

Minutes of last General Assembly meeting

Title: General Assembly
Date: Tuesday 6 July 2021
Venue: Zoom Webinar

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Attendance 156 authorities in full LGA membership were represented at the meeting.	
2	Welcome by the Chief Executive of the LGA Mark Lloyd, LGA Chief Executive, welcomed representatives to the meeting and highlighted the role of the General Assembly in electing the political leadership team that would drive the LGA agenda on behalf of all local government over the next 12 months. He also thanked all those members and officers that had played a part in the LGA to help all member councils and the communities they represented. Mark thanked LGA Board members who were stepping down from their roles this year: Cllr Howard Sykes MBE had been an LGA Vice-Chair and had led the LGA's Liberal Democrat group since 2017, Cllr Ruth Dombey had been an LGA Deputy Chair and Deputy Leader of the LGA Liberal Democrat group also since 2017, and Cllr Clive Woodbridge had been an LGA Deputy Chair and Deputy Leader of the Independent Group since 2018. He noted that the LGA would miss their valuable contributions and wished them well as they continued to play a leading role at your councils. Mark also thanked the outgoing LGA President, Lord Kerslake, on behalf of the LGA who was stepping down after six years in the role. The LGA had valued his role in supporting the interests of local government in the Houses of Parliament and invited him to address the General Assembly.	
3	Address by Lord Kerslake, Outgoing LGA President Lord Kerslake delivered his final address to the LGA General Assembly and thanked the LGA and members for their work with him over the past six years.	
4	Election of LGA President The Chief Executive invited that General Assembly to elect a President for 2021/22, under Part 3 - Paragraph 9 of the LGA Articles of Association. There was one nomination for LGA President, Baroness Tanni Grey-	

Thompson.

Baroness Grey-Thompson was proposed by Cllr James Jamieson (Central Bedfordshire Council) and seconded by Cllr Nick Forbes CBE (Newcastle upon Tyne City Council).

Decision

It was moved, seconded and **agreed** by the General Assembly that Baroness Grey-Thompson be elected President of the Association for 2021/22.

Baroness Grey-Thompson took the Chair and delivered an address to thank the General Assembly.

5 Election of LGA Chairman

Baroness Grey-Thompson invited nominations from the General Assembly for Chairman of the Local Government Association (LGA) for 2021/22.

The LGA's Articles of Association (Article 21.1) provided for the General Assembly, at its Annual Meeting, to elect a Chairman from amongst the members representing full member authorities. Under Article 21.2, the largest political group at the point of calculating the political balance would nominate the Chairman of the Association, who under the LGA's Governance Framework also holds the equivalent office on the LGA Board and the Executive Advisory Board. The Conservative Group, which was the largest political group at the point of calculating the LGA's political balance for 2021/22, nominated Cllr James Jamieson (Central Bedfordshire Council) to be the Chairman for 2021/22.

Cllr Jamieson was proposed by Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE (Warwickshire County Council) and seconded by Cllr Nick Forbes CBE (Newcastle City Council).

Decision

It was moved, seconded and **agreed** by the General Assembly that Cllr James Jamieson (Central Bedfordshire Council) be elected Chairman of the Association for 2021/22.

The Chairman thanked Baroness Grey-Thompson and took the Chair.

6 Address by the Chairman of the LGA

Cllr Jamieson thanked the General Assembly, and all Members who served on LGA governance structures. He stated that he would represent all Members regardless of their party or council, and it was the LGA's cross-party work which made a great difference to communities across the country. He would formally address Members again at the opening of the LGA Annual Conference later that morning.

7 Election of LGA Vice-Chairs

The Chairman invited the General Assembly to elect four Vice-Chairs for 2021/22 under Article 21.1 of the Articles of Association.

Under Article 21.2 of the LGA Articles of Association, each group whose share of the weighted electorate exceeds 5 per cent of the total was entitled to one Vice-Chair. Under the 2021/22 political breakdown four groups – Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat and Independent – met the criteria and were entitled to one Vice Chair each.

Decision

It was moved, seconded and **agreed** by the General Assembly that the following four Vice-Chairs of the Association were elected for 2021/22:

Conservative: Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE (Warwickshire County Council)

Labour: Cllr Nick Forbes CBE (Newcastle upon Tyne City Council)

Liberal Democrat: Cllr Joe Harris (Cotswold District Council)

Independent: Cllr Marianne Overton OBE (Lincolnshire County Council and North Kesteven District Council)

8 Election of LGA Deputy Chairs

The Chairman invited the General Assembly to elect nine Deputy Chairs for 2021/22 under Article 21.1 of the Articles of Association.

Under Article 21.2 of the LGA Articles of Association, the larger political groups were entitled to Deputy Chairs according to proportionality. Under the 2021/22 political breakdown four groups – Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat and Independent – met the criteria and were entitled to Deputy Chairs as set out below:

Conservative: 3

Labour: 4

Liberal Democrat: 1

Independent: 1

Decision

It was moved, seconded and **agreed** by the General Assembly that the following nine Deputy Chairs of the Association were elected for 2021/22:

Conservative:

Cllr John Fuller OBE (South Norfolk District Council)

Cllr Robert Alden (Birmingham City Council)

Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE (Bexley Council)

Labour:

Cllr Michael Payne (Gedling Borough Council)

Cllr Anntoinette Bramble (London Borough of Hackney)

Cllr Tudor Evans OBE (Plymouth City Council)

Cllr Georgia Gould (London Borough of Camden)

Liberal Democrat:

Cllr Bridget Smith (South Cambridgeshire District Council)

Independent:

Cllr Hannah Dalton (Epsom and Ewell Borough Council)

9 LGA Vice-Presidents 2021/22

The General Assembly were invited to note the appointments of Vice-Presidents for 2021/22, under Article 9.2 of the LGA Articles of Association.

The Chairman highlighted that following dispatch of the agenda the LGA had received notification that the Earl of Lytton has resigned as an LGA Vice President and would therefore not be appointed for 2021/22. The LGA had written to thank him for his tenure as an LGA Vice-President.

Decision

The General Assembly **noted** the appointment of the following Members of Parliament and Peers as Vice-Presidents for 2021/22:

Conservative

- David Simmonds MP (Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner)
- Sara Britcliffe MP (Hyndburn)
- Fiona Bruce MP (Congleton)
- Mary Robinson MP (Cheadle)
- Tim Loughton MP (East Worthing and Shoreham)
- Neil O'Brien MP (Harborough)
- Mark Pawsey MP (Rugby)
- Charles Walker MP (Broxbourne)
- Bob Blackman MP (Harrow East)
- Simon Clarke MP (Middlesbrough South & East Cleveland)
- Baroness Coultie
- Lord Whitby
- Lord True
- Baroness Eaton
- Lord Farmer

Labour

- Clive Betts MP (Sheffield South East)
- Catherine McKinnell MP (Newcastle upon Tyne North)
- Steve Reed MP (Croydon North)
- Wes Streeting MP (Ilford North)
- Catherine West MP (Hornsey and Wood Green)
- Jim McMahon MP (Oldham West and Royton)
- Preet Kaur Gill MP (Edgbaston, Birmingham)
- Helen Hayes MP (Dulwich and West Norwood)
- Diana Johnson MP (Kingston upon Hull North)
- Mike Amesbury MP (Weaver Vale)
- Abena Oppong-Asare (Erith and Thamesmead)
- Florence Eshalomi (Vauxhall)
- Feryal Clark MP (Enfield North)
- Rachel Hopkins MP (Luton South)
- Dan Jarvis MP (Barnsley Central)

- Lord Beecham
- Lord Kennedy of Southwark
- Baroness Smith of Basildon
- Lord Smith of Leigh
- Lord Filkin
- Baroness Wilcox of Newport
- Baroness Blake of Leeds

Liberal Democrats

- Layla Moran MP (Oxford West and Abingdon)
- Sir Ed Davey MP (Kingston and Surbiton)
- Wera Hobhouse MP (Bath)
- Daisy Cooper MP (St Albans)
- Tim Farron MP (Westmorland and Lonsdale)
- Baroness Brinton
- Baroness Bakewell of Hardington Mandeville
- Baroness Janke
- Baroness Scott of Needham Market
- Lord Shipley
- Baroness Pinnock
- Baroness Thornhill
- Lord Storey
- Lord Scriven
- Lord Tope

Independents

- Lord Best (crossbench)
- Lord Kerslake (crossbench)
- Lord Adebawale (crossbench)
- Lord Bird (crossbench)
- Baroness Greengross (crossbench)
- Lord Bichard (crossbench)
- The Lord Bishop of St Albans (crossbench)
- The Lord Bishop Sentamu (crossbench)
- Lord Woolley of Woodford (crossbench)
- Baroness Casey of Blackstock (crossbench)
- Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle (Green)
- Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb (Green)
- Lord Wigley (Plaid Cymru)
- Liz Saville-Roberts MP (Plaid Cymru, Dwyfor Meirionnydd)
- Ben Lake MP (Plaid Cymru, Ceredigion)

10 Amendments to LGA Articles of Association

The General Assembly were invited to agree amendments to the LGA Articles of Association.

Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive, introduced the report which set out the proposed changes to the Articles of Association which, in light of the increase in virtual and hybrid meetings over the past 16 months, would

enable greater voting flexibility for meetings of the General Assembly in future.

Decision

The General Assembly **approved** by Special Resolution the following amendments to the LGA Articles of Association allowing greater voting flexibility at virtual meetings:

THAT with effect from the conclusion of the meeting the Articles of Association of the Company be amended by inserting

the following new article 13.2.3:

13.2.3 or, that person has received a postal or electronic ballot in advance of the General Meeting setting out the details of the matters to which the votes are to be cast and how such voting shall be effected.

And new article number 17.6:

17.6. Voting may be exercised in advance of the General Meeting by postal or electronic ballot. Where such method of voting is adopted, Member Authorities will receive advance notice setting out the details of the matters to which the votes are to be cast and how such voting shall be effected.

11 LGA Group Financial Statements for the Year to 31 March 2021

The General Assembly were invited to receive the LGA Group financial statements for the year to 31 March 2021.

Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive, presented the report which set out the LGA's consolidated financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. They had been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the LGA Board on 3 June 2020. They have received an unqualified (clean) audit opinion from the external auditors PKF Littlejohn LLP.

Decision

The General Assembly **received** the LGA Group financial statements for the year to 31 March 2021.

12 2021 Annual Report of the Audit Committee

The General Assembly received an overview of areas reviewed and work undertaken by the Audit Committee in 2020/21.

Decision

The General Assembly **noted** the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2020/21.

13 Motion: Local Government contributions towards national climate action in the year of COP26

Cllr Phelim Mac Cafferty, Leader of Brighton and Hove City Council, proposed a Motion on local government contributions towards national climate action in the year of COP26.

In light of:

- *The significant and far reaching steps that councils across the United Kingdom are taking to combat climate change, cut carbon emissions and protect our environment; including such measures as:
 - *Declaring a climate and biodiversity emergency, action now taken by nearly three-quarters of all local councils;*
 - *Announcing extensive commitments often with detailed action plans to reach net-zero carbon by 2030, surpassing the vague government commitments of 2035;*
 - *Implementing broad community level action on climate change, such as climate assemblies, green bonds, warmer homes schemes, sourcing electricity demand from renewables, and developing new parks, open spaces and active travel measures;**
- *The significance of the ‘Conference of the Parties’ (COP26) UN Conference on Climate Change taking place this year in Glasgow, hosted by the UK; and its aims to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and UN Framework Convention on Climate Change;*
- *The response of local councils to the issue of sustainable food, given that food systems account for 1/3 of total greenhouse gas emissions, environmental degradation, food waste and socio-economic and health inequalities; in particular the efforts of councils during the Covid-19 crisis in providing food to local communities, as well as supporting community food growing and assisting food banks;*

The Association therefore agrees to:

1.
 - *Call on national government to ensure the adequate representation of local government at COP26, in order to promote the significant contribution, leadership and efforts of local councils in reducing toxic carbon emissions across the UK, and to champion the innovative and rapid progress being made at a local level to tackle climate change;*
 - *Encourage councils to continue their work to address climate change by:
 - *promoting further signatories to the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration¹. This Declaration confirms the**

¹ <https://www.glasgowdeclaration.org/>

commitment of local and regional authorities to develop sustainable food policy, and calls on national government to put food and farming at the heart of the global response to the climate emergency at COP26; and

2.

- *promoting greater participation from local councils to the UK100²: the network for UK locally elected leaders who have pledged to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, and switch to clean energy as soon as possible.*

Cllr Julian Dean (Shropshire Council) seconded the Motion.

The Chairman opened the debate to the floor, in which the following Members spoke in support of the Motion: *Cllr Izzie Seccombe OBE (Conservative, Warwickshire County Council), Cllr Nick Forbes CBE (Labour, Newcastle upon Tyne City Council), Cllr Pippa Heylings (Liberal Democrat, South Cambridgeshire District Council), and Cllr Marianne Overton MBE (Independent, North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council).*

On being put to the vote the Motion was carried.

Cllr James Jamieson (Central Bedfordshire Council), LGA Chairman, responded to the Motion and debate on behalf of the LGA as follows:

I would like to thank Cllr Phélim Mac Cafferty and Cllr Julian Dean for bringing this motion forward and thank all of you who have supported it and contributed to this debate.

The LGA supports the broad aim of this motion. Over 300 councils across the UK have declared a climate emergency and are well placed to support Government to meet its net-zero carbon ambitions by 2050 or sooner.

The position of councils as place-shapers, convenors of communities and businesses, asset-owners, problem solvers and significant purchasers puts them at the forefront of delivering real, tangible changes in the transition to net zero and should be essential partners with government.

This is why we are recommending that Government should work with councils and business to establish a national framework for addressing the climate emergency.

This is also why it will be critical that local government has the appropriate representation at the COP 26 Summit and the LGA is working with national and international partners to ensure this. We are calling for a dedicated local government day in accordance with previous COPs and a dedicated chapter in the official agreement reached at COP 26 that recognises the importance of co-designing and delivering climate action with local government.

A Climate Change Task Group has been established to provide strategic oversight of the LGA's political engagement on net zero and in the lead up

² <https://www.uk100.org/>

to the Summit in November.

In addition to the Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration and UK100 Net Zero pledge, there are a number of climate and environment declarations that councils can sign up to. We support councils to make those decisions locally. Other work related to this motion will be taken up by the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport (EEHT) Board and we will keep members informed as this work progresses.

Decision

The General Assembly **agreed** the Motion on local government contributions to national climate action in the year of COP26 as set out above.

14 Minutes of the LGA General Assembly held on 30 September 2020

The Chairman closed the meeting and noted that the next meeting Annual Meeting of the General Assembly would be held on Tuesday 28 June 2022 in Harrogate.