

LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition 2014

Purpose of report

For information and overview.

Summary

This report updates the Leadership Board on the progress made to date with arrangements for the LGA Annual Conference, taking place in Bournemouth from 8-10 July 2014.

Recommendation

That the Leadership Board comment on and approve the emerging programme and activities for the Annual Conference 2014.

Action

As directed by the Board.

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LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition ‘the local government event of the year’

Background and conference programme planning

1. The LGA annual conference and exhibition is the Association’s showpiece event attracting over 1200 attendees from Local Government and the Local Government family, central Government, the private and voluntary sector, plus up to another 300 exhibitors, speakers and press.
2. Last year the LGA successfully used its annual conference to set out, through its “Rewiring Public Services” campaign, a range of propositions that will change the relationship for the better between central and local government, and address the financial issues that are providing serious challenges to the sector. Since last year the LGA has been ensuring that these propositions are heard, understood and adopted by those writing party manifestos.
3. This year’s annual conference comes at a pivotal time between the May local elections and the 2015 General Election. As party manifestos are finalised the LGA will use this conference as an opportunity to build on the “Rewiring” work and look to the priorities of whichever government is formed in May 2015. The conference will provide an excellent opportunity for national politicians to hear first-hand the key challenges for the sector, and what needs to be done to address them.
4. Further to the February Leadership Board, we have revised the end of the Thursday of conference, to include lunches within the group meetings. Therefore, conference will officially close at 2.30pm.
5. Invitations have been sent to the three party leaders for main keynote sessions. Other plenary sessions will be as follows:
 - 5.1. **Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP**, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.
 - 5.2. **Rt Hon Iain Duncan Smith MP**, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
 - 5.3. Conference opening session ‘**Political Leadership**’, a cross-party panel discussion opened by **Ben Page** sharing research findings, with vox pops from leaders in the public sector, police commanders, business and voluntary sector representatives.
 - 5.4. ‘**How do we build the homes we need**’ – **Sir Michael Lyons** to speak alongside **Cllr Keith House** and **Natalie Elphicke**, joint leads, ‘Review of local authorities’ role in housing supply’.

- 5.5. **The future of health and social care – Simon Stevens**, Chief Executive, NHS England.
- 5.6. **Lord Adonis** has been invited to speak at '**Our new sub regions – a model for devolution**', alongside Sir John Peace, Chair, Non-Cities Commission and Jim O'Neill, Chair, RSA Cities Commission – with involvement from new Chairs of the LGA City Regions and People & Places Boards.
6. Lead members and officers have this year identified the key conference themes. The current conference programme (with confirmed speakers only) is attached at **Appendix A**. Since the last conference update in February, additional sessions have been commissioned on the following:
- Culture/tourism and local growth
 - Fracking
 - Bonds/Local Authority investments session
 - Councils' emergency response
 - Impact of devolution
 - Local government offer on adult skills
 - Fighting fraud locally
7. Following the success of last year's Innovation Zone, the LGA will be running an innovation programme across three days of the conference, in a dedicated space at the conference centre. The Innovation Zone will provide insights, inspiration and practical support to councils that are ready to think in fundamentally different ways and to re-imagine the role of local government. Again, this will allow the opportunity for drop in sessions, masterclasses and/or discussion opportunities for councils to share best practice with each other.
8. We will have a full, open programme of political group events, alongside a programme for Chief Executives.

The audience

9. We currently have around 450 delegates booked, which is comparable with recent, previous years, and continue to promote the event via our networks – almost 200 bookings have been received since the last update.
10. The conference dedicated website (www.local.gov.uk/annual-conference) is available for all conference updates.

Exhibition and sponsorship

11. CCLA have confirmed as gold sponsor, McDonald's have confirmed as silver sponsor, further to approval from February Leadership Board and The MJ are confirmed as

media sponsor. Other packages are being sourced and finalised.

12. The LGA will have a main exhibition stand in the centre of the Purbeck Hall – used as a hub for any launches and for highlighting our services, member benefits, key messages etc. This will be staffed by senior staff but will also have a strong communications team presence, and is an excellent opportunity for networking with members and showcasing member benefits.
13. The political groups will be co-located in this area in the centre of the Purbeck Hall alongside additional seating space to allow for networking and debate.
14. Work is on-going to achieve targets for exhibition and sponsorship which is again proving challenging. Exhibitors booked to date are:

Alzheimer's Society	Newton Europe Ltd
APSE	NLGN
Blue Sky Peterborough Ltd	Norse Group
Bournemouth Borough Council	Partnership
British Sprinkler Alliance	Patrol
Campaign for Fairer Gambling	Pinnacle PSG
Charities Aid Foundation	PIRC Limited
Community Development Foundation	Public Helath England
Concessionary Solutions	Rennicks uk
DANFO UK Ltd	RNIB
DUOL (Domes)	Solace
Healthmatic Limited	The Guide Dogs for the Blind
INLOGOV	The MJ
LGBCE	The Woodland Trust
Local Government Chronicle	Turn to us
Mordern Mindset	UNISON
National Audit Office	Volunteer Squared Ltd

Summary

15. The conference provides an excellent platform for the Association to engage with a large portion of our membership. It supports the Association's lobbying and influencing agenda through political group meetings and key speeches. It showcases local authority best practice to the wider sector through workshops, fringes, exhibition and case studies. It offers opportunities to profile the Association's new products, research and publications. It allows us to profile the policy work undertaken by the Association, promote local government reputation and the wide ranging benefits of membership. The event is a high profile opportunity for the lead members and senior staff to engage with the membership and partners.