

People & Places Board

Agenda

Tuesday, 7 June 2022
1.00 pm

Hybrid meeting (via Microsoft Teams OR
Beecham Room, 18 Smith Square, London,
SW1P 3HZ)

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People & Places Board
7 June 2022

There will be a meeting of the People & Places Board at **1.00 pm on Tuesday, 7 June 2022** Hybrid meeting (via Microsoft Teams OR Beecham Room, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ).

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Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: labgp@lga.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent.group@lga.local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk

Attendance:

Your attendance, whether it be in person or virtual, will be noted by the clerk at the meeting.

LGA Contact:

Emma West – emma.west@local.gov.uk

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People & Places Board – Membership 2021/22

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (12)	
Cllr Kevin Bentley (Chairman)	Essex County Council
Cllr Morris Bright MBE (Vice Chairman)	Hertsmere Borough Council
Cllr Rachel Bailey	Cheshire East Council
Cllr Marc Bayliss	Worcester City Council
Cllr Peter Butlin	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr Hilary Carrick	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen	Breckland Council
Cllr Jordan Meade	Gravesham Borough Council
Cllr Eddie Reeves	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire Council
Cllr Phillippa Williamson	Lancashire County Council
Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Colin Davie	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Peter Heydon	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Cllr Colin Kemp	Woking Borough Council
Labour (4)	
Cllr Simon Henig CBE (Deputy Chair)	Durham County Council
Cllr Kyle Robinson	Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
Cllr Doina Cornell	Stroud District Council
Cllr Damien Greenhalgh	High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire County Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Alan Waters	Norwich City Council
Cllr Rosanne Kirk	Lincoln City Council
Cllr Erica Lewis	Lancaster City Council
Liberal Democrat (3)	
Cllr Emily Smith (Vice-Chair)	Vale of White Horse District Council
Cllr Caroline Leaver	Devon County Council
Cllr Stan Collins	Cumbria County Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Michael Mullaney	Leicestershire County Council
Independent (3)	
Cllr Emily O'Brien (Deputy Chair)	Lewes District Council
Cllr Kevin Etheridge	Caerphilly County Borough Council
Cllr Sue Roberts	South Oxfordshire District Council

<i>Substitutes</i>	
Cllr Georgina Hill	Northumberland County Council
Cllr Nicola Dillon Jones	North Kesteven District Council

Agenda

People & Places Board

Tuesday 7 June 2022

1.00 pm

Hybrid meeting (via Microsoft Teams OR Beecham Room, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ)

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OPEN SESSION	
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Date of Next Meeting: Friday, 23 September 2022, 2.00pm, Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online via Microsoft Teams

Note of last People & Places Board meeting

Title:	People & Places Board
Date:	Tuesday 15 March 2022
Venue:	Hybrid meeting (via Microsoft Teams & Beecham Room, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ)

Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions
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1	Chair's Welcome, Apologies and Substitutes and Declarations of Interest
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The Chair welcomed Members, officers and guests to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Colin Davie, Peter Butlin and Stan Collins. Cllrs Peter Heydon, Erica Lewis attended the meeting as substitutes.

No declarations of interest had been received.

The Chair referred to recent government announcements and negotiations between the Secretary of State and the LGA's Chairman, James Jamieson, in relation to the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. Board Members made a number of comments and the Chair requested that officers feed Board Members' comments back to the LGA's Chairman, on his behalf.

2	Minutes of the last meeting
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The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

3	Levelling Up Rural and Coastal Communities
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The Chair welcomed Minette Batters, President of the National Farmers Union (NFU), and invited her to introduce the report.

Minette introduced both herself, and the report, and provided an overview of the NFU's "Levelling up rural Britain" report, looking in greater detail at areas of common interest and overlap with the LGA's "Rural recognition, recovery, resilience and revitalisation" report.

Board Members made a number of comments and asked questions which related to the following points:

- Food security, pressures on land use and the current disruptions to the farming and agricultural industry.
- The NFU's working relationship with The Syngenta Group, the leading global provider of agricultural science and technology.
- The work that local government could undertake to support the NFU from a skills perspective.
- Moving to a plant-based diet and the role of farming in supporting the transition to net-zero.
- The protection of land from overdevelopment.
- Fuel security and the lack of public transport available in rural areas, in particular with regard to rural bus networks.
- Embedding rural proofing in procurement and supporting local businesses.
- Investing in farmers.
- Preserving rural areas and enabling rural businesses.
- Ensuring that meat and dairy products in particular were affordable and accessible.

Minette responded to Board Members' comments, setting out the following points:

- The NFU continued to liaise with government in relation to their commitment to setting self-sufficiency targets and the ability to continue to grow in successful areas.
- The Nature Recovery green paper would be launched on 16 March and would set out thoughts on driving nature recovery in England via protected sites and species protections.
- It was important that the UK displayed global leadership and collaborate working to ensure that there were no global shortages.
- The NFU had a good working relationship with The Syngenta Group and communicated with them regularly.
- With regards to the current disruption in Ukraine, the NFU had recently spoken to a colleague based in Ukraine in relation to food shortages who had confirmed that they had hoped to plant 50% of crops. Areas such as North Africa and the Middle East were heavily reliant on grain out of Russia and Ukraine.
- The NFU were working closely with primary and secondary schools on a successful education campaign which related to linking agriculture to stem learning.
- More renewable energy projects were needed.
- In relation to building houses, the need for a rural policy which delivered a multi-faceted return to support the ever-growing population.
- The importance of whole foods, cooking from scratch and a balanced diet was emphasised.
- The need for working collaboratively on a world-beating food strategy, ensuring that everyone everywhere had access to high-quality British food, was emphasised.
- A trade-strategy had been devised to ensure that the UK could import and export more high-quality produce than at present.
- Challenges which related to tourism and affordable housing

remained to be a concern for farmers.

- The importance of diversification on farms, planning, biodiversity and associated investments was emphasised.
- The Southwest LEP had undertaken work in relation to food procurement which would be shared with Members of the Board.
- The NFU do not condone any business that does not have very high welfare standards on farms.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

- Officers to liaise with group spokespeople and the Chair of the Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport Board in relation to buses.

4 Levelling Up and Devolution

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

Philip introduced the report which, following the recent publication of the Levelling Up White Paper, proposed four issues for the Board to consider as part its work programme over the remaining political cycle: county deals and the devolution framework; the UK Shared Prosperity Fund; neighbourhood governance; and the expected levelling up and devolution bill. It also asked for the Board's views on the emerging work related to the government's commitment to streamline growth funding.

Board Members made a number of comments and asked questions which related to the following points:

- The devolution framework.
- The best opportunity for further devolution to deliver for residents and businesses.
- The LGA offer of guidance to councillors to help them make decisions for the areas in which they represent.
- Accountability for local councillors and the involvement of their communities.
- Better supporting town and parishes' governance and culture.
- The lack of capacity within government departments to respond to enquiries.
- The importance districts and boroughs having clear responsibilities and powers.

Philip and the Chair responded to Board Members' comments, setting out the following points:

- Residents and their needs continued to be the key point of focus.
- The importance of an open and honest conversation with government officials and the need to think about what the LGA



could better offer as an organisation, was emphasised.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

- Officers to submit a report to a future meeting of the Board in relation to the government's plan to streamline growth funding.

5 Demography and Levelling Up

The Chair invited Ellie Law and Esther Barrott, Policy Advisers, to introduce the report and set out a series of presentation slides.

Ellie and Esther presented a series of slides which provided an update on the findings of LGA officer research into demographic changes resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic and set out the implications of the findings for the levelling up agenda.

Board Members made a number of comments and asked questions which related to the following points:

- The benefits of the census being carried out online and its timeliness.
- The ownership of second homes in rural areas and the associated rise in house prices.
- Homelessness and its presence within the levelling up enquiry.
- The financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic being higher for women.
- Building houses for local residents and the need for more social housing.
- The impact of changing economic factors.

Ellie and Esther confirmed that the points raised by Board Members would be built into the Levelling Up Locally Inquiry, and report back to the Board again once census data is released.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

- Officers to ensure that regular update reports be submitted to future meetings of the Board.

6 Digital Levelling Up

The Chair invited Esther Barrott, Policy Adviser, to introduce the report.

Esther introduced the report which provided an overview of recent policy and public affairs activity relating to digital connectivity and proposed a new work programme focused on addressing digital exclusion for the Board to consider, including a session on 'digital levelling up' at the LGA's annual conference. Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE, Digital Champion for the LGA, had seen the report and was engaged in regular conversations with policy officers.

Board Members made a number of comments and asked questions which related to the following points:

- The need to continue to focus on data poverty.
- The importance of upskilling and the use of technology to ensure that all people had equal access to good data connection.
- The role of local government re digital inclusion.
- Cyber security and the checks that could be put into place to protect people digitally.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

7 Retrofit Skills and Employment

The Chair invited Jacob Coburn, Adviser, to introduce the report.

Jacob introduced the report which set out the current barriers to the retrofit sector, the implications that retrofit would have on the work undertaken by councils, and changes that could be implemented to support retrofit skills and employment to develop effectively and at speed. In parallel, officers of the LGA's Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board continued to look at approaches to 'whole-place' street /neighbourhood decarbonisation, including buildings and transport. The Board's work would make recommendations to policy makers, national and local partners, and local authorities across the UK. Both pieces of work would give the LGA a clear policy position and strategy for retrofit.

Board Members made a number of comments and asked questions which related to the following points:

- The net-zero agenda.
- A proposed timeline re green skills and green jobs in agriculture.
- The need to insulate and ventilate homes to avoid high prices and contribute to net-zero.
- The need to undertake more work across the country re training and qualifications for people of all ages.
- Making the case to government for a strategic approach across all sectors and to better support councils with the next steps.
- The need for innovation and sustainability to encourage councils to procure appropriately.



Jacob and the Chair responded to Board Members' comments, setting out the following points:

- Councils' Adult Community Learning (ACL) teams had undertaken a significant amount of work during and post Covid-19 pandemic to support people of all ages in retraining and upskilling.
- Re the example provided in point 15 of the report, additional information could be submitted to a future meeting of the Board in terms of the work that Devon County Council had undertaken.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Action:

- Officers to re-circulate the LGA's green economy work to Board Members.
- Officers to submit an update report to the next meeting of the Board.

8 Any other business

None.

Appendix A - Attendance

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



	Cllr Stan Collins	Cumbria County Council
In Attendance	Cllr Peter Heydon	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
	Cllr Erica Lewis	Lancaster City Council
	Cllr Michael Mullaney	Leicestershire County Council

Business in the Community Update

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This paper provides members with a brief overview of the Board's work with Business in the Community including a summary of the recently published 'Partnerships in Place: The Business of Levelling Up' report. This information will help support a discussion with Chair of the Business in the Community Place Taskforce, Lord Steve Bassam (Appendix A).

Is this report confidential? Yes ☐ No ☒

Recommendation/s

Board members are asked to consider as background reading Business in the Community's recently published report 'Partnerships in Place: The Business of Levelling Up' ahead of the meeting.

Action/s

Officers will use the discussion and the findings from the report to shape the Board's future levelling up work and will take forward any opportunities for future collaborative work with Business in the Community.

Contact officer: Esther Barrott
Position: Adviser
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Email: esther.barrott@local.gov.uk

Business in the Community Place Taskforce

Background

1. Business in the Community's (BITC) Place Taskforce set out to capture and showcase 'what works' in transforming the prospects of a place, creating a blueprint for business engagement in place-based transformation. The findings were shared in a [report](#) titled 'Partnerships in Place: The Business of Levelling Up' launched on 11 May 2022 to coincide with the 40th anniversary of BITC.
2. The report provides practical recommendations to business, local government and national government on the role that business can play in delivering the 'how' of the Levelling Up White Paper as well as the foundations that are needed, both nationally and locally, to truly transform communities. A summary of the recommendations can be seen in paragraph 7.

LGA's involvement to date

3. The Place Taskforce ran a call for evidence which closed in December 2021 and received 34 written submissions. The Place Taskforce ran an additional eight verbal evidence sessions with 17 speakers, conducted three formal interviews, visited Wisbech and Grimsby where there were discussion sessions with local stakeholders and visits to local regeneration initiatives and the LGA hosted a roundtable. These all informed the final report.
4. On 1 November 2021, the LGA hosted a roundtable providing an opportunity to bring the voices of local government leaders from across the country together on this agenda. The roundtable was co-chaired by Cllr Abi Brown and Cllr Simon Henig who were members of the Place Taskforce representing the LGA's People and Places Board and City Regions Board. The roundtable focused on three themes: collaborative and partnership working, levers and measuring impact and developing a strategy and vision.
5. The LGA used the evidence gathered from the roundtable to inform their submission to the Place Taskforce's Call for Evidence. In January 2022, Lord Bassam attended the LGA's People and Places Board to discuss emerging findings and the LGA's call for evidence submission with members.
6. To coincide with the launch of the report, 'Partnerships in Place: The Business of Levelling Up', Business in the Community held a webinar in May 2022 to discuss the recommendations in further detail. Cllr Henig represented the People and Places Board and was a panel member at the event. Cllr Henig highlighted the importance of councils working in partnership with business as well as the need for early engagement between local government and the private sector to create a joined-up vision of a place owned by all the actors involved. Cllr Henig drew on examples from Durham and reinforced the

importance of long-term and joined-up funding to enable more effective place-based regeneration.

Report summary

7. The following list is a summary of key findings and recommendations identified in the report, 'Partnerships in Place: The Business of Levelling Up'. The full report provides an explanation and context for each which is important for understanding their application.

Collaboration is essential

- 7.1 Recommendation 1: All sectors need to work together to form place-based collaboration.
- 7.2 Recommendation 2: The Business Connector, Champion, and Ambassador Role are crucial in establishing and maintaining place-based partnerships.
- 7.3 Recommendation 3: All partnerships need to deliver early action, understand the local issues and opportunities, develop a vision and action plan, and measure their impact.

Business leadership drives successful partnerships and place-based

- 7.4 Recommendation 4: Partnerships need to be driven by an independent chair transformation.
- 7.5 Recommendation 5: Businesses need to secure senior-level buy-in to effectively participate in partnerships.
- 7.6 Recommendation 6: Business should play a key role in tackling the key issues in a place.

The unique resources of each partner need to be leveraged

- 7.7 Recommendation 7: Business, civil society organisations, and local government should each play a key role in setting a strategy for a place.
- 7.8 Recommendation 8: Business should utilise its knowledge & assets to benefit the partnership and the wider community.
- 7.9 Recommendation 9: Businesses should advocate for their place on a national level.
- 7.10 Recommendation 10: Businesses should harness their supply chain to engage more organisations in a partnership.

Government needs to do more to involve business in levelling up

- 7.11 Recommendation 11: Central government needs to facilitate effective local partnerships, that will work closely with Levelling Up Directors, through funding Connectors.
- 7.12 Recommendation 12: Town Deal Boards have the potential to be further utilised to deliver the levelling up missions, but central government needs to ensure they are truly business led and give them increased revenue funding to enable them to operate as an effective place-based partnership.

- 7.13 Recommendation 13: Levelling up funding needs to be flexible, long-term, localised and aligned with the levelling up missions to maximise the engagement of business and deliver transformative change.
- 7.14 Recommendation 14: A place-based approach by business could be empowered by incentives that direct attention and resources to places.

Next steps

- 8. The Board meeting is an opportunity for members to discuss with Lord Steve Bassam (see Appendix A for biography) the recommendations presented in the final report in greater detail. Lord Bassam will share the findings and comment on opportunities for future collaboration with the People and Places Board.
- 9. Members are invited to comment on the final report and have a further discussion with Lord Bassam considering how the recommendations can inform the Board's wider levelling up work programme.

Implications for Wales

- 10. While the UK Government has committed to level up the UK, economic development is a matter devolved to the Welsh Assembly.

Financial Implications

- 11. The Board's activities are supported by budgets for policy development and improvement. The LGA's financial contribution to the Taskforce was funded through the budget for policy development.



Lord Steve Bassam
Place Director, Business in the Community

Lord Bassam began his career working as a legal adviser in Deptford's Law Centre, moving on to several senior research roles in London local government. He served as an assistant secretary at the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, before consulting in the private sector for KPMG and Capita.

Lord Bassam became involved in local politics in the early 1980s and quickly rose to become Leader of Brighton, and then Brighton and Hove City Council. In November 1997, he was created a life peer and introduced into the House of Lords. Bassam was promoted to the frontbenches as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Office in 1999. In 2001, he was appointed a Lord-in-waiting where he served until 2009. During the same period, he served at various times as Government spokesman for several other departments, including Communities and Local Government, Culture Media and Sport, and Transport. He was Chief Whip for 10 years.

In 2018/19 he chaired and authored a report as Chair of the Lords Select Committee on The Future of Seaside Towns, which recommended the expansion of town deals and argued for improved connectivity and levelling up. In 2020, Lord Bassam was appointed as Co-Director of Business in the Community's Place Programme.

The role of councils in addressing the rising cost of living

Purpose of report

For direction.

Summary

This paper provides an overview of the LGA's current work on support for low-income households, led by the Resources Board and Rose Doran, senior adviser in the Children, Welfare, Equality and Democracy (CWED) officer team. It provides background information for members ahead of a discussion with Rose at the Board around opportunities for join-up.

Is this report confidential? Yes ☐ No ☒

Recommendation/s

Members are asked to consider the LGA's work to date on support for low-income households led by the Resources Board to inform a discussion with Rose Doran about opportunities for policy join-up.

Action/s

Members are asked to agree on whether they are happy for Cllr Emily O'Brien to represent the People and Places Board on a cost-of-living steering group.

Officers will take away actions around suggested future work and build them into the Board's work programme for the 22-23 cycle.

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The role of councils in addressing the rising cost of living

Background

1. Inflation is currently running at 9 per cent and is expected to increase further. Recent estimates by the [Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee](#) suggest that the conflict in Ukraine, combined with global supply constraints and rising energy costs could push 2022/23 peak inflation above 10 per cent.
2. Low-income households spend a greater proportion of their income on energy and food than households on higher incomes, which makes them more vulnerable to rising costs.
3. The [latest ONS data](#) shows upward pressure on pay and high levels of vacancies, but pay recovery is lagging inflation, with some sectors (e.g. retail) slower to recover than others. The positive unemployment data is counter-balanced with some complexities in the jobs market including increased numbers of people leaving the labour market, long-term sickness, and reductions in self-employment.
4. The Government has committed to tackling health disparities. Councils have highlighted the importance of addressing the wider determinants of public health as part of that work.
5. In December 2021 life expectancy in the most affluent areas was on average nine years longer than for those in the least affluent. Those living in the most-deprived areas were identified as spending nearly a third of their lives in poor health, compared with only about a sixth for those in the least-deprived areas.
6. In 2019 Sir Michael Marmot highlighted that if a household in the lowest income decile followed Public Health England's healthy eating advice, they would need to spend 74% of their income on food. A 2021 report by the Food Foundation found that healthy food is almost three times as expensive as unhealthy food. This is likely to become more of an issue as food costs continue to rise.
7. On 26 May 2022 the Chancellor acted on calls by the LGA, councils and partners to increase and extend the Household Support Fund to the end of the financial year. The LGA is calling on Government to accompany these measures with a longer-term solution to addressing wider cost of living pressures to build resilience through the wider welfare system which includes not just benefits but employment support, housing, health and financial inclusion.
8. The cost-of-living policy work sits within the LGA's Resources Board remit and is led by the CWED officer team. To date, the team have commissioned Shared Service Architecture to deliver a programme of action learning on the role of councils in

supporting low-income households with the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis as we move into recovery from the pandemic.

9. A Debt Maturity Model is also being developed for councils and there is a wider programme of work planned for 2022/23 looking at the longer-term role of councils in the wider welfare system which will look at how local, discretionary support interacts effectively with Universal Credit and the mainstream benefits system.

Rural implications

10. As members are aware, people living in rural communities are particularly vulnerable to the rising cost of living. Recent research from the [Centre for Rural Economy](#) shows many rural households already experiencing poverty and financial vulnerability will be hit hardest by increases in energy costs. Many people living in rural Britain face fuel poverty, higher costs of living, insecure employment and lack of access to services. In England, about a [third of households](#) are predicted to experience fuel poverty in rural West Norfolk, Northeast Lincolnshire, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Yorkshire.
11. While rural areas are hubs of agricultural production, local residents often have difficulties accessing fresh produce at affordable prices due to limited choices locally. People living in poverty in rural communities can also struggle due to distances from services, transportation costs and access to information, with fewer people able to access financial support. The [APPG into hunger](#) in the UK identified seven factors which may worsen the ability of low-income households in rural and coastal areas to be able to afford food.

Opportunities for join-up

12. The LGA is keen to develop an integrated approach to supporting councils and communities meet the rising cost of living. There are several suggested projects which the People and Places Board might like to get involved with.
13. Resources Board members and policy colleagues recently agreed to set up a cost-of-living steering group, with engagement from key researchers, think tanks, partners, and stakeholders to work to identify key priorities for councils, partners and communities, both in terms of impact and support.
14. Participants will identify and share their own relevant research, as well as advising on potential areas of focus and sources of evidence to inform the LGA's lobbying, research and improvement work. Lead Members agreed that, with the approval of members at the full Board meeting, Cllr Emily O'Brien would sit on the steering group and represent the LGA's People and Places Board.
15. There is an opportunity to explore the role of councils in addressing the cost-of-living crisis in the 'productivity and prosperity' session of the Levelling up Locally Inquiry.

The roundtable looks to explore the role of the private and public sector in addressing inter and intra-regional inequalities and consider the shift towards sustainable and inclusive models of prosperity.

16. The session will be used to explore what inclusive economies look like in practice and which financial models support this, as well as the role of local partners and services in building financial resilience within places.
17. Following a steer from lead members, officers will invite representatives from organisations providing the perspectives of rural communities to the session as well as representatives from food networks to explore the impact of the rising cost of living on food insecurity as well as the opportunities sustainable food networks bring to communities.

Next steps

18. Members will have the opportunity to hear about the cost-of-living work undertaken to date from Rose and have a wider discussion about areas of possible join-up.
19. Members are asked to agree on whether they are happy for Cllr Emily O'Brien to represent the People and Places Board on a cost-of-living steering group.
20. Officers will take forward proposals and build these into the Boards work programme for the 22/23 cycle.

Implications for Wales

21. Benefits delivery and financial inclusion are devolved. However, we do share ideas and learning with WLGA colleagues and Welsh Councils where appropriate and will continue to do so for wider, integrated work on the cost of living.

Financial Implications

22. Any financial implications arising from this work will be met from the Boards' agreed programme budgets.

Levelling Up Locally

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This paper provides a short update for board members on the Levelling Up Locally inquiry.

Is this report confidential? Yes ☐ No ☒

Recommendation/s

Board members are asked to note the work to date for the Levelling Up Locally inquiry.

Action/s

Officers will continue with the inquiry programme and feedback any emerging recommendations to lead members as the inquiry develops.

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Levelling Up Locally

Background

1. At the first meeting of the People and Places Board, members agreed to support a joint and independent inquiry with the City Regions Board into Levelling Up Locally. A similar paper was also approved by the City Regions Board at their first meeting. It was agreed by People and Places Board members the inquiry would look at four aspects:
 - 1.1. Funding and alignment – The practical questions about how levelling up in the broadest sense might be paid for and, at a more granular level, the opportunities to align policy and funding interventions at the local level to improve the quality of public service outcomes and address concentrations of deprivation.
 - 1.2. Leadership – The role of local leadership in binding communities and anchor institutions together to strengthen resilience, align national priorities, and articulate policy interventions necessary to support balanced economic growth.
 - 1.3. Productivity and prosperity – The role of the private and public sector in addressing inter and intra-regional inequalities and the shift towards sustainable and inclusive models of prosperity.
 - 1.4. Place and identity – The questions of place and identity within a post-pandemic context and the potential of local social and cultural infrastructure to strengthen inward investment, encourage entrepreneurialism and address economic inequalities.
2. It was decided the inquiry would be an opportunity to broaden the conversation around levelling up beyond local and central government and hear from a diverse range of speakers from different backgrounds to develop the Board's policy lines around place-based leadership.
3. Officers are continuing to pursue a wider programme of work which forms the Board's response to the Levelling Up agenda. This independent inquiry is one piece of work within this wider programme.

Update

4. At the People and Places Board meeting in January 2022 members agreed to the following independent [steering group](#) members overseeing the inquiry. The steering group met for the first time to agree on the terms of reference and reflect on the recent publication of the Levelling Up White Paper in early March.
5. Following this, the LGA hosted the first roundtable on 22 March 2022 exploring the theme of funding and alignment.

- 5.1. The session was well attended with representatives from organisations including King's Fund, Manchester University, Wates Group, New Philanthropy Capital, Institute for Fiscal Studies, Welsh Local Government Association, Shared Intelligence, Social Investment Business, Association of Directors of Children's Services and WPI Economics.
- 5.2. Professor Philip McCann (professor of urban and regional economics at the University of Sheffield Management School) opened the session discussing the scale of investment required for the levelling up agenda, drawing on international perspectives. This was followed by a talk from Matt Whittaker (chief executive officer at Pro Bono Economics) who shared views around where the money for the levelling up agenda would be best spent and how we can ensure resources play to the strength of local institutions. A more comprehensive [write-up](#) has been published on the LGA website.
6. A second roundtable session was held on Monday 16th May 2022 exploring the theme of leadership.
 - 6.1. The roundtable was attended by representatives from a range of organisations including the Institute of Directors, Wates Group, Hertsmere Borough Council, St Oswald's Hospice, University of Manchester, Friends Provident Foundation, Torfaen County Borough Council, Reform, University of Cambridge, Centre for Local Economic Strategies, Nottingham City Council, Maslaha, Lewes District Council, British Youth Council, WLGA, IPPR North, Vale of White Horse District Council, COSLA and Essex County Council.
 - 6.2. The first speaker was Professor Joy Warmington, Chief Executive Officer at Brap who discussed the ways in which leadership approaches can deliver transformational change in tackling systemic inequality to deliver on the levelling up agenda. This was followed by Nick Gardham, Chief Executive Officer at Community Organisers who explored the transformational impact listening can have upon communities and the distribution of power within society. Patricia Wharton, community advocate, was the final speaker discussing how we can strengthen the talent pipeline so there is a continuation of people who have the skills and are representative of their communities to fill positions of leadership and Patricia also provided examples of what good local leadership looks like.
7. A third roundtable session exploring the theme of productivity and prosperity is scheduled for Tuesday 21 June and a final session on place and identity on 20 July.
8. The final set of recommendations will be brought to both the People and Places and City Regions Boards in the autumn for members to sign-off.

Implications for Wales

9. The Government has committed to 'levelling up' the entire of the UK. While not all the policy and funding responsibilities covered by the inquiry are devolved matters, the Welsh Local Government Association have attended both roundtables to share relevant lessons and ideas. We will continue to engage colleagues in Wales throughout the Inquiry.

Financial Implications

10. Any financial implications arising from this work will be met from the Boards' agreed programme budgets.

Next steps

11. Officers will continue with the inquiry programme and feedback any emerging recommendations to lead members as the inquiry develops.

Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill Update

Purpose of report

For direction.

Summary

This paper provides an overview of provisions within the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill relating to devolution and levelling up missions and asks members for a steer on the LGA's approach to lobbying on these issues.

Is this report confidential? Yes ☐ No ☒

Recommendation/s

That Members:

1. Discuss provisions relating to devolution and levelling up missions within the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.
2. Provide a steer on how they would like officers to respond to these topics, identifying any specific areas that they would like to see amended or which need further clarification from Ministers.

Action/s

1. Officers will continue to work with DCN, CCN and other relevant groups to ensure a strong consensual voice for local government sector as the Bill proceeds through Parliament.

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Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill Update

Background

1. The Queen's Speech on 10 May announced a Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, which was then presented to Parliament on 11 May. The Bill aims to drive local growth, empower local leaders to regenerate their areas, and ensure everyone can share in the UK's success. It will place a duty on the Government to set Levelling Up missions, and produce an annual report updating the country on the delivery of these missions.
2. The [LGA responded to the announcement of the Bill](#) by welcoming the steps it takes to extend devolution, and make good on the commitment in the Levelling Up White Paper to offer all of England the opportunity to benefit from a devolution deal by 2030.
3. The LGA response also emphasised that turning levelling up from a political slogan to a reality will only be achieved if councils have the powers and funding they need to address regional inequality, tackle concentrations of deprivation and make towns and communities across England attractive places to live, work and visit.
4. Following the publication of the Bill, officers have been analysing the sections of the Bill relating to the levelling up missions and metrics, and devolution and governance. Officers have met with the District Councils Network and the County Councils Network to understand their views on the Bill and the implications for their members.
5. In line with the policy responsibilities of the People and Places Board this report focuses those provisions directly relating to devolution and the levelling up missions. The LGA's response to provisions relating to housing and regeneration is being led by the Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport Board.

Issues

Levelling Up Missions

6. The Bill states the Minister must publish an annual report on the levelling-up missions which includes progress to date and future plans (Part 1, Section 2). Progress to date is measured using the latest data for calculating the mission and metrics. In this section it also sets out that the Government may decide a mission is no longer appropriate to pursue.
7. The Bill allows for the Minister to revise the mission progress methodology and metrics or the chosen target date (Part 1, Section 4).
8. Part 1, Section 5 of the Bill states that the missions must be reviewed within a five-year period. Each review must: consider whether pursuing the missions is contributing to the reduction of geographical disparities in the UK, decide whether the missions should

continue to be pursued and if not what the new ones should be, and consider whether any additional missions should be pursued.

New County Combined Authorities

9. The Bill allows for the establishment of new County Combined Authorities (CCAs) (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 7). It sets out two conditions for establishing a CCA – firstly, that it must cover the whole of the area of a two tier county council, and the whole of one or more of the area of a two tier county council, the area of a unitary county council, or the area of a unitary district council, and secondly, that no part of the area of the CCA can be part of any other CCA, combined authority, or the integrated transport area of an integrated transport authority.
10. Before submitting a proposal to create a CCA to the Secretary of State, the authority or authorities in question must carry out a public consultation across the proposed area on the proposal and set out the purposes to be achieved by the creation of the CCA to the Secretary of State (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 42). The Secretary of State may make regulations setting out what information and materials must be included in or submitted with a proposal to establish a CCA. The proposal to establish a CCA does not need to be submitted by all authorities. However, if an authority doesn't submit a proposal, they still must consent to its submission (Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 60).
11. The Secretary of State may only establish a CCA if they consider that establishing it is likely to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of some or all of the people in the area, considers the need for effective local government, reflects the identities and interests to local communities, that it will achieve the purpose(s) set out by the proposal made by the authorities, that the constituent councils of the CCA consent to its creation and public consultation has been carried out. The Secretary of State must carry out a public consultation unless it has already been carried out by the constituent councils and the Secretary of State considers no further consultation to be needed (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 43).
12. These CCAs are similar to existing Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) but differ in a number of ways. Constituent members of a CCA can be either county councils, or unitary councils within the CCA's area, but not district councils (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 8). District councils can be non-constituent members, which are by default non-voting members unless the existing constituent members resolve otherwise.
13. The Bill allows for non-constituent members be drawn from a wider pool than just district councils. Local organisations such as universities, LEPs or business groups could be given non-constituent member status. The Bill also includes provision for associate members to be appointed to the CCA. An associate member is an individual person – such as a local business leader – that a CCA can appoint. (Part 2, Chapter 1, Sections 9 and 10). Associate members are also by default non-voting members of the CCA.

14. The Bill establishes that the Secretary of State may determine the maximum number of non-constituent and associate members of a CCA (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 11). It also states that the committee of a CCA must not consist solely of non-constituent or associate members (Part 2, Chapter 1, section 27).
15. The Bill establishes Overview and Scrutiny Committees for CCAs, and allows for members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to receive allowances (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 13). At present, members of OSC for MCAs do not receive allowances. The Bill states that the Chair of OSC must be a person who is not a member of the same political party as the Mayor, or if there is no Mayor, the majority party. This suggests that if all members of the CCA are from one political party, the Chair of OSC must be an Independent Person.
16. The Bill allows for allows the Secretary of State to provide for functions of a county or district council to be exercisable by a County Combined Authority (CCA). These functions can be exercisable instead of the local authority, jointly with the local authority or concurrently with the local authority (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 16).
17. This is similar to the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act (2016) which is the legal basis for existing Combined Authorities, but the 2016 Act says that this can only occur when either (a) in the case of an order in relation to an existing combined authority, each appropriate authority consents; (b) in any other case, each constituent council consents.
18. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill also requires the consent of the constituent councils, however, as the Bill explicitly excludes district councils from being constituent councils (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 8), this implies that powers could be transferred from a district to a CCA without requiring the consent of the district.
19. The Bill does not set out either in this section or elsewhere the types of powers that they would expect to be transferred under Section 16. In the explanatory notes of the Bill, it gives examples of transport, skills or economic development functions.
20. The Bill allows for powers currently held by other public authorities to be conferred instead to the CCA, and for the public authority to then be abolished if it no longer has any functions as a result of these changes (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 17). However, it also states that Section 18 of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act (2016) regarding the devolution of health functions still applies, suggesting there is little proposed changed to the health devolution landscape.
21. Powers can only be transferred to the CCA if the Secretary of State considers that the change is likely to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of some or all of the people who live or work in the area. The Secretary of State if doing this must

place a report before Parliament to say what the effect of the change would be and the reasoning behind the change.

22. The boundaries of a CCA may be changed, with the Secretary of State able to add or remove the area of a two-tier county council, the area of a unitary county council, or the area of a unitary district council (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 22). If CCA has a Mayor, both the Mayor and the relevant council area must consent, if there is no Mayor, the relevant council and the CCA board must consent to the change.
23. Once the position of Mayor has been created for a CCA, the Bill states that this cannot be revoked without establishing the entire CCA and with it the office of Mayor (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 24). This is also the case with existing MCAs. CCAs may also be abolished if the majority of constituent councils (and the Mayor, where one exists) consent for the Secretary of State to do so (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 23).
24. The Bill allows for the position of a Mayor to be created (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 25), and for powers that are similar to any exercised by the CCA to be conferred to a Mayor, although this may not include the power to borrow money (Part 2, Chapter 1, Section 27). The Mayor may request powers to be conferred to them by the Secretary of State, but this is contingent on them having consulted with the constituent councils. When making the request to the Secretary of State, the Mayor must make a statement saying that either all the constituent councils agree to these powers being given to the Mayor, or if not, the Mayor's rationale for proceeding without the consent of the constituent councils. This suggests that the Mayor will be able to request powers from Secretary of State even without the constituent councils agreeing to this transfer.
25. Although the Bill uses the term Mayor throughout, it also makes provision for the role to be known by alternative titles including county commissioner, county governor, elected leader, governor, or another title as created by the CCA. If the CCA wants to use another title, this must be passed by a meeting of the CCA. A CCA can also decide to change the title of Mayor to another title, but must send notice of the change to the Secretary of State.
26. The Bill removes the previous moratorium on carrying out changes of governance within a short timeframe to enable areas to access deeper devolution even if they have only recently adopted a different governance model. The Secretary of State can now allow an authority to hold a referendum or submit a proposal within a shorter timeframe (Part 2, Chapter 2, Section 66).

Implications for Wales

27. New County Combined Authorities can only be created in England, and the Levelling Up White Paper focusses on ensuring that all areas of England are able to access a devolution deal by the end of 2030. However, as work to detail the scope and scale of

powers needed to deliver the 12 Missions at a UK level unfolds the LGA will continue to look for opportunities to work with Welsh local government.

Financial Implications

28. Any financial commitments made as part of the actions identified in this report will be met from the Board's existing policy budget.

Next steps

29. The LGA is a cross-party membership body that seeks to represent the interests of all councils. Officers will continue to work with DCN, CCN and other relevant groups to ensure that any policy or lobbying activity related to the provisions set out above are developed based on consensus and agreed with members.

30. Within this context members are asked to provide a steer on how they would like officers to respond to these topics within the Bill, identifying any specific areas that they would like to see amended or which need further clarification from Ministers.

People and Places Board Annual Report

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report summarises the Board's activity over the past year. It sets out key achievements in relation to the priorities for the **People and Places Board** in 2021/22 and looks forward to next year's priorities.

Is this report confidential? Yes ☐ No ☒

Recommendation/s

Members are invited to:

1. Note the achievements against the board's priorities for 2021/22; and
2. Note the board's proposed priority areas for 2022/23

Action/s

Officers to take forward actions as appropriate.

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People and Places Board Annual Report

Background

1. The People and Places Board was created to provide a clear voice and resource for non-metropolitan authorities within the LGA.
2. Members are asked to consider the achievements of the board over the last year against the use of allocated resources and to reflect on whether the board is continuing to meet its original purpose in response to the emerging priorities of non-metropolitan areas.

Priorities and Achievements

Levelling up and devolution

3. The Government's long-awaited Levelling Up White Paper was published on 2 February 2022. The LGA published a [briefing note](#) and [full press release](#) in response to the Government's ambition to pursue 12 national missions and proposals relating to a new devolution framework, a plan to streamline growth funding, a new independent data body and the establishment of a new levelling up advisory council.
4. Following the announcement of a Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill in the Queen's Speech, on 10 May, the LGA issued a [response](#) emphasising that levelling up will only be achieved if councils have the powers and funding they need to address interregional and intraregional inequalities, tackle deprivation, and make communities attractive places to live, work and visit. We will be working with parliamentarians and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to shape and amend this legislation to ensure it helps councils level up and delivers greater devolution.
5. The Board, with the City Regions Board launched an inquiry into how the Government's levelling up agenda might better strengthen local communities. The [Levelling Up Locally Inquiry](#) looks beyond the Levelling Up White Paper to investigate the role of local leadership in shaping a recovery that works for all.
6. The Board agreed to an independent steering group helping to shape the inquiry's development including its evidence gathering; making contributions drawing on their own experience and expertise; and formulating a set of recommendations based around each of the themes. The steering group is co-chaired by Cllr Bentley and Mayor Rees and comprises members from business, academia, think tanks, community groups and government organisations.
7. As part of the inquiry, four roundtables are being held on: funding and alignment, leadership, productivity and prosperity, and place and identity. To date, two of the four roundtables have taken place. A final set of recommendations will be published in the Autumn.

Local growth

8. The Board, with the City Regions Board, has supported Business in the Community (BITC) Place Taskforce to launch a [new report](#) looking into the role of business and cross-sector partnerships in place-based regeneration. Cllr Simon Henig represented the People and Places Board on the Taskforce. The report provides practical recommendations to business, local government and national government on the role business can play in delivering the 'how' of the Levelling Up White Paper, as well as the foundations that are needed to transform communities.

Employment and skills

9. In May, we published [Work Local: Unlocking talent to level up](#), our employment and skills devolution proposals which build on the Levelling up White Paper and recommend ways Whitehall can improve its approach to employment and skills policy for all places right now and deliver a coherent devolution approach. Analysis reveals devolution could result in a 15 per cent increase in the number of people improving their skills or finding work in a local area each year.
10. Following the Government's Skills for Jobs White Paper, it launched two consultation and legislated to establish new Local Skills Improvement Plans. The LGA responded to the consultations on the [National Skills Fund](#) and the [FE Funding and Accountability System](#), and engaged parliamentarians to support the LGA position on the [Skills and Post 16 Education Bill](#) which has now been enacted.
11. We proactively brought together DfE and councils outside of devolution areas to ensure that the £270 million Multiply adult numeracy programme (funded through UKSPF) was routed via councils in non-devolution areas rather than contacted nationally through the Education and Skills Funding Agency.
12. We published a [report](#) to showcase the work of councils to support and develop education, employment and training pathways, including the wider wrap-around support for young people experiencing disadvantage.

Community Renewal Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund

13. In April 2022, the Government published the [UKSPF prospectus and allocations](#), which [allocated £2.6 billion over three years](#), as well as [the allocations for the Multiply adult numeracy Programme](#). We launched a [UKSPF Hub](#) to support local authorities to develop their investment plans.
14. The announcement confirmed that the fund would be driven by local authorities, funding to support capacity building and the removal of competitive bidding processes. These

are some of the key asks that we have been consistently lobbying on since the EU referendum.

15. We have continually engaged with councils and combined authorities to understand the implications of the prospectus, and identified some of the key concerns, including the funding gap between the end of European Social Fund programmes and the commitment of the People & Skills priority in 2024/25, as well as the need for a longer-term funding solution. We have raised these issues through [the press](#) which was featured in the Financial Times. The Chairs of the People & Places and City Regions Boards wrote to the Secretary of State setting out the sector's concerns regarding the funding gap.
16. The LGA has worked with the sector to capture learning from the UK Community Renewal Fund. Following the delay in the announcement of the successful bids, we [lobbied successfully for an extension of the fund](#), with the Chairs of the People and Places and City Regions Boards writing to the Secretary of State, outlining the sector's concerns. We have commissioned Shared Intelligence to capture the learning from the fund to help inform our wider work on growth funding.

Digital connectivity

17. We have [responded](#) to a Westminster Hall Debate on digital inclusion, responded to the National Infrastructure Commission's baseline report call for evidence, submitted evidence and subsequently [responded](#) to a Public Accounts Committee report into Project Gigabit which had [wide coverage from news outlets including the BBC](#), briefed for a Westminster Hall debate on ultrafast broadband in Devon and Somerset, and Cllr Bentley met with the head of regional tech policy at DCMS.
18. We also [responded](#) to the Levelling Up White Paper target for the UK to have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage by 2030 and our response was picked up by [national outlets](#). We shared a [press response](#) to the Government's announcement of eight pilot areas to speed up 5G rollout and Cllr Hawthorne, the LGA's digital connectivity champion, gave an interview at the end of February to the BBC about the gigabit capable broadband rollout. We also issued a [press release](#) in response to the Government's announcement of a change in the planning laws to increase the use of permitted development rights in relation to the size of mobile masts.
19. The retirement of the public switched telephone network (PSTN) for new digital technologies continues to be cause for concern impacting on both council infrastructure as well as services for residents and we have launched a working group to share good practice and discuss challenges and a [digital switchover hub](#) on the LGA website to disseminate useful resources.

20. The Board has long called for further funding from Government for digital connectivity champions to help co-ordinate delivery locally. Mobile UK now echoes these calls having recently published research calling on Government to [fund local authority digital champions](#). In May Cllr Hawthorne met with digital policy leads at District Councils Network and County Councils Network to discuss the role of digital connectivity champions, how we can refine our call on Government and gather further support. Officers have been raising these conversations in monthly meetings with DCMS and the Barrier Busting Taskforce.

Programme of work and priorities

21. The Board will advocate for Work Local model to be a way of mechanism for enabling the sector deliver a local employment and skills offer to support the levelling up agenda.
22. The Board will also continue to work to ensure that the Government puts councils at the heart of its Levelling Up agenda.
23. The Board will continue to seek feedback on the UK Community Renewal Fund process to help the development of the design of the forthcoming UK Shared Prosperity Fund and ensure that councils play a key role in managing growth funding through the Levelling Up Fund and UKSPF.
24. The Board is now well established as an important voice on digital connectivity, but as the policy agenda is currently in a largely technical phase. The Board will now play a defining role in the increasingly high-profile area of digital exclusion following a session on 'digital levelling up' at the LGA's annual conference.

Next steps

25. Officers to take forward actions as appropriate to draft a work programme for the board.

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