

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

Post-Brexit England Commission

1. Following on from the launch of the Commission on 28 February in London, the first two in a series of regional roadshows took place on 9 May in Taunton and 11 May in Nottingham. These were a great success, bringing together local leaders and key representatives of business who were able to discuss the opportunities as well as the challenges facing non-metropolitan areas in the period following Britain's departure from the EU. More roadshows are currently being organised for the 2018/19 Board cycle.
2. The publication of the Commission's Interim Report is in its final stages, and on course to be launched at Annual Conference in July.

Industrial Strategy – Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

3. A roundtable event attended by representatives of the People and Places, City Regions, and Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport (EEHT) Boards and Chairs from three LEPs was held on 15 March. The meeting was an opportunity to identify common ground between councils and LEPs and to strengthen their strategic relationship ahead of the publication of the Government's LEP Review.
4. Following the roundtable a letter was sent to the Secretary of State for the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which was signed by the three Chairs of the LEP Network in attendance, along with Chairman Cllr Martin Tett of the EEHT Board, Chair of the City Regions Board Sir Richard Leese, and myself. The letter requested support from national government in three key areas: unified funding, local leadership and greater local flexibility.
5. A response to the letter was received on 6 May 2018 and Alexandra Jones, Director of Industrial Strategy at BEIS, will be attending the next Board meeting on 12 June for a discussion regarding the Government's proposals.

Rural Digital Connectivity Task and Finish Group

6. Following on from the last Cllrs' Forum, the first and second meetings of the Rural Digital Connectivity Working Group have taken place. These have established clear priorities for the group's focus on digital and mobile phone connectivity. At the most recent meeting, Members were given the chance to hold discussions with representatives from Ofcom, the UK's communication regulator, which laid the foundation of a strategic working partnership. We are also holding discussions with the British Standards Institute (BSI).
7. Members may recall that the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) have agreed to administer the Group at officer level. The Group's progress and proposed next steps will be presented at the next Board.

7 June 2018

Skills and Employment – Work Local

8. Following on from today's Forum, Sir Richard Leese and myself will be meeting the Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills, the Rt. Hon. Anne Milton MP to discuss the LGA's vision for a more localised skills system, and build on the foundation for a systematic relationship between the DfE and the LGA.
9. Both the People and Places and City Regions Board have now agreed to establish a new 'skills taskforce', whose purpose will be to dedicate specific time to, and have oversight of our employment and skills work, and re-focus LGA work to provide place-based solutions to Brexit and the Industrial Strategy. Both Boards have agreed it should draw in expertise from within the sector and engage a range of stakeholders. Establishment of the Taskforce is well underway, drawing on expertise from Members of the LGA's Children and Young People, Community and Wellbeing and EEHT Boards.

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