

People & Places Board

Agenda

Monday, 14 March 2016
1.00 pm

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

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People & Places Board
14 March 2016

There will be a meeting of the People & Places Board at **1.00 pm on Monday, 14 March 2016** Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

A sandwich lunch will be available at 1.00pm

Attendance Sheet:

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

Political Group meetings:

The group meetings will take place from 10.00 -11.00am. Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

Apologies:

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting.

Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3334	email: Labour.GroupLGA@local.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent.group@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk

Location:

A map showing the location of Local Government House is printed on the back cover.

LGA Contact:

Eleanor Reader-Moore
eleanor.reader-moore@local.gov.uk, 020 7664 3383

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The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgapp

People & Places Board – Membership 2015/2016

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (12)	
Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE (Chairman)	Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Gillian Brown (Vice Chairman)	Arun District Council
Cllr Philip Atkins	Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Andrew Bowles	Swale Borough Council
Cllr Paul Carter CBE	Kent County Council
Cllr Paul Diviani	East Devon District Council
Cllr Kenneth Meeson	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Derek Bastiman	Scarborough Borough Council
Cllr Roger Blaney	Newark & Sherwood District Council
Cllr Chris Hayward	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Mike Jones	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr John Osman	Somerset County Council
Substitutes	
Labour (4)	
Cllr Alan Rhodes (Vice Chairman)	Nottinghamshire County Council
Cllr Vince Maple	Medway Council
Cllr Jennifer Mein	Lancashire County Council
Cllr Caitlin Bisknell	Derbyshire County Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Leigh Redman	Somerset County Council
Cllr Frank Radcliffe	North Hertfordshire District Council
Independent (4)	
Cllr John Pollard (Deputy Chair)	Cornwall Council
Cllr Amanda Martin	Council of the Isles of Scilly
Cllr Clive Woodbridge	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Cllr Chris Townsend	Mole Valley District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Helen Grant	North Yorkshire County Council
Liberal Democrat (3)	
Cllr Heather Kidd (Deputy Chair)	Shropshire Council
Cllr Sarah Osborne	Lewes District Council
Cllr Stan Collins	South Lakeland District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr David Bill MBE	Leicestershire County Council

People and Places Board - Attendance 2015-2016

Councillors	19/10/15	14/1/16		
Conservative Group				
Mark Hawthorne MBE	Yes	Yes		
Gillian Brown	Yes	Yes		
Philip Atkins	Yes	Yes		
Andrew Bowles	No	No		
Paul Carter CBE	Yes	No		
Paul Diviani	Yes	Yes		
Ken Meeson	Yes	Yes		
Derek Bastiman	Yes	Yes		
Roger Blaney	Yes	Yes		
Chris Hayward	Yes	No		
Mike Jones	Yes	Yes		
John Osman	Yes	No		
Labour Group				
Alan Rhodes	Yes	No		
Vince Maple	Yes	Yes		
Jenny Mein	Yes	Yes		
Caitlin Bisknell	Yes	Yes		
Independent				
John Pollard	Yes	Yes		
Amanda Martin	Yes	Yes		
Chris Townsend	Yes	Yes		
Clive Woodbridge	Yes	Yes		
Lib Dem Group				
Heather Kidd	Yes	Yes		
Stan Collins	Yes	No		
Sarah Osborne	Yes	Yes		
Substitutes/Observers				
Leigh Redman	Yes	No		
Frank Radcliffe	Yes	No		

Agenda

People & Places Board

Monday 14 March 2016

1.00 pm

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

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Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, 15 June 2016, 1.00 pm, Bevin Hall,
Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ



Employment and skills: update paper

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

Board members agreed that employment and skills should continue to be a key lobbying focus for the organisation, and one which should be developed alongside the City Regions Board. This paper updates the Board on latest Government announcements and LGA activity and suggests options for future activity in this area.

Recommendation:

Devolving employment and skills levers and funding to groups of councils is a longstanding LGA lobbying aim and one of the top 'asks' in councils' devolution bids. This paper seeks Members' steer on current and proposed activity to influence this.

Action:

Officers to take forward as directed by members.

Contact officer: Jasbir Jhas, Senior Adviser jasbir.jhas@local.gov.uk 020 7664 3114

Employment and skills: update paper

Summary

1. Devolving employment and skills levers and funding to groups of councils is a longstanding LGA lobbying aim and one of the top 'asks' in councils' devolution bids. This requires the sector negotiating with Whitehall on an individual devolution deal basis and at scale. The LGA has a clear role in supporting councils in both. This paper seeks Members' steer on current and proposed activity to influence this.

The Government's employment and skills agenda

2. Over the course of this Parliament, the Government has committed to achieve full employment, deliver three million new apprenticeships, restructure and localise the skills system, reduce worklessness by halving the disability employment gap, supporting more people with mental health and long term 'treatable' conditions into work, and make young people 'earn or learn'. These reforms need to be delivered within reduced departmental budgets, and require careful and planned use of resources.
3. While the Government recognises that 'local' matters, a continued silo approach in Whitehall – via DWP, BIS and DfE – to employment and skills, perpetuates disparate funding streams, initiatives and institutions, which lack coherence on the ground or relevance to local economic need, and ill-serve people and places which most need it.

The role for councils

4. Councils want to stimulate thriving local economies, so all residents contribute and benefit from local growth. Working across functional economic areas with businesses and local partners, they are building on their unique and proven capacity to integrate services around vulnerable people and anticipate and respond to local employer needs.
5. To achieve that, we need a **devolved mainstream skills system** – further education, 16-19, adult skills, apprenticeships, higher skills, learner loans and careers advice and guidance – to prepare people to enter and progress into jobs market. Alongside this, a **locally responsive re-engagement system** – commissioning Jobcentre Plus and back to work schemes – is critical to help people who require extra support to enter, get back into, or progress in work.
6. In the LGA Spending Review submission, we called on the Government to enable local areas to manage the strategic local integration of public funds so they can plan, integrate and deliver welfare support, employment, and skills provision locally. In return, councils would help deliver Government priorities to target skills spending to local economic need, boost apprenticeships, tackle worklessness, increase employment and stimulate local economies.
7. A growing number of areas are benefitting from elements of devolved funding through City, Growth and Devolution Deals. Councils' pitches within the most recent bidding round included:

- a. *Employment*: devolved employment support for the long term unemployed as a minimum, and oversight of JobCentre Plus (JCP).
 - b. *Skills*: local commissioning of Education Funding Agency (EFA) and Skills Funding Agency (SFA) budgets to simplify and localise the Further Education system across all age groups, as well as apprenticeships and all information, advice and guidance.
8. Greater Manchester's Working Well, London's Working Capital and Suffolk's MyGo demonstrate councils' ambition and capability with devolved powers and funding. But all areas want to secure funding channelled into one place with local influence over institutions to plan more effectively. This requires the sector negotiating on an individual devolution deal basis and at scale. This paper seeks Members' steer on current and proposed activity to influence this.

Update on current work

Employment support

9. The Spending Review (November 2015) announced a new specialist Work and Health Programme (WHP) – £130 million per year – for claimants with health conditions or disabilities and those unemployed for over two years, to replace the Work Programme (WP) and Work Choice in 2017. Jobcentre Plus will support all other JSA claimants up to their WHP eligibility.
10. Prior to the Spending Review, the [LGA put forward its own a proposal to Ministers for devolved employment support](#), integrated with health and skills interventions, using a case worker approach, eligible for up to one million of the most disadvantaged jobseekers including Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) work ready claimants. Our proposal is being used by various Whitehall departments, councils, stakeholders and think tanks to inform next steps in the WHP design and local government's role within it. However our longstanding concerns - insufficient funding, deal-based rather than England wide, councils given a peripheral role rather than commissioner – are now surfacing. We need to lobby for:
 - 10.1 Clearer and faster devolution beyond the seven city region areas which DWP has agreed to work with within the context of their devolution deals. Our proposal was for this to be level of localism to be applicable to all groups of councils including non-metropolitan areas across England so they could lead commissioning.
 - 10.2 Increasing £130 million WHP budget line by combining Whitehall budgets (additional Work and Health Unit fund plus BIS and DH skills / health funding) otherwise our concern is that the programme will help too few claimants or interventions may fall short of the support they need. The predecessor WP was £600 million per year.
 - 10.3 Exploring ways with DWP how those areas outside of the devolution deals can influence the national WHP design. This means bringing councils together with DWP (March to October) to identify ways to influence tenders, and map how local services / funding and WHP can be aligned more closely.
11. The newly established Work and Health Unit (WHU) responsible for integrating health and employment will soon launch a White Paper with proposals on how this can be achieved. The LGA will respond, and has already discussed with the Unit the role councils can play in integration (above proposal) and secured a place on the Unit's

cross Whitehall Programme Board. **Members are invited to comment on steps to move this work further and faster.**

Skills:

12. The Government is making significant changes to skills policy and funding. While the LGA has secured some initial wins, more remains to be done to ensure the changes work for non-metropolitan areas and that powers and funding are devolved in a joined-up way.
13. **Area Based Reviews (ABR)** are tasked with making the Further Education system financially resilient and responsive to local economic need. Councils are keen to improve the whole system, and want Reviews to capture a broader range of educational establishments, not just colleges. Board members raised concerns that rationalisation of colleges in rural areas would put unprecedented strain on transport links and the ability of (disadvantaged) learners to travel. This is being raised with Government.
14. A new **Adult Education Budget** (£1.5 billion per year) will consolidate current skills funding for adults – Adult Skills Budget, Community Learning, and Discretionary Learner Support. Funding will no longer be qualification based and combined authorities will negotiate how funding is spent. Devolution deal areas will pilot this in 2016/2017 initially through a block grant to FE colleges, with SFA and local areas co-commissioning. The intention is to move to full local commissioning with locally negotiated funding allocations by 2018/2019. **The LGA has successfully lobbied for adult skills to be devolved and integrated alongside WHP so local areas could coordinate interventions for jobseekers. We now need to ensure devolved responsibilities for FE (readiness criteria) are proportionate to the amount of AEB being devolved, and that all areas benefit from this subsequently.**
15. Apprenticeships
16. While the LGA supports the Government's pledge of **three million Apprenticeships** by 2020, we lobbied against centrally imposed targets and the Levy applying to the sector, given this will cost councils £600 million per year. This national approach to this policy is at odds with the localist approach BIS is taking on adult skills (above).
17. All public bodies including councils with over 250 staff will be set a 2.3 percent apprenticeship target per year. It is currently based on headcount, which would have a cost to councils of £400 million per year. The LGA will lobby for it to be based on FTE to lessen the impact on councils. Taking effect from April 2017, an Apprenticeship Levy, expected to raise £3 billion by 2019/20 will pay for this, while state funding will be phased out. All public and private employers with a pay bill of over £3 million, including councils, will contribute 0.5 percent of payroll. This will cost councils over £200 million per year. To ensure the Levy is locally targeted, the LGA is calling for all public (and possibly private contributions) to be locally pooled, rather than centrally controlled by HMT, so local areas assess demand by sector and employer type, commission provision, and promote the Fund locally.

Future activity

18. To add value to our ongoing lobbying work (above), below are further suggestions for work to start April 2016.

Influence the debate on the future Jobcentre Plus

19. There is potential for significant changes to the way Jobcentre Plus (JCP) operates in the future when DWP's PFI contract expire in 2018. The LGA is already pushing for greater number of areas to benefit from co-location and develop thinking on integration. To ensure local government has a strong coordinated voice to influence the debate, it is suggested that LGA initiate research on international comparisons on locally accountable public employment services, and consider how efficiencies can be made between JCP and the National Careers Service locally alongside other public agencies.

A whole system skills commissioning role

20. Given areas are at different stages in negotiating skills devolution, it is suggested we focus our future work on
- Understanding specific issues non-met areas have to overcome to help make the case for skills devolution, and looking to commission research to achieve that
 - Pilot work / research to identify councils commissioning / brokering role in maximising opportunities for adults to improve their skills through the extended learner loan system
 - Help councils maximise their role in the apprenticeship target and levy (April 2017)
21. **Members' views are sought, particularly on the balance of activity between detailed policy work and media and lobbying activity. It is also recommended that Lead Members of both the City Regions and People and Places meet to discuss and agree a programme of work for 2016/2017.**



Transport Paper for Leadership Board

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

At their last meeting the LGA's Leadership Board agreed to have a discussion on key transport issues affecting local government and the LGA's work in supporting council's interest, which is led by the EEHT Board. The following is a draft report setting out key issues to help the Leadership Board's discussion, which will be led by the Chair of the EEHT Board. The LGA's EEHT Board is happy to invite, at their request, the People and Places board to further reflect and provide feedback on the draft report and to highlight any issues, in particular in relation to rural matters.

Recommendation

To note the report and work being led by EEHT Board.
To ask for any further steer/ input from a non-metropolitan perspective to feed into EEHT's report to the LGA's Leadership Board.

Action

Officers to take forward as directed by members.

Contact Officer: Kamal Panchal, Senior Advisor, kamal.panchal@local.gov.uk, 020 7664 3174

Introduction

1. Local authorities play a vital role in maintaining and improving local transport for the communities and local economies they serve, spending a total of £7.3 billion on transport in 2014/15. With a projected increase of up to 55% in traffic by 2040, the LGA's Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport (EEHT) Board has been leading on work on behalf of the LGA to promote the role of local transport, protect services and ensure relevant powers and funding are devolved to councils. Key live transport priorities include:
 - 1.1 Funding
 - 1.2 Devolution
 - 1.3 Buses Bill
 - 1.4 Air Quality

Funding

2. Local funding sources for transport are currently a mix of a range of government grants, competitive funds (including the Local Growth Fund via LEPs), council's core funding, other local sources, developer contributions and prudential borrowing. The EEHT Board has supported councils call for more simplified and flexible funding arrangements that enable them to:
 - 2.1 Deliver the right transport infrastructure investment that is based on the long-term needs of local communities and business, and not skewed to short term projects.
 - 2.2 Tackle the £12billion road repairs backlog and focus on preventative measures to make highways more resilient, rather than more expensive reactive repairs.
 - 2.3 Shape bus provision so that public subsidies are targeted according to local priorities.
 - 2.4 Deliver a locally more joined-up approach to future transport needs, ensuring that other modes of travel, such as cycling and walking can be promoted in a way that makes sense locally.
 - 2.5 Influence strategic transport spending in recognition of its impact on local growth (such as the Highways Agency).
3. The November 2015 Spending Review/ Autumn Statement largely protected local transport budgets as well as the Bus Services Operators Grant (BSOG) and confirmed the Government's commitment to fund the rest of the £12billion Local Growth Fund. However, fragmentation of funding remains and a growing revenue/ capital mismatch make it more difficult for local areas to maximise the benefits of their investment.

Devolution

4. The LGA's independently researched report from September 2014, Better Roads for England, provided supporting evidence that the way transport is funded and decisions are made in England is broken and that there are lessons to be learned from other countries. Councils have responded with a call for greater devolution of funding and powers so that they can prioritise and fund the long-term improvements needed to transport infrastructure and service. In response to the Government's invitation for devolution deals ahead of the 2015 Spending Review/ Autumn Statement, 28 of the 34 of included significant transport asks, which included:

1. Further bus franchising powers and control of resources, including bus subsidies.
 2. A single, smart-ticketing system.
 3. Multi-year funding and consolidated transport budgets.
 4. Moving traffic management powers.
 5. Memoranda of Understanding/ strategic partnerships with Highways England and influence spending from RIS 2 (Roads Investment Strategy).
 6. More influence over rail assets, operations and future investment (see below under the Rail update).
5. 'Devo deals' announced since Autumn 2015 have included significant transfer of funding and decision making, recognising many of the asks listed, with greater control over bus services making the biggest headlines. However, LGA members have highlighted concerns with the slow pace of progress on deals in non-metropolitan areas after the early success in Cornwall. The LGA will continue to develop the evidence base on devolution and to push for progress in non-metropolitan areas through the media and other opportunities for influencing national politicians. There is more on the Buses Bill below.
6. Councils have also been seeking powers to enforce moving traffic offences similar to those already enjoyed by Wales and London, for a long time. Such powers give local areas the ability to deal more effectively with congestion, air quality, and road safety hotspots as well as enforcement of weight restrictions. The Chair of the EEHT Board wrote to the Transport Minister last year with proposals of how the powers could be adopted by English councils in a way that would deal with Government's concerns that some councils may misuse such powers to raise revenue. This is now being followed up at officer level.

Buses Policy and the Buses Bill

7. The EEHT Board commissioned a report, Missing the Bus?, on the status of bus provision in non-metropolitan areas in order to understand the pressures on council's ability to support bus provision, how they are responding to budget reductions and what further measures would help them. The report made a number of recommendations:
 - 7.1 Suite of regulatory reforms to help the bus network deliver better value for the financial support it receives. This includes the availability of franchising powers to all areas, changes to the role of Traffic Commissioners, changes to make smart-ticketing easier and the moving traffic enforcement powers referred to above to aid bus journey times by reducing congestion.
 - 7.2 That there are no further reductions to the Bus Services Operators Grant and that the grant is devolved to councils.
 - 7.3 The lessons from the Total Transport pilots are rapidly disseminated and that councils are empowered to build on them.
 - 7.4 fully funding the cost of operating The English National Concessionary Transport Scheme.
8. There have been some notable successes. The Buses Bill will make available bus franchising powers potentially to all areas, however, the Government's current policy is to restrict it to combined authorities with a mayor, although Cornwall is the current exception. We anticipate that it will also require bus operators to make data on fares

more accessible, reform the licensing system, strengthen statutory bus partnerships and make smart ticketing easier to implement – all of which the LGA have previously lobbied for. The latest Spending Review confirmed that BSOG would continue. The LGA will continue to call for full funding of the concessionary fares scheme, devolution of BSOG and councils to be given moving traffic enforcement powers, as well as the early sharing of the Total Transport pilots. Officers will also continue to scrutinise the Buses Bill, which is expected to be published shortly, in favour of councils' interests.

Air Quality

9. Transport is a major contributor to poor air quality – for example, road transport still accounts for just under one third of total Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_x) emissions. Emissions of NO_x can cause breathing problems, trigger asthma, reduce lung function and cause lung diseases.
10. Following the launch of infraction proceedings by the European Commission for breach of NO_x limit values, and a Supreme Court ruling, the Government consulted on its draft plans for tackling the air pollution problem, to which the LGA responded.
11. Subsequently, in its response, the Government proposed a Clean Air Zone framework that would allow local authorities to introduce one of four types of Clean Air Zones (CAZs)¹ under a framework designed to ensure the same standards are set for each class of vehicle in each CAZ.
12. One change from the draft plans was for CAZs to be compulsory in five cities: Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham, Derby and Southampton. For example, in Birmingham and Leeds this will mean that buses, heavy goods vehicles, taxis and light goods vehicles that do not meet the Euro standard 6 (the latest standard on exhaust emissions of NO_x and other pollutants) will have to pay to enter a CAZ. Cars can only be considered after measures are taken on these on other types of vehicles. Other areas would also be able to introduce Clean Air Zones.
13. At the same time, the LGA was invited to give evidence to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee evidence session on air quality and on Defra's plans. Through our oral and written response the LGA made the following points:
 - 13.1 Do not support the Government's plan to 'impose' CAZs on some councils. CAZs should be optional and further we do not believe they will allow the UK to meet its air quality obligations unless they are introduced as part of a wider package of measures at the national and local level (including moving traffic enforcement powers).
 - 13.2 At national level, the Government should incentivise a move away from the most harmful cars and consider what contribution vehicle manufacturers should make to the cost of reducing nitrogen dioxide pollution.
 - 13.3 We would welcome more flexibility to deal with cars as the Government acknowledges that "around 80 per cent of NO_x emissions in areas where the UK is exceeding NO₂ limits are due to transport... the largest source is emissions from diesel light duty vehicles (cars and vans)"

¹ CAZs can cover (type A) buses and taxis; (B) buses, taxis and HGVs; (C) Buses, taxis, HGVs and vans; or (D) buses, taxis, HGVs, vans and cars. They cannot only target cars or only target HGVs.

- 13.4 Greater flexibility is needed for buses, for example to exempt infrequent visitors and target frequent zone-entrants, or to set different standards (national standards are not needed as bus services tend to operate very locally, unlike HGVs etc).
14. It is expected that the Government will consult in summer with a view to introducing secondary legislation in 2017. Scoping studies will also be undertaken in the affected places.
15. Under Part 2 of the Localism Act the Government could require councils to pay all or part of an infraction fine. The LGA will continue to make the case that there is no justification for the Government to pass on fines to local authorities for air quality infractions.

Document is Restricted

Note of last People & Places Board meeting

Title: People & Places Board
Date: Thursday 14 January 2016
Venue: Smith Square 1&2, Ground 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
8	Welcome, introductions and declarations of interest The chair welcomed members to the meeting and introduced Chris Townsend (Chief Executive) and Andrew Field (Head of Operations) from Broadband Delivery UK. Apologies for absence were noted. Councillor Mike Jones repeated the declaration of interest made at the board meeting on the 19 th October 2015 - that he was currently working as a consultant for a company involved in the broadband sector.	
9	Minutes of the last meeting on 19 October 2015 In the minutes of the meeting held on the 19 th October 2015, it was noted that page two, point three, should also state that LGA officers would liaise with the District Councils' Network as well as County Councils' Network. Decision The minutes were subsequently agreed .	
10	Superfast Broadband and the Digital Divide Daniel Shamplin-Hall, Adviser on Policy and Finance, introduced the report on superfast broadband and the digital divide. At the last meeting, members had highlighted frustration around the lack of progress on connectivity. Since then, a nationwide survey had been commissioned and the response rate from councils currently stood at 75%. He advised that super-fast broadband delivery was on track to achieve its target. 91% coverage across the country had been achieved and 95% coverage was set to be achieved by 2017. The report suggested councils were broadly satisfied with delivery. However, respondents reported that mobile infrastructure had failed and 70% were dissatisfied with the rate at which delivery partners were engaged. Councils were looking to develop their own relationships with local networks. Since the	

board last met, the government had established the universal service obligation. He advised that the LGA would be responding to that consultation.

Chris Townsend, Chief Executive Officer of Broadband Delivery UK, updated the board on the BDUK project. The project had set objectives to achieve 90% coverage of the UK by May 2016 and 95% coverage by December 2017. 3.5 million premises had been delivered with broadband to date and 4.2 million premises were on track to be delivered with broadband by May.

BDUK had now started phase 2. They currently spent 50% of time working with BT. In April 2014, the project had introduced seven market test programmes of different technologies and funding models and would publish their findings at the end of January.

He advised the board that smaller suppliers demonstrated they could win open procurement plan networks and design and build networks, as well as providing service customers with value.

Market capability was improving and BT were now delivering 30,000 to 40,000 premises with super-fast broadband a week. Small suppliers had delivered 20,000 in three years and BDUK were working hard with them to increase this. In rural areas of Northumberland and Hampshire, small fibre networks issuing superfast speeds had been set up using telegraph poles, which avoided the need to build trenches and was very cost effective.

Whilst negotiations with the European Union on state aid clearance for the broadband scheme were still ongoing, BDUK were optimistic this would be secured by April. In addition, the universal service obligation would provide a solution to households achieving less than ten megabits and the board would be kept updated on its progress.

He advised the board that BDUK would ensure BT delivered against contractual commitments. BT had confirmed that they would pay a gain share of £129 million in 2016 if the take up of superfast broadband increased. If the take up increased again by 30%-40%, BT would pay another £129 million. In addition, the estimated underspend was currently £250 to £300 million. The underspend and gain share would be mapped out and put back into the project to enable the project to increase coverage.

He assured the board that a report would be published by the end of January and that it would be shared with board members. He welcomed council engagement thus far, highlighting it as critical to the success of the scheme and asked that local authorities continue working with them to provide premises with information.

Board members raised the following points in the discussion that followed:

- Members asked about the criteria to qualify for the superfast broadband upgrade schemes and highlighted the importance of BDUK working with local authorities to ensure information was provided to the public. It was agreed the postcode checker on

BDUK's website would be sent to members.

- The experience in households in rural areas did not equate with the claim that 90-95% coverage had been achieved. The board was informed that if a premise was far from a cabinet they would not receive superfast speeds as they were not in a target area. It was suggested that a solution might be to put a secondary cabinet in remote areas.
- It was not clear which premises were due to receive help as BT would not release the postcodes. Members were advised that BT would release these soon. They were assured that the project was finding ways to cover the last 5% of premises (1.5million).
- Members asked what the ability of smaller providers would be to deal with disasters (such as flooding). The board was reassured that BDUK had confidence in the smaller companies to act fast in these situations.
- With reference to a specific example on the Welsh borders, there was a discussion on the issue of the challenges of cross board collaboration. As many people in this area lived more than 1.2 kilometre from fibre cabinets, this presented problems when more government departments required more documents to be completed online.
- Members questioned the opportunity for underspend from the SBP to be reallocated to the Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP) and welcomed the opportunity to discuss MIP in more detail with officials going forward. Suggestions included, Group Leaders coordinating local intelligence from Board members and hosting a conference in the spring between council procurement officers, members and BDUK officials.
- With reference to the misperception amongst local residents that a good broadband connection could only be obtained through fibre optic, members discussed the range of innovative solutions available and emphasised the need to address the information gap.

Decisions

The People and Places Board:

1. **Noted** the emerging results of the survey and the latest coverage data
2. **Noted** the update Superfast Broadband Programme from BDUK; and
3. **Agreed** the next steps in taking forward the LGA's work on digital connectivity.

Actions

It was agreed that:

- A question and answer type document would be developed and circulated to board members on key issues raised during the broadband delivery UK project item. This would include details on

the Universal Service Commitment, satellite voucher scheme, a summary of assurances provided by BDUK officers at the meeting and a link to their online postcode checker on BDUK website to enable people to access the schemes.

- Member Services Officers would circulate the slides from the BDUK presentation to board members.
- LGA officers would liaise with BDUK to disseminate the government's phase 3 pilots final report when it was published in late January.
- LGA officers would draft a formal letter from the Chair of the Board to BDUK to push for the reallocation of any underspend on the Mobile Infrastructure Project, organise a conference with lead broadband suppliers and LGA lead officers in the spring to discuss new procurement processes, hear from alternative network providers and share best practice, and to lobby BDUK and the government's Digital Economy Unit to explore efforts to support councils to better stimulate demand in areas.
- LGA officers would engage the Mobile Network Operators to understand the mobile market and wider commercial development and explore ways both sectors could work together.
- LGA officers would explore media opportunities following the outcome of the meeting and report potential ideas back to the chair of the board in the week commencing the 25th January.
- BDUK would return and update the board in March or April 2016.

12 The Spending Review, Business Rates Retention and the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2016/17 and Future Years

Nicola Morton (Head of Local Government Finance) reported on the Spending Review, Autumn Statement 2015 and the 2016/2017 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. She advised the board that this had involved a funding reduction of 24% in real terms for local government. She updated the board on the following points: the potential for councils to increase council tax by 2%, the consultation on the new homes bonus, the potential savings that could be moved to social care and the opportunity for councils to retain business rates.

Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive of the LGA, highlighted that although the Settlement was 'flat cash', this was based on assumptions on council tax bases and did not take into account cost pressures and would be particularly challenges in the first few years of the settlement. In addition, he emphasised that the LGA would ask whether government proposals to invest additional Better Care Fund monies could come into the process earlier. With regard to the option for councils to negotiate four year settlement, this would be contingent on councils submitting an efficiency plan; he assured board members that the LGA would be working on that.

Board members raised the following points in the discussion which

followed:

- There would be an implication on housing and planning (section 151) with some council officers saying this would lead to at least a 30% cut whilst the need to provide the living wage to employees would also affect finances.
- The government's right to vary the four year settlement was discussed and consequently the problems with making an efficiency plan under these circumstances. At the same time, there was a discussion on the potential financial loss that would result from not producing an efficiency plan.
- The potential 2% increase in council tax was discussed and how that would be spent. With financial pressures coming in with the Autism Act, cuts in the Better Care Fund, overspends on adult social care in combination with efficiency savings, members agreed that 2% would have a limited impact. There was concern that other services would need to be cut if a council could not fund priority services. There was a strong feeling that the flexibilities to raise council tax offered to those district councils whose council tax is currently in the lowest quartile should be extended to all districts. Board members were assured that the LGA would be asking how councils could square the circle until the better care fund came in in four years' time. The LGA would ask if it was possible to bring this fund in earlier.
- The LGA's response to the financial settlement was discussed, with several members expressing the view that that the overall tone and substance of the submission did not reflect the reality for many councils. Members highlighted the challenging timescale for councils to set a budget, with the settlement announced the week before Christmas and emphasised the importance to continue lobby for more sustainable funding.
- There was a discussion on the new homes bonus and it was emphasised that there needed to be a robust analysis of how the better care fund had been used.
- With reference to financial pressures specific to rural authorities, board members recommended that the LGA undertake work on distribution under 100% Business Rate Retention, with a view to taking a position on a sector wide equitable funding methodology.

Decisions:

The People and Places Board:

1. **Noted** the report;
2. Asked that their comments inform the LGA's finance policy work; and
3. That they recommended that work on distribution under 100% Business Rate Retention be undertaken, with a view to taking a position on a sector wide equitable funding methodology

Action

It was agreed that:

Work would be undertaken following the board's recommendation on Business Rate Retention and it would then be distributed to the LGA's Political Group Leaders (Vice-Chairs of the Association), with a view to taking a position on a sector wide equitable funding methodology.

LGA officers would continue to brief MPs and Peers as the Finance Settlement was debated in January and February 2016.

The board then moved into the confidential session.

13 Devolution within England

Rebecca Cox, Principal Policy Adviser, introduced the report on the progress of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill through Parliament. She advised the board that they expected the bill to be granted royal assent within the next two weeks.

Ian Hughes, Head of Programmes, advised the board that there was concern from the Executive Committee on blockages to devolution, particularly with regard to certain Government Departments and some backbench MPs who were unconvinced by the need for devolution. There had been some issues around governance and he advised that those that wanted deals as significant powers, such as Manchester, would be required to have a Metro Mayor. Academics had been commissioned to look at models for alternative mayoral governance models. So far, only Cornwall had a devolution deal without an elected mayor and more pressure needed to be put on ministers.

Andrew Campbell, Associate Director, advised the board that by September 2015 thirty-four bids had been received and eight agreements had been reached. In only four cases had there been no further engagement from government. There was some pressure on some two tiered areas to have a mayor. He expressed cautious optimism that there would be further deals signed by the end of January or February 2016.

In the discussion that followed members raised the following points:

- With reference to the number of completed bid applications, disappointment was expressed at the delay since submission and members expressed concern that the government might say the rules had changed during this period. In addition, it was felt there needed to be recognition from government that there would be different types of deals.
- With reference to examples from within their localities, members discussed the difficulties of cross boundary and cross party collaborations, including: changes to leadership; length of discussions; level of engagement from MPs and their level of understanding.

- There was concern that the debate was now focused on the form of local government rather than its function. Some authorities had been told by MPs that their areas were not big enough for a devolution deal. However, it was equally felt that such intervention was counter to the principles of devolution.

Decisions

It was agreed that a letter would be written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government expressing concern that there had been no deals in two tier areas outside of the city groups.

It was agreed that the LGA would start developing a programme of work to help give a clear steer on defining devolution and to further progress the public sector reform agenda.

Actions

It was agreed that:

A letter would be drafted to the Secretary of State.

A programme of work would be developed to help give a clear steer on defining devolution and to further progress the public sector reform agenda.

LGA officers would develop a prospectus spelling out the opportunities presented by devolution, which would be aimed at backbench MPs.

LGA officers would continue to examine ways in which Combined Authorities, Mayors and other areas with devolution deals could be supported within the LGA. The work would be steered by a working group with a representative from each of the groups in order to assess how the LGA develops to address these issues.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Gillian Brown	Arun District Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Heather Kidd	Shropshire Council
	Cllr John Pollard	Cornwall Council
Members	Cllr Sarah Osborne	Lewes District Council
	Cllr Vince Maple	Medway Council
	Cllr Jennifer Mein	Lancashire County Council
	Cllr Philip Atkins	Staffordshire County Council
	Cllr Paul Diviani	East Devon District Council
	Cllr Kenneth Meeson	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Derek Bastiman	Scarborough Borough Council
	Cllr Roger Blaney	Newark & Sherwood District Council
	Cllr Mike Jones	Cheshire West and Chester Council
	Cllr Caitlin Bisknell	Derbyshire County Council
	Cllr Amanda Martin	Council of the Isles of Scilly
	Cllr Clive Woodbridge	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
	Cllr Chris Townsend	Mole Valley District Council
Apologies	Cllr Alan Rhodes	Nottinghamshire County Council
	Cllr Andrew Bowles	Swale Borough Council
	Cllr Paul Carter CBE	Kent County Council
	Cllr Stan Collins	South Lakeland District Council
	Cllr Chris Hayward	Hertfordshire County Council
	Cllr John Osman	Somerset County Council



Superfast Broadband and the Digital Divide – Update Paper

Purpose

For information.

Summary

This paper provides members with:

- a national policy update on superfast broadband and mobile connectivity;
- an update on related LGA activity in these areas.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the update.

Action

Officers to take forward as directed by members.

Contact officer: Daniel Shamplin-Hall
Position: Adviser
Phone no: 020 7664 3314
Email: daniel.shamplin-hall@local.gov.uk

Superfast Broadband and the Digital Divide

Background

1. At the last People and Places Board, members received the results of the broadband and mobile connectivity survey of councils they had commissioned and heard presentations from Chief Executive of the Government's Broadband Delivery UK team (BDUK), Chris Townsend and the Superfast Broadband Programme Director at BDUK, Andrew Field.
2. Members used the opportunity to feed back to Government their experiences of the two major publicly funded programmes charged with improving connectivity: the Superfast Broadband Programme and the Mobile Infrastructure Project, and highlighted cases where both programmes had been ineffective at extending mobile and/or superfast broadband coverage.
3. At the Board, BDUK gave members a range of assurances on different aspects of the programme including the finalisation of the EU State Aid exemption by April 2016 and the manner local authorities' could use future clawback funds. Further details can be found in **Annex A** which was drawn up in partnership between LGA officers and BDUK and sent to all People and Places Board members.
4. Following the Board, Chair Cllr Mark Hawthorne wrote to Mr Townsend (**Annex B**). The letter:
 - 4.1 Pushed for the reallocation of any underspend on the Mobile Infrastructure Project to future projects focused on improving mobile connectivity;
 - 4.2 Offered to host a joint conference for council officers, members and BDUK officials – which has now been set for 17 March – to discuss the new procurement approach that will be implemented by Government and explore alternative solutions to reaching the final 5 percent.
 - 4.3 Lobbied for councils to be better supported by Government to raise awareness of the availability of superfast broadband in their areas and improve the online skills of their residents.
 - 4.4 Invited Mr Townsend to a future People and Places Board to discuss in more detail the Government's mobile connectivity plans. Mr Townsend has provisionally accepted attending the June Board.
5. With this in mind, this report provides an update on the developing national policy context, and reports the progress of related LGA work in this area including lobbying activity and the latest on the Up to Speed campaign.

National Policy Update

6. Since the last Board there have been several key policy developments that will impact councils and their residents. The key points to note for councils are:
 - 6.1 Ofcom will enact new measures to separate BT and Openreach to "increase competitive pressure on [Openreach's] network. This is likely to be regarded as positive by councils.
 - 6.2 Ofcom will also auction off further mobile spectrum by 2020 with a specific obligation on the winning provider to improve rural mobile coverage for residents.
 - 6.3 EE will build a new national mobile network for the Emergency Services (The Emergency Services Network) which will also improve mobile coverage for rural residents.
 - 6.4 It is an opportune moment for councils to seek to influence and engage with Mobile Network Providers (MNOs) on their upcoming commercial delivery plans in light of the mobile coverage obligations they have agreed with Government.

7. The Government's Market Test Pilots, seven different technologies piloted across the country to trial new models of delivery and service provision, have had their preliminary findings announced in [a report released in February](#). The report highlighted that:
 - 7.1 Suppliers can successfully use mixed technologies to deliver cost-effective superfast broadband solutions in hard to reach areas;
 - 7.2 Smaller "alt-net" suppliers can bid for, win and deliver open public procurements at competitive costs, including meeting the necessary EU-wide State aid requirements for receiving public funding;
 - 7.3 Communities can work together with suppliers to create viable commercial conditions for small projects.
8. Encouragingly, the increase in "alt nets" in the market has given local authorities a wider choice when procuring solutions to extending provision to the hardest to reach residents. This has seen some councils already procure from alt-net providers, including those mentioned in this report. As part of the LGA's upcoming Superfast Broadband Conference on 17 March (**Annex C**), attendees will hear from two of the pilots on the results of their work.
9. The Government has announced it will be conducting a review into the **business broadband** market. The review will specifically look at increasing the level of affordable and high quality fibre broadband available to businesses. It will assess what steps can be taken to encourage choice and competition which will help drive down prices while delivering a better service. This follows the Government's Broadband Connection Voucher Scheme which ran from December 2013 until October 2015 which issued 55,000 vouchers for superfast broadband connections to SMEs during its lifetime of the scheme. Several councils are considering adopting a similar scheme separate to Government and the LGA will work closely to disseminate any best practice that results from any resulting activity.
10. Ofcom announced the initial conclusions of its **Digital Communications Review**, its first overarching review of the UK's digital communications for ten years. The review considered future issues relating to infrastructure and competition and, amongst a raft of other measures, announced a new strategy "to promote large-scale roll-out of new ultrafast broadband networks, based on cable and fibre lines, as an alternative to the partly copper-based technologies currently being planned by BT." To achieve this they will obligate Openreach to open up its telegraph poles and cable ducts to rival providers to "be able to build their own fibre networks, connected directly to homes and offices."
11. Ofcom will also overhaul Openreach's governance which it concluded "lacks adequate independence from BT." By doing this Ofcom will look to secure "greater transparency over how costs and assets are allocated between Openreach and the rest of BT."
12. Councils have been working in partnership with both BT and other digital infrastructure providers to extend superfast broadband coverage to as many residents as possible. The introduction of measures to increase competition in the market and make it easier and cheaper for suppliers to use infrastructure is likely to be regarded as positive by councils and their residents.
13. In regards to mobile, encouragingly Ofcom have stated that any future auctions of radio spectrum, specifically those that will go to mobile network operators, will include new obligations to help improve **rural mobile coverage**. The LGA will look to engage with Ofcom to better understand these rural coverage obligations. By 2020, Ofcom will auction off the 700 MHz spectrum band, a

band particularly well suited to providing better coverage to rural areas as it can cover a wider area and also penetrates further through walls.

14. The Government and the Home Builders Federation (HBF) have also announced an agreement to deliver superfast broadband connectivity to **new build properties** in the UK. All new developments will see fibre based broadband offered either for free or as part of a co-funded initiative. It is estimated that more than half of all new build properties can be connected to fibre broadband free of charge to developers.
15. Finally, the Government recently announced it selected the UK's largest Mobile Network Operator, EE, to build a **new national mobile network for the Emergency Services**, giving 300,000 critical emergency workers access to 4G voice and data for the first time. As part of the project EE will build 500 new mast sites, expanding mobile coverage in rural areas, and will switch on low frequency 800MHz spectrum on more than 3,800 sites to enhance rural and indoor coverage.
16. The project is important for hard to reach rural areas as consumers, although only on EE's network, will be able to access better more reliable mobile connection – although the network will have the capability to afford network access priority to Emergency Services when needed. (More detail on a recent LGA-EE meeting is provided below.)

LGA Activity

17. The LGA and BDUK will host an event on 17 March for council officers, councillors and BDUK officials to discuss how best to procure solutions to reach the final five percent. All members of the People and Places Board as well as leaders and broadband council officers from councils leading on the Superfast Broadband Programme have been invited to the event. An agenda is attached below (Annex C). The event will be an opportunity for councillors and council officers to hear first-hand from the Government's Market Test Pilots on their new solutions, and from council officers and members on their experiences using "alt net" providers and of procuring within and outside the Government's National Procurement Framework.
18. The Board-commissioned Up to Speed campaign is in its final stages of design and will be launched in March. Its main aims are to help both councils and residents consider different approaches to improving broadband speeds, and raise awareness of those residents, councillors and businesses still without adequate broadband speeds owing to a lack of suitable digital infrastructure.
19. The LGA successfully lobbied the Culture, Media and Sports Committee to host a local government evidence session to feed into its Inquiry into Establishing World Class Connectivity. A session with West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Westminster City Council and Connecting Devon and Somerset was held on 3 February, with the sector's viewpoint put forward. The Inquiry is expected to conclude early this year.
20. Chair of the Board, Cllr Mark Hawthorne, and LGA officers have held separate meetings with Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) EE and Hutchinson 3G UK (Three) to discuss their commercial roll out plans in rural not spot areas, and explore how both sectors can continue to develop helpful partnerships locally. Council officers have highlighted the need for MNOs to improve at sharing their commercial roll out plans with councils to help with efforts to provide better connectivity to residents. With all four MNOs signed up to provide voice coverage to 90% of the UK's landmass, and Telefonica (O2) obligated to provide 98% of the UK population with 4g coverage by 2017, it is an opportune moment for local government to engage with the mobile sector. All the major MNOs will be under pressure to build new digital infrastructure to service these obligations and the LGA

will lobby for them to liaise with local authorities as part of these plans. As a result of the meetings already held it has been agreed that:

- 20.1 To encourage the link up of MNOs and local authorities on a strategic as well as technical planning level, the LGA will work in partnership with Hutchinson 3G UK and EE, and pursue other positive relationships with remaining MNOs through the national representative body Mobile UK, to facilitate their engagement with local authorities' local infrastructure, economic growth and community engagement teams, as part of their roll out plans.
 - 20.2 EE will look to share their wider Emergency Service Network roll out plans when possible with the LGA and the sector later on in the year. The LGA will maintain pressure to ensure this happens.
 - 20.3 LGA officers will liaise with Hutchinson 3G UK in the series of planned regional events to share their connectivity plans with local stakeholders.
21. Finally, the LGA issued a press release responding to the conclusion of the Government's Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP) and its plans to extend permitted development rights to taller mobile phone masts. Rather than introducing measures to bypass the planning system and allow masts in excess of 50ft to be built without planning permission, the LGA urged Mobile Network Operators and their delivery partners to work with councils and communities to identify and address coverage blackspots together. The LGA also pressed for Government to reallocate the underspend of the MIP to new projects related to tackling poor mobile connectivity. The press release can be found [here](#); it was picked up by both [ITV](#) and the [Daily Mail](#).

Next steps

22. LGA officers will
- 22.1 Continue to engage Mobile Network Operators to understand the mobile market and wider commercial development and explore ways both sectors can work together.
 - 22.2 Seek to further engage Government on their mobile connectivity strategy and plans for supporting MNOs and local government partnership working Report to members at the next Board on the progress of the new Up to Speed Campaign.
 - 22.3 Report to the Board on the outcome of the Superfast Broadband conference in March.
 - 22.4 Continue seek to engage Ofcom to assess whether their new mobile coverage map could be a useful tool for councils or if it could be improved in any way.
 - 22.5 Subject to final member approval, finalise the attendance of Chris Townsend at the June Board.



People and Places Board

14 March 2016



**SUPERFAST
BRITAIN**



Annex A

Chris Townsend, Chief Executive of Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) addressed the People and Places Board **on 14 January 2016** and provided the following assurances in relation to the Superfast Broadband Programme:

- The programme has passed **3.5 million premises to date** and is on target to pass **4 million by March 2016** and around **4.1 million by May 2016**. This will enable the UK total coverage to reach 90 per cent. This will be measured independently by Ofcom.
- **Negotiations to secure an EU State Aid decision until 2020 are ongoing**. BDUK believe they will have **clearance in principle by end of January 2016** and **formal clearance by the end of April 2016**. This will allow areas to embark on new procurements.
- BDUK will be **publishing the final findings of the [market test pilots](#) at the end of January 2016** – a series of projects testing different technologies for extending superfast broadband to the hardest to reach areas of the UK. As part of the process, pilots have been **reviewed for their risk management capacity including abilities to cope with disaster recovery**.
- In partnership with BT, BDUK are **currently conducting a nationwide mapping exercise to identify those premises that make up the ‘final 5 per cent’**. BT will present proposals to individual local authorities for extending provision to these premises through gainshare funds/clawback funding. If local authorities do not believe this represents value for money, they will be able to **release clawback funding for use in procuring alternative solutions from other providers**.
- **BDUK committed to revisit the People and Places Board** and discuss the Government’s Mobile Infrastructure Project at a later date.

The Universal Service Commitment and Satellite Scheme

The Government committed to giving access to 2Mbps download speed to every premise in the UK from the end of 2015. As part of this commitment, councils in conjunction with BDUK are making available the option of a subsidised satellite broadband installation for eligible premises. This provides support towards the cost of equipment and installation of a satellite broadband connection so that a basic broadband service can be purchased for a first year cost of no more than £400 (taking account of any upfront costs and the 12 month service charges). The subsidised installation can also be used to access higher cost packages with higher speeds or greater monthly data caps. Residents will only be eligible if their premise does not have access to speeds of more than 2Mbps.

How can my residents access this scheme?

Residents can check whether they are in a scheme area via the BDUK postcode checker and receive a link to the relevant part of their council website:
<http://gosuperfastchecker.culture.gov.uk/basicbroadbandchecker/index.php>

Annex B



Chris Townsend,
Broadband Delivery UK,
Cabinet Office,
70 Whitehall,
London,
SW1A 2AS

21 January 2016

Dear Chris,

I would like to formally thank you and Andrew for presenting to the LGA People and Places Board on 14 January 2016. The members of the Board valued the update on the Superfast Broadband Programme and the opportunity to feedback on how it has performed in their local areas. As we all agree, spreading coverage to as close to 100 per cent of residents as possible is vital if we are to achieve local growth, increase productivity, and increasingly deliver more local services online.

The Phase 3 pilots and the EU State Aid Exemption

At the Board, you updated members on the ongoing talks between Government and the European Commission to secure an EU State Aid exemption for the future public funding of superfast broadband projects. I am heartened to hear it is likely you will achieve clearance in principle at the end of this month, and formal sign off in April 2016. As you can imagine, any pause to securing the exemption has a knock on effect in local areas, leaves councils unable to fund new procurements, and ultimately afflicts the communities we serve.

I understand that when an agreement is secured you will be seeking councils' input into how the new procurement approach will be implemented. The LGA is happy to assist in this regard and offers to host a conference for council officers, members and BDUK officials to discuss how a new process would work. The event would also be an excellent opportunity for members from across the country to find out more about alternative network suppliers in the broadband infrastructure market place. If you are content with this, I will ask my officers to contact your officials to agree a date.

Take up of Superfast Broadband

At the Board LGA officers made reference to the relatively low levels of take up of superfast broadband where its provision has been extended as part of the publicly funded programme. Not only are there positive outcomes for our residents when they take up superfast broadband, but also for central and local government who "clawback" more public subsidy the more connections that are taken up on the ground. I am keen therefore to see councils better supported by Government to raise awareness of the availability of superfast broadband in their areas and improve the online skills of their residents. The transfer of the Digital Economy Unit's function to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and the refresh of the UK's Digital Strategy present an opportunity for Government to join up its efforts to improve digital skill with schemes to encourage the take up of superfast broadband. I will ask my officers to secure a meeting with officials to discuss this going forward.

14 March 2016

The Mobile Infrastructure Project

Before the meeting, we briefly touched upon the Government's Mobile Infrastructure Project (the MIP). It is widely accepted that the Project has failed many areas, with only 75 of the planned 600 masts forecast to be built. I am aware that as of November 2015, only £9.1 million from the project's £150 million three-year budget has been spent and am concerned there will be a significant underspend when the project completes in March 2016. In light of this, I would encourage Government to reallocate any underspend to future efforts focussed on improving mobile connectivity in not-spot areas. I would also recommend the Government carries out a full assessment of the MIP to capture any learning and data from the last three years. The LGA would be happy to disseminate such learning to councils to ensure any achievements to date can be built on.

Finally, you kindly offered to revisit the People and Places Board at a later date to discuss the MIP in more detail. I would like to invite you to the next Board on Monday 14 March 2016. Please feel free to contact Daniel.shamplin-hall@local.gov.uk to discuss this further.

Thank you again for your presentation and I look forward to engaging with you further over my term as Chair of the LGA People and Places Board to achieve our shared objectives.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Mark Hawthorne MBE
Chairman of the LGA People and Places Board

Annex C



Extending Superfast Broadband to the final five per cent

17 March 2016 Congress Centre
28 Great Russell St London WC1B 3LS

Extending superfast broadband coverage to as close to 100 per cent of residents as possible is vital if we are to achieve local growth, increase productivity, and increasingly deliver more local services online.

The Local Government Association and Broadband Delivery UK are hosting a joint conference for officers and councillors to discuss the next stage of extending SFB provision to the hardest to reach areas. The event will be an opportunity for attendees to:

- hear directly from Government on the findings from the Phase 3 market test pilots;
- discover more about the efforts of alternative network suppliers and community-funded schemes to extend digital infrastructure to the final 5 per cent;
- share learning on the benefits and challenges of procuring solutions at a smaller scale;
- hear from councils on their efforts to raise awareness of the availability of SFB and increase the digital skills of residents, and from communities themselves procuring their own solutions.

RSVP – Rachel.duke@local.gov.uk

09.45 Registration and refreshments

10.30 **Opening Remarks**
Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Chair of LGA People and Places Board

10.45 **Matt Agar – BDUK**
An update on Phase 1 and 2 and the findings from the Phase 3 pilots

11.00 **Case studies - technologies for extending provision to the hardest to reach rural communities**

- **Daniel Heery, Cybermoor**
- **Neil Tucker, AB Internet**

11.35 Refreshments

11.50 **Technologies for extending provision to the hardest to reach rural communities**

Chaired by Cllr Hawthorne

- **David Hamson, BDUK**
The capacity for alt-nets to compete in the broadband infrastructure market
- **Malcolm Corbett, Independent Networks Co-operative Association (INCA)**
A sector-wide perspective on alt-net capacity to deliver solutions at scale
- **Liz Harrison, Kent County Council**

	The effectiveness of alt-network delivery – a council officer’s perspective
12.50	Lunch
13:45	How should local government procure new ways to reach the final five percent? Chaired by Cllr Hawthorne <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matt Agar, BDUK An overview of the Government’s newly drafted National Procurement Framework• Matt Smith, Herefordshire Council/Gloucestershire County Council Experience of procuring outside the NPF – an officer’s perspective• Cllr Penny Channer, Essex County Council Procuring outside the NPF – a councillor’s perspective
14:45	Workshops Workshop 1 Increasing take up and digital skills Councils are working hard to increase take up in local areas to benefit residents and secure value for money through clawback. Two speakers will share their experiences of increasing awareness/raising digital skills. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oliver Sheldrick, Go On UK The digital heatmap• Andrew Arditti, Connecting Cheshire Partnership <hr/> Workshop 2 Communities building their own infrastructure Some communities not covered by the Superfast Broadband Programme have developed their own community funded initiatives; this workshop will showcase examples. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barry Forde, B4RN (Broadband for the Rural North)• Dave Hollings, Co-operative and Mutual Solutions
15.35	Workshops repeat (refreshments served in workshops)
16.25	Close

Current LGA support activity	Audience	Intended outcome	Timing / dissemination
Publications and reports			
Governance models: review possible executive arrangements and different mayoral models (Professor Robin Hambleton)	Senior officers and members in councils, especially those in combined authorities.	Raising awareness of different models of governance; sharing knowledge on how to evaluate different models.	Report to LGA end April, dissemination online and through existing events in June/July
Analysis of the implications of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 for the formation of combined authorities and practical advice for those considering a CA (supplier tbc)	Senior officers and members in councils, especially those considering combined authorities.	Councils are better informed on the practicalities of forming a combined authority.	Report to LGA early May, dissemination online and through officer network in first instance.
Briefing note on health devolution and the implications for providers and the VCS (builds on briefing event on 1 March)	Councils, health partners, VCS groups	Better awareness of how health and care devolution fits into the wider transformation landscape. Co-branded with NHS Clinical Commissioners and NHS Confederation.	March; dissemination online and through relevant networks.
Sharing the experience of Greater Manchester council and health partners of their health and care devolution experiences (from roundtable event Feb 2016).	Councils with an interest in health and care devolution.	Learning is shared across the sector. Co-branded with Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Greater Manchester NHS and Public Sector Transformation Network.	March; dissemination online
LGA DevoNext hub	Wide	LGA continues to be the leader in sharing knowledge on devolution in England.	Ongoing
Interviews and analysis of devolution deal process to date	Members and officers in councils, LEPs, civil servants	Learning from frontrunner deals is captured; recommendations made	Report to LGA end March. Publication likely post

(New Economy)	and Minister.	for improving the process where possible.	purdah. Depending on finding we may consider a local/national roundtable to discuss next steps.
Think pieces: the role of communities and the VCS in devolution (partner tbc)	Councils and voluntary and community organisations	Good practice is shared and councils are better equipped to engage their community representatives on devolution.	Report to LGA in the summer
Work with places			
Bespoke engagement with places on negotiations	Demand-driven	Places benefit from the most up to date information on devolution and 'critical friend' challenge.	Ongoing
Governance support to councils (Centre for Public Scrutiny)	Council members and officers	Some places are directly supported to develop their governance arrangements and learnings are shared with all.	Report to LGA at end March; dissemination online; workshop with devolution network planned; session at member event planned.
Higher education: programme of engagement with Universities UK	Initial work focused on small group of leaders from both sectors. Lessons to be shared with councils, combined authorities and LEAs.	Better understanding of how universities and higher education partners can play a role in place-based services.	Scoping meeting in March; potential for 12-month programme
Lobbying			
Engaging with MPs to share key messages about devolution.	All MPs	MPs are better able to engage constructively in local discussions.	To align with first annual devolution report from the Secretary of State.
Events			
Officer devolution network	Council officers involved in	Learning and advice is shared	Next meeting 28 April.

	devolution deals	between peers. Knowledge and information can be targeted to key individuals.	Ongoing activity, including thematic workshops.
Member devolution event	All members, especially backbench members	Members are better informed about the national context on devolution and can engage more effectively in local conversations.	21 June
Joint event with NALC (National Association of Local Councils)	Principal and town and parish councillors	The sector is aware of the opportunities for onward devolution to town and parish councils. Town and parish councils better understand the wider local government context.	1 June (tbc)
Devolution sessions at LGA annual conference	All delegates	Specifics are still being scoped out.	5-7 July
Local devolution communication events.	On demand from places	Comms officers are better able to communicate with their residents about devolution.	Three events in train for the spring.
Tools			
Analysis and sharing of tax and spend data tool for all councils, plus guides on how to use effectively	Council officers negotiating or implementing a devolution deal or working on public service transformation	Councils are better able to make the case for transforming public services	LGA currently reviewing first drafts. Dissemination online once QA checks have been completed.
Local devolution communications tools.	Comms officers in councils and combined authorities.	Comms officers are better able to communicate with their residents about devolution.	Project is currently being scoped.
LGA corporate work			
Ongoing development of the	Various	Various, with a focus on ensuring	Ongoing in anticipation of

broader support offer on devolution to ensure it remains relevant to all places.		our offer remains relevant to councils at all stages of the process.	RSG.
Combined authority working group	Internal	The LGA reflects the changes in local government.	Reports to Leadership Board in April.

LGA location map

Local Government Association

Local Government House
 Smith Square
 London SW1P 3HZ

Tel: 020 7664 3131
 Fax: 020 7664 3030
 Email: info@local.gov.uk
 Website: www.local.gov.uk

Public transport

Local Government House is well served by public transport. The nearest mainline stations are: Victoria and Waterloo: the local underground stations are

St James's Park (Circle and District Lines), **Westminster** (Circle, District and Jubilee Lines), and **Pimlico** (Victoria Line) - all about 10 minutes walk away.

Buses 3 and 87 travel along Millbank, and the 507 between Victoria and Waterloo stops in Horseferry Road close to Dean Bradley Street.

Bus routes – Horseferry Road

- 507** Waterloo - Victoria
- C10** Canada Water - Pimlico - Victoria
- 88** Camden Town - Whitehall - Westminster - Pimlico - Clapham Common

Bus routes – Millbank

- 87** Wandsworth - Aldwych
- 3** Crystal Palace - Brixton - Oxford Circus

For further information, visit the Transport for London website at www.tfl.gov.uk

Cycling facilities

The nearest Barclays cycle hire racks are in Smith Square. Cycle racks are also available at Local Government House. Please telephone the LGA on 020 7664 3131.

Central London Congestion Charging Zone

Local Government House is located within the congestion charging zone.

For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at www.cclondon.com

Car parks

Abingdon Street Car Park (off Great College Street)

Horseferry Road Car Park
 Horseferry Road/Arneway Street. Visit the website at www.westminster.gov.uk/parking

