

Note of last Executive Advisory Board meeting

Title: Executive Advisory Board
Date: Thursday 27 January 2022
Venue: Online via Microsoft Teams

Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions
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1 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **Lobbying Headlines**

Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive, introduced a report summarising the LGA's lobbying headlines. Sarah Pickup, Deputy Chief Executive also contributed with updates on Health and Social Care. In particular, Mark brought attention to the impact of the Omicron variant and the winter pressures affecting councils, including the impact on services, budgets, decision making and ability to provide support to residents.

Also highlighted were the LGA's lobbying work on local government finance, the Adult Social Care and Integration white papers, Public Health funding, asylum and resettlement as well as the Levelling Up, UKSPF and Devolution agendas.

In the subsequent discussion, Members made the following points:

- Concerns were raised about the childrens' social care workforce, use of private agencies, a potential recruitment crisis, and safeguarding issues
- Concern was expressed about the impact of self-funders accessing social care at local authority rates and the financial impact on councils.
- There were calls for the LGA to lobby further for political and democratic leadership on Integrated Care Boards.
- A view was expressed that any intervention by Government in a Council must be proportionate, necessary and evidence based to ensure integrity of the sector led improvement system.
- A view was expressed that an extension of the bus recovery grants would be needed to prevent a collapse of routes and services.
- Concerns were raised about the lack of standardisation in the Electric Vehicle charging networks across the county.
- A view was expressed that elections would need to modernise in order to maintain democracy.

In response to these comments Mark Lloyd thanked Members and reassured them

the LGA would continue to make these points to Government. Mark gave assurances that the LGA's Improvement work was focused on ensuring that intervention would be less necessary and that it would be shaped by the sector where it was necessary. Mark confirmed that a cross party working group on the Elections Bill had been established to work through the LGA's lobbying lines.

The Chairman gave feedback that he had met with the Minister for Afghan Resettlement regarding information and data sharing with local authorities.

Decision

The Executive Advisory Board **noted** the report.

3 Online Safety Bill

The Chairman invited Louise Smith, Senior Adviser, to introduce the Online Safety Bill report which proposed policy positions additional to those set out in the evidence the LGA had previously submitted on the Draft Bill.

Decision

The Executive Advisory Board **agreed** the proposed policy positions summarised in paragraph 10 of the report.

Action

Policy positions agreed by members would be used to inform lobbying on the Online Safety Bill going forward.

4 Local Government Finance Settlement

The Chairman invited Cllr Wenham, Vice Chairman of the Resources Board, to introduce the report summarising the work of the LGA on the Provisional 2022/23 Local Government Finance Settlement and information on the Spring Statement / Budget.

Cllr Wenham provided a summary of the provisional settlement.

- There was a potential increase of 6.9% in Core Spending Power in 2022/23, assuming all local authorities raised council tax by the maximum allowable limit without a referendum.
- This amounted to a core principle increase of 2%, with the higher of 2% or £5 for shire districts and an additional 1% adult social care precept (along with any unused flexibility from the previous year).
- Some grants increased by inflation, others were cash flat and there was £1.5 billion of new money comprised of:
 - a new social care grant for adults and children's services.
 - A one-off, unringfenced, Services Grant
- The Government had not yet announced public health grant allocations.

Local Government Finance reform

- The Government said it was committed to ensuring that the assessment of needs and resources was up to date and would work with the sector on this however it was unclear whether this referred to data and the formulae.
- There was no mention of the future of new homes bonus reform, further business rates retention or the business rates reset at the settlement.
- However, the Secretary of State said that he thought that a system of 75% business rates retention would go against the principle of levelling up in a session of the Communities, Housing and Local Government Select Committee in November 2021.

Decision

The Executive Advisory Board **noted** the update.

Action

It was planned that a letter would be sent to the Chancellor ahead of any future Spring Budget/Statement, to be signed off by the Chairman and Group Leaders. This approach would be kept under review in case the need for fuller policy submissions becomes more appropriate.

Officers would proceed with the delivery of the LGA's work on local government finance.

5 Decisions and actions from the previous meeting

The Executive Advisory Board agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 9 December 2021.

Appendix A - Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
	Cllr James Jamieson (Chairman)	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Cllr Nick Forbes	Newcastle City Council
	Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE (Vice Chairman)	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr Joe Harris (Vice-Chair)	Cotswold District Council
	Cllr Marianne Overton MBE (Vice-Chair)	North Kesteven District Council
	Cllr John Fuller OBE	South Norfolk District Council
	Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE	Bexley Council
	Cllr Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
	Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District Council
	Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
	Cllr David Fothergill	Somerset County Council
	Cllr Nick Forbes CBE	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
	Cllr Michael Payne	Gedling Borough Council
	Cllr Georgia Gould	Camden Council
	Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Plymouth City Council
	Cllr Shabir Pandor	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
	Cllr Nesil Caliskan	Enfield Council
	Mayor Marvin Rees	Bristol City
	Cllr Bridget Smith	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE	Portsmouth City Council
	Cllr Paul Woodhead	Cannock Chase Council
	Cllr Hannah Dalton	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
	Cllr Chris Poulter	East Midlands
	Cllr Graeme Miller	North East of England
	Cllr Tim Oliver	CCN
Apologies:	Cllr Shaun Davies	Telford and Wrekin Council
	Cllr Nicholas Heslop	South East Councils
	Cllr Antoinette Bramble	Hackney Council