

Note of last People & Places Board meeting

Title: People & Places Board
Date: Tuesday 8 June 2021
Venue: Online via Microsoft Teams

Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Chair's Welcome, Apologies and Substitutes and Declarations of Interest The Chair welcomed Members, officers, and guests to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Cllrs Peter Moss, Doina Cornell, Eddie Reeves and Barry Wood. Cllr Colin Davie attended the meeting as a substitute. Cllr Rachel Bailey declared an interest in relation to item 6 on the agenda as she was a partner in an agri-business. The Chair thanked Sue Woodward for her support and dedication to the Board in her time as a Board Member.	
2	Levelling Up The Chair invited Rebecca Cox, Principal Policy Adviser, to introduce the report. Rebecca introduced the report which asked Members for their views on a change of emphasise in relation to the Government's announcement of a Levelling Up White Paper in place of the previous Devolution (and Local Recovery) White Paper. Board Members made the following comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It would be useful for Tom Walker, Director of the Cities and Local Growth Unit, or Neil O'Brian, MP, to attend one of our Board Meetings so that Board Members could hear more about some of their key priorities which would help us in terms of how we lobby them going forward.• We need to understand exactly what the government's agenda is and what their ideas are before we start trying to work out responses and ways forward.	

- There will be people in different parts of the country who still want to move ahead with various devolution agendas, but I do think what is being suggested in terms of focusing on delivery is to be supported.
- We must take every opportunity to remind government that our rural and coastal areas need attention as well.
- This is a good opportunity for us as a Board to connect with the policy agenda that is emerging.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

Officers to take the appropriate to action to invite Tom Walker/Neil O'Brian to a future meeting of the Board.

3 Moving our employment and skills work forward

The Chair invited Jasbir Jhas, Senior Adviser, to introduce the report.

Jas introduced the paper which aimed to support a Board discussion to take stock of employment and skills activity over the past year, agreeing how best to re-position messaging around new Government policy, and plan activity over the coming year. The paper would be discussed at the City Regions Board on 16 June.

Board Members made the following comments:

- This is critical in the levelling-up work for people of all ages, not just young people. There is a significant role to play in all of this in relation to Adult Community Learning (ACL).
- With regards to youth provision, councils like Buckinghamshire working hard with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to join programmes together including traineeships to reach harder to place young people.
- We need to consider older adults too; many have become redundant for the first time in their lives as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Some do not necessarily need to be re-trained; they need additional training to better the skills that they already have.
- We must continue to focus on outcomes and must not work on the basis that one size fits all.
- Access to employment and education is important, and so we need to think about the rural areas and encourage innovation on this and welcome the comments made in terms of alignment and close working in government.

- We could build on the benefits of working from home and the opportunities that this offers for people to contribute from home and not having to travel, although access to broadband and technology would need to be considered.
- There are entrepreneurial issues across the country, and we must support people of all ages to start businesses and create employment opportunities not just for themselves, but for other people around them.

Jas responded to comments made by Board Members:

- A Skills Taskforce was set up a couple of years ago whereby representative bodies from education, training, business-led organisations were invited to allow collaboration and the sharing of best practice. It would be good to do something similar, perhaps a Jobs Taskforce to focus on the government's new agenda, the creation of jobs and explore training opportunities for people of all ages. Officers will be in touch with Lead Members in relation to the creation of a Jobs Taskforce after the report is presented to the City Regions Board on 16 June.
- With regards to training for older people, specifically industries including aviation, there are some positive stories of how councils with airports in their area have been able to fit people into different types of jobs and support their training, that's where ACL comes into its own and shows how councils are working constructively with the NHS trust.
- We are also working closely with organisations in relation to green jobs. One of the organisations has been undertaking evidence-based work over 2-3 years so we can provide more information on real-life case studies at a future meeting of the Board.
- With regards to encouraging people to start their own businesses and become self-employed, we'll be working more closely with a self-employed people association in coming months and fitting them into our wider thinking.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

Officers to liaise with People and Places Lead Members and City Regions Lead Members in relation to the setting up of a Jobs Taskforce.

4 Publications Update

The Chair invited Philip Clifford, Senior Adviser, to introduce the report.

Philip introduced the report which set out a brief overview of four reports due for publication in the coming weeks.

Board Members made the following comments:

- In relation to the 'local government's role in supporting the advanced digital skills pipeline' paper, there is reference to the fact that Tech employment growth will be strongest outside of the traditional hotspots of London and the South East, why is this the case?
- In relation to the 'Devolution deal to delivery' paper and soft powers, where does soft power come from?
- We need to be mindful of power supply issues and whether we have enough electric/power structure to support our changing economies.
- In relation to the 'A framework for supporting parish and town councils to play an increased role in local service delivery and place-shaping' paper, I would like the report to provide more information for the parish councils in need of more support regarding maintenance and what maintenance for them means.
- In relation to the 'A framework for supporting parish and town councils to play an increased role in local service delivery and place-shaping' paper, I wondered with the reduced focus work on devolution, is a greater role for town and parish councils still envisaged?

Philip responded to the comments made by Members of the Board:

- With regards to Tech employment growth, government expect the South East to reach saturation point. I could provide a more detailed response with Members offline if they would like me to do so.
- In relation to soft powers, we have had a nuanced 'back and forth' with the development of the devolution paper with regards to different mayors in different roles locally both as the interpreter of local government and as a member of the combined authorities.
- Regarding electric/power supply, this matter has been raised multiple times in relation to the mismatch between the power of demand and high frequency trading and power supply. We can take a look at the levers that councils within these 'at risk' areas to encourage conversations with Power UK.
- The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) are keen to engage the LGA and this Board in future work, so there is an opportunity if Members of this Board want to reach out.

Decision:

Board Members noted the report.

5 Annual report

The Chairman invited Rebecca Cox, Principal Policy Adviser, to introduce the report.

Rebecca introduced the report which set out key achievements in relation to the priorities for the People and Places Board in 2020/21 and looks forward to next year's priorities.

Board Members requested that their thanks to officers for their hard work over the years be formally noted in the minutes.

Decision:

Board Members noted the report.

6 Update on the Rural Recognition, Recovery, Resilience and Revitalisation project

The Chairman invited Jessica Craig, Graduate Trainee (NGDP) to introduce the report.

Jessica introduced the report which provided an update on the 'Rural Recognition, Recovery, Resilience and Revitalisation' project. It summarised the work to date, outlined the key findings and recommendations of the draft report, and sought the views of Board Members prior to the work being finalised ahead of publication.

Cllr Waltham proposed, and Cllr Clarke seconded, that the recommendation be amended from:

Members are invited to:

- i. comment on the findings of the draft report and, subject to these comments, agree to its publication; and
- ii. provide direction on next steps in order to maximise the impact of this work.

to:

Members welcome the report as a sound evidence base to establish equality of opportunity through outcome-focused approaches delivered locally through devolution of funding and powers.

Decision:

Members welcomed the report as a sound evidence base to establish equality of opportunity through outcome-focused approaches delivered locally through devolution of funding and powers.

7 Local Enterprise Partnership Review

The Chair invited Philip Clifford, Senior Adviser, to introduce the report.

Philip introduced the report which set out the background to the review and provided a draft letter to the relevant minister describing a range of issues for consideration and sign-off. Following the discussion, a similar paper would be submitted to the City Regions Board and circulated electronically to Lead Members of the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board, with the intention of sending the joint letter to the relevant minister.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

- Officers would re-circulate the draft letter to the minister to Board Members outside of the meeting.

8 UK Community Renewal Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The Chairman invited Paul Green, Policy Adviser, to introduce the report.

Paul introduced the report which provided an update on the work undertaken by the LGA regarding the UK Community Renewal Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

- Officers to write to the Secretary of State in relation to the creation of the UK SPF Taskforce

9 Youth participation update

The Chair invited Bushra Jamil, Adviser, to introduce the report.

Bushra introduced the report and said that a project had been commissioned by the Board to undertake an action learning project to develop a better understanding of the barriers and challenges that existed for Councils in fulfilling their statutory duties for young people.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

- Officers to bring an action plan to the next meeting of the Board.

10 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2021 were agreed as an accurate record, subject to two changes being made.

11 Any other business

The Chair expressed his sincere thanks to all Board Members and officers for their hard work and contributions over the last year.

Emma West, Member Services Officer provided a brief update to Board Members in relation to planning for a smooth transition to hybrid working and use of 18 Smith Square post-Covid.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the updates.

Action:

- Officers to send a survey e-mail to Board Members in relation to their working arrangement preferences post-Covid.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Kevin Bentley	Essex County Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Morris Bright MBE	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Cllr Simon Henig CBE	Durham County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Heather Kidd	Shropshire Council
	Cllr Bob Jennings	Epping Forest District Council
Members	Cllr Rachel Bailey	Cheshire East Council
	Cllr Marc Bayliss	Worcester City Council
	Cllr Hilary Carrick	Cumbria County Council
	Cllr Neil Clarke MBE	Rushcliffe Borough Council
	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
	Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire Council
	Cllr Bradley Thomas	Wychavon District Council
	Cllr Rob Waltham MBE	North Lincolnshire Council
	Cllr Leigh Redman	Somerset County Council
	Cllr Sarah Osborne	East Sussex County Council
	Cllr Stan Collins	Cumbria County Council
	Cllr Helen Grant	Richmondshire District Council
Apologies	Cllr Eddie Reeves	Oxfordshire County Council
	Cllr Doina Cornell	Stroud District Council
	Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
In Attendance	Cllr Colin Davie	Lincolnshire County Council