

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive
Tuesday 28 February 2017 9:30am**

Cllr Claire Kober OBE was in the chair

Present

Member	Position
Cllr Claire Kober OBE	Chair
Cllr Peter John OBE	Deputy chair
Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE	Vice chair
Mr Mark Boleat	Vice chair
Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE	Vice chair
Mayor Sir Steve Bullock	
Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE	
Cllr Julian Bell	
Cllr Kevin Davis	
Cllr Lib Peck	

London Councils officers were in attendance

1. Apologies for absence and announcement of deputies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Darren Rodwell.

2. Declaration of interest

Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE declared a personal non-pecuniary interest in item 6 *Housing White Paper* as a member of the HCA board.

3. Minutes of the Executive Meeting held on 17 January 2017

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 17 January 2017 were agreed.

4. Devolution and Public Service Reform – verbal update

The Chief Executive updated the Executive on progress made in further advancing previously agreed positioning on a number of devolution themes. Key points included:

- discussions with Government on some elements of the joint London proposition on business rate retention for possible inclusion in an expanded London pilot from 2018
- moving towards agreement on a further Health and Care Devolution Memorandum of Understanding
- establishing a platform for further discussions on securing greater local influence over employment and skills
- steps towards a potential Memorandum of Understanding on Criminal Justice Devolution
- further discussions on helping boroughs and TfL to reduce congestion on roads.

The Chief Executive said that it seemed likely that the Government, the Chair of London Councils and the Mayor would mark progress to date and commit to further discussions via some joint statement in the near future.

The Chair commented on the very fast pace of developments over the previous fortnight and Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE expressed his concern that the Government might pass down responsibility but not funding.

On congestion, Mr Mark Boleat pointed out that the single biggest disincentive to businesses remaining in London was the difficulty of getting around in the city.

Cllr Peter John OBE said he had gained some impression that the Government may be less enthusiastic on Crossrail 2 and he was unsure what could be done to support the Mayor in pursuing the project.

Mayor Sir Steve Bullock argued that a narrative needed to be created that explained the inter-dependence of the UK economy and the importance of London to it.

The Chair concluded by pointing out that efforts needed to be made to frame a narrative on his point about inter-dependence between London and other parts of the country.

5. Transforming Health and Care through Devolution

Cllr Kevin Davis introduced the item saying that the draft Health and Care Devolution Memorandum of Understanding was close to being finalised. He felt it would be helpful

if this could be complemented by London Councils undertaking some of its own work about a more locally-lead system of health and care.

Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE said that local leadership would be key to addressing the challenge that the wider system faced.

Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE saw the important strands of work on integration in the Memorandum of Understanding, but that the connection between that integration and devolution needed to be more strongly developed..

Cllr Peter John OBE was not clear where the models were working and suggested that it would be helpful if London Councils could pull this together.

Cllr Davis concluded by emphasising his view that collaboration could only come with local leadership..

The Executive agreed that a report consolidating the discussion at the Executive would go to Leaders' Committee in March.

6. Housing White Paper

Mayor Sir Steve Bullock introduced the report saying:

- Discussions had been taking place with the new Housing minister Gavin Barwell MP
- The issue of right to buy for tenants of units built by local Housing Companies had been touched upon. The minister had indicated some greater flexibility and range of positions on these matters as some reports had suggested would be the case.
- The minister saw a clear role for boroughs in delivering on the White Paper aspirations in London. He was keen to work with London Councils and has agreed to address a London Councils event for Leaders, Housing Partnership leads and senior officers in April.

- He was happy to have a conversation about powers and potential resources coming to boroughs in exchange for a clear commitment to the construction of housing units
- There had been a welcome departure from the position of previous Housing minister's approach in that it was acknowledged that there was no solution in the short, medium or long term without an increase in rental supply

Cllr Puddifoot stressed again the importance of Housing Companies not being restricted by Right to Buy requirements.

The Chair said that she had seen a fair and pragmatic approach by the minister in her discussions with members of the Executive.

The Executive agreed to note the report.

7. London Councils Challenge – utilising the contribution of London Local Government more broadly

The Chief Executive introduced the report saying it worked with the grain of discussions at Leaders' Committee, the Executive and more widely including with CELC (the Chief Executives London Committee) and tried to address the issues of accountability and transparency for the process of commissioning support for London Councils' work.

Cllr Puddifoot argued that the report needed to be clearer about the flow of accountability in cases where Chief Executives were supporting the work of London Councils.

Cllr Davis commented that it was important that issues did not emerge from CELC that ran ahead of political direction. There needed to be a relationship between Chief Executives commissioned to support the work of London Councils and the London Councils portfolio-holders.

Cllr Lib Peck asked for more emphatic language around this paragraph:

Leading members at London Councils – both via an Executive Awayday discussion in November 2016 and a private discussion amongst Leaders in December 2016 – have affirmed their view that this conclusion needs to be progressed as part of the follow up to the Challenge process. There is a view that the arrangements need to be clear and transparent and that when CELC members are operating in support of London local government's collective political leadership via London Councils, there needs to be a flow of accountability back to the London Councils' Leaders' Committee.

The Chief Executive responded by saying that CELC was both a voluntary network designed to help Chief Executives to do their job effectively in their own places as well as a body that was keen for its members to be of service to the collective political leadership of London local government through London Councils.

There were different functions and Chief Executives owed different types of accountability to members – locally and across London – depending upon which of their roles they were operating in at any particular time . The primary intention of the papers and the proposition was to facilitate a means to commission Chief Executives to carry out particular pieces of work and make greater use of this resource.

The Chair concluded by saying that the report would be clarified to reflect the comments made but that the proposition was an important step towards harnessing an important resource in a transparent and accountable fashion for the benefit of London Local Government as a whole.

The Executive agreed to note the report.

8. Month 9 Revenue Forecast 2016/17

The Director of Corporate Resources introduced the report saying that it was the last report of the financial year and showed a projected underspend of just under £2m.

Parallel reports would be going to TEC and Grants Committee.

Cllr Puddifoot asked that a minor error in which a 'debit' was referred to as a 'credit' was corrected but apart from that saw the report as being reflective of a good budget position especially given the current overall state of local government finance.

The Executive agreed to note the overall forecast surplus as at 31 December 2016 (Month 9) of £1.995 million, compared to £1.758 million as at Month 6, and to note the position on reserves as detailed in the report.

9. Debtors Update Report

The Director of Corporate Resources also introduced this report saying that the level of historic debt had been reduced to £5,000. In addition, for the first time, he was able to report that not a single borough had any significant debt dating back over 60 days old.

The Executive agreed to note the report and to approve the write-off of £18,750 in respect of three invoices to recover European Social Fund (ESF) community grant funding.

Action points

Item	Action	Progress
5. Transforming Health and Care through Devolution	PAPA Health	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A report to go to Leaders' Committee in March.		

The meeting ended at 10:15