. This has included sending at least 480 letters to companies and attending over 20 meetings. This engagement has taken place across nine domiciles, and has included four consultation responses. LAPFF also actively engaged in the 2015 AGM season, issuing nine voting alerts across five domiciles. These alerts primarily related to carbon risk reporting and employment standards. LAPFF's work has also been covered by a wide variety of different UK and global media outlets during the past year.

- To develop LAPFF's engagement on IFRS accounting standards further, the Forum commissioned Mr Bompas QC's second legal opinion on the meaning of 'true and fair value' in accounts. This opinion supported LAPFF's strategy of pursuing defective accounts and maintaining its challenge to aspects of international reporting standards. Following this opinion, LAPFF wrote to each of the FTSE350 companies asking them to disregard guidance and statements from the Financial Reporting Council, in order to meet their legal obligations. LAPFF's findings and views were summarised in a paper published in December, 'Sorry, Wrong Number', which received widespread press coverage.
- LAPFF continued to strengthen its engagement on carbon risk, participating in nine company meetings, attending seven AGMs and sending 12 letters on the issue. In particular, LAPFF, as part of the 'Aiming for A Investor Coalition', was heavily involved in the filing of two strategic resilience resolutions at BP and Shell. Over a dozen LAPFF funds co-filed these resolutions, which were supported by the company boards and were voted in by 98% of voting shareholders. More recently, LAPFF has engaged with Rio Tinto, Glencore and Anglo American on similar issues.
- LAPFF has also developed a new area of engagement, on corporate tax transparency. The Forum sent a survey to all FTSE100 companies and is using their responses to define its engagement strategy on this topical issue over the coming year.
- Continuing engagement on board diversity issues included a member of the LAPFF executive committee participating in an Equality and Human Rights Commission Inquiry roundtable into the recruitment and appointment of board directors. LAPFF maintained its involvement with the 30% Club Investor Group, which submitted a response to the Government Equalities Office consultation 'Closing the Gender Pay Gap'. Employment standards and human rights have also been addressed more broadly, particularly in relation to the living wage and labour conditions in Qatar and in the UK at Sports Direct plc.
- LAPFF has also taken a prominent role in facilitating discussions on the proposed reforms to the LGPS. The Forum has facilitated two seminars on this issue, as well as considering the issue further at the Forum's annual conference in December, and submitting a consultation response to the Department for Communities and Local Governments in February 2016. Several members of the LAPFF Executive are members of the LGPS Scheme Advisory Board.
- Growing support for LAPFF's work has been evidenced by membership of six additional funds over the last year, raising the total membership from 64 to 70 funds.
- A copy of LAPFF's annual report is attached providing more information on the range of Forum activities and outcomes in the period October 2014 to September 2015.

National Association of British Market Authorities Annual Report

SIG Name:	National Association of British Market Authorities
Lead Member:	Councillor Mick Barker, Derby City Council - President
Lead Officer:	Graham Wilson OBE

Aim

NABMA is an unincorporated association and is governed by a Constitution which provides a framework for how the organisation is managed and operated.

For over nearly 100 years NABMA has served the interests of its members and in recent years it has increased its profile, particularly on the national stage by working with Government to secure recognition for markets in a number of major policy areas. At the same time, we provide a wide portfolio of membership services.

NABMA has worked hard to improve the quality of member services and our priority is to raise the standards in markets management

While working on the national stage, NABMA also cooperates with other organisations which play an important role in securing the future of markets.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

2015 has been NABMA's most successful year with a number of records broken. Membership is at its highest ever level; attendances at our One-Day Conference and Annual Conference surpassed previous totals; entries for the Great British Market Awards exceeded expectations and we have continued to promote markets nationally and internationally.

During 2015 we invested significantly in improving the range of member services.

The 2015 DMA Programme of specialist markets training courses has been another great success. 22 Diplomas were presented to the largest number of candidates who have entered – and passed – the four assignments required to gain the professional markets qualification which has become the industry standard for all those associated with markets management.

We started 2015 with probably the most ambitious project that we have undertaken in many years. Mission for Markets was a partnership project with the National Market Traders Federation (NMTF). Not only has Mission for Markets provided the most comprehensive assessment of the state of the markets industry but it has also provided lots of good practice examples of how markets can move forward.

2015 saw another successful year for Love Your Local Market when we not only broke the 1000 mark - but the campaign was also celebrated in 16 countries across the world.

The focus of both our Conferences in 2015 was Mission for Markets .The One-Day Conference at Birmingham, in January, was a “sell-out” and the September Annual Conference at Harrogate attracted a record number of delegates.

One of our main objectives is to promote markets on the national stage. As part of Mission for Markets we published a markets manifesto highlighting a number of areas that we would seek to campaign on. These include business rates, European legislation, public liability, and simplifying procedures for holding markets in town centres. In order to pursue our agenda with Government and also to keep markets at the forefront of national politicians, we continue to support the All Party Parliamentary Markets Group and also the Government’s Retail Market Forum. NABMA is also represented on the Future High Street Forum and we continue to work closely with the Association of Town & City Management and more recently Revive and Thrive.

The success of 2015 could not have been achieved without the support of so many people both through the NABMA team and the Elected Members who serve as members of the Presidency and Officers of the Association. Thanks are also due to Oswestry Town Council for the wonderful support they provide in delivering the Service Level Agreement. NABMA is fortunate to have a large number of sponsors who contribute in so many ways to the running of the organisation. While sponsors make a significant financial contribution, they also help in so many other ways providing services to our members and help, information and advice.

Without doubt 2015 was an excellent year for NABMA. We now look towards our centenary with pride and the wide spread recognition from government and many partners of the importance of markets and their economic and community impact on the everyday life of our town and city centres.

New Nuclear Local Authorities Group Annual Report

SIG Name:	New Nuclear Local Authorities Group (NNLAG)
Lead Member:	<p>To 5.3.16 Cllr David Hall – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Business, Inward Investment and Policy – Somerset County Council</p> <p>From 5.3.16 Cllr Geoff Holdcroft - Deputy Leader – Suffolk Coastal District Council</p>
Lead Officer:	<p>To 31.3.16 Carrie Blogg - Service Manager, Major Programmes, Somerset County Council</p> <p>From 1.4.16 Katherine Potts - Project Manager – Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, Suffolk County Council</p>

Aim

NNLAG's primary aim is to share knowledge, information and best practice regarding new nuclear, and to provide a mechanism for local authorities, as elected representatives of local areas, to discuss and make representations direct to Government regarding the development of new nuclear and of nuclear-related connection/transmission projects.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

1. Establishment and ratification of new Terms of Reference. Key features of this include:
 - Formalisation of governance arrangements confirming that NNLAG operates on an informal non-executive basis and that it is chaired by a senior councillor of a member authority, who is elected at an annual conference, and who will ordinarily serve an office of two years. Cllr Geoff Holdcroft from Suffolk Coastal DC was elected as NNLAG's new Chair at NNLAG's 2016 Spring Conference.
 - Formalisation of meeting/working arrangements to comprise an annual conference open to the full NNLAG membership (i.e. members and officers), and the establishment of a smaller officer group (1-2 officers per authority), which meets in between the conference to take forward priorities and actions agreed at the annual conference, to share knowledge and to look at opportunities to share resources/expertise, and to debate and seek common resolution to other issues that emerge in between.
 - Formalisation of NNLAG coordination arrangements, which will from now on usually rotate with the Chair. Suffolk County Council has taken over coordination of NNLAG from Somerset County Council with effect from 1 April 2016.
 - An annual fee will now be charged to member authorities by the coordinating authority towards its costs of organising and administering the group and its meetings, undertaking any follow-up actions, and maintaining associated online resources. The fee level is set annually at the Spring conference. The fee for 2015/16 was £400.

2. Workstreams and workstream leads established:
 - Community Benefit – Sedgemoor
 - Resourcing – Taunton & West Somerset
 - Infrastructure – Suffolk
 - Economic Development – Somerset
 - Energy/nuclear – Suffolk
 - GDA/regulatory – South Gloucestershire
3. Areas of common interest/concern mapped and associated lobbying action undertaken with central Government (e.g. regarding ERDF funding changes and Community Benefit).
4. Information/intelligence sharing regarding specific issues (e.g. consultant frameworks).
5. Increased collaboration/networking between individual member authorities to liaise on/share experiences of specific issues (e.g. tourism).
6. Stronger links made with DECC's Office for Nuclear Development, which has helped to affirm to central Government NNLAG's role as the principal local authority forum nationally to connect with in respect of the development of new nuclear.
7. Scope of the group's interests expanded to include the wider economic issues associated with the construction and operation of new nuclear builds and the issues associated with the connections required to transmit the power generated from a new nuclear power station to the National Grid.
8. Review and reinvigoration of the group's online presence on Khub (formerly Knowledge Hub) to support better and easier information and knowledge sharing. Membership increased from 29 to 41.
9. Membership of NNLAG increased from 13 to 15 authorities.

Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum Annual Report

SIG Name:	NuLeAF
Lead Member:	Chairman (until 7 June 2016) - Cllr Richard Smith, MVO, Suffolk County Council
Lead Officer:	Executive Director – Philip Matthews

Aim

NuLeAF's **Aims** are set out in the **Terms of Reference** document.

“The Aims are:

- to seek to ensure that all nuclear, waste management and decommissioning activities operate to the highest safety, security and environmental standards
- to raise the profile of debate within local government on any issue with very significant implications for any area affected by future proposed radioactive waste development
- to increase and aid ‘capacity building’ within local government and enable informed responses to Government and the NDA from a broader based local government grouping
- to be an interface with government and the NDA on future strategic radioactive waste policy, decommissioning and liabilities management issues
- to confer greater democratic legitimacy on Government and NDA engagement processes in the decommissioning and legacy management sphere
- to add weight and credibility to the current local government input into the radioactive waste, decommissioning and liabilities engagement processes now in hand
- to effectively utilise the democratic legitimacy of local government and increase influence over policy and strategy proposals that will be critical to national progress on nuclear industry legacy issues
- to provide representatives on Government and NDA consultation, stakeholder and advisory bodies reporting back to local government through the SIG mechanism
- to lever resources, in addition to those conferred through the establishment of a SIG, to enable ‘capacity building’ within local government so that Government policy can develop with broad based democratic consent.”

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

- Held 5 Steering Group meetings including AGM and 3 meetings of the Radioactive Waste Planning Group.
- Published 6 newsletters for contributing member authorities and 5 e-bulletins issued to full mailing list.
- Responded to 14 consultations, circulating draft responses to members both for comment and as a resource for their own responses.
- In liaison with Low Level Waste Repository Limited organised 2nd Annual Local Government/Operator/Supply Chain meeting to review low level radioactive waste movements for the forthcoming year.
- Held seminar on 30 September to discuss forthcoming review of NDA strategy and community aspects of the Geological Disposal Facility siting process. Speakers from

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, Department for Energy and Climate Change and Radioactive Waste Management Ltd (RWM).

- In liaison with RWM Ltd arranged local government workshop on the national geological screening process.
- Spoke at conference organised by the Environment Agency.
- Assisted Environment Agency, Natural Resources Wales and SEPA on their work on the use of institutional controls for the management of former nuclear sites post decommissioning.
- Invited Magnox Ltd to give presentation on developments in their National Waste Management programme to NuLeAF's Radioactive Waste Planning Group.
- Invited CoRWM to speak to NuLeAF Steering Group about its work programme, Triennial Review and its involvement with the Geological Disposal Facility siting process and in particular the Communities Representation Working Group.
- Produced paper on the decommissioning of EDF nuclear power stations.
- Met with CEO and senior Director of Nuclear Industry Association.

Attended and participated in the following meetings

- 3 plenary meetings of the Committee of Radioactive Waste Management as observer.
- 5 liaison meetings with DECC and RWM regarding the Geological Disposal Facility and met with Managing Director of RWM to discuss work proposals.
- Various workshops on the national geological screening process for the GDF project.
- 7 meetings of the Communities Representation Working Group of the GDF project (NB, Phil Matthews is appointed to the CRWG in a personal capacity rather than as NuLeAF's Executive Director).
- 1 Submarine Dismantling Project (SDP) Advisory Group meeting.
- 7 Theme Overview Group meetings on Site Restoration, Integrated Waste Management and Critical Enablers.
- 2 meetings regarding the development of NDA Strategy III.
- 2 meetings regarding the disposal of asbestos (including radioactive asbestos) and 2 National Waste Programme meetings.
- New Nuclear Local Authorities Special Interest Group Spring Conference.
- Workshop on the development of the Appraisal of Sustainability associated with the Geological Disposal siting assessment process.
- 2 Low Level Waste Delivery Overview Group meetings.

Public transport Consortium Special Interest Group Annual Report

SIG Name:	Public Transport Consortium
Lead Member:	Harold Davenport
Lead Officer:	John Pope

Aims

- act as a forum for discussion and promotion of public transport issues affecting local authorities outside metropolitan areas;
- promote the exchange of experience and good practice between member authorities and in liaison with other bodies;
- advise appropriate committees or other executive bodies of the LGA on public transport issues; and
- represent interests of member authorities to Government, the Local Government Association, operators and other organisations involved in public transport
- provide advice and guidance to member authorities concerning Passenger Transport policy and operations.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

Responded to the following consultations:

- a. Public Transport Ticketing Schemes block exemption review
- b. Triennial review of the Traffic Commissioners – outcome
- c. Department for Transport – Rolling Stock Perspective
- d. The future shape and financing of Network Rail
- e. CMA consultation on block ticketing – analysis
- f. Traffic commissioners statutory guidance – analysis
- g. New approach to rail passenger services in London and the South East

Considered the following topics:

- b. Rail Franchise Update
- c. HS2 update
- d. STC Statutory Document 14 Local Bus Services England (outside London) & Wales
- e. DfT Quarterly Bus Statistics Great Britain Jan – Mar 2015
- f. Transport Focus National Rail Passenger Survey Spring 2015
- g. Transport Focus Advance Purchase of Rail Tickets
- h. Planning & Timing of Engineering Work
- i. Bus industry in Wales
- j. Airports Commission final report
- k. Future of Transport in an ageing society
- l. State Aid to Community Organisations
- m. Conduct of Bus Drivers, conductors, inspectors and passengers regulations
- n. Traveline Updates
- o. DfT Quarterly Bus Statistics Great Britain

- p. Rail Industry Statistics
- q. Sheffield Bus Partnership
- r. Total Transport Authorities – new deal for town and rural bus services
- s. Bus Industry Statistics
- t. LGA Missing the Bus
- u. Greener Journeys Roadmap to Growth
- v. Replanning of Network Rail investment programme – Hendy report
- w. Planning of Network Rail enhancement programme 2014-19 – Bowe report
- x. Devolving rail services to London
- y. Transport Focus – train punctuality, the passenger perspective
- z. Transport Focus – planned rail engineering work
- aa. Campaign for Better Transport – Buses in Crisis
- bb. Tyne & Wear quality contract scheme
- cc. Traveline Stakeholder briefing
- dd. Why Community Transport Matters
- ee. All Party Parliamentary Group on Rail
- ff. Wheelchairs and Buggies on Buses
- gg. Transport Focus National Rail Passenger Survey Autumn 2015
- hh. Local Bus Market Study – KPMG report to DfT
- ii. Building a World class Bus System for Britain

Liaised with LGA transport policy officers

Regional meeting & study tour held in Nottingham

Speakers at Plenary meetings included representatives from Department for Transport, Crossrail 1, Hackney Community Transport group, Transport Focus.

Regular meetings with DfT regarding content of Buses Bill, Met Members of Parliament with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Rural Services.

The consortium is also member of the All Party Parliamentary Groups for bus and rail.

Rural Services Network Annual Report to LGA Leadership Board

SIG Name:	RURAL SERVICES NETWORK
Lead Member:	Councillor Cecilia Motley (Chairman) (Shropshire Council)
Lead Officer:	David Inman Director

Aim

Our ultimate long term objective remains unchanged: It is to network across all English rural areas so that the views of rural people, communities and businesses – and those of the bodies that provide services to them – can be gathered and articulated at the national level. Rural areas are contained in over 240 English Council areas. Now that the Commission for Rural Communities has gone we are the sole organisation dealing independently with rural services in England. To achieve our desired network therefore we are dependent on support from all of those Councils. That is a very sizeable challenge but if rural areas are to continue to be given any joined up national focus it seems this is the only route which can now be pursued.

For **SPARSE-Rural** our first priority will remain the funding formulae and the impact of the massive public expenditure reductions and their ultimate impact on public services. Of course, in 2016 and beyond we will also be extremely active in respect of the Needs Review announced by the Secretary of State in the Final Settlement and in respect of the move to 100% retention (by the sector) of Business rates and the re-distributional methodology.

We will continue to work with, and support, the work of the Parliamentary **Rural Fair Share Group** which now involves over 140 MPs from rural constituencies.

For the **Rural Assembly** our priorities will be to seek to influence Government and Policy Makers across a whole range of issues facing rural service providers and communities. We set these out in a “Rural Services Manifesto” which we launched ahead of the May 2015 General Election and we are closely monitoring the way government responds to the issues.

We continue to provide the Secretariat to the **All Party Parliamentary Group on Rural Services** at Westminster and to support its work.

With the demise of the Regional Development Agencies and the Commission for Rural Communities we have sought to introduce a number of important initiatives over the past few years.

- Rural England as a Research body (a registered Community Interest Company)
- Service Groupings in relation to individual RSP member service areas. Housing, Health, Fire, Rural Crime, Economic Development and Transport Groups have all been established creating an array of networking opportunities back into our RSN member authorities through the links formed as very a much needed response to the austerity measures.
- A system of area forums and seminars across every rural region in England.
- A Rural Policy and Research and Practitioners Group operating across the United Kingdom examining current rural issues and examining best practice.

We will continue to seek to play a significant role in giving voice to rural issues and to provide the significant network to assist rural areas across England and the people who live and work there.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

The major outcome from our work in 2015 is the increase in Rural Service Delivery Grant to £80.5M in 2016/17 and, along with others, achieving an unprecedented level of change between the Provisional and Final Local Government Finance Settlements through the introduction of Transitional Relief.

In the 2015/16 year SPARSE-Rural and the Rural Assembly respectively debated:-

- The RSN Neighbourhood Planning Evidence Base Service
- Party Manifestos
- BIS Committee Report to which the RSN had submitted evidence – this led to a subsequent presentation to the Group by Royal Mail.
- Transformation Challenge – receiving best practice presentations from some of its member authorities
- Rural Housing (on several occasions especially in relation to the Housing and Planning Bill)
- Devolution
- A presentation from Neil Parish MP the Chair of the EFRA Select Committee.
- Results of RSN Sounding Board Survey on the impact on services of budget cuts.
- A presentation from Julia Mulligan the PCC for North Yorkshire on rural policing issues and the results of the National Rural Crime Network's (NRCN) National Rural Crime Survey (the RSN provides the secretariat to the NRCN).
- The proposed Buses Bill
- The RSN's Rural Fair Share's Campaign (at each of 3 SPARSE-Rural meetings)

In addition to its free Seminar programme, the RSN also put on three very successful Conferences:-

Rural Housing 9th July, 2015 - House of Lords

Rural Conference – 8/9 September, 2015 - Gloucestershire University, Cheltenham

Rural Health – 29th January, 2016 – House of Lords

The RSN is not however just about meetings. We provide a range of services to the membership and we see ourselves as seeking to provide the opportunity for information exchange and best practice identification across Local Authorities with rural areas and their communities and their business organisations.

The website rsnonline.org.uk is the country's leading source for rural information with tens of thousands of subscribers to its weekly email news digest.

Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group (SASIG) Annual Report

SIG Name:	Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group (SASIG)
Lead Member:	Cllr Jamie Macrae (Chair)
Lead Officer:	SASIG Secretariat c/o Northpoint Aviation

Aims

SASIG's objectives are:

- to promote the need for long-term, sustainable aviation policies that lead to a reduction in the environmental impact of aviation whilst securing appropriate social and economic benefits;
- to increase understanding of the local and global impacts of aviation on the environment and communities;
- to identify and promote the changes needed to move towards sustainable aviation practices within the industry and Government; and
- to work with other organisations and the Government on the formulation of policy advice.

SASIG Policy Principles

- i. To give the people of the UK the social and business opportunities to travel from their nearest airport where feasible.
- ii. To capture, not stifle, the social and economic benefits of aviation using robust and objective evidence.
- iii. To direct aviation growth to locations where it will assist sustainable economic regeneration.
- iv. To minimise adverse impacts – social, economic and environmental – by protecting people and non-transferable habitats.
- v. To ensure that the air transport sector rather than local communities pays the full costs of the impact of all air journeys.
- vi. To offer the aviation industry tough but realistic parameters based upon associated impacts around which to secure growth.
- vii. To ensure that good quality surface access links are provided to airports, particularly public transport links that create integrated transport hubs.
- viii. To promote better point to point air services from regional airports, with sensitive control over all impacts.
- ix. To work with Government and other bodies to ensure that noise impacts as a result of airport growth, airspace changes and flight path changes on local communities are minimised and mitigated.
- x. To support the coordination and integration of the full spectrum of national policies on issues relating to aviation. This must accord with international and regional policy-making and implementation.
- xi. To promote investigation of the impacts of the air freight industry, supporting the

development of air freight infrastructure where it is the most appropriate mode.

- xii. To encourage Governments and the aviation industry to make greater efforts to reduce aviation's impacts on climate change.

SASIG strongly urge that Government address the need for a new national aviation policy that:

- Is based on the need to control the impacts rather than the aviation activity.
- Has considered in detail all options for providing capacity to meet forecast demand, and for providing for other, lower levels of demand.
- Embraces the concept of integrated transport provision.
- Audits the parameters that should be used in any forecasts of future demand.
- Adopts an assessment process for aviation developments that explicitly includes all associated costs.
- Sets effective environmental limits for the aviation industry to meet, taking the appropriate form – regulation, charges, taxes, etc.
- Considers and mitigates against the impact of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Develops the economic analysis of aviation, and in particular improves valuation of the net impact – benefits and disbenefits.
- Coordinates with other transport policies and with other associated national policies, such as climate change, and energy policies.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken:

National Representation: The ways in which SASIG is represented publicly emphasises the national nature of the membership and thus the sphere of interest. This has included:

The Airports Commission

SASIG has continued to be actively involved in the Airports Commission's programme as below:

- Attending meetings with the Commission and their representatives.
- Submitting a formal response to the Airports Commission's final report, regarding the shortlisted options for a new runway capacity in the South East (Submitted 30th November 2015, to The Cabinet office sub-committee, the Sec.of.State for transport, the DfT and other government departments).
- Meeting with the Aviation Minister, Robert Goodwill MP, on March 14th 2016 to discuss the SASIG response to the Commission's final report and address the Government's plans in respect of the runway decision. In addition, the establishment of an Independent Noise Authority and the Government's timetable for publishing a National Policy Statement for Aviation.

Department for Transport, CAA & Defra

- SASIG continues as a member of the Department for Transport's Aviation 'External Advisory Group' (EAG); the group met in July 2015 and again on 28 January 2016.

Papers and notes of these meetings are made available to Members and published on our website.

- SASIG was also invited to nominate two representatives for DfT focus groups in March 2016, to help scope its forthcoming consultation on a review of Noise and Airspace Change policy.
- The CAA has also sought SASIG's views on its five-year programme of work and now on how decisions on airspace change should be made. A response will be submitted by 15 June 2016.
- SASIG is a member of the DEFRA Noise and Nuisance Team external stakeholder panel and attended a meeting on 1 February 2016 with a further meeting scheduled for 12 July 2016.

Advisory Board member - 'Runways UK'

A SASIG representative attended the Advisory Board meeting of 'Runways UK' on 20 January 2016. Runways UK is an organisation established to provide a platform for public debate about the aviation sector and organise key conferences. It was recognised by the Airport's Commission and has a Board full of senior industry figures.

Engagement with Other Stakeholders

SASIG's Secretariat has met with, and is continuing to liaise with, other prominent stakeholder groups including the LEP Network, Key Cities, Sustainable Aviation, Aviation Environment Federation and Gatwick Airport Conservation Campaign.

Conferences and Public Fora

A SASIG representative attended the Westminster Hall debate on regional airports and UK airport capacity. A representative from SASIG Secretariat will present at the RAeS's 'Greener by Design' Conference in October 2016 to give SASIG's views on the management and regulation of noise.

SASIG Newsletter

This is a core service provided by the SASIG secretariat. Emailed to members monthly it contains: an editorial; an events diary; a 'Monthly Highlights' section; relevant Parliamentary Questions and Answers on aviation matters; news articles from the month covering Parliamentary News, Government News, London and South East News, Regional News, National and Other Industry News and European News; updates of any additions to the SASIG website (publications/ industry documents etc). The newsletter provides a valuable resource, allowing Local Authorities to remain well-informed and take an active role in the aviation debate.

SIGOMA Annual Report

SIG Name:	Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (outside London) within the LGA
Lead Member:	Sir Stephen Houghton CBE
Lead Officer:	Frances Foster

Aim

To analyse current and proposed government policy for its impact on member authorities.

To brief SIGOMA member authorities, at appropriate levels, on the impact of current and proposed policy

To obtain wherever possible the consensus views of members and represent these to the LGA, government departments and the government of the day.

To work with the LGA, government departments other authority representatives and other stakeholders to ensure that regulations and other policy initiatives are considered and implemented with regard to member interests and consistent with an effective and efficient approach.

To engage with members of all political parties via its parliamentary group so as to represent the particular issues facing our membership and the impact upon them of policy proposals.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

Local government funding

- Involvement in the design of the local government finance systems most notably the Business Rate Retention implementation working group, the Settlement Working Group and the CLIP finance group.
- Continuing to press for quantum measurement by the government of the combined impact of welfare reform and funding cuts.
- Working with LGA officers to encourage identification of unfair distribution as an issue within cuts.
- Hosting MP group meetings to highlight the plight of Councils facing financial distress.
- Responding on all funding consultations including the 2015 Spending Review consultation, December 2015 settlement consultation and Business Rates consultations.
- Supplying briefing notes on the 2015 Spending Review, the 2015 Autumn Statement and the 2016 Budget to members, MPs and Chief Officers,
- Engaging in national debates on funding issues.

Education

Canvassing and representing member views on National Fair Funding Formula. Modelling potential impact for members

Housing

- Highlighting the redistribution impact of New Homes Bonus and its lack of effectiveness in terms of housing policy.
- Canvassing and representing member views on consultation on proposed changes to NHB payment structure.

Health and Welfare

- Canvassing member views on changes to public health ACRA formula. Modelling potential impact for members

General

- Participation in IMD advisory group.
- Represent at Business Rate Implementation Working Group
- Attitude and impact polls within SIGOMA
- MP group briefing meetings
- Press opinion articles and technical explanations to press
- Technical updates to officers and Members within SIGOMA
- Officer group meetings
- Website publications
- Public media accounts such as Twitter
- Attending and presenting at main party conferences

World Heritage Sites Annual Report

SIG Name:	World Heritage UK
Lead Member:	
Lead Officer:	Sam Rose, Dorset County Council

Aim

To promote and support for the benefit of the public the protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the UK's World Heritage Sites, defined as those places considered by the United Nations Educational Cultural and Scientific Organisation (UNESCO) as having such Outstanding Universal Value that they warrant being inscribed on the World Heritage List through the powers of the international Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972.

To support for the benefit of the public the development of World Heritage Site nominations for the UK's Tentative List Sites, defined as sites on the UK Government's official Tentative List for nomination for World Heritage Status.

To advance the education of the public in general in respect of the significance and values of the UK's World Heritage Sites and Tentative List Sites, as defined above.

Key Activities / Outcomes of work undertaken

1. World Heritage UK continues the work of its predecessor, LAWHF, as a powerful advocate for the UK's World Heritage Sites, and as an effective forum for Local Authorities, government bodies and others, such as independent trusts, involved in WH matters.
2. World Heritage UK achieved the status of Charitable Incorporated Organisation in 2015.
3. A first Networking, or Technical meeting was held in Liverpool in March 2015 on the subject of the Values of World Heritage.
4. The first Conference was held in Saltaire World Heritage Site in October 2015, hosted by City of Bradford Metropolitan Council. The title was "Tourism – Unlocking the Potential" and attracted participants from 16 UK WHS, DCMS, and University students.
5. In January 2016 a second Technical Workshop meeting was held in Edinburgh, hosted by Historic Environment Scotland. The theme was "Management Planning".
6. The organisation maintains links with officers from DCMS, and responds to Government Consultations. Comments were submitted in response to the recent Culture White Paper.
7. The organisation also maintains links with the Association of World Heritage Properties in Europe.

