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Executive Advisory Board

Thursday, 8 December 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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8 Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

The Chairman congratulated Cllr Samantha Dixon who had been elected to parliament and held a moment of silence to remember Cllr Judi Billing who had passed away.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Izzi Seccombe, Cllr David Baines, Cllr John Fuller, Cllr Antoinette Bramble, Cllr Michael Payne, Cllr Hannah Dalton and Cllr Andrew Western.

There were no declarations of interest.

9 Lobbying Headlines

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

Mark noted that the LGA had published a new business plan, The LGA Plan, which set out priorities for the following 3 years for supporting, promoting and improving local councils. The LGA Plan also included plans for horizon scanning and shaping influence over this time period.

Mark raised six major issues facing councils that were highlighted in the report but not mentioned elsewhere on the agenda.

- The recent death of a child in Rochdale as a consequence of damp and mould, housing conditions – officials and monitor solution to housing conditions rather than blaming councils and housing providers. Constructive way forward
- Data collection – Michael Gove's return to DLUHC puts the creation of an office for local government back on the agenda. LGA lobbying to make sure this will be helpful to the sector and encourage better use data already available e.g. LG Inform. Mark

asked members if the sector should do more of its own assurance rather than wait for Whitehall to shape its destiny

- Asylum and resettlement, particularly the use of hotels, were continuing issues but progress had recently been made. Weekly meetings with Government officials co-chaired by the LGA to improve and get action on safeguarding, accommodation, health, data and engagement & communications were ongoing.
- Government was rumoured to be dropping the Education Bill, however the LGA would continue work to create a register of children being electively home educated despite the lack of legislative framework
- Operational concerns regarding elections in May 2023 and Voter ID. The LGA had agreed its submission to government on these concerns which would be highlighted publicly, and any progress would be reported at a future meeting
- Supporting councils with local government's contribution to the Covid Inquiry. The LGA successfully lobbied for the Rule 9 evidence request not to be applied directly to Councils but to do this through the LGA. The Survey had produced a 100% return rate, this had reduced the burden on councils and eliminated legal consequences

During the discussion, Members raised the following points:

Safety and security concerns regarding Voter ID at local elections if implemented in May 2023 as electoral administrators in rural areas had expressed concern about police support on polling day with some being advised to ring 999 highlighting the potential danger to persons and democracy.

Safety of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) following reports that 8 children under the age of 18 had been incorrectly processed and found among a group of men housed in a hotel. These errors in processing were causing safeguarding and health issues and placing an extra care burden on local authorities.

Concern regarding the future of sector led improvement with DLUHC's Assurance methodologies being unknown.

The Cost-of-Living crisis may increase homelessness which had risen by 15% in some areas. A view was expressed that the LGA should lobby to remove the Local Housing Allowance freeze.

Decision

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

10 Cost of Living

Sally Burlington, Director of Policy (People), introduced the report outlining

the LGA's approach to shaping policy and supporting councils with the impact of cost-of-living pressures and socioeconomic inequality on people and communities.

A task and finish group on Cost of Living was suggested by members. It was recommended that Group Leaders consider proposed terms of reference for the Member Advisory Board in January 2023. It was requested that representatives from each of the LGA's policy Boards be included.

Rose Doran, Senior Adviser, explained that research on private rented sector accommodation had been commissioned jointly by the Resources and Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Boards. It was disappointing that the Local Housing Allowance rate has not been increased in the Autumn 2022 Budget.

Decision

The Executive Advisory Board agreed to note the report.

Action

In January 2023, officers will present Group Leaders with options for effective leadership on the Cost-of-Living crisis.

11 Autumn Statement 2022

The Chairman welcomed Sarah Pickup, Deputy Chief Executive, to the meeting. Sarah gave a summary of the key local government finance announcements in the 2022 Autumn Statement.

In the discussion, members raised concern over business rates the rise during an economic downturn and council tax rises in context of a reduction in services. Regret was expressed that the Local Housing Allowance had not been raised.

Decision

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

Action

- Officers will proceed with the delivery of the LGA's work on local government finance, including the 2023/24 Local government Finance Settlement.

12 Minutes of the previous meeting

The Executive Advisory Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20 October 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 Bridget Smith	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Members	Cllr Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
	Baroness Teresa O'Neill OBE	Bexley Council
	Cllr David Fothergill	Somerset County Council
	Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
	Cllr Kevin Bentley	Essex County Council
	Cllr Shaun Davies	Telford and Wrekin Council
	Cllr Nesil Caliskan	Enfield Council
	Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West and Chester Council
	Mayor Marvin Rees	Bristol City
	Cllr Christopher Poulter	East Midlands Councils
	Cllr Shabir Pandor	Yorkshire and Humber Region
	Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	SIGOMA
	Cllr Tim Oliver	County Councils Network
Apologies	Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr John Fuller OBE	South Norfolk District Council
	Cllr Abi Brown	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
	Cllr Michael Payne	Gedling Borough Council
	Cllr Anntoinette Bramble	Hackney London Borough Council
	Cllr Andrew Western	Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE	Portsmouth City Council
	Cllr Hannah Dalton	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
	Cllr Paul Woodhead	Cannock Chase District Council
	Cllr Robert Stewart	WLGA
	Cllr Marc Bayliss	West Midlands
	Cllr Matthew Hicks	East of England LGA
	Cllr John Hart	South West Councils
	Cllr Graeme Miller	North East of England
	Cllr Nicolas Heslop	South East Councils
	Cllr David Baines	North West Regional Leaders' Board
	Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen	District Councils Network
In Attendance		
LGA Officers	Mark Lloyd	
	Ian Hughes	
	Sally Burlington	
	Sarah Pickup	
	Dennis Skinner	
	Nicky Old	
	Nicola Morton	

Claire Holloway
Pete Robbins
Angela Page
Sonika Sidhu
Anna Morrell
Charlotte Maguire
Claire Christopher
David Pealing
Jacqui Smale
Lizzie Nugent
Mike Heiser
Rose Doran
Sam Swift
Alexander Saul