

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

Local growth

1. Given the recent establishment of new sub-national bodies, such as the Western Powerhouse, the LGA has commissioned research to explore the lessons learned from these sub-national bodies to date. This will focus principally on the Midlands Engine and the Northern Powerhouse and the research provider will attend a future Board to present their findings.
2. *Inclusive Growth*. There has been a growing momentum across the country of councils looking at how they can make their local economies more inclusive. As a result, the LGA has commissioned a piece of research which will engage with national and local stakeholders to understand the activities currently being undertaken by councils and their partners to drive inclusive growth across local areas.

Devolution

3. With a renewed national focus on devolution and the upcoming Devolution White Paper, the LGA has established a Devolution Task and Finish Group to develop our policy in this area. This group will meet for the first time this month and I will be co-chairing with the Chairman of the People and Places Board.
4. In February, IPPR North published their report '[The Devolution Parliament](#)', which City Regions Lead Members had agreed to support and which was informed by feedback from the City Regions Board in January. The LGA's response to the report is available [here](#).

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

5. The LGA continues to lobby Government for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to be a localised, place based domestic replacement for EU funding. It is a key priority in the LGA's Budget Submission. Our principles for the UKSPF were reviewed by City Regions Lead Members and refreshed principles will be presented at the March City Regions Board.

Employment and skills

6. Last year, a Skills Commission inquiry co-chaired by Sir John Hayes CBE MP and Barry Sheerman MP, was launched to design a blueprint for a skills ecosystem in England that can reflect both local need and future priorities. The LGA sat on the Commission's steering group and submitted [Work Local](#) as evidence. The Commission's final report, *England's skills puzzle: piecing together further education, training and employment* was launched in Parliament on Tuesday 3 March. The LGA was represented by Cllr Gillian Ford. The report recommend that devolution is the way forward, and that a local collaboration fund should be developed to test capacity and develop relationships, which align closely with our Work Local lines.

7. Youth Participation: Sector Roundtable in January 2020 engaged with lead employment and skills officers to better understand the issues and explore potential solutions in this area. This was the first in a series of engagement events and the findings from these will inform the final report in the Summer.

Contact officer: Rebecca Cox
Position: Principal Policy Adviser
Phone no: 020 7187 7384
E-mail: Rebecca.Cox@local.gov.uk