

Minutes of last Executive Advisory Board meeting

Executive Advisory Board

Thursday, 20 October 2022

Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A**

Item	Decisions and actions
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1	Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest
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The Chairman congratulated Cllr Teresa O'Neill who had received a nomination to sit in the House of Lords.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Shaun Davies, Cllr Hannah Dalton, Cllr David Baines, Cllr Nicolas Heslop, Cllr Sam Chapman - Allen and Cllr Andrew Western.

There were no declarations of interest.

2	Lobbying Document
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The Chairman invited Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive to address the Executive Advisory Board.

Mark assured Members of the Executive Advisory Board that, following the Prime Minister's resignation earlier that day, the LGA was poised to brief the yet to be declared Conservative Party leadership candidates on the key issues affecting local government.

Mark also highlighted the LGA's new business plan, the 'LGA Plan', which would serve as a governing framework going forward to ensure the LGA continued to promote, support and improve councils. This focused on four key issues; a sustainable financial future for councils, stronger economies and thriving democracy, putting people first to support individuals in communities and championing climate change and environmental issues.

Referencing the Lobbying Document, Mark highlighted ongoing work concerning the spread of Covid infections in parallel with work supporting councils' through the upcoming Covid Inquiry, assuring members that the LGA was engaging with monitoring officers to ensure councils would be well prepared for the forthcoming pressures this would involve. Mark explained that he would be writing to council Chief Executives outlining the LGA's offer of help.

Sally Burlington, Director of Policy (People), then briefed the Executive

Advisory Board on the LGA's work concerning asylum dispersal schemes highlighting issues around the use of hotel accommodation. On children's social care and special educational needs, Sally detailed discussions with government on concerns around the future of the Schools Bill, the SEND Green paper and deficits of high needs budgets.

Member raised the following issues

- Additional funding for 18 – 25 year old unaccompanied minors, especially where SEND provision is required, creating additional cost pressures
- Consider workforce, hard to recruit psychologists
- Concerns around the Homes for Ukraine scheme and relationship breakdowns
- Regret at Lord Harrington's departure and desire for the recreation of a Refugee Minister post
- Concerns about changes to polling stations and voter ID. Possibility of legal challenges and six months not sufficient time to get compliant
- Concerns around cost of living for residents – need to increase money going into communities. Targeted support needed
- Cross party concern that the 'Prevention' agenda is being abandoned e.g. sugar tax scrapped etc.
- Call for LGA to provide a pathway for councils to submit evidence to the Covid Inquiry – this should be documented by the sector before knowledge is lost.

Decision

The Executive Advisory Board **agreed** to note the report.

3 Membership, Terms of Reference and LGA Governance Structures

Decision

The Executive Advisory Board **agreed** to note the Membership, Terms of Reference and LGA Governance Structures for the 2022/23 meeting cycle.

4 2022 Autumn Fiscal Event

The Chairman invited Nicola Morton, Head of Local Government Finance, to introduce the report.

It was expected that the new Chancellor was due to announce a medium-term fiscal plan on 31 October 2022. This was expected to include a costed plan to reduce debt as a share of the economy. The Chancellor had also stated that departments would need to re-double their efforts to find efficiencies and that some areas of public spending would be cut, however the level of savings required was not specified.

The LGA Submission, cleared by Informal Group Leaders and Resources

Board members, focused on a number of key themes with a clear ask for funding to meet cost pressures facing councils in 2022/23 and to address future funding gaps. The Submission included preliminary evidence from the LGA's Cost Pressures Survey. Members were encouraged to complete and return the survey to help strengthen the case to Government.

The LGA has been, and would continue to, campaign in the run up to the fiscal event and 23/24 Local Government Finance Settlement. The campaign included high profile media activity, social media coverage and a toolkit for councils.

Members requested that in advance of an October announcement and the 2023/24 Local Government Finance Settlement, mention be made of SEND transport in the LGA campaign as this was a significant additional pressure for councils.

Decision

The Executive Advisory Board **agreed** to note the LGA submission to an Autumn fiscal event.

5 Anticipated upcoming key issues for housing and planning

The Chairman welcomed Cllr David Renard, Chairman of the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board, to introduce the report. Cllr Renard updated the Board on the recent and upcoming policy changes in housing and planning, as well as ongoing challenges for the sector. The previous 18 months had seen several significant policy reforms which the LGA had lobbied on. Cllr Renard outlined several wins secured through this lobbying resulting in a positive change in direction by the government on planning reform in comparison to the proposals outlined in the 2020 Planning White Paper.

Cllr Renard also highlighted the LGA's Improvement work, which continued to be well received by Councils. The Social Housing Management peer challenge had been launched in June and applications had been opened for the longstanding Housing Advisers Programme. This work would continue to support the delivery of the homes and infrastructure needed across the country.

In the discussion that followed members welcomed the positive changes made to the planning reforms thanks to LGA lobbying such as the win on five year land supply requirements but emphasised the need to continue petitioning government on issues such as viability assessments. A view was expressed that the Right to Buy policy was still very damaging for local government and housing supply.

Decision

The Executive Advisory Board **agreed** to note the update.

Action

Officers were directed to provide comments to the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board on the identified issues and the future direction of the LGA's lobbying and influencing work in this area.

6 Climate Change

The Chairman invited Cllr David Renard, Chairman of the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport (EEHT) Board and Co-Chair of the Climate Change Task Group (CCTG), to introduce the report.

Cllr Renard outlined the recent activity of both the EEHT Board and CCTG since their delegation to the COP 26 Climate Change Conference in 2021. Cllr Renard highlighted meetings with Government Ministers to discuss objectives as well as work undertaken with European local government colleagues. The LGA's policy and improvement programmes on climate change mitigation and adaptation were also detailed.

Members welcomed that Climate Change work was being looked at through the lens of the cost-of-living crisis and health, wellbeing and prevention – well insulated homes are cheaper to run, more comfortable to live in and prevent illnesses. Active travel networks keep residents fit and healthy.

Decision

The Executive Advisory Board **agreed** to note the report and update.

Action

To be taken forward by officers as directed.

7 Minutes of the previous meeting

The Executive Advisory Board **agreed** the minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 21 July 2022.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr James Jamieson OBE	Central Bedfordshire Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Joe Harris	Cotswold District Council
	Cllr Marianne Overton MBE	North Kesteven District Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Plymouth City Council
	Cllr Georgia Gould	Camden Council
	Cllr Anntoinette Bramble	Hackney London Borough Council
	Cllr Bridget Smith	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Members	Cllr John Fuller OBE	South Norfolk District Council

	Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE	Bexley Council
	Cllr David Fothergill	Somerset County Council
	Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
	Cllr Abi Brown	Stoke City Council
	Cllr Nesil Caliskan	Enfield Council
	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE	Portsmouth City Council
	Cllr Paul Woodhead	Cannock Chase District Council
	Cllr Tony Saffell	
	Cllr Robert Stewart	WLGA
	Cllr Marc Bayliss	West Midlands
	Cllr Matthew Hicks	East of England LGA
	Cllr Ralph Bagge	South East Councils
	Alderman Sir David Wootton	Local Partnerships
	Cllr Tim Oliver	County Councils Network
Apologies	Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
	Cllr Kevin Bentley	Essex County Council
	Cllr Shaun Davies	Telford and Wrekin Council
	Cllr Michael Payne	Gedling Borough Council
	Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West and Chester Council
	Cllr Andrew Western	Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
	Mayor Marvin Rees	Bristol City
	Cllr John Hart	South West Councils
	Cllr Graeme Miller	North East of England
	Cllr Nicolas Heslop	South East Councils
	Cllr Christopher Poulter	East Midlands Councils
	Cllr David Baines	North West Regional Leaders' Board
	Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	SIGOMA
	Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen	District Councils Network
In Attendance		
LGA Officers		