

## Urban Summit

### Purpose of Report

For direction.

**Is this report confidential? No**

### Summary

This paper sets out options for a third Urban Summit to take place in 2024. The aim of this summit would be to bring together urban leaders from the City Regions Board, Core Cities as well as London Councils and Key Cities, and set out their key priorities to national stakeholders, politicians and stakeholders.

**LGA Plan Theme:** Stronger local economies, thriving local democracy

### Recommendation(s)

**That the Board comment on the proposal to host a third urban summit at the end of the board cycle, in June 2024.**

### Contact details

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# Urban Summit

## Background

1. The LGA's second urban summit was held in March 2023, with over a hundred people in attendance. Attendees heard from Andy Haldane, Chief Executive of the RSA, who set out the initial findings of the RSA's UK Urban Futures Commission, including how UK cities lag their global competitors on productivity and growth, and highlighted the links between income and health disparities. This work was supported by a collection of essays, videos, data and analysis on the LGA's [Future of Cities Hub](#).
2. The summit was supported by an [open letter to Michael Gove](#), Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities signed by the leaders of Core Cities, Key Cities and London Councils. This set out our ambitious offer to government: that, with the right policies, finances and space to deliver, cities can produce better outcomes, not just for urban areas, but also for the whole country.
3. As we look to the next general election, there is an opportunity to sharpen our offer to government and consider how a third Urban Summit in 2024 could give the Board, and its partner Special Interest Groups, a platform to engage influential people and organisations to amplify this offer.

## Proposal

4. Following discussion with City Regions Board Lead Members, we would like to test appetite with the Board on organising a third urban summit to take place in 2024.
5. Previous urban summits have brought together city leaders, experts, as well as other stakeholders and partners to draw on their understanding of how cities need to change to meet the needs of the future and the strong offer cities can make to some of the important challenges facing the nation.
6. It is proposed that an urban summit in 2024 would have a different focus, providing an opportunity for urban leaders to come together to reach an agreed set of asks and offers around the future of cities, inform the LGA's lobbying to government and political parties in the lead up to the general election, and, crucially, offer a chance to engage with and influence key national decision makers and politicians who could .
7. Previous urban summits have been organised in collaboration with Core Cities, and other partners including Key Cities, London Councils, and the RSA. Officers have held early conversations with Core Cities, Key Cities and London Councils to gauge interest in organising and participating in another summit. Feedback has been positive, all are keen to play an active role.
8. Following direction from Lead Members, it is proposed that officers start planning for an urban summit be held in person at the end of the board cycle, in June 2024. This would provide an opportunity to bring together the work of the Board from the year, and to avoid clashes with local elections and budget setting. We are open to suggestions about the location of the summit.

9. Officers have drawn up options for themes for the summit and possible workshops. We are keen to hear views from members on this and for further suggestions.
  - 9.1. Political parties' perspective on how cities can thrive
  - 9.2. The relationship between cities and towns
  - 9.3. The future of growth funding
  - 9.4. AI and the potential impact on cities' labour markets
  - 9.5. The international perspective on climate action
  - 9.6. The opportunities to align health and local government devolution
10. It is intended that the summit be interactive and include urban Special Interest Groups, as well as national agencies and representatives from political parties.

### **Implications for Wales**

11. This work is being carried out within the context of the Levelling Up White Paper, which presents a vision for the UK. While many of the investment and policy levers are likely different within the Welsh context there will be value in drawing on the experience of Welsh cities and the aspirations of Welsh city leaders as part of this work.

### **Financial Implications**

12. The cost of arranging an urban summit as well as any additional policy activity arising from this paper will be met from the Board's policy and research budget.

### **Equalities implications**

13. Officers will ensure that the urban summit has a diverse range of speakers which reflects the diversity of cities in the UK, and that equalities implications of policies affecting cities are examined as part of the sessions taking place in the urban summit.

### **Next steps**

14. Subject to feedback from members, officers will agree a date and agenda for the urban summit and bring this to the Board for agreement.