

City Regions Board – report from Sir Richard Leese CBE (Chair)

Industrial Strategy – Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

1. 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.
2. 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, myself and Cllr Mark Hawthorne Chairman of the People and Places Board. The letter requested support from national government in three key areas: unified funding, local leadership and greater local flexibility.
3. A response to the letter was received on 6 May 2018 and Stephen Jones, Director of the Cities and Local Growth Unit, will be attending the next Board meeting on 18 June for a discussion regarding the Government's proposals.

Town and City Centre Management and Community Cohesion

4. The government published its Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper in March as a response to the Casey Review, which closed for consultation on 5 June. The LGA submitted evidence to the government consultation, led by the Safer and Stronger Communities Board. At the next meeting of the City Regions Board, we shall be discussing next steps in light of the Government's Green Paper and the work in this area being undertaken by the Safer, Stronger Communities Board. .

Fiscal Devolution

5. As previously reported, Members have agreed to commission two pieces of technical work in support of making an enhanced case for Fiscal Devolution. Public First have been commissioned to produce messaging analysis that will help inform how the LGA can best present the case for fiscal devolution to Government. WPI Economics, will support the LGA with econometric modelling that will help the LGA spell out in more detail what a specific instance of fiscal devolution would look like in practice.
6. Work is continuing on both projects and a seminar is currently being organised for Lead Members of the City Regions, People and Places and Resources Boards to discuss how best to take forward future activity in this area.

Skills and Employment – Work Local

7. Following on from today's Forum, Cllr Mark Hawthorne 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.

7 June 2018

8. Both the City Regions and People and Places 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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