

LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition 2014

Purpose of report

For information and direction.

Summary

This report updates the Leadership Board on the progress made to date with arrangements for the LGA Annual Conference, taking place in Bournemouth from 8-10 July 2014.

Recommendation

That the Leadership Board comment on and approve the emerging programme and activities for the Annual Conference 2014.

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LGA annual conference and exhibition ‘the local government event of the year’

Background and conference programme planning

1. The LGA annual conference and exhibition is the Association’s showpiece event attracting over 1200 attendees from Local Government and the Local Government family, central Government, the private and voluntary sector, plus up to another 300 exhibitors, speakers and press.
2. Last year the LGA successfully used its annual conference to set out, through its “Rewiring Public Services” campaign, a range of propositions that will change the relationship for the better between central and local government, and address the financial issues that are providing serious challenges to the sector. Since last year the LGA has been ensuring that these propositions are heard, understood and adopted by those writing party manifestos.
3. This year’s annual conference comes at a pivotal time between the May local elections and the 2015 General Election. As party manifestos are finalised the LGA will use this conference as an opportunity to build on the “Rewiring” work and look to the priorities of whichever government is formed in May 2015. The conference will provide an excellent opportunity for national politicians to hear first-hand the key challenges for the sector, and what needs to be done to address them.
4. A number of recommendations were made in relation to the conference at the September Leadership Board. Where possible these have been addressed and acted upon and the current conference programme is attached.

The main changes are as follows:

- 4.1. Conference registration will start slightly earlier and be slightly shorter.
- 4.2. The General Assembly meeting will be business and motions (no external speakers).
- 4.3. Registration, group meetings and General Assembly will all take place in the morning, prior to lunch, separating it effectively from the conference opening and enabling the Chairman’s speech to open the conference.
- 4.4. Political group (and the Chief Executives) dinners will take place on Wednesday evening (excluding the Independent Group which shall remain on Tuesday evening).
- 4.5. Conference will close at lunchtime on Thursday, followed by political group and officer meetings.

5. Invitations have been sent to the three party leaders for main keynote sessions. In addition to these, main plenary sessions are being built around '**Political Leadership**', a cross-party panel discussion opened by **Ben Page** sharing research findings; **Lord Adonis** has been invited to speak at 'Our new sub regions – a model for devolution'; **Simon Stevens**, incoming Chief Executive of NHS England has confirmed to speak; and **Sir Michael Lyons** has confirmed to speak at 'How do we build the homes we need?'
6. Lead members and officers have this year identified the key conference themes and work is ongoing to confirm speakers for the following sessions:
 - A vision for children and young people in the 21st century
 - Broadband rollout
 - Clash of the think tanks
 - Climate Local: delivering growth, income and safer communities
 - Councils and the motorist – do we have a future together?
 - Councils innovating to generate income
 - Driving transformational change
 - Fair deal for England and Wales
 - Finance commission / future funding
 - Health and wellbeing boards
 - Hidden Talents, supporting every young person into work or learning
 - LEPs - friend, foe or frenemy?
 - Lessons from the Dutch government
 - The high street is dead. Long live the high street
 - The National Procurement Strategy for Local Government
 - The path to true workforce integration
 - Transforming Postcards from the edge – using your workforce to transform your council
 - Rewiring blue light services
 - Social Care/Care Bill
 - Social impact bonds
 - Strengthening local accountability: a pre-requisite for greater local devolution of financial powers (CfPS)
 - Public health services for 0-5 year olds
 - What next for welfare reform / behaviour change
7. We have deliberately left a number of sessions unplanned and therefore available to pick up any issues that may arise over the coming months.
8. Following the success of last year's Innovation Zone, the LGA will be running an innovation programme across three days of the conference, in a dedicated space at the conference centre. Again, this will allow the opportunity for drop in sessions, masterclasses and/or discussion opportunities for councils to share best practice with each other.
9. We will have a full, open programme of political group events, alongside a programme for Chief Executives.

LGA Leadership Board

19 February 2014

Item 2

The audience

10. In 2013, 302 member authorities sent delegate(s) to the Annual Conference (in the main Leader, Deputy Leader or Group Leaders) and almost 200 Chief Executives were in attendance. We currently have over 200 delegates booked and continue to promote the event via our networks.
11. The conference dedicated website (www.local.gov.uk/annual-conference) is available for all conference updates.

Exhibition

12. The LGA will have a main exhibition stand in the centre of the Purbeck Hall – used as a hub for any launches and for highlighting our services, member benefits, key messages etc. This will be staffed by senior staff but will also have a strong communications team presence, and is an excellent opportunity for networking with members and showcasing member benefits.
13. The political groups will be co-located in this area in the centre of the Purbeck Hall alongside additional seating space to allow for networking and debate.

13.1 Work is on-going to achieve targets for exhibition and sponsorship which is again proving challenging. Exhibitors booked to date are:

Alzheimer's Society	National Audit Office
Association for Public Service	Newton Europe Ltd
Excellence - APSE	Patrol
Bournemouth Borough Council	Pinnacle PSG
British Sprinkler Alliance	PIRC Limited
Community Development	Public Health England
Foundation	Rennicks uk
DANFO UK Ltd	The MJ
Guide Dogs UK	The Woodland Trust
Healthmatic Limited	UNISON
INLOGOV	Volunteer Squared Ltd
LGBCE	

Summary

14. The conference provides an excellent platform for the Association to engage with a large portion of our membership. It supports the Association's lobbying and influencing agenda through political group meetings and key speeches. It showcases local authority best practice to the wider sector through workshops, fringes, exhibition and case studies. It offers opportunities to profile the Association's new products, research and publications. It allows us to profile the policy work undertaken by the Association, promote local government reputation and the wide ranging benefits of membership. The event is a high profile opportunity for the lead members and senior staff to engage with the membership and partners.