

## Note of last People & Places Board meeting

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**Title:** People & Places Board  
**Date:** Tuesday 11 September 2018  
**Venue:** Smith Square 3&4, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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### Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

### Item Decisions and actions

#### 1 Welcome, introductions and declarations of interest

The Chairman welcomed all newly appointed and reappointed members to the first People and Places Board meeting for the 2018/19 political cycle. Apologies listed at Appendix A were noted.

No declarations of interest were made.

#### 2 Membership and Terms of Reference

The Chairman asked the Board to formally note the membership and the Board's Lead Members for 2018/19, and the Terms of Reference which outlines the purpose of the Board.

*Actions and decisions:*

All members noted and agreed the Membership and Terms of Reference.

#### 3 People and Places Draft Work Programme 2018/19

Philip Clifford, Senior Adviser, set out the draft work programme for the 2018/19 political cycle.

Philip highlighted the following points:

- It was established that while the primary objective of the People and Places Board remains the devolution of power and resources to local government across England, the Government's focus on Brexit has seen a downward shift in the momentum behind devolution.
- Reflecting the national context, the Work Programme seeks to pursue the following broad and forward-looking strategic priorities:
- Advocating for devolution through national Government's place-based growth agenda – focusing on the Industrial Strategy and devolution on a department-by-department basis, such as skills and employment support devolution and sub-national trade and investment reform;

- Using the Post-Brexit England Commission as a platform to advance a refreshed case for devolution to non-metropolitan areas; and
- Pushing for parity of treatment in Government policy and investment across all parts of England, with a particular focus on priorities for the Board such as digital connectivity and the opportunity to reform the Common Agricultural Policy.

The Chairman thanked Philip for the update and invited members to comment:

- The Chairman noted that the Government's Industrial Strategy has strengthened its commitment to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). The Board felt this presented an opportunity to further engagement with the LEP Network and pursue collaboration with LEPs, particularly through Local Industrial Strategy development.
- Board members highlighted that "high street resilience" was a significant issue for non-metropolitan areas, while acknowledging that this falls under the remit of the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport (EEHT) Board.
- Members expressed an interest in issues of interest being considered by the EEHT Board, such as high street resilience and housing, to be opened up to People and Places Members. The Chairman stated that he and the EEHT Chairman share updates on areas of crossover and that Members who are interested in issues covered by the EEHT Board will be given the opportunity to attend.
- Members felt that the CAP focus in the work programme is slightly narrow and needs to capture the wider rural land management agenda.
- Clarification about the future of the Committee of the Regions after the UK's departure from the EU was requested. Ian Hughes, Head of Policy, informed the Board that this issue was raised in the House of Lords following LGA lobbying and the Government has confirmed that a process will be established to consult local government on matters they would otherwise have been consulted on through the Committee of the Regions but further detail was not currently available on what these arrangements will look like.
- The Chairman noted that the next Board meeting will include an update from Cllr Kevin Bentley, Chairman of the LGA Brexit Task Force and officers will ensure he is briefed to talk to developments on the replacement arrangements for the Committee of the Regions.

*Actions and decisions:*

- The Board agreed the draft work programme.
- Officers to refresh the Digital Connectivity Working Group membership.
- Officers will work with the Chairman to consider how the rural land management agenda is taken forward.
- Officers to take steps to open up areas of interest led by the EEHT Board to People and Places Board Members.

#### **4 Industrial Strategy Update**

Daniel Gardiner, Adviser, provided the Board with an update on recent

developments with the Government's Industrial Strategy and outlined the proposed next steps related to the key place-based elements of the strategy.

Daniel highlighted the following points:

- The immediate next step for implementation will be the submission of proposals on LEP geographies which all areas are expected to submit by 28 September.
- There have been indications that the Government may be seeking to reduce the number of LEPs through this process which, if this is the case, will have implications for both Local Industrial Strategy development and the allocation of the UKSPF.
- The key development with Local Industrial Strategies (LIS) has been the confirmation that the Government will agree a LIS with all parts of the country following joint calls from the LGA and the LEP Network to commit to this.
- Daniel then handed over to Paul Green, Adviser who provided a brief update on developments with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and indicated that a consultation on the UKSPF is still expected before the end of the year.

The Chairman thanked Daniel and Paul for the update and invited Members to comment:

- Some members expressed disappointment at the proposed reduction in public sector representation on LEP Boards and the proposal for the removal of overlapping LEP boundaries.
- The Chairman pointed to the need for urgent clarification on the Government's approach to decision-making on LEP geographies.
- The Board acknowledged the opportunity presented by speaking with a united voice in relation to the LEP Network.
- Potential to explore work on the role of local government scrutiny in relation to LEPs as well as the other mechanisms through which councils can work with LEPs – the Chairman referenced the Gloucestershire Joint Local Economic Growth Committee by way of example.
- Members expressed concern at the timeframe for LIS development and the introduction of the UKSPF – as well as the risk that decisions on these areas of policy will be made without sufficient engagement with local areas.

*Actions and decisions:*

- Officers to finalise letter from the Chairman to the BEIS Secretary of State requesting urgent clarification on the criteria that areas are required to consider when developing proposals for local geography and setting out how council oversight and accountability will be preserved following this process of review, particularly in areas where mergers would lead to much diminished publicly accountable representation on LEP Boards.

Daniel Shamplin-Hall, Adviser, updated the Board on the Post-Brexit England Commission (PBEC) and asked members to reflect on the work of the Commission to date, to agree its future policy direction and note the dates of the Commissions remaining roadshows.

Daniel highlighted the following points:

- With the process of Brexit occupying Government, it has left little scope to tackle the major barriers to success and prosperity facing non-metropolitan England.
- The Commission has built a broad coalition of partners from across local government, Parliament, business and the public and housing sectors. In May, it began a series of roadshows across the country to gather evidence on the challenges rural and coastal communities faced, and the local policy levers needed to tackle them.
- Members have seen the interim report published in July 2018 which detailed findings that spanned seven policy areas of the challenges to be faced by non-metropolitan areas. Building on this, the publication of the Commission's final report is now an opportunity for members to undertake fresh research and develop new thinking on behalf of the sector in policy areas of importance to non-metropolitan councils, and on which it has the direct remit to engage with Government and other key stakeholders in the aftermath of Brexit.
- It was suggested that the Commission maintained a watching brief over the remaining policy areas covered in the interim report, and on which future LGA activity is being steered by other LGA Boards or working groups.

*Actions and decisions:*

The Board reflected on the work of the Commission to date and agreed the future policy direction of the Commission.

## **6 Post Brexit England Commission [Part 2]**

Daniel Shamplin-Hall, Adviser, updated the Board with the options in relation to the launch of the Post-Brexit England Commission's (PBEC) Final Report and outlined a proposed stakeholder engagement strategy.

Daniel highlighted the following points:

- Members were asked to choose a launch date for the PBEC report.
- A preliminary timeline was agreed that set out the activity of the Board from September 2018 to July 2019 ahead of the potential launch date at the LGA Annual Conference July 2019.

*Actions and decisions:*

- Members agreed the preliminary timetable of the Commissions second phase of work which included the launch window for the final report at LGA Annual Conference in 2019.
- Members agreed to postpone the launch of the Commission's second phase of work initially planned for 20 September 2018 and to re-engage with external stakeholders.

## **7 Skills Task Force - Verbal Update**

Jasbir Jhas, Senior Adviser, updated the Board members on progress to establish an LGA Skills Taskforce. It will be jointly led by the People and Places Board Chairman (Cllr Mark Hawthorne) and the City Regions Board Chair (Sir Richard Leese) as an avenue to push the proposal for '**Work Local**' and engage with a wide range of stakeholders to help drive this forward through a series of three roundtables. A final report will bring all the findings together. This may be accompanied by a launch involving parliamentarians. The Taskforce will meet in October to agree a work plan. An update will be provided to the next Board.

*Decision:*

Board members noted and agreed the update.

## **8 Minutes of the last meeting**

Members agreed and noted the confidential minutes from the last meeting.

*Actions and decisions:*

Noted and agreed.

**Appendix A -Attendance**

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	Gloucestershire County Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Gillian Brown OBE	Arun District Council
Deputy-Chairman	Cllr Heather Kidd	Shropshire Council
Deputy-Chairman	Cllr Bob Jennings	Epping Forest District Council
Members	Cllr Derek Bastiman	Scarborough Borough Council
	Cllr Tim Hall	Surrey County Council
	Cllr Adrian Hardman	Worcestershire County Council
	Cllr Glen Horn	Mid Suffolk District Council
	Cllr Linda Robinson	Wychavon District Council
	Cllr Harvey Siggs	Mendip District Council
	Cllr David Thomas	Torbay Council
	Cllr Peter Jackson	Northumberland Council
	Cllr Rob Waltham MBE	North Lincolnshire Council
	Cllr Azhar Ali	Lancashire County Council
	Cllr Leigh Redman	Somerset County Council
	Cllr Sarah Osborne	Lewes District Council
	Cllr Helen Grant	Richmondshire District Council
Apologies	Cllr Tom Fitzpatrick	North Norfolk District Council
	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
	Cllr Rory Love	Shepway District Council
	Cllr Simon Henig CBE	Durham County Council
	Cllr Sue Woodward	Staffordshire County Council