

London Councils

Minutes of the London Councils Leaders' Committee held on 9 February 2016
Mayor Jules Pipe chaired the meeting

Present:

BARKING AND DAGENHAM
BARNET
BEXLEY
BRENT
BROMLEY
CAMDEN
CROYDON
EALING
ENFIELD
GREENWICH
HACKNEY
HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM
HARINGEY
HARROW
HAVERING
HILLINGDON
HOUNSLOW
ISLINGTON
KENSINGTON & CHELSEA
KINGSTON
LAMBETH
LEWISHAM
MERTON
NEWHAM
REDBRIDGE
RICHMOND UPON THAMES
SOUTHWARK
SUTTON
TOWER HAMLETS
WALTHAM FOREST
WANDSWORTH
WESTMINSTER
CITY OF LONDON
LFEP

Cllr Darren Rodwell
Cllr Richard Cornelius
Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE
Cllr M. A. Butt
-
Cllr Sarah Hayward
Cllr Tony Newman
Cllr Julian Bell
Cllr Doug Taylor
Cllr John Fahy
Mayor Jules Pipe
-
Cllr Claire Kober
Cllr David Perry
Cllr Roger Ramsey
Cllr Philip Corthorne
Cllr Steve Curran
Cllr Richard Watts
Cllr Nick Paget-Brown
Cllr Kevin Davis
Cllr Lib Peck
Mayor Sir Steve Bullock
Cllr Stephen Alambritis
-
Cllr Jas Atwal
Cllr Lord True
Cllr Peter John OBE
Cllr Simon Wales
Mayor John Biggs
Cllr Clyde Loakes
Cllr Jonathan Cook
Cllr Philippa Roe
Mr Mark Boleat
-

Apologies:

BROMLEY
GREENWICH
HILLINGDON
NEWHAM

SUTTON
WALTHAM FOREST
WANDSWORTH

Cllr Stephen Carr
Cllr Denise Hyland
Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE
Mayor Sir Robin Wales
Cllr Ken Clark
Cllr Ruth Dombey
Cllr Chris Robbins
Cllr Ravi Govindia

Ex officio (under the provisions of Standing Order 2.5)

Officers of London Councils and the following were in attendance:

- Lord Kerslake (London CIV's non-executive Chair)
- Mr Hugh Grover, Chief Executive, London LGPS CIV Ltd
- Mr Mike Cooke, Chief Executive of Camden Council and Chair of the London Safeguarding Children Board
- Mr Barry Quirk CBE, Chief Executive of Lewisham council and Chair of the London Elections Management Board

Before the meeting started the Chair invited the meeting to congratulate Cllr Peter John who had been awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the New Year Honours

1. Apologies for absence and announcement of deputies

The deputies listed above were noted.

2. Declarations of interest

No interests were declared.

3. Pensions CIV Update

The Chair welcomed and introduced Lord Kerslake (London CIV's non-executive Chair) who addressed the meeting as follows:

- Leaders' Committee last received a report on progress towards establishing the London CIV in July 2015 when it set out a number of ambitions for the subsequent six months, these have all been achieved and officers deserved praise for this achievement
- In October the new board of London LGPS CIV Ltd. took over from the interim board which had comprised the party group leaders and some officers and they were also deserving of thanks for their efforts

- In November the Government announced that the 89 Local Government Pension Scheme Funds in England and Wales would be required to pool assets into something like six wealth funds
- London CIV was the first such pool to be established and it launched its first Sub-Fund in December 2015 some £500 million of assets under management.

Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE on behalf of Leaders' Committee, thanked Hugh Grover for what he had achieved so far to get this work off the ground.

Cllr Philippa Roe (Conservative, City of Westminster, Devolution and Public Services Reform) asked which funds were being benchmarked against. In response Lord Kerslake pointed out that both the private and public sectors were being looked to and a robust performance management regime was being put in place. The Chief Executive, London LGPS CIV Ltd replied that they were working with the Investment Advisory Committee looking to bring in new managers with a wider range of skills and expertise. Cllr Roe asked for reports of this work to come back to Leaders' Committee particularly on performance management.

The Chair commented:

- Huge savings had already been made, even for the borough that had not become involved because fund managers had reflected the influence of the CIV in pricing
- One issue was whether London's CIV should remain as just one of the five or six funds across the country or whether this ignored the potential scale and scope of London's vehicle

Lord Kerslake replied that the Chair's question about scale and scope had been debated and, indeed, there was still some uncertainty with groupings elsewhere in the country and some large authorities, especially in the south-east, had yet to choose a vehicle but at present the priority was to accelerate the process of building up the fund in London. He would, nonetheless be open to a conversation about other authorities joining the London vehicle.

Leaders' Committee agreed to note the report.

4. Tackling child sexual exploitation in London

Cllr Peter John OBE (Labour, Southwark, Children and Young People) introduced the report:

- Child sexual exploitation was now recognised as a widespread problem across the UK.
- The multi-agency partnerships that work to keep children and young people safe were co-ordinated and evaluated by local safeguarding children's boards (SCBs)
- The London safeguarding children board was in addition to the statutory local boards – it was a voluntary, regional partnership which sought to add value by considering issues on a Pan-London basis.
- He introduced Mr Mike Cooke, Chief Executive of Camden Council, and chair of the London SCB

Mr Mike Cooke reported:

- At a national level, CSE had been designated a 'national threat'
- In London, the police report approximately 2000 young people at risk of, or experiencing CSE.
- Operation Makesafe was an important initiative - it aimed to raise awareness across businesses such as hotels and taxi firms and increase reporting.
- In relation to Ofsted, it was important to note that the new Joint Targeted Area Inspections will have a Deep Dive Inspection of CSE and Ofsted makes it clear that it would be assessing the role of elected members in providing effective scrutiny and challenge.
- There was some overlap with CSE and the young people who go missing or truant from school
- Authorities must be able to demonstrate three things:
 - That they understand the scale and nature of the problem, that they take it seriously and that there is a clear local profile for CSE
 - That they have a strategic plan to address the issues sponsored and led by the board
 - There is close and robust monitoring of the strategy

- CSE was currently one of the MOPAC identified priority crimes.

Members then asked questions and made comments:

- Cllr Stephen Alambritis (Labour, Merton) asked whether a breakdown was available of victims and perpetrators on the basis of ethnicity and age
- Cllr Nick Paget-Brown (Conservative, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea) asked how many of those missing from school represented abductions?
- Mayor John Biggs (Labour, Tower Hamlets) pointed out the difficulties of getting information from complimentary schools where there was no statutory right to inspect registers
- Cllr Steve Curran (Labour, Hounslow) mentioned gangs that operate across borough borders moving people around particularly girls and young women
- Cllr Kevin Davis (Conservative, Royal Borough of Kingston) said this was a vital issue for elected members to show leadership on – the fact that a predecessor of his had served a prison sentence for the possession and distribution of indecent images of children and showed how that role could be challenged and damaged profoundly. Ward councillors can play a vitally important role in spotting suspicious signs of CSE in their communities but there needs to be a system for tapping into this knowledge and expertise.

Mr Cooke responded:

- One of the priorities of the board was to improve data especially as there was a concern that police data may involve under-reporting
- One of the key questions OFSTED inspectors ask concerns children missing from care
- Leaders were encouraged to meet regularly with chairs of safeguarding boards
- He was not aware of any patterns around abduction
- He accepted the point about complimentary schools, where the Government had concentrated its attention on violent extremism while leaving local authorities with limited powers over them. As well as complimentary or independent schools, home schooling was a third element to be considered.

Leaders' Committee agreed to:

- Note the report
- Press for the importance of strong borough commands supported by specialist central resources for the provision of effective, co-ordinated policing support to both children and vulnerable adults
- Press for Mayoral candidates to make disrupting and prosecuting child sexual exploitation a priority for the Metropolitan Police Service – this reflecting the fact that CSE is now designated a 'national threat'.

5. Elections Management and the Review of Election Fees for 2016/17

The Chair welcomed Mr Barry Quirk, chief executive of the L. B. Lewisham and chair of the London Elections Management Board who introduced the report as follows:

- The London Elections Management Board, which he chaired, had been in existence for 18 months and followed the model of such a board established in Scotland. This model was being followed elsewhere with Elections Management Board (EMBs) being established across the English regions
- Its purpose was to make the management of elections, including fee arrangements, more effective and transparent
- The responsible minister, John Penrose MP (Minister for Constitutional Reform) calls meetings with EMBs every two months
- Questions had been raised by members about the appointment of local authority chief executives or senior managers to the remunerated position of a returning officer (RO); he had sought to address those questions in his report.
- A major challenge was to ensure consistency while elections remain locally managed
- Most boroughs employ four or five staff to manage their electoral function. That figure could rise to as many as 700 during an election and potentially more on polling day
- Maintaining an accurate register in a city like London with such a degree of churn, particularly in the private rented sector was a real challenge
- The Government was trialling projects to try to improve the quality of the register

- In London, in 2016, there would not only be the GLA elections in May but potentially a referendum on membership of the European Union possibly in June

Cllr Richard Cornelius (Conservative, Barnet) thanked Mr Quirk for the explanation but pointed out that to the public:

- It is difficult to understand why a chief executive is paid to perform the function of an RO that they, the public, assume is part of their general responsibilities as chief executive
- The fee seemed a considerable sum to pay them

Mr Quirk replied by saying that the appointment was a product of the system that parliament persisted with. The function ROs perform may begin several months before polling day and in all these matters it is a personal liability on the part of the RO, one in which their authority cannot act on their behalf in the case of any dispute. One RO was recently personally cited in an election petition in the courts.

Leaders' Committee agreed to note and approve the proposed scale of fees and expenses, attached as an appendix to the report, as guidance for the London boroughs, with effect from 1 April 2016.

6. Minutes of Leaders' Committee meeting held on 8 December 2015

Leaders' Committee agreed the minutes of the Leaders' Committee meeting held on 8 December 2015.

7. TEC Policy Update

Cllr Julian Bell (Labour, Ealing, TEC) introduced the item:

- The paper highlighted some of the activities that the Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) had undertaken over the past year, in particular on air quality, electric vehicles, road safety and rail devolution.
- There were a significant number of deaths associated with poor air quality in London.
- Proceedings over the infraction of the European Directive had started against the UK. These proceedings take a long time but could result in significant fines, £300 million per year was a figure that has frequently been quoted.

- The Government had published its National Air Quality Plan, as it was required to do, at the end of last year. This included very few actions from central government to improve air quality and conceded that limits would not be met in London until 2025 (all other areas by 2020). TEC responded strongly to the consultation and asked government to look to assessing how compliance could be achieved in London by 2020 and assessing what could be done to improve air quality through national policy, regulatory and financial instruments.
- Linked to the agenda of air quality, London, through a joint bid with TfL and the GLA, had been successful in obtaining grant funding from OLEV for the introduction of infrastructure to support electric vehicle take up in London.
- On rail devolution, TfL and DfT had recently published a prospectus, which talked about TfL's ambitions to take over some of the suburban rail lines in London. TEC had generally been very supportive of this, given TfL's strong track record on the Overground ("the orange line") but were not able to fully support the proposals, given the uncertainty over who would pick up the increased Freedom Pass costs. These negotiations had taken a more positive turn and there was more optimism that a satisfactory agreement could be reached soon.
- The prospectus also highlighted the need for increased engagement at local authority level in the franchise negotiations, which was an area we have lobbied on over the past year.

Members responded:

- Cllr Lord True (Conservative, Richmond):
 - The OLEV boundary was on the South Circular Rd but boroughs on either side would be affected
 - If expansion at Heathrow went ahead the effect on air quality could be significant but the issue of Heathrow expansion was hardly mentioned in the report
- Cllr Richard Watts (Labour, Islington) highlighted the discrepancy between the performance of diesel engines in test conditions and in the urban environment. This was an issue that TEC should pursue

- Cllr Steve Curran (Labour, Hounslow) pointed to the fact that 40% of the pollution on Chiswick High Rd and Gunnersbury Ave was caused by buses and urged TfL to get the right buses travelling in the right areas to reduce air pollution.

Cllr Bell responded by saying that:

- The points about boroughs dissected by the north and south circulars and on Heathrow were supported. The reason for the lack of coverage of them in the report was simply to highlight other issues. He reassured members that both issues were firmly on the agenda at TEC
- The failure of diesel testing was regularly looked at by TEC and he agreed that it was disappointing that Government had not addressed the issue.

Leaders' Committee agreed to note the report.

8. Devolution and Public Service Reform – Update

The Chair introduced the item:

- This item provided an update on three important elements within our negotiations with Government on devolution to London:
 - Employment
 - Skills
 - Health (including the London health pilots)
- In all three cases, there had been noticeable progress since the CSR at the end of November last year
- Tangible opportunities were now becoming available for boroughs and groups of boroughs to realise some of the ambitions set out in the London Proposition
- However, it also meant that we were moving to a new phase of activity, with effort ramping up within boroughs and borough groupings, to ensure that these opportunities can be realised.
- This included work within boroughs and borough groupings to:
 - embed governance arrangements and
 - ensure that capacity was in place to ensure effective commissioning, contract management and oversight
- Five health pilots had been agreed. The agreement with Government expects action by both pilot areas to develop plans and non-pilot boroughs to be ready to take advantage of this work

- Significant work was also required at London level in collaboration with both the NHS and the GLA to ensure that the interests of boroughs and local health systems were not squeezed by national interests.
- We were now entering an intensive phase of joint work with DWP to design the Work and Health programme by April, and to develop the commissioning strategy by summer 2016.
- Skills devolution negotiations with Government were expected to be complete in the next few months. Boroughs and sub-regional groups would want to be ready to shape priorities for adult skills funding and what providers should deliver
- A lot more would be heard at a local and sub-regional level over the coming months about the opportunities that were available in health, skills and employment - and the greater focus of resources that this would require
- Boroughs should continue to come together through London Councils to ensure the borough perspective was properly reflected in London's negotiations with Government.

Cllr Peter John OBE (Labour, Southwark, Children and Young People) reported on the process of engagement around Skills Area Based Reviews. He indicated that Central London Forward leaders would be happy to share some of the experience on this more widely. He also pointed out that with many DWP Job Centre leases coming to an end in 2017, there was the potential for not only for co-location of Job Centre Plus offices in council buildings but for greater collaboration and service co-operation with them.

Cllr Clyde Loakes (Labour, Waltham Forest) said that information on this for boroughs would be helpful, not least to avoid challenges around the implications in respect of Permitted Development Rights.

Leaders' Committee agreed to:

- Note the progress that had been achieved following submission of the London Proposition on devolution and public service reform, particularly in respect of opportunities that were now available to boroughs in relation to:
 - Employment
 - Skills
 - Health
- Note the work which was progressing within boroughs and borough groupings, to ensure that these opportunities could be realised. This included work within boroughs and borough groupings to embed governance arrangements and

ensure that capacity was in place to ensure that effective commissioning, contract management and oversight was in place.

9. Crime and Policing Update

Cllr Lib Peck (Labour, Lambeth, Crime and Public Protection) introduced the item:

- This strand of work started with the 'Safer Together' report that the MPS commissioned from the RSA last year and had been closely followed by the London Councils' nominees on the London Crime Reduction Board (CRB), herself, Mayor Jules Pipe and Cllr Richard Watts
- Many leaders attended the Safer Together Summit in December at New Scotland Yard where the safety of London and Londoners emerged as a strong theme.

Cllr Nick Paget-Brown (Conservative, RB Kensington and Chelsea) expressed his concern over the proposed community safety index from the RSA report which, he thought risked being out-of-date by the time it was collected.

Cllr Simon Wales (Sutton, Liberal Democrat) advocated the use of restorative justice.

Cllr Peck responded by acknowledging the point about statistics rapidly becoming out of date and questioned the value of the sort of league tables they generated. She also thanked Cllr Wales for his point about restorative justice which, she said, had not been discussed by the London CRB despite many groups existing in boroughs and undertook to try to get it considered at LCRB. She reported on work that London Councils' officers, borough chief executives and MPs offices were doing to explore the sort of principles that should underpin future borough policing. She indicated that this would need to come back to Leaders relatively soon for political consideration.

Leaders' Committee agreed to note the report.

10. Minutes and Summaries

Leader's Committee agreed to note the draft minutes and summaries:

- GLPC – 22nd October 2015
- Pensions – 4th November, 2015
- Grants Committee – 18th November, 2015

- TEC Exec – 24 November, 2015
- Capital Ambition – 8 December, 2015
- TEC – 10 December, 2015

The meeting resolved to exclude the press and public.

The meeting ended at 12:45.

Action Points

Item		Action	Progress
4.	Pensions CIV Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports of the performance management work of the CIV to come back to Leaders' Committee. 	CIV	Noted, a further report will be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.
5.	Tackling child sexual exploitation in London <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press for the importance of strong borough commands supported by specialist central resources to the provision of effective, co-ordinated support to both children and vulnerable adults in the review of police services in London being led by the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service • Press for Mayoral Candidates to make disrupting and prosecuting child sexual exploitation a priority for the Metropolitan Police Service – this reflecting the fact that CSE is now designated a 'national threat'. 	PAPA Safe-guarding Children	In hand
7.	TEC Policy Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEC to pursue the issue of the discrepancy between the performance of diesel engines in test conditions and in the urban environment 	T&E	In hand
8.	Devolution and Public Service Reform – Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central London Forward leaders to share experience of the process of engagement around Skills Area Based Reviews 	PAPA ECT	In hand

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise boroughs on the potential co-location of Job Centre Plus offices in council buildings 		
9.	<p>Crime and Policing Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Peck to seek to get restorative justice discussed by the LCRB A report to come to Leaders' Committee, relatively soon, to explore the sort of principles that should underpin future borough policing 	PAPA C&PP	In hand