

Note of last City Regions Board meeting

Title: City Regions Board
Date: Thursday 23 November 2017
Venue: Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Welcome and Apologies The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming Members to the Board. Apologies were noted by the Chair. There were no declarations of interest.	
2	Industrial Strategy Daniel Gardiner, Adviser, introduced this Item, noting that the Industrial Strategy White Paper is due to be published on Monday 27 November 2017. The Chair introduced Alexandra Jones – Director of Industrial Strategy, from the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to the Board. Alex began by providing an overview of the White Paper, stating: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The White Paper followed the publication of the Industrial Strategy Green Paper released in January 2017.• The Green Paper received over 2,000 responses, many of which reflected a number of reoccurring themes.• These themes had set the direction for the White Paper and encouraged a streamlined approach with a particular emphasis on place-based growth.• At the heart of the Industrial Strategy is a push to boost productivity and increase the earning power of individuals. There then followed a confidential discussion that touched on a number of areas: skills devolution; partnership working; the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships; funding and local industrial strategies. The Chair thanked Alex for her time.	
	Decision:	

The City Regions Board noted:

- The latest intelligence regarding the forthcoming Industrial Strategy White Paper,
- The letter in **Appendix B**; and
- The framework for engagement between LGA Boards on the Industrial Strategy.

Actions:

- Officers to incorporate Members' comments into ongoing work relating to the Industrial Strategy and Local Enterprise Partnerships.
 - Alex Jones to be invited back to a future meeting, along with representation from the Department for Communities and Local Government (and possibly the Department of Education) – this should be after guidance on Local Industrial Strategies has been issued (March 2018).
- a) Appendix A - Briefing for presentation from Alexandra Jones
- b) Appendix B - Letter from Margot James MP and Jake Berry MP regarding the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) review

3 City Centre Management and Community Cohesion

The Chair invited Daniel Shamplin-Hall, Adviser, to introduce the paper. Daniel started by giving an overview of the paper, which included setting out the role city leaders can play to foster greater community cohesion.

Daniel stated that he required two steers from the Members for two different work-streams: city centre management and community cohesion in the context of the Government's forthcoming response to the Casey Review.

Discussion relating to the first work-stream focused on the potential to engage with Core Cities who were undertaking research into how councils can best support well managed, safe city centres. With this in mind, Members raised the following:

- The importance of the Board engaging with Core Cities in relation to their work
- That while the proposed areas of focus were centred on enforcement approaches; there was also an important need to explore more holistic responses (including outreach work) to issues surrounding community cohesion and centre management,
- That the LGA's work in this area should be extended, to include small cities and large towns and look to engage other partners, like the Key Cities Group
- The risks of a 'one size fits all approach', as such, this work should be tailored to individual urban towns and cities.
- Issues around traffic offenses and unregistered taxi companies. In addition, Members discussed the current Private Members Bill brought to Parliament by Daniel Zeichner MP, which is in-between

its first and second reading.

- One member mentioned that their own council had collated available powers pertaining to local authorities, local policing and enforcement in relating to city centre management and community cohesion, and was willing to share this with LGA Officers after the Board. The Chair also stated that his own city council had commissioned a similar piece of work, and that they would also share with LGA Officers to compare.
- Members also requested that LGA officers look to develop work that places a greater emphasis on homelessness and rough sleeping.

The second work-stream is in relation to the Board independently exploring the opportunities for urban authorities to support community cohesion, taking into consideration the imminent release of the Government's response to the Casey Review. Members agreed not to discuss this until the Review had been released, but asked that this decision be recorded formally.

Decisions:

- The board considered and agreed the first work-stream.
- The Board agreed to defer the second work-stream until the Casey Review had been released.
- Further work should be developed by officers in line with the board's wide-ranging interest in this area

Actions:

- The Board will revisit its work on Community Cohesion once the Government publishes its response to the Casey Review, due in the coming months.
- Officers will explore specific work relating to aggressive begging and homeless and city centre management
- Officers to circulate the list of available powers to board members

4 Fiscal Devolution

The Chair invited Alex Thomson, Principle Policy Adviser, to introduce the paper. Alex started by giving an overview of the paper, making particular reference to the previous asks the LGA has made to the government in relation to fiscal devolution. Alex also stated that a similar paper in relation to fiscal devolution will be submitted to the People and Places Board. Alex summarised by seeking two steers, whether to:

- Commission strategic communication analysis to strengthen future lobbying work; and
- Commission detailed econometric modelling to detail specific instances of fiscal devolution.

The Chair then proceeded to open up discussions to Board Members. The following was discussed:

- Members agreed with the report; that government ministers are dedicating the priority of their work in their respective portfolios on delivering Brexit, and agreed that calls for more fiscal devolution should not lose momentum.
- Some members raised concerns over commissioning further work in relation to strategic communications due to the already extensive calls for fiscal devolution.
- In turn other members reflected that that the message was simply not being heard by central government.
- In the course of the discussion that followed there was agreement with steer one, provided that the commissioning be clear in its objectives, guidance and structure.
- Members went on to discuss the public's low-opinion of local government's handling of financial matters, it was agreed that commissioned econometric work could help create a more distinctive argument, but the Board would need to be closely involved in its development.

Decisions:

- The Board endorsed the first steer regarding commissioning strategic communication analysis.
- The Board agreed in principle for the second steer, but requested more detailed examples and the parameters the work would cover before formally commissioning an external consultancy.
- Fiscal devolution to become a regular feature at future City Regions Board

Actions:

- For LGA officers to take forward commissions on both these areas of work, involving the board as requested.
- Fiscal devolution to feature on all City Regions Board agenda for the foreseeable future.

a) Appendix A - LGA's Fiscal Devolution asks

5 Brexit (oral update)

The Chair invited Ian Hughes, Head of Policy, to give the update on the current Brexit situation. Ian gave a brief overview, with the main focus and policy priority around gaining a seat in the Brexit negotiations to represent local authorities. Ian also gave an update on the LGA's Migration Advisory Committee, as well as communications from LGA on the possible implications Brexit will cause for local government.

The Chair opened the discussions up to Members:

- Members discussed the Autumn Budget (22 November), and the decision taken by the Chancellor, not to announce any detailed substituted for local government EU structural funding.
- Members discussed transitional periods pertaining to Brexit, after the UK leaves the EU.

- Members expressed concerns over what impact a ‘no deal’ Brexit would look like on local government, and possible costs.
- Members also discussed the future of EU law, and the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill, including the current stages of the Bill.
- Discussions were had over in relation to proposed EU law that could be delegated to local authorities’ post-Brexit, and the need for consultation with local authorities.
- Further discussions were held over creating spaces with Parliamentarians regarding these issues.
- Members agreed that the EU is an extremely large political body, with numerous offices and laws. These approaches and any future laws that will be created (from existing EU law) may have to be streamlined.

Decision:

- Members noted the update.

Action:

- Officers to proceed with work in line with Members’ steer.

6 Sub-national trade and investment (oral update)

Daniel Shamplin-Hall, Adviser, introduced the item, recapping work on sub-national trade and investment which the board had supported in the 2016-2017 cycle. He outlined the research which had been commissioned and the report produced by Value Adage. Following a discussion, members had steered officers to develop the set of recommendations in the report and broaden engagement with the Department for International Trade and the British Chamber of Commerce.

Decision:

- Members noted the update.

Action:

- Officers to proceed with work in line with Members’ steer.

7 Skills and employment (oral update)

The Chair invited Jasbir Jhas, Senior Adviser, to introduce the paper. Jas stated that there was resounding support on the consultation, and that future work-streams would focus on:

- Developing a lobbying strategy; and
- Developing a stakeholder engagement strategy.

Jas stated that these would further be explored in the next City Regions Lead Members meeting in the 11 December. Jas also went on to state that there would be updates to policy work, to incorporate the Industrial

Strategy White Paper, and linking with any Budget updates. Jasbir concluded that LGA officers were progressing well with making strong political partnerships with Department of Education officials and ministers.

Decision :

- Members noted the update.

Action:

- Officers to proceed with work in line with Members' steer.
- a) Appendix A - Work Local Consultation - Analysis of feedback

8 Leading Places (oral update)

The Chair invited Daniel Gardiner, Adviser, to introduce the paper. Daniel stated that the project so far was going well, and updated Members that the national event was taking place on 30 November 2017, with the second event taking place towards the end of March 2018.

Daniel went on to state that they are considering extending an invite to the new CEO for the newly established Office for Students (formally HEFCE), and a future Paper update will be submitted.

Decision:

- Members noted the update.

Action:

- Officers to proceed with work in line with Members' steer.

9 Budget Update

The Chair proposed to create a new Item, in order for Members to discuss the Autumn Budget (22 November 2017). Members agreed. The Chair then invited Members to turn discussions towards the Autumn Budget. Members conversed over the following:

- Members agreed that overall, the budget did not contain many updates.
- Some Members of the Board expressed their concerns over a lack of funding for both adult and child social care. However, debating this point, other Members stated that while there was no significant updates regarding adult and child social care, there was a lot on housing reform.
- In relation to housing, Members agreed that there was a significant push from the Chancellor. Some Members reasoned that the LGA – along with other external stakeholders – were making significant calls for this, and so it was important to acknowledge parts of these

calls had been met.

Decision:

- Members noted the update.

Action:

- Officers to proceed with work in line with Members' steer.

10 Notes of the Previous Meeting

Members agreed notes of the previous Board.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Sir Richard Leese CBE	Manchester City Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Robert Light	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
	Cllr Abigail Bell	Hull City Council
	Cllr Liz Hazell	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council
Members	Cllr Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
	Cllr Abi Brown	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
	Cllr Donna Jones JP	Portsmouth City Council
	Cllr Tim Warren	Bath & North East Somerset Council
	Cllr Samantha Dixon	Cheshire West and Chester Council
	Mayor Marvin Rees	Bristol City Council
	Cllr Jean Stretton	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Peter John OBE	Southwark Council
	Cllr Timothy Swift MBE	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Apologies	Cllr Simon Letts	Southampton City Council
	Cllr Martin Gannon	Gateshead Council
	Mayor Joe Anderson OBE	Liverpool City Council
	Cllr Jon Collins	Nottingham City Council
	Cllr Debbie Wilcox	Newport City Council
	Cllr Warren Morgan	Brighton & Hove City Council
In Attendance	Cllr Sue Jeffrey	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
	Cllr Paul Crossley	Bath & North East Somerset Council
LGA Officers		