

People and Places Board – Report from Cllr Martin Tett (Chairman)

Digital

1. The Board has continued to support councils with the digital switchover. Following publication of the [digital switch readiness survey](#) to understand councils' position on awareness, planning and implementation, the [digital switchover hub](#) has been updated in collaboration with key partners and social media assets and the leaflet contained within the [communications toolkit](#) have been revised incorporating feedback from councils.
2. The issue of provider engagement and household readiness has continued to gain traction in the national press. In response we are in the process of further expanding our digital communications campaign and facilitating a round table co-chaired by Helen Morgan MP and Cllr Mark Hawthorne to understand what further steps could be taken to improve awareness and the potential impacts of the digital switchover amongst local residents and councils.

Levelling up

3. The NHS Confederation, through its Health Economic Partnerships work programme and ICS network, established a time-limited health and devolution working group. The aim of the group was to understand the priorities, opportunities, and challenges for ICS leaders, how this intersects with English devolution to date and the emerging devolution deals. The Board co-sponsored the group alongside the City Regions and Community Wellbeing Boards. Four meetings took place in April, June, July and September and officers from the LGA and NHS Confederation are finalising the report encapsulating the findings from the working group.

Employment and skills

4. The LGA has submitted written evidence to the House of Lords [Public Services Committee inquiry into the transition from education to employment for young disabled people](#). In addition, Councillor Martin Tett along with two sector colleagues gave oral evidence [to the Committee](#) highlighting the role of councils in supporting young disabled people and funding pressures, and our Work Local model for improving the system.
5. To build on the City Regions and People and Places Boards' joint work to ensure economic inclusion, Pragmatix Advisory has been commissioned to examine how the transport system impacts people and places by limiting or enabling access to skills, training, and the labour market. The project has engaged with

the sector and will present its draft findings/report in March 2024.

6. The LGA continues to support discussions between councils and the Department for Work and Pensions on the design of Universal Support, a new employment support programme to be grant funded to (clusters of) councils and devolved authorities. Designed to help people back into work, including people with health conditions, the programme is set to be phased in across areas later this autumn. We have secured a meeting between LGA politicians and Mims Davies MP, the Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work to ensure there is a clear understanding and joint commitment to delivering this, as well as to negotiate any outstanding issues. It is likely to take place during the next month.
7. As we move towards a General Election in 2024, all political parties are interested in ensuring investment for infrastructure, jobs and skills gets to places. Our aim is that a returning Government or new administration will adopt policies to improve public employment and skills services, so they work better for people, places and local employers, and which take us towards our Work Local employment and skills devolution ambitions. The LGA has established a working group of officers from councils, devolved authorities and local government partner bodies to develop finer detail.

Local growth

9. The Board, alongside the City Regions Board, commissioned Henham Strategy to work alongside local areas to work through the challenges and opportunities of LEP integration, with the findings published for other areas to benefit from as they plan their future economic support and leadership offer. The findings from this research will be used to support the LGA's lobbying of central government to provide further support to councils and combined authorities with the next steps following LEP integration.

Contact details

Contact officer: Philip Clifford

Position: Principal Policy Adviser

Phone no: 07909 898 327

Email: philip.clifford@local.gov.uk