

Minutes of last Resources Board meeting

Resources Board

Wednesday, 12 July 2023

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A**

Item	Decisions and actions
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1	Welcome, Apologies and Substitutes, Declarations of Interest
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The Chair welcomed members to the Resources Board meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Cllr James Lewis, Cllr Shama Tatler and Cllr Jason Zadrozny, as well as apologies for lateness from Cllr Jim Hakewill.

Cllr Stephanie Cryan, Cllr Nikki Dillon-Jones, Cllr John Fuller, Cllr Peter Golds and Cllr Abdul Jabbar were in attendance as substitutes.

No declarations of interest were made.

2	Local government finance update
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The Chair invited Nicola Morton, Head of Local Government Finance to present the report which provides a summary of the work by the LGA on funding and finance issues since the last Board meeting.

Since the circulation of the paper the Government published a consultation on business rates avoidance and evasion. There was also a consultation on proposals to exempt categories of dwellings from the council tax premiums, both of which would have a response from the LGA.

The Chair invited Jo Donnelly, Head of Pensions, to give an update on pensions. It was announced that the Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill was now at the committee stage, having been introduced in mid-June. A technical briefing had been provided ahead of the second reading. Members' attention was also drawn to the recently [released DLUHC consultation](#), setting out next steps on investments in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Members made the following comments:

- There was a request for information on the funding gap analysis to be circulated with Board members.
- Avoidance and evasion of business rates are different things.

Action:

Officers to circulate information on the LGA's funding gap analysis
Members to send examples of business rates avoidance and evasion to LGA officers.

Decision:

Members **noted** the report.

3 Local government workforce capacity update

The Chair invited Heather Wills, Principal Adviser, to present the report which set out the latest draft of a prioritised plan of LGA action in relation to local government workforce capacity, in light of the relevant issues for service areas experiencing the greatest challenges, latest progress and actions underway and planned by other bodies. Members were asked to comment on the draft plan and the approach to prioritised action in relation to activity which is currently unfunded and to consider the proposal to add lines to the budget submission to address specific issues relating to workforce as set out in para 9.34.

Members made the following comments:

- It was suggested that the diversity of workforce be considered in certain sectors such as building control.
- It was queried if there had been any focus on educational psychologists given the increase in demand
- Local government needed to be considered more appealing by those leaving further education as well as the ageing workforce who may wish to retrain
- Members expressed that as well as focusing on the supply side, especially in children's social care, there should be long term consideration and focus on prevention including from the point of view of workforce capacity. Retainment is just as important as recruitment.

In response, Heather Wills and Naomi Cooke, Head of Workforce, made the following comments:

- Officers will follow up the query to see if diversity is considered within the scheme to increase capacity in building control funded by DLUHC
- There is DLUHC grant funding to promote working in local government more generally via a pilot of a new recruitment campaign
- Future reports will give updates on pilots in which the LGA is involved in
- There was lots of activity to address workforce challenges in the planning sector.
- There is ongoing work in regions areas to address the issue of councils competing for staff
- The prioritised approach proposed is due to limited resource and

- funding for workforce capacity support
- Educational psychologists can be incorporated as part of work to address children's social workers capacity challenges

Decision:

Members **agreed** the proposed additional content to be included for submissions for Autumn / Spring statements / budgets in relation to workforce resourcing, set out in paragraph 9.34 of Appendix A; and

Members supported the draft plan and approach to prioritised action set out in the report, subject to the above comments.

4 Support for low income households update

The Chair invited Rose Doran, Senior Adviser, to present the report which updated members on the progress against agreed priorities for the LGA's work on the role of councils in supporting people with the rising cost of living; promoting financial inclusion and resilience, and the design and delivery of the welfare system.

There had been work on the Memorandum of Understanding for DWP data-sharing, it had been clarified that councils did not need to be compliant at this stage. The proposal is for DWP to work closely with the sector over a period to ensure data is being used safely and effectively.

Cllr David Leaf, who sits as a representative on the Cost of Living Advisory Group, gave an update on the group's work:

- There was a webinar series which had over 300 attending, including councils and those from the voluntary and community sector.
- The next meeting of the group would be at the end of the month.

Members supported the aspiration for councils to make better and wider use of DWP data.

Decision:

Members noted the update.

5 End of Year Report 2022/23

The Chair invited Members to comment on the End of Year Report 2022-2023 which provided an overview of the work of the Board as well as areas of focus to consider in the coming year.

Members expressed support for an induction session prior to the first meeting in the Board meeting so they are prepared to discuss the Board cycle and year ahead.

The Chair expressed thanks to colleagues for the quality and outcomes of the work which had taken place in the 2022-23 year.

Action:

An induction session to be scheduled for members in the new Board cycle.

Decision:

Members noted the report.

6 Presentation by Neil Harris, Director of Local Audit, Financial Reporting Council

Please refer to the confidential minutes document.

7 Apprenticeships Update

Please refer to the confidential minutes document.

8 Workforce Update

Please refer to the confidential minutes document.

9 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 May 2023

Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting as an accurate record with the addition of Cllr Stephanie Cryan listed as in attendance.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Peter Marland	Milton Keynes Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Richard Wenham	Central Bedfordshire Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Keith House	Eastleigh Borough Council
Members	Cllr David Leaf	Bexley Council
	Cllr Phillip King	Harborough District Council
	Cllr Rory Love OBE	Kent County Council
	Cllr Roger Phillips	Herefordshire Council
	Cllr Cathy Mitchell	Warrington Borough Council
	Cllr Ed Turner	Oxford City Council
	Cllr Peter Mason	Ealing Council
	Cllr Terry Paul	Newham London Borough Council
	Cllr Abdul Jabbar MBE	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Stephanie Cryan	Southwark Council
	Cllr Richard Kemp CBE	Liverpool City Council
	Cllr Nicola Dillon Jones	North Kesteven District Council
Apologies	Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
	Cllr James Lewis	Leeds City Council
	Cllr Shama Tatler	Brent Council
	Cllr Jason Zadrozny	Ashfield District Council
LGA Officers	Alex Burfitt	
	Greg Burns	
	Naomi Cooke	
	Jo Donnelly	
	Rose Doran	
	Elliot Gregory	
	Mike Heiser	
	Dionne Hopkins	
	Bevis Ingram	
	Nicola Morton	
	Arian Nemati	
	Emilia Peters	
	Sarah Pickup	
	Jamie Saddler	
	Heather Wills	