

City Regions Board Terms of Reference

Purpose of Report

For decision.

Is this report confidential? No

Summary

The City Regions Board provides a forum for urban authorities to debate economic growth and public service transformation in their areas. Members are asked to consider the Board's proposed terms of reference and make any comments.

LGA Plan Theme: Stronger local economies, thriving local democracy

Recommendation(s)

That the Board agree the revised terms of reference.

Contact details

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City Regions Board Terms of Reference

Background

1. The LGA's policy boards are asked to review and agree their terms of reference at the beginning of every Board cycle. Board members have made a number of changes to the terms of reference over the lifetime of the Board to reflect the changing policy landscape, for example reflecting the role of urban leaders in climate and net zero issues.
2. The City Regions Board provides a forum for urban authorities to debate sustainable economic growth, including the importance of decarbonisation and biodiversity recovery, and public service transformation in their areas. Excluding urban policy, the Board works jointly with the People and Places Board.
3. Where our work crosses the remit of other Boards, such as in health devolution, members have worked with their colleagues on the relevant Boards to ensure our work supports the LGA's wider policy objectives while also amplifying the interests of urban authorities. This may result in a joint undertaking or a standalone piece of work, but in all instances LGA officers will work closely together to avoid duplication or confusion of the LGA's policy lines.
4. 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. Following discussion with lead members, the Board will agree a work programme to explore members' priority issues in this area.

Terms of reference

5. The purpose of the City Regions Board is to represent the interests of urban areas and city regions, including those which are part of Combined Authorities or seeking devolution deals. Its remit includes devolution; inclusive and sustainable economic growth; skills and employment support; strategic transport and housing issues; wider public service reform. It will also consider the role of urban leaders in responding to the climate and ecological emergencies, working with the Local Infrastructure and Net Zero (LINZ) Board, and the opportunities within the Board's work programme to promote improved health and wellbeing.
6. The Board should seek to involve councillors in supporting the delivery of these priorities (through task groups, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), regional networks and other means of wider engagement); essentially operating as the centre of a network connecting to all urban councils and drawing on the expertise of key advisors from the sector. This includes working closely with relevant LGA Boards.
7. The City Regions Board's responsibilities include:
 - 7.1. Ensuring the priorities of councils are fed into the business planning process.
 - 7.2. Developing a work programme to deliver the business plan priorities relevant to their brief, covering lobbying campaigns, research, and improvement support in the

context of the strategic framework set by Improvement & Innovation Board and events and linking with other boards where appropriate.

- 7.3. Sharing good practice and ideas to stimulate innovation and improvement.
Representing and lobbying on behalf of the LGA including making public statements on its area of responsibility.
 - 7.4. Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders.
 - 7.5. Involving representatives from councils in its work, through task groups, Commissions, SIGs, regional networks and mechanisms.
 - 7.6. Responding to specific issues referred to the Board by one or more member councils or groupings of councils.
8. The City Regions Board may:
- 8.1. Appoint members to relevant outside bodies in accordance with the Political Conventions.
 - 8.2. Appoint member champions from the Board to lead on key issues, with responsibility for liaising with portfolio holders on key issues that require rapid response/contact with councils.

Quorum

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

Financial Implications

10. Membership of the City Regions Board is drawn from the Core and Key cities, SIGOMA and London Boroughs, and is reflective of those in Combined Authorities or seeking devolution deals.
11. The Board has 22 members and its make-up reflects the political proportionality of the wider group of councils from which the membership is drawn. This differs from the seven policy boards, whose make-up reflects the political proportionality of the Association as a whole.
12. The chair has been appointed from the largest group on the Board and falls within the LGA's own proportionate allocations. In line with the LGA's political conventions, the remaining groups each have a vice or deputy chair.
13. 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. The current composition is:
 - 13.1. Conservative group: 4 members
 - 13.2. Labour group: 14 members
 - 13.3. Independent group: 2 members

13.4. Liberal Democrat group: 2 members

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

Frequency

15. Meetings to be held five times per annum. For the 2023/24 cycle, it is proposed that 3 meetings be held virtually, with the January meeting hybrid with members invited to attend in person if possible and incorporating a study visit. The June meeting is to be expanded to include the Urban Summit.

Reporting accountabilities

16. The Board will report annually to the LGA Executive Advisory Board at the July meeting.