

People and Places Board Terms of Reference

Purpose of Report

For direction.

Is this report confidential? No

Summary

The People and Places Board provides a forum for local authorities that are not metropolitan to debate economic growth and public service transformation in their areas. Members are asked to consider the Board's draft terms of reference and make any comments.

LGA Plan Theme: Stronger local economies, thriving local democracy

Recommendation(s)

That Board members agree the terms of reference. Members are invited to express an interest in the digital connectivity role (para 9) and to agree the proposals for some in person meetings (para 18).

Contact details

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Background

1. The People and Places Board provides a forum for local authorities that are not metropolitan to debate sustainable economic growth, including the importance of decarbonisation and biodiversity recovery, and public service transformation in their areas.
2. Excluding rural and non-metropolitan policy and digital connectivity, the Board works jointly with the City Regions Board.
3. At the LGA Board's July meeting, as part of a portfolio update to some LGA Boards, members agreed that the People and Places and City Regions Boards take on 'strategic transport and housing' as part of their remit. This change is underlined in paragraph 4 below. The Board Chairman will meet with the City Regions Chair and Local Infrastructure and Net Zero Board Chair (formerly Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport) to ensure the work programmes are complementary.

Remit

4. The People and Places Board brings together senior and authoritative elected members from non-metropolitan authorities (county, district/borough, and non-metropolitan unitary councils), and is reflective of those in Combined Authorities or seeking devolution deals. The role of the Board is to develop greater clarity on the role of non-metropolitan authorities in enabling sustainable economic growth for the long-term prosperity and wellbeing of residents, and on how devolution and transformation of public services can enable that.
5. Its remit is to consider how planning and infrastructure provision, publicly-funded skills and employment programmes, digital connectivity, and strategic transport and housing might be better deployed in a non-metropolitan setting to drive sustainable growth leading to greater prosperity. The Board will consider the role of non-metropolitan leaders in responding to the climate and ecological emergencies, including the role of agriculture and nature restoration, and building capacity around the green economy. It will also consider how people services and health and care integration, together with greater use of pooled funding, might help to improve wellbeing and drive transformation in services.

Operational accountabilities

6. The Board will seek to involve councillors in supporting the delivery of these priorities (through Forums, policy grouping, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), regional networks and other means of wider engagement); essentially operating as the centre of a network connecting to all councils and drawing on the expertise of key advisors from the sector.
7. The People and Places Board will be responsible for:
 - 7.1. Ensuring the priorities of councils are fed into the business planning process.

- 7.2. Developing a work programme to deliver their brief, covering lobbying, campaigns, research, improvement support and events and linking with other boards where appropriate.
 - 7.3. Sharing good practice and ideas to stimulate innovation and improvement.
 - 7.4. Representing and lobbying on behalf of the LGA, including making public statements on its areas of responsibility.
 - 7.5. Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.
 - 7.6. Involving representatives from councils in its work, through task groups, Commissions, SIGs, regional networks and mechanisms.
 - 7.7. Responding to specific issues referred to the Board by one or more member councils or groupings of councils.
8. The People and Places Board may:
 - 8.1. Appoint members to relevant outside bodies in accordance with the Political Conventions.
 - 8.2. Appoint member champion and spokespersons from the Board to lead on key issues.
9. Lead members agreed that Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE continue as the digital champion, reporting regularly to the Board. Lead members suggested the Board appoint a digital connectivity lead to work with Mark between Board meetings. Members interested in taking on this role are asked to let their lead member know in advance of the Board meeting.
 10. In the last cycle, Cllr Emily O'Brien was appointed the green jobs champion to support the Board's work on the Government's Green Jobs Delivery Group and associated sub-groups, which will continue to meet through the autumn. Lead members agreed that she continue in this role.
 11. An equalities champion is due to be appointed to all Boards in the autumn.

Work programme

12. The Board to set its own work programme which is agreed at the start of each meeting cycle in early Autumn.

Quorum

13. One third of the members, provided that representatives of at least 2 political groups represented on the body are present.

Political composition

14. The composition by political party is recalculated each year and reflects the political proportionality of the wider group of councils from which their membership is drawn.

15. The current composition is:

15.1. Conservative group: 11 members

15.2. Labour group: 4 members

15.3. Independent group: 3 members

15.4. Liberal Democrat group: 4 members

16. Substitute members from each political group may also be appointed.

Frequency

17. Meetings to be five times per annum.

18. While LGA meetings now offer hybrid facilities, lead members expressed support for the idea of designating two meetings as 'in person if possible,' while retaining hybrid facilities for those who are unable to attend in person. This would support closer working relationships between Board members.

Reporting accountabilities

19. The LGA Executive Advisory Board (EAB) provides oversight of the Board. The Board may report periodically to the EAB as required, and will submit an annual report to the Executive's July meeting.

Next steps

20. Officers to publish the final terms of reference.