

People & Places Board – report from Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE (Chairman)

Trade and Investment

1. Within the context of greater devolution, the Government's Industrial Strategy and the uncertainty surrounding Britain's departure from the European Union, the People and Places and City Regions Boards jointly commissioned research in support of a stronger sub-national approach to trade and investment. The independent report 'Strengthening Sub-National Trade and Investment' was presented to members at the June 2017 board meeting. Following members' comments the work is now being brought to the attention of senior ministers. In recognition of this and within the context of devolution, Brexit and the emerging Industrial Strategy, the LGA, steered by members of this Board and the City Regions Board, commissioned the consultants *Value Adage* in late January 2017 to undertake a review of the national trade and investment policy landscape with a view to understanding the potential for a strengthened sub-national approach.
2. Through a combination of desk-based literature review, telephone interviews with local and national stakeholders and a policy workshop the research drew the following conclusions:
 1. Through a combination of desk-based literature review, telephone interviews with local and national stakeholders and a policy workshop the research drew the following conclusions

Skills and Employment

Last year, with the City Regions Board, the Board commissioned work from the Learning and Work Institute (LWI) to develop a local government vision for an integrated and devolved employment and skills service which will bring agencies together so they work for everyone that needs support to progress. The final report – Work Local – at the LGA Annual Conference in Birmingham in July during the Parallel Plenary Session 'Industrial Strategy- the local response'.

The LGA has launched a dedicated [Work Local webpage](#) to promote this work, and held fringe sessions at each of the party conferences which focused on Work Local proposals. Meetings to discuss Work Local have taken place with the NCVO, ERSA, Careers and Enterprise Company, AoC, JRF, Core Cities, and CCN, and requests for meetings with skills and employment ministers to discuss the vision.

Devolution

Leading Places project

2. Following on from the success of Phase 1 and in recognition of the growing currency of work to strengthen collaboration between universities and councils, a second phase of

the Leading Places Project continues to progress in 15 areas with LGA support. The LGA is also working with HEFCE to run the Local Growth Academy, a leadership programme aims to bring together councils, universities and the NHS to help deliver growth. Initial sessions of the Academy have been positively received by attendees from councils.

Superfast Broadband and Mobile Connectivity

The Board continues its strong focus on improving the digital connectivity of residents, supporting councils' efforts to roll out superfast broadband across the country. Over the next year, the Board will capitalise on this success and adopts a more strategic approach to this topic: strengthening key relationships with national government and the communications regulator Ofcom.

3. .

Contact officer: Rebecca Cox
Position: Principal Policy Adviser
Phone no: 0207 187 7384
Email: Rebecca.cox@local.gov.uk