

30 January 2017

## **IPPR research: Devolution, local government and gender representation**

### **Purpose**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

This paper provides an update to members on activity to support IPPR's research into gender representation in local government as the devolution agenda progresses. The paper outlines the detail of the research brief and provides a timeline for the completion of the work.

### **Recommendation**

That the City Regions Board note the update.

### **Action**

Officers to take forward as directed by members.

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## **IPPR research: Devolution, local government and gender representation**

### **Background**

1. At the last CR Board meeting, on 11 November 2016, members were notified that the LGA had been approached to seek support for a research project to examine gender representation in local government as devolution progresses.
2. Board members agreed that this work should be supported as a cross-party commission and agreed that officers should finalise an outline for the research with colleagues from IPPR. Full detail of the research programme is attached as **Appendix A**.
3. Primarily the research will look to learn the lessons of other devolved political systems internationally to understand what works in promoting better gender representation. The research will also focus on practical suggestions/recommendations to overcome these barriers; including practices to recruit and retain female politicians.

### **Research Report**

4. A report will be produced before the Mayoral elections in May, comparing countries that have devolved political systems, how they perform on gender diversity measures and their strategies and activities to improve representation. Details of what this will cover are included at **Appendix A**.
5. The report will make recommendations for what political leaders in local government and national government and other key actors can do to help build a stronger pipeline of female talent. It will also identify what could be learnt from initiatives in these countries to potentially inform the design of a UK scheme to increase gender representation in local government and will include detail on practical measures such as; childcare, allowances and maternity leave.
6. This work is able to be funded within the Board's allocated budget.

### **Next steps**

7. It is intended that the research report will be produced ahead of the Mayoral elections in May and given the tight timescales IPPR will commence the work in January. To ensure a high profile for the research programme, there will be a launch event (date to be confirmed) that will bring together campaigners, national politicians, councillors, and policy specialists working on devolution.
8. As the key sponsor for the research we will ensure that a Board rep(s) will be present at the event along with other LGA leads if practical. Officers will work with IPPR to find a date that works for as many Board members who wish to attend as possible. Officers will also work with LGA communications teams to ensure alignment of LGA/IPPR communications on the project.

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9. **Members are asked to note the content and timeline of the research project and are requested to feed back any comments over and above the project proposal to Claire Hogan. In doing so members may wish to consider the following questions:**
  - 9.1 How might the LGA promote the findings/recommendations from this work?
  - 9.2 Are members aware of practical actions locally that have been taken to improve gender balance, which they would like to feed into the research?
  - 9.3 Are members aware of case studies that could be shared with the researchers and referenced in the final report?
10. A draft report will be circulated to Members for comment at the end of March.