

## People & Places Board – Report from Cllr Kevin Bentley (Chairman)

### Devolution

1. In the run-up to the Queen's Speech, we [published research](#) showing 58 per cent of MPs and 80 per cent of peers agree that councils should be given greater powers and funding to drive employment and training schemes in their areas.
2. The LGA [responded](#) to the House of Lords Public Services Committee report on Levelling Up, saying bringing greater resources and powers over key responsibilities, such as skills, transport and housing, closer to communities is the best way to ensure we have a recovery that works for everyone.
3. We responded to the Treasury Select Committee's inquiry into jobs, growth and productivity after coronavirus, setting out the important convening role played by local government in the many aspects of the local economy.
4. Following confirmation that the Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper has been superseded by the Levelling Up White Paper, the Board is discussing how to ensure that the sector's devolution priorities and the opportunities for rural and non-metropolitan areas can best be included within this new agenda.
5. Following the successful launch of its report in March, the Devolution APPG held its Annual General Meeting in May and agreed a new work programme.

### Employment & Skills

6. On 25 March, we brought together Whitehall leads with councils to engage on, and shape, Plan for Jobs related activity, and ran a workshop with the sector and the National Audit Office on its inquiry into the workings of DWP during Covid-19.
7. We responded to the [DfE's flexi-apprenticeship consultation](#), noting councils' important convening work during the pandemic, setting out the case for recovery interventions to be locally tailored, and pointing out councils' key role in ensuring interventions are coordinated nationally and locally.
8. We launched a new [Local employment and skills recovery learning hub](#) at a [webinar](#) on 20 May with 208 delegates. The hub contains *Top tips on five themes to boost a local jobs and skills* and thirteen case studies highlighting practical local government action to coordinate jobs and skills during the pandemic and a report capturing lessons for the future.

9. We also launched a [report](#) capturing action learning to support local authorities identify barriers and challenges in fulfilling their statutory duties for young people and identify solutions.
10. We [briefed](#) for the 15 April Westminster Hall debate on the Education Committee's report on adult skills and lifelong learning; making the case for the role of local government.
11. We continue to work with sector to set out the implications of the Government's Adult Education Budget funding rule change on councils' adult and community learning provision.
12. We responded to the House of Lords Youth Unemployment Committee's inquiry into measures taken to protect and create jobs for young people, reiterating our asks for young people in the recovery.

### **EU Funding & UKSPF**

13. Following the launch of the UK Community Renewal Fund prospectus, officers are speaking to a number of lead authorities to seek feedback on the CRF process and any learning that might be made available for the design of the forthcoming UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

### **Digital Connectivity**

14. We promoted to councils a request by the Universities Minister, Michelle Donelan for their support to help students access education online by adding the 'eduroam' network to their existing public Wi-Fi network, at no extra charge.

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