

## Note of last LGA Executive meeting

---

<b>Title:</b>	LGA Executive
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday 3 March 2016
<b>Venue:</b>	Westminster Suite, 8th Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

---

### Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
<b>1</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
	No declarations were made.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Housing and Planning</b>	
	<p>The Chairman introduced the report, which had been considered by the Leadership Board the previous day. The report updated Members on the work being done to influence the proposals set out in the Housing and Planning Bill, and included information on the cumulative impact of housing reforms on councils' Housing Revenue Accounts and their local areas.</p> <p>Cllr Peter Box, Chairman of the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board, added that lobbying on the Housing and Planning Bill had been discussed at the EEHT Board for some time, and it was welcome that the profile of the LGA's campaign had been raised to make the most of the opportunity to influence amendments to the Bill.</p> <p>In the discussion which followed Members made a number of comments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Members raised concern at the results of the online survey which had been sent to all 176 housing stock owning local authorities in England. Of those who had completed the survey 78% expected more homelessness as a result of the government reforms, 80% expected to cut the number of new homes to be built, and 80% expected to cut the amount of maintenance spending. This was not in line with the government's expected aims of the Bill, which was also expected to increase housing benefit bills and impact upon residents' ability to afford tenancies.</li><li>It was highlighted that lobbying on the Bill was not a political issue but a practical issue for all types of local authority. The higher</li></ul>	

**Item Decisions and actions**

**Action**

profile lobbying was welcomed, and Members agreed that the LGA should continue to press for amendments to the Bill in the House of Lords, but that amendments should have a clear evidence base highlighting the unintended consequences so that they would also be welcomed in the House of Commons and accepted by the government.

- Local authorities were only allowed to use a third of money from Right to Buy, and as more houses were sold councils would not have the borrowing or capital financing to fund the other two thirds. This would impact heavily on councils' ability to build homes. Sale of high value assets was also highly contentious as specialised housing, including housing for elderly and disabled residents, was likely to be of high value and so could be at risk.
- In future there should be a coherent policy on housing across the spectrum. The LGA's Housing Commission was currently in the process of considering evidence which had been submitted, and an interim report would be published in April 2016. The final report of the Commission would make recommendations for future work on housing.
- A lot of areas in the report were council-focussed, but the LGA should also reflect on the wider consequences of the Bill, for example residents who were financially excluded from owning their own homes could be targeted by sub-prime lenders. Concerns over the long term supply of housing should also be considered.
- The District Councils Network had separately made various observations on the Bill, all of which supported growth. District councils were ready to support the sector through the skills agenda to help deliver housing for the future. Members supported the view that there should be more investment in skills and apprenticeships in the building industry.
- In terms of adult social care, councils had invested a long of money into extra care housing. It was good for people to stay in their own homes for as long as possible, and reduced the strain on social care. Currently authorities were funding extra care housing in a number of ways, but there was concern that if there was a shift in the market this would become less affordable in the future.

**Decision**

The LGA Executive **endorsed** the approach which was being taken to influence the proposals set out in the Housing and Planning Bill.

**Action**

Members to be updated on progress at a future meeting. (**Eamon Lally**).

**3 Update on NHS Policy Announcements and Supporting Joint Working**

Cllr Izzi Seccombe, Chair of the Community Wellbeing Portfolio, introduced the report and highlighted that the LGA had consistently campaigned for a democratically accountable, place-based approach for

**Item Decisions and actions**

**Action**

health and wellbeing, and therefore welcomed the place-based approach that sustainability and transformation plans (STPs) were intended to introduce which had been announced by the NHS.

Integration was fundamentally important for local government and the NHS for a sustainable future for health services. The CWB Portfolio policy group on the future vision for health and social care was currently examining what has been learnt from approaches to integration so far, and how the integration agenda could be influenced in the future.

NHS planning guidance for 2016/17 required the development of sub-regional footprints, which had been welcomed by the LGA as they worked well with the Five Year Forward View and were intended to help improve financial efficiency, the health and wellbeing gap and the equality gap. However, there were some areas of concern; there was a very tight timescale for establishing the footprints, with draft plans required to be submitted by early April and full plans by early June, and guidance had been issued at a very late stage; and each area was required to identify a Chief Executive from the NHS or local government to oversee and develop the footprint, which could potentially draw accountability away from Health and Wellbeing Boards and local authorities and not help with integration.

In the discussion which followed Members made a number of comments, including:

- Members supported the view that Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) should have oversight of the emerging footprints to provide democratic accountability. HWBs were a strong integration point and if they were not engaged in the process it could not be seen as accountable. Sub-regional footprint geography should match with that of HWBs where possible.
- Concern was raised that the NHS was not engaging in meaningful consultation on the sub-regional footprints. In some areas these did not match with combined authority footprints. Guidance from the NHS stressed that the plans should be for the whole system, with full involvement of local government and in some areas this had not been the case. Local authorities wanted to bring budgets together with the NHS to innovate and transform services.
- Local authorities had previously been informed that the announcements on the Better Care Fund (BCF) in the Local Government Finance Settlement would help those areas with a smaller tax base. If the BCF was used for the transformation agenda this would begin to move away from the principles outlined in the Settlement.
- Local authorities were currently unable to create sustainable solutions for the prevention agenda. There should be a much stronger, clearer and funded commitment from the government for Public Health, so local public health issues could be addressed and councils could work on longer term transformational issues.
- Members supported the suggestion that a letter should be written

**Item Decisions and actions**

**Action**

to Jeremy Hunt, the Secretary of State for Health, to address issues which had been raised by members around sustainability and transformation plans and sub-regional footprints.

**Decision**

The LGA Executive:

- i. **noted** the action taken so far by the LGA in representing the views of councils in relation to health and care integration and transformation work; and
- ii. **agreed** that a letter be written to the Secretary of State for Health to address issues which had been raised by members around sustainability and transformation plans and sub-regional footprints.

**Action**

Letter to the Secretary of State to be drafted as agreed by members.  
(**Sally Burlington**)

**4 LGA Budget 2016-17**

Paul Brack (Strategic Finance Manager) introduced the LGA Budget for 2016/17. He drew attention to the assumptions underpinning it, projections for future years, and noted that adjustments may be required to reflect the final grant notification from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Mark Lloyd (Chief Executive) highlighted that the Leadership Board had amended the second recommendation of the report so that approval to make necessary budget adjustments to reflect the final grant notification from DCLG was delegated to the LGA Chairman and Group Leaders, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive.

**Decisions**

The LGA Executive:

- i. **agreed** the LGA's budget for 2016-17 as recommended by the Leadership Board; and
- ii. **endorsed** the Leadership Board's delegation to the LGA Chairman and Group Leaders, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive, to make necessary adjustments to reflect the final grant notification from DCLG.

**Action**

Adjustments to the budget to be made by the Strategic Finance Manager following approval by the LGA Chairman and Group Leaders, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive. (**Sarah Pickup / Paul Brack**).

**5 LGA Perceptions Survey 2015/2016**

**Item Decisions and actions**

**Action**

David Holdstock, Director of Communications, introduced the report and commented that it was the fourth consecutive year that an independent survey of the LGA's membership had been undertaken. He drew members' attention to the key findings and highlighted that it had provided a useful steer on how the LGA engaged with frontline councillors who were less aware of the work of the LGA. The Leadership Board had asked for more detailed analysis of the results of the survey, which would be reported back in due course.

Members agreed that more work should be done to engage with frontline councillors, particularly with reference to sector led improvement work, and other areas where the value of the LGA as a membership organisation could be evidenced.

**Decisions**

The LGA Executive:

- i. **noted** the results of the 2015/16 perceptions survey;
- ii. **endorsed** the Leadership Board's decision to continue with an annual perceptions survey of councils;
- iii. **endorsed** the Leadership Board's decision that increased efforts be made to engage with frontline councillors; and
- iv. **noted** that a perceptions survey action plan would be considered at a future meeting of the Leadership Board.

**Action**

LGA Perceptions Survey Action Plan to be considered at a future meeting of the Leadership Board. (**David Holdstock**).

**6 Note of the last Leadership Board meeting**

The Leader of the Conservative group drew attention to the discussion which had taken place at the Leadership Board regarding preparation to move to 100 per cent business rate retention. He asked that the decision of the Leadership Board and information on next steps be sent to the Leaders and Chief Executives of all LGA member councils so they were aware of how the LGA was taking the matter forward in partnership with DCLG. Members endorsed this approach.

**Decisions**

The LGA Executive:

- i. **noted** the minutes of the Leadership Board held on 2 March 2016; and
- ii. **agreed** that the Leadership Board's decision regarding the move to 100 per cent business rate retention, and the next steps to be taken, be communicated to the Leaders and Chief Executives of all LGA member councils.

**Action**

Information on business rate retention and next steps be circulated as agreed. (**Nicola Morton**)

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
7	<p><b>Note of last LGA Executive meeting</b></p> <p><b>Decision</b> The LGA Executive <b>agreed</b> the minutes of the LGA Executive held on 21 January 2016.</p>	
8	<p><b>Devolution Update</b></p> <p>Ian Hughes (Head of Policy) introduced the report which sought Members' views on the LGA's approach to the next phase of devolution through to the summer of 2017. It was proposed that a Green Paper on 'Devo Plus' be prepared for the LGA's Annual Conference in July which would make the case for more extensive devolution of powers and responsibilities than had been achieved to date. The paper would cover the main themes of financial devolution, public service reform, public engagement, and areas where the LGA will be refining its membership and improvement offer to take account of the development of Combined Authorities, both Mayoral and non-Mayoral.</p> <p>In discussion which followed Members made a number of comments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Localisation of business rates could not be removed from wider discussions on devolution as it would enable individual areas to improve their economies.</li><li>• The conversation with government should shift from devolution of national functions to place-based public sector reform. The government should be clear on its objectives for devolution so that an open and accountable discussion with the sector could take place. There should be a clear idea of what devolution and the public sector would look like in 5 to 10 years so that there were clear goals for central and local government.</li><li>• Drafting of the Green Paper should allow for reactive decisions on devolution to be made, given the fast paced nature of discussions and announcements on the matter. The City Regions and People and Places Boards would receive regular updates throughout the drafting process in order to have continued Member oversight.</li><li>• The government were looking to reduce public spending and transfer functions to local government where they could be run more efficiently, so there was a real opportunity to engage on what the future of devolution and local government would look like. The government would be most receptive if LGA presented clear evidence based information on financial frameworks and service provision.</li><li>• Communication with residents and communities was important to explain what devolution would mean for them and what changes there would be to existing services.</li><li>• Although economic matters were important in devolution</li></ul>	

**Item Decisions and actions**

**Action**

discussions, the major challenge for local government would be how behaviours, culture and processes changed as a result of devolution.

- The LGA should engage with councils who have already gone through the devolution process to consider lessons learned as part of their discussions with the government. Engagement with LEPs was also suggested.

**Decision**

The LGA Executive:

- endorsed** the Leadership Board's decision that a campaign Green Paper be prepared for the LGA's Annual Conference, which would make the case for the more extensive devolution of funding and powers than has been achieved to date;
- agreed** that City Regions and People and Places Board would be asked to provide the detailed analysis; and
- endorsed** the next steps to be taken which were identified in the report.

**Appendix A -Attendance**

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Lord Gary Porter (Chairman)		South Holland District Council
Cllr David Hodge (Vice Chairman)		Surrey County Council
Cllr David Simmonds CBE (Deputy Chairman)		Hillingdon London Borough Council
Cllr Peter Fleming OBE (Deputy Chairman)		Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Sean Anstee (Deputy Chairman)		Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Nick Forbes (Vice-Chair)		Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
Cllr Marianne Overton MBE (Vice-Chair)		Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Vice-Chair)		Portsmouth City Council
Cllr Izzi Seccombe		Warwickshire County Council and Community Wellbeing Board
Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE		Stevenage Borough Council
Mayor Sir Steve Bullock		Lewisham London Borough Council
Cllr Sue Murphy CBE		Manchester City Council
Cllr Peter Box CBE		Wakefield Metropolitan District Council and Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport
Cllr Claire Kober OBE		Haringey LB and Resources Board
Cllr Simon Blackburn		Blackpool Council
Cllr Ian Stephens		Isle of Wight Council
Cllr Peter Reeve		Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Bob Dutton OBE		Wrexham County Borough Council
Cllr Chris White		Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Nicolas Heslop		South East England Councils (SEEC)
Cllr Martin Hill OBE		East Midlands Councils
Cllr Roger Lawrence		West Midlands LGA
Cllr Paul Watson		Association of North East Councils

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
	<p>Cllr Barrie Grunewald Mayor Jules Pipe Sir Stephen Houghton CBE Cllr Paul Carter CBE Cllr Neil Clarke MBE</p>	<p>North West Regional Leaders Board London Councils SIGOMA County Councils Network (CCN) District Councils Network</p>
	<p>Apologies:</p> <p>Cllr Philippa Roe Cllr Roy Perry Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE Cllr Anne Western CBE Cllr Keith Wakefield OBE Sir Richard Leese CBE</p> <p>Mayor Dorothy Thornhill MBE Cllr Jason Ablewhite</p> <p>Cllr John Hart Cllr Stephen Parnaby OBE Cllr Aaron Shotton Alderman Sir David Wootton</p>	<p>Westminster City Council Hampshire County Council Gloucestershire County Council Derbyshire County Council Leeds City Council Manchester City Council and City Regions Board Watford Borough Council</p> <p>East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) South West Councils Local Government Yorkshire and Humber (LGYH) Welsh Local Government Assoc. (WLGA) Local Partnerships</p>
	<p>In Attendance:</p>	
	<p>LGA Officers:</p>	