

City Regions Policy Updates

Purpose of Report

For information.

Is this report confidential? No

Summary

This report provides Board members with an update on the progress of activity in the board work programme including: health devolution, universal support, strategic transport and green jobs.

LGA Plan Theme: Stronger local economies, thriving local democracy

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the content of the update paper.

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Health Devolution

1. Officers have continued to work with the NHS Confederation on a joint report into the opportunities for closer working between Integrated Care Systems and local government devolution. Following feedback from members a shorter, more focused report is being written and will be circulated to lead members of the People and Places, City Regions and Community Wellbeing Boards for comment and clearance before publication.

Universal Support

2. The LGA is working with DWP to route Universal Support (US), the Government's Back to Work intervention announced during last year's fiscal events, through local government. The £1.4 billion 'place and train' employment programme covering England and Wales, will support economically inactive groups including those with physical and mental health conditions and unemployed people with complex needs. It will be phased in from Autumn 2024 and run to 2028/2029. We continue to bring councils together with DWP to discuss design elements and are linked in with devolved areas who are having parallel discussions.
3. Board Members discussed this at the January Boards and raised several points. These included: US and similar initiatives being led by Integrated Care Boards must align; local government needs the ability to move funding from year to year; some groups will take longer to secure sustained employment; and training is vital to help people transitioning to new industries.
4. Political level engagement between the LGA and DWP is critical to ensuring a shared understanding and commitment to delivering this. We will report back to the Board following a meeting with Mims Davies MP, the Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work.

Strategic Transport

5. City Regions Lead Members have agreed to lead on the commissioning of a piece of work looking at examples of decision-making arrangements for transport investment and planning in different countries, including the UK, and the role of local governments within them. The research will consider how well transport decisions are being integrated with other infrastructure and service decisions and include consideration of the specific needs and experiences of urban and non-metropolitan places. This comparison will allow a robust appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the current system in England together with options for change to strengthen our evidence base for any changes we wish to propose to a new or returning government. Given the People and Places Board's shared interest in this work officers will work with Lead Members of that Board to ensure that their priorities and ambitions are captured and reflected in this project.

Green Jobs

6. The LGA has been collaborating with other local government sector bodies, including ADEPT, MCA Network and UK100, as part of the Local Capacity and Capability sub-group in putting forward a vision for the skills and net zero system, reflective of the LGA's [Green Jobs Framework](#). This has also been informed by the views of representatives of

businesses, skills providers and industry. The local government representative will continue to promote this model through the Ministerial Green Jobs Delivery Group, with an expected Green Jobs Action Plan due later in March 2024

Implications for Wales

7. Officers will look to share lessons emerging from this work with the Welsh Local Government Association when appropriate.

Financial Implications

8. This can be met from the Board's budget.

Equalities implications

9. When possible, LGA officials will include details related to inequalities, including protected characteristics and other groups that experience.

Next steps

10. Officers will continue driving work forward and will report back to the Board when appropriate.