

Minutes of last People & Places Board meeting

People & Places Board

Tuesday, 12 March 2024

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

The Chair welcomed Members, officers and guests to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received by Cllr Tim Oliver.

No declarations of interest were received.

2 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record.

3 Local Government and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The Chair welcomed **Jenny McEaney, Senior Improvement Policy Adviser**, to the meeting and invited her to present a series of slides to the Board. The presentation slides focused on:

- The cyber, digital and technology team
- Background information related to AI
- Current context
- AI engagement
- Use cases
- Risks and opportunities
- Asks from Local Government
- Priorities
- Regulation

Members made the following contributions:

- A question was asked which related to regulators and access to specialised knowledge.
- In addition to governance and data protection, the importance of

delivery design and retaining ownership and control of services using AI was emphasised.

- It was suggested that case studies be undertaken with councils across the country to better understand what was being explored collectively.
- A concern was raised which related to smaller district councils at risk of being left behind.
- A concern was raised regarding public perception and a lack of trust in relation to AI being used in local authorities.

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

- The challenges associated with AI-specific regulators were highlighted, and the way in which service area experts could be better supported continued to be explored.
- Case studies continued to be undertaken with local authorities across the country to better understand the way in which AI was being used and to ensure that particularly district councils were not left behind.
- Members of local authorities across the country attended AI network meetings regularly.
- The way in which the governance of AI could be better supported across local authorities continued to be explored.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

4 People & Places Board updates

The Chair invited **Philip Clifford, Principal Policy Adviser**, to introduce the report which provided an update on the progress of activity in the Board's work programme including health devolution, housing and town regeneration, strategic transport and green jobs, including local food and drink supply chains.

Members made the following contributions:

- In relation to local food and drink supply chains, it was requested that co-benefits, health, food security and climate-related issues, be included.
- In relation to housing and town centre regeneration, it was requested that the reallocation of space for traffic, community engagement in consultations and more of a private-sector focus, be included.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

5 Work Local

The Chair invited **Jasbir Jhas, Senior Adviser**, to introduce the report. At the last Board meeting, Members discussed LGA activity to enhance Work Local proposals with a view to influencing political parties ahead of a General Election. The paper set out more detail based on work in progress officer level thinking.

Members made the following contributions:

- It was noted that the following aspects should be strengthened within the report:
 - geography
 - national infrastructure projects
 - mayoral combined authorities
 - place-shaping roles
 - devolved non-metropolitan authorities and lower tiers
 - support for carers
- It was suggested that Mims Davies MP be invited to attend a future meeting of the Board.
- Board Members agreed to convening a joint lead members meeting with City Regions to discuss the next stages of this work.
- Boards Members agreed to officers putting forward a one pager for Lead Member clearance which sets out our offer in broad terms which we can use to socialise our messages.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

6 Transporting Economic Inclusion

The Chair welcomed **Mark Pragnell, Director – Pragmatix Advisory**, to the meeting and invited him to present a series of slides to the Board. The presentation slides focused on the objective of the Transporting Economic Inclusion project. The research set out to examine how the transport system impacts people and places by limiting or enabling access to skills, training, and the labour market. The project looked at six (coastal/rural/urban) places with different typologies to illustrate the impact of transport challenges and make a set of short-term and long-term policy recommendations. It looked at the varying needs of users, price barriers, sustainability, and the central government's role.

Members made the following contributions:

- The importance of long-term planning, locally-led solutions and working in collaboration with bus services was emphasised.
- It appears that non-met areas have been significantly impacted by transport cuts.
- The intersection between geographies and demographics needs to be considered – travel to learn and work areas.
- Local areas need to be enabled to develop innovative local

solutions – a ‘one size fits’ solution does not work.

- The need for demand-responsive transport was expressed.
- The need for public transport to be affordable, accessible and reliable was expressed.
- The need for policy-specific requests for the government to consider was highlighted.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report and would welcome a further discussion on this topic
- Board Members were keen to invite officials and Ministers, including Shadow Ministers to Lead Members or Board to discuss the topic and the findings of the research.
- In reference to point 9.3 within the report, it was suggested that officers further explore the economic costs of transport connectivity to regions/local areas for England akin to the Northern Powerhouse Partnership’s recent work.

7 LEPs

The Chair welcomed **Nick Glover, Director – Local Growth at Henham Strategy**, to the meeting and invited him to present a series of slides to the Board. The presentation slides focused on LEP Integration, headline challenges with integration and next steps.

Members made the following contributions:

- The importance of a strong place-making role was emphasised.
- It was suggested that officers engage with the Rural Services Network in relation to LEP integration.
- The need to continue to work in partnership was expressed.
- The importance of continuing to focus on the challenges faced within rural areas was emphasised.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

8 Future Growth Funding

Due to timing constraints, there was no introduction to this item.

Members made the following contributions:

- It was suggested that a work stream be assembled related to local growth for local authorities to share best practice.
- The need for a joined-up offer, long term funding and needs-based allocation of funding was expressed.

Decision:

- Board Members noted the report.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Louise McKinlay	Essex County Council
	Cllr Caroline Leaver	Devon County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Amanda Serjeant	Chesterfield Borough Council
	Cllr Emily O'Brien	Lewes District Council
Members	Cllr Lisa Brown	Cumberland Council
	Cllr Simon Henig CBE	Durham County Council
	Cllr Damien Greenhalgh	High Peak Borough Council and Derbyshire County Council
	Cllr Eddie Reeves	Oxfordshire County Council
	Cllr Marc Bayliss	Worcestershire County Council
	Cllr Kris Wilson	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
	Cllr Hilary Carrick	Westmorland and Furness Council
	Cllr Colin Noble	Suffolk County Council
	Cllr Rachel Bailey	Cheshire East Council
	Cllr Jordan Meade	Gravesham Borough Council
	Cllr Victoria Wilson	Staffordshire County Council
	Cllr Emily Smith	Vale of White Horse District Council
	Cllr Michael Mullaney	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
	Cllr Alex Wagner	Shropshire Council
	Cllr Kevin Etheridge	Caerphilly County Borough Council
	Cllr Julian Dean	Shropshire Council
Apologies	Cllr Tim Oliver	Surrey County Council
In Attendance	Cllr Sam Carling	Cambridge City Council