

11 September 2014

Note of last LGA Executive meeting

Title: LGA Executive
Date: Thursday 17 July 2014
Venue: Westminster Suite, 8th Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Opening Remarks The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming the newly appointed Deputy-Chairs of the Association to the Executive.	
2	Declarations of Interest No declarations of interest were made.	
3	Better Care Fund Carolyn Downs (Chief Executive) introduced the report which updated on a number of changes to the £1 billion pay for performance component of the Better Care Fund (BCF) and on the timescale for revised Health and Wellbeing Plans to be signed off. In doing so, she highlighted that the LGA had robustly opposed the revisions to the BCF and she encouraged all Health and Wellbeing Boards to put on record the potential detrimental impact the changes would have on Adult Social Care (ASC) services. Members were united in their opposition to the changes to the BCF and emphasised the need to maintain pressure on Government so that the original shared ambition for health and social care integration is not undermined by further changes. Specific concerns included: the ability of local authorities to adequately fund ASC; the admissions criteria and the length of time it would take to evidence reductions in admissions; the short timeframe for HWBs to agree revised BCF Plans; and the balance between maximising the opportunities presented by integration and the risks it presented. Members also discussed the situation regarding integration and funding of health and ASC in Wales.	

Decisions

The LGA Executive:

- i. **noted** the update on the Better Care Fund; and
- ii. **asked** that their views inform the continuing dialogue on the Better Care Fund between the LGA and the Department for Health.

4 Municipal Bonds Agency

Michael Lockwood (Interim Director of Local Government Finance and Policy) introduced the report which updated Members on the progress made thus far in securing investment in the Municipal Bonds Project from a diverse range of 35 councils. Based on this success, Executive's agreement was sought to proceed with the project and to commit the LGA's full investment.

In the discussion that followed, the Executive confirmed their support for proceeding with the project as set out. Cllr David Phillips asked for support from officers in exploring the possibility of Welsh involvement in the project.

Decisions

The LGA Executive:

- i. **agreed** that the Municipal Bonds Agency project should continue into full mobilisation; and
- ii. **approved** the full commitment of the LGA's intended investment; including a budgeted £100,000 of initial start-up costs, taking the LGA's total equity stake in the Agency to £500,000.

5 LGA Boards Annual Review of the Year

The Chair briefly introduced the report which set out the principle achievements from the 11 Boards over the past 12 months, as well some key issues going forward.

Cllr McMahon (Workforce Board Chair) drew particular attention to the recent national strike action and the potential for future localised and targeting action. Cllr Fleming (Improvement and Innovation Board Chairman) expressed his gratitude to those councils that had taken part in the Innovation Zone at the 2014 LGA Annual Conference.

Decision

The Executive **noted** the achievements of the Boards in the 2013/14 meeting year.

6 Note of the last Leadership Board meeting on 16 July - Tabled

Decision

The Executive noted the minutes of the Leadership Board held on Wednesday 16 July.

Exclusion of Press and Public

The press and public were excluded for the remainder of the meeting for the consideration of the following confidential items.

7 Note of last LGA Executive meeting on 12 June

Decision

The Executive agreed the minutes of the previous Executive meeting held on 12 June.

8 The Council Role in Education

Cllr David Simmonds (Children and Young People Chairman) introduced the report, which summarised the current complex picture of local accountability for schools and set out a number of ambitious proposals to clarify and strengthen the role of councils in this area. He invited Members' comments on the proposals and on whether the LGA should establish a campaign to reform accountability in the schools system.

In the discussion that followed, Members made a number of comments, including:

- The Executive welcomed the publication and supported the development of a campaign to simplify and strengthen local accountability for schools. It was suggested that links should be made with a similar piece of work being undertaken by the County Councils Network (CCN).
- Members expressed concerns regarding the accountability of schools within the current system. These included an inequitable distribution of funding and a lack of clarity and undue bureaucracy from Government regarding councils' ability to intervene in under-performing schools. It was suggested that research could be undertaken to learn lessons from instances where local authorities had intervened, as well as those cases where there had been obstacles to intervention.

11 September 2014

- There were a number of queries over how the proposals would work in practice and the potential for contradiction between them. Specific reference was made to: balancing financial constraints with further investment in School Governors; the viability of recruiting to a Governor ‘whistle blower’ post; and the role of an Education Trust alongside an enhanced role for local authorities in school accountability.
- In addition to the issues highlighted in the report, Members discussed the current situation in Wales and suggested that the LGA’s proposals should have a greater focus on school transport and include the requirement for all schools, including academies, to submit data to their local authority.

Decisions

The LGA Executive:

- i. **endorsed** the proposals in the report and agreed that the LGA should stimulate a debate around reforming accountability in the schools system, with a clearer and stronger role for councils in relation to all schools; and
- ii. **asked** that their comments inform the development of this work.

Appendix A -Attendance

Cllr and Position/Role	Authority/Representing
Cllr David Sparks OBE (Chairman)	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Jim McMahon (Vice Chairman)	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE (Deputy Chairman)	Stevenage Borough Council
Mayor Sir Steve Bullock (Deputy Chairman)	Lewisham London Borough Council
Cllr Gary Porter (Vice Chairman)	South Holland District Council
Cllr David Hodge (Deputy Chairman)	Surrey County Council
Cllr Neil Clarke MBE (Deputy Chairman)	Rushcliffe Borough Council / District Councils Network SIG
Mayor Dorothy Thornhill MBE (Deputy Chairman)	Watford Borough Council
Cllr Marianne Overton MBE (Vice Chairman)	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Peter Box CBE	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Sir Richard Leese CBE	People & Places Board / North West Regional Leaders' Board representative
Cllr David Simmonds	Hillingdon London Borough Council
Cllr Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Mike Jones	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr Flick Rea MBE	Camden Council
Cllr Clarence Barrett	Havering London Borough Council
Cllr Tony Jackson	East of England LGA (East Herts DC)
Cllr Gordon Keymer CBE	South East England Councils (Tandridge DC)
Cllr Mrs Izzi Seccombe	Centre for Local Government West Midlands (Warwickshire County Council)
Cllr Martin Hill OBE	East Midlands Councils (Lincolnshire County Council)
Cllr John Hart	South West Councils (Devon County Council)
Mayor Jules Pipe	London Councils (Hackney London Borough Council)
Cllr Paul Watson	Association of North East Councils (Sunderland City Council)
Cllr David Phillips	Welsh LGA (Swansea City and County Council)
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (Barnsley Council)
Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE	County Councils Network SIG (Gloucestershire County Council)
Apologies: Cllr Mrs Ann Lucas OBE	Coventry City Council
Cllr Philippa Roe	Westminster City Council
Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson	Portsmouth City Council
Cllr Katie Hall	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Cllr Peter Reeve	Cambridgeshire County Council

