

Note of last City Regions Board meeting

Title: City Regions Board
Date: Friday 5 October 2018
Venue: Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

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

Item Decisions and actions

1 Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, including a roundup of the authorities and organisations members and officers were representing.

Apologies were noted.

No declarations of interest were made.

2 Membership and Terms of Reference for 2018/19

Benn Cain, Member Services Officer, introduced item two.

Benn stated that the first part of the paper details the Board's Membership, and that the second part of the paper lays out the terms of reference of the City Regions Board, which includes the political composition.

Benn went on to explain that the third part of the paper makes reference to outside bodies of the City Regions Board. Currently, the City Regions Board doesn't have any outside body appointments, however, if any are made throughout the 2018/19 political year, this report will need to be updated. This appointment will also need to be agreed by lead members of the board and the group political offices. Members will then have to agree nominations to outside bodies at the beginning of next year's cycle (2019/20).

Action

- Members noted the report and agreed to the terms of reference.

3 Draft Board Work Programme 2018/19

Philip Clifford, Senior Adviser, introduced item three.

Philip stated that the report sets out a draft work programme for the 2018/19 political cycle, from September 2018 to July 2019. Philip gave an overview of the board's work-streams, and asked members to consider the draft programme. These work-streams include: the Government's Industrial Strategy; Local Industrial Strategies; the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) review; Brexit's impact on local government; devolution for local areas; urban leadership; and, the skills agenda.

The Chair welcomed members to comment:

- Members of the board requested that Wales is included and referenced in all work, and made particular reference to paragraph 20.3 in this report.
- The Chair requested officers to further investigate public service reform, ensuring that work is being done through one of the LGA's governance structures. This led to a discussion amongst members around residents currently out of work – particularly in the 50-64 year old category. Members agreed that a joined-up approach in areas such as skills, health, adult social care and education needed to be used to tackle this issue.
- Members discussed the devolution agenda, and requested that the LGA start giving the Government deadlines to roll-out devolution packages. Members agreed that the stall in devolution is costing local economies significantly.

Action and Decision

- Members noted the report, and agreed that it be confirmed as the City Regions Board's work programme for 2018/19.
- Officers to explore further activity related to public service reform as part of the LGA's wider work programme.

4 Urban Leadership

Philip Clifford, Senior Adviser, introduced item four.

Philip stated that the report advances the proposal set out in the City Region Board's Draft Work Programme 2018/19 to assemble a coalition of interested parties and representative bodies and make the distinct case for urban authorities on the national stage. Philip then went on to outline the four options laid out in the paper.

The Chair stated that this work has arisen out of numerous conversations with a number of organisations representing urban voices. To ensure that calls and lobbying do not become fragmented, this work will ensure representative organisations are collectively making a coherent case for urban areas.

Members then commented on the following:

- Members discussed the four different options. It was agreed that the first two (outlined in paragraph 10.1 and 10.2) largely duplicate previous work that might be easily be recirculated.
- Members discussed the merits of making arguments that benefit both local and central government, in order to work cohesively.

- Members also requested that any devolution work taken forward also include Wales. The Chair stated that the lack of devolution is a nationwide problem, due to the UK having a very centralised government.
- Members agreed that coordinating calls, lobbying and messages is vital.
- Members discussed the upcoming Spending Review, and discussions turned to timescales of this work. Officers confirmed that work on this work will be undertaken straight away and that other organisations are in agreement with this.

Action

- Members agreed to look at option 10.4, and then 10.3 in the first instance.

5 Industrial Strategy Update

Daniel Gardiner, Adviser, introduce item five.

Daniel stated that the paper provides an update on recent developments with the Government's Industrial Strategy and outlines proposed next steps relating to the key place-based elements of the Industrial Strategy:

- the Government's Review of Local Enterprise Partnerships;
- the development of Local Industrial Strategies; and
- the design of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Given the pace of developments across these three areas of policy, officers will provide a verbal update on any further developments at the Board. Officers concluded that LEP geography is playing a big part of the review.

Following on from this, members discussed the following:

- The differences in merging and overlapping LEPs, including the advantages and disadvantages of both.
- Members stated that the government has ignored some parts of the country that have huge economic value and potential, using boundaries formulated in medieval times.
- Members discussed how devolved areas should be able to formulate their own LEP boundaries.
- It was discussed how LEPs need more flexibility, particularly around membership. Members agreed LEPs need further transparency and local accountability.
- Further discussions were held over LEPs membership.
- Members agreed that the board needs to take an active, watching brief on this work, as there will be a danger that if local government doesn't push for good place-based outcomes LEPs will fail to meet local economic needs.
- Daniel Gardiner, Adviser, then updated members regarding Local Industrial Strategies (LIS). Daniel stated that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have confirmed that every area in England will get a LIS by early 2020 (further details can be found in paragraph 19-20 in the report). Daniel also advised members that LIS policy has now been published, including for the West Midlands LIS.

Daniel drew attention to paragraphs 20-21 in the report, and asked members if they

agreed with these proposals.

Members then went on to discuss the following:

- The Chair stated that this was a significant win for the LGA.
- Members remarked on the potentially tight timeframe to submit LIS proposals.
- Members discussed the capacity of government in relation to the roll-out of LIS.

Jasbir Jhas, Senior Adviser, then updated members on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), drawing member's attention to paragraphs 23 – 31 set out in the report. Members raised a number of issues, including:

- concerns over the democratic accountability of LEPs, and their capacity to deliver;
- that while European funding and its successor UKSPF is absolutely critical, it needs to be seen as part of a wider economic development landscape post 2020 which will see the end of the Transforming Cities and Local Growth Funds; and
- that allocations and distributions will be a key issue going forward, particularly the need to address pockets of deprivation within larger administrative geographies.

The Chair thanked members for their input and the officers for their updates.

Action and Decisions

- Officers to progress policy work in order to address issues raised by Members.

6 Skills Taskforce - Verbal Update

Jasbir Jhas, Senior Adviser, introduced item six.

- Jasbir updated members on the Work Local Campaign, and plans to get the newly established Skills Taskforce up and running which will be co-chaired by Cllrs Sir Richard Leese and Mark Hawthorne. A planning meeting on 18 October will agree the Taskforce's overall work plan.

Action

- Members noted the update.

7 Note of the Previous Meeting

Notes of the previous City Regions Board on 18 June 2018 were agreed by members.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Sir Richard Leese CBE	Manchester City Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Abi Brown	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
	Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Abigail Bell	Hull City Council
	Cllr Clarence Barrett	Havering London Borough Council

Members	<p>Cllr Robert Alden Cllr Tim Warren Cllr Sean Anstee Cllr John Beesley Cllr Martin Gannon Mayor Marvin Rees Cllr Timothy Swift MBE Cllr Debbie Wilcox Cllr Sue Jeffrey Cllr Roger Lawrence</p>	<p>Birmingham City Council Bath & North East Somerset Council Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council Bournemouth Borough Council Gateshead Council Bristol City Council Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council Newport City Council Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council City of Wolverhampton Council</p>
Apologies	<p>Mayor Joe Anderson OBE Cllr Jon Collins Cllr Peter John OBE Cllr Julie Dore Cllr Linda Thomas Cllr Paul Crossley</p>	<p>Liverpool City Council Nottingham City Council Southwark Council Sheffield City Council Bolton Council Bath & North East Somerset Council</p>
LGA Officers		
Head of Policy	Ian Hughes	Local Government Association
Principal Policy Officer	Rebecca Cox	Local Government Association
Principal Policy Officer	Alex Thomson	Local Government Association
Senior Adviser	Philip Clifford	Local Government Association
Senior Adviser	Jasbir Jhas	Local Government Association
Adviser	Daniel Gardiner	Local Government Association
Member Services Officer	Benn Cain	Local Government Association