

Note of last People & Places Board meeting

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Title: | People & Places Board |
| Date: | Tuesday 14 September 2021 |
| Venue: | Hybrid meeting (via Microsoft Teams OR Beecham Room, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ) |

Attendance

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

| Item | Decisions and actions | Action |
|----------|---|--------|
| 1 | Chair's Welcome, Introductions, Apologies/Substitutes and Declarations of Interest The Chair welcomed Members, officers and guests to the meeting and asked attendees to briefly introduce themselves. Apologies had been received from Cllrs Kevin Bentley, Marc Bayliss, Peter Butlin, Eddie Reeves, Alan Waters and Damien Greenhalgh. Cllr Erica Lewis attended the meeting as a substitute. The following declarations of interest had been received: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Rachel Bailey declared an interest as a partner in an agri-business.• Cllr Erica Lewis declared an interest as she worked for the University of Cumbria.• Cllr Stan Collins declared an interest as he had shares in the broadband network, B4RN. | |
| 2 | Minutes of the last meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2021 were agreed as an accurate record. | |
| 3 | Terms of Reference The Chair briefly introduced the report and asked Board Members to comment. In the subsequent discussion, Board Members raised the following points: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cllr Roberts and Cllr O'Brien asked that information related to climate and ecology be included within the Terms of Reference, as well as prosperity and wellbeing.• Cllr Cornell suggested that information which related to local economies and building capacity around the green economy be included within the Terms of Reference. | |

- Cllr Lewis emphasised the importance of sustainability and suggested that all mention of economic development within the Terms of Reference be amended to 'sustainable economic development'.
- Cllr Bailey emphasised the importance of ensuring that previous work is linked to new work and findings.

Board Members' suggestions and comments were noted by officers.

Decision:

- Board Members agreed that a revised Terms of Reference, taking account of their comments, would be brought before Lead Members for final sign off.

4 People & Places Work Programme 2021/22

The Chair briefly introduced the report and asked Board Members to comment on each of the work programme headings.

Board Members raised the following points:

1. Devolution

- Cllr Tett sought clarification on the differences between the levelling up white paper and the devolution and local recovery white paper.
- Cllr Kemp suggested that health and wellbeing should be referenced within the work programme.
- Cllr Lewis emphasised the importance of engagement with residents and the community sector in relation to devolution processes.
- Cllr O'Brien referred to the complexities of mayoral combined authorities and asked that they be considered in devolution discussions and research.
- Cllr Etheridge highlighted the importance of devolution being locally led and equal treatment of all areas. He also sought clarification in relation to the white paper's timescales.
- Cllr Collins suggested that there should be more of a focus on young people's mental health and raised a concern in relation to the lack of mental health services available to young people in rural areas.

Philip Clifford, Senior Adviser, responded to Board Members' comments and raised the following points:

- It was understood that the devolution and local recovery white paper would be incorporated in the levelling up white paper.
- Officers were not anticipating a significant amount of legislative reform.
- Health and wellbeing was a subject which had been raised at previous Board meetings and would be incorporated within Integrated Care Systems (ICS) and health devolution work.

- Once the levelling up white paper is published, officers will work with parish councils in relation to further devolution and to secure the best possible outcome for residents.
- Work related to ensuring equal rights for all areas would continue to be a part of the Board's work moving forward.

2. *Levelling Up*

- Cllr Smith asked that there be more of a focus on youth services in rural areas, buses and rural transport and housing and affordability. Philip said that conversations related to planning and rural transport had taken place at the last People and Places Board meeting. He added that the relevant LGA Boards could share best practice and their work programmes.

3. *Economic Growth and Recovery*

- Cllr Etheridge asked that further research be undertaken in relation to town centre viability and high streets under threat as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Cllr Bailey emphasised the importance of access to learning in rural areas for both young people and adults.
- Cllr Lewis referred to economic growth and recovery and reemphasised the importance of sustainability and the transition of the economy. She added that more money should be spent with local businesses to support local jobs.
- Cllr Davie and Cllr Roberts said that he would welcome wider discussion at a future Board meeting in relation to the opportunities and challenges faced by the food industry and planning, particularly in relation to future employment.
- Cllr Leaver asked that information related to service delivery in rural areas, skills shortages, apprenticeships and key areas of council activity, particular in relation to social care and social work, be submitted to a future meeting of the Board.

4. *Digital Connectivity*

- Cllr Collins, Cllr Davie and Philip would liaise with one another outside of the meeting in relation to Internet Service Providers (ISPs)

5. *Employment and Skills*

- Cllr Chapman-Allen asked a question which related to the connection between supply and demand across the sector at present as well as in the future and the risk to employment and skills in a 'post-covid world'.
- Cllr Kemp suggested that more information related to disabilities and employment be added to paragraph 20 of the report.

Jasbir Jhas, Senior Adviser, responded to Board Members' comments

and raised the following points:

- Labour market challenges, digital and blended learning would key focuses over the next couple of years through work local. Jas encouraged Board Members to submit their suggestions to policy officers in relation to points of focus.
- Further work would be undertaken in relation to job accessibility, information would be included within the further education white paper.

6. *UK Shared Prosperity Fund*

- Cllr Tett asked a question which related to timetables.
- Cllr Davie asked whether there had been any communication with government Ministers in relation to the community renewal fund (CRF) delay.
- Cllr Cornell expressed her concern in relation to the significant amount of resource injected into bidding processes.
- Cllr Bailey emphasised the importance of having agile processes and accurate and fair growth measures.

Paul Green, Policy Adviser, responded to Board Members' comments and raised the following points:

- In relation to the CRF pilot scheme, announcement of the successful programmes was expected to be received between September and October.
- Officers continued to work on a task force with central government to ensure that the voices of local government were heard.
- Cllr Bentley, Chair of the People and Places Board, had written a letter to Ministers to alert them of the significant impact of the delay for the CRF.

Decision:

Board Members agreed the draft work programme, subject to final sign-off by Lead Members.

5 Levelling Up Locally

The Chair briefly introduced the report and asked Board Members to comment.

Decision:

- Board Members agreed the proposal to hold an Inquiry into Levelling Up Locally.

6 Refreshing our employment and skills work

The Chair briefly introduced the report and asked Board Members to comment.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

7 UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Learning from the Community Renewal Fund

The Chair briefly introduced the report and asked Board Members to comment.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Appendix A -Attendance

| Position/Role | Councillor | Authority |
|---|---|---|
| Vice-Chairman (Standing in as Chairman) | Cllr Morris Bright MBE | Hertsmere Borough Council |
| Deputy-chairman | Cllr Emily Smith Cllr Simon Henig CBE Cllr Emily O'Brien | Vale of White Horse District Council Durham County Council Lewes District Council |
| Members | Cllr Rachel Bailey Cllr Hilary Carrick Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen Cllr Jordan Meade Cllr Martin Tett Cllr Phillippa Williamson Cllr Barry Wood Cllr Kyle Robinson Cllr Doina Cornell Cllr Caroline Leaver Cllr Stan Collins Cllr Kevin Etheridge Cllr Sue Roberts | Cheshire East Council Cumbria County Council Breckland Council Gravesham Borough Council Buckinghamshire Council Lancashire County Council Cherwell District Council Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Stroud District Council North Devon Council Cumbria County Council Caerphilly County Borough Council South Oxfordshire District Council |
| Apologies | Cllr Kevin Bentley Cllr Marc Bayliss Cllr Peter Butlin Cllr Eddie Reeves Cllr Damien Greenhalgh | Essex County Council Worcester City Council Warwickshire County Council Oxfordshire County Council Derbyshire County Council |