

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive  
Tuesday 16 January 2018 9:30 am**

**Cllr Peter John OBE was in the chair**

**Present**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Position</b>
Cllr Peter John OBE	Deputy chair
Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE	Vice chair
Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE	Vice chair
Mayor Sir Steve Bullock	
Cllr Darren Rodwell	
Cllr Kevin Davis	

London Councils officers and Cllr Sarah Hayward (Camden), London Councils' Lead Member for Equalities were in attendance.

**1. Apologies for absence and announcement of deputies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Claire Kober OBE, Ms Catherine McGuinness, Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE, Cllr Lib Peck and Cllr Julian Bell. No deputies were announced.

**2. Declaration of interest**

No interests were declared

**3. Minutes of the Executive Meeting held on 14 November 2017**

The minutes of the Executive meeting held on 14 November 2017 were agreed.

**4. Equalities Impact Research**

The Chair invited Cllr Sarah Hayward, London Councils' Lead Member for Equalities to introduce the report, she did as follows:

- The report introduced an equalities research report, attached as an appendix, which was commissioned from the Learning and Work Institute in 2017
- The research reviewed the local equalities implications of recent and emerging changes in relation to three themes:
  - employment and skills
  - social security policy
  - housing and homelessness
- The work was designed to inform London Councils business planning process for 2018/19 onwards
- The wide-ranging work was narrowed down in the recommendations
- There was a more detailed section on welfare reform and in-work poverty
- The housing section looked at the right-to-rent and discrimination for which it was difficult to get evidence. Landlords had been reluctant to provide information and the evidence from tenants was anecdotal; more research was needed.

Cllr Teresa O'Neill responded:

- She thought it was valuable piece of work and felt it would be worthwhile trying to track changes in the impact of the issues discussed in the report over time
- However, she thought, if the report was going to be distributed more widely than the Executive, the language needed to be reviewed so that it did not detract from the central messages of the report. Certain sections need much more nuanced expression in order to read well with key audiences and help achieve the objectives that would underpin this work

Cllr Hayward agreed with these points.

Cllr O'Neill went on to say that five boroughs voted to leave (the European Union) and they should be treated in a more nuanced way.

Cllr Kevin Davis expressed his surprise at the narrowness between the figures for inner and outer London in the Table 1 *Poverty level thresholds (weekly income)* and asked

where the information had come from and if there was any data that would show if the gap was narrowing?

Cllr Hayward replied that the information had come from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) and the Head of Strategic Policy undertook to circulate it to members of the Executive.

Cllr Davis went on to say that there was a new model of working, especially found among young people, of doing a number of part-time jobs while living at home and this needed to be taken into account in the analysis.

Cllr Darren Rodwell pointed to the extent to which the black economy had become significant with people making money through rent-a-bed arrangements – a three bedroom house in his borough had been raided and was found to have 36 people living in it. This needed to be looked at in equalities terms and the unofficial economy tackled.

Cllr Hayward replied that the 'gig' economy and to a lesser extent the black economy were driving in-work poverty and would be considered when developing the strategy in 2018/19. She asked the Executive for a steer on how much housing abuses such as bed-renting should be looked at and the Executive agreed to leave it to her discretion. She went on to say that London Councils could lead by example and challenge other public sector employers in the area.

Cllr Dombey said it was important that London Councils did what it could to lead by example. The Chair asked whether London Councils was an accredited London Living wage payer and was told it did meet the criteria but was not accredited. He also asked what Investors in People (IIP). London Councils was not IIP accredited and Cllr Rodwell expressed his opposition to this. The Chair concluded by agreeing that the development of the strategy should be monitored by the Executive and did not need to go to Leaders' Committee at this stage.

The Executive agreed:

- to draw on the evidence base which had been collected through the research in developing the London Councils Business Plan and Equality Objectives for 2018/19 onwards

- to include the following within the 2018/19 business plan the wording: *Promoting the local authority role in providing joined-up support in relation to poverty, in-work poverty, homelessness prevention and welfare (including access to Universal Credit).*

## **5. Devolution of the Criminal Justice Service**

The Chief Executive introduced the report:

- The overarching Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on further devolution to London, which had been agreed between Government, the Mayor and London Councils in March 2017, included a commitment to agreeing a specific Criminal Justice MoU
- In October 2017, Leaders' Committee delegated authority to the three London Councils Member-level representatives on the LCRB, Cllr Kober, Cllr Peck and Cllr Cornelius to consider and approve the final MoU. The current ambition was for the working text to be agreed with officials by the end of January 2018
- Currently Youth Justice provision was a borough responsibility and was funded by the Youth Justice Board. Ms Sophie Linden Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime wanted to understand where the boroughs stood on Youth Justice reform involving its delivery by groups of boroughs. Crime and Public Protection portfolio-holder, Cllr Lib Peck decided to test the appetite for the proposals before the MoU was finalized and she requested a paper proposing a pilot, which was attached to the report as an appendix

Cllr Rodwell expressed his concern over the possibility of MOPAC taking over Youth Justice. He pointed to the experience of other pilots – such as the BCU changes – where roll out sometimes appeared to precede evaluation.

Cllr Ruth Dombey argued that there was a definite change in the dynamic of deprivation in outer London and agreed with Cllr Rodwell about changes to footprint for the youth justice service. She did not think the pilot should be set up. Cllr O'Neill also shared this view.

Cllr Davis argued that it would be reasonable to indicate a willingness to keep the issue under review in future, but there was agreement by all members of the Executive that the MoU should be pursued without any reference to the Youth Justice pilot.

Before the item was concluded Cllr Davis suggested that the Probation Service was in a mess and cited a case where his borough had not been provided with important information by the service on an individual who had been released into the borough.

With the exception of the youth justice proposals referred to above, the Executive agreed to note the report.

## **6. Devolution and Public Service Reform**

The Corporate Director, Policy and Public Affairs introduced the report saying it provided an update on London government's work on devolution and public service reform – including updates regarding the progress against the Memorandum of Understanding with Government on further devolution to London, particularly in relation to:

- **Further Business Rates retention:** Today was transition day with formal agreements were going through boroughs
- **Adult Education Budget and wider skills devolution:** the Government had been pressed to accelerate the process but there was a new Secretary-of-State. Governance had been agreed comprising four representatives of the sub-regions and the London Councils portfolio-holder being part of that. Powers were to be devolved to the Mayor under provisions in the 1999 Greater London Authority Act
- **The London Work and Health Programme:** Launches in each of the sub-regional areas were now set
- **Industrial Strategy:** No tangible issues to report
- **Health devolution:** Try to encourage locally led attempts to make use of the leverage this now provided
- **Housing:** New targets had been set by both central government and the Mayor, in his draft London Plan.

Cllr O'Neill commented:

- On Business Rate retention, a two-year period for the pilots had been discussed but it was formally set up as one. In response, officers said that HM Treasury had consciously to maintain the formal position of a one-year agreement, but that 10 pilots were announced in the Local Government Finance Settlement in addition to the one in London it would be surprising if London could not secure agreement to the pilot continuing into 2019/20 if it so wished
- On health devolution she was concerned about the asymmetry between STP footprints and those coming under a single accountable officer in her area
- Some boroughs were committing to sub-regional partnerships but stepping away from the full consequences of this.

The Executive agreed to note the report.

## **7. Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2018-19**

Director of Finance, Performance and Procurement introduced the report saying:

- That today was the day that the consultation on the Provisional Settlement closed and a response had been prepared closely following the points made in the report
- This year's Settlement was the third of the current four year Spending Review period (2016-17 to 2019-20). For those authorities that had accepted the Government's four year offer, the Provisional Settlement confirmed Revenue Support Grant allocations for the next two years 2018-19 and 2019-20
- The most notable announcement was the increase in the council tax referendum threshold from 2% to 3% in both 2018-19 and 2019-20. The reason given by government was "in recognition of higher than expected inflation and the pressures on services such as social care and policing". London Councils estimated that an additional 1% increase would, if adopted by all London boroughs, raise approximately £32 million in 2018-19 and £35 million in 2019-20. This is in the context of £540m more of savings being implemented by boroughs in the current year

- The Government confirmed its intention to implement a system of 75% business rates retention across local government in 2020-21: lower than the 100% it had previously aimed for prior to the general election. It confirmed that this would include rolling in RSG, Rural Services Delivery Grant, GLA Transport Grant and Public Health Grant, and did not refer to any transfer of new responsibilities
- London Councils had long called for not only 100% retention for the sector but, full control over the setting and proceeds of business rates within the capital in line with the previous work of the London Finance Commission
- The Government also published, alongside the provisional settlement, a consultation on the Fair Funding Review, which would be implemented at the same time as the new 75% retention system in 2020-21.
- The February meeting of the Executive would receive a further report on the next consultation on the Fair Funding Review and the broader approach to be adopted to this.

The Chair reported on a meeting that Cllr Govindia and himself had had with the Secretary-of-State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (DHCLG), Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP when he had raised the funding of Children's Services, Adult Care, Housing and Homelessness as well as fire safety

Cllr O'Neill commented that in relation to the consultation response in the settlement

- It was worth recording that the decision not to make further changes to the New Homes Bonus was a positive factor
- There was a need to discuss planning fees and the Better Care Fund

The Chair suggested a debate was likely on responsibility for adult social care and he would be interested to see the social care green paper due to be published in the summer. The London local government view of this needed to be heard as part of that.

Cllr Davis commented that as RSG disappeared, discussion of it became less relevant but his borough was one of those facing negative RSG. He was informed this impacted on about four boroughs. The Government was seeking to find ways of mitigating the impact of this.

Cllr Dombey asked about resources for implementing the Homelessness Reduction Act. Officers reported the London figures, as collected by London Councils, which showed a very significant gap between provision and cost on the ground. This had been raised consistently with ministers.

The Executive agreed to note the report.

## **8. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Update**

The Director of Corporate Resources introduced the report:

- London Councils was currently making good progress in preparing for the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), which are effective from 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018
- Successful partnership work had been carried out with the London Fire Brigade in determining the impact of GDPR
- GDPR is not a huge change for organisations that have been doing existing data protection work well
- London Councils have a GDPR improvement plan and an officer board monitoring it. Progress had been shared with Internal Audit at the City
- All areas of high risk have been identified and some low-risk also
- In relation to two major contracts being retendered - for Taxicard and Freedom Pass, the impact of GDPR on those relationships has been included within the appropriate tender/contract documentation
- Standard clauses for contracts need to be written in for existing and new contracts and it was hoped that these would be provided via standard clauses provided by the Government/Information Commissioner
- The Information Commissioner wants to see evidence of the preparedness of organisations for the impact of GDPR, including a record of regular staff training
- It was hoped that specific consent to hold existing personal data was not going to be needed from individual holders of a Taxicard which would mean writing to every one of the existing 67,000 card holders, which would cost around £30,000 in postage costs alone.

The Executive agreed to note the report and the work being done in preparing for the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and regarding the Data Protection Bill.

## 9. AOB

Cllr O'Neill asked if she could raise the Pensions Common Investment Vehicle (CIV) and made the following points:

- She had been proud of London Councils' achievement in securing agreement from the boroughs to create it
- However, she was concerned about the danger of certain rumours eroding confidence in the CIV. It was important that leaders should be kept informed of developments. She asked for the CIV to provide an update for leaders.

The Chief Executive:

- Undertook to discuss her points with Lord Kerslake, chair of the Pensions CIV
- Pointed out that a report was going to the March meeting of the Pensions CIV with governance options and a financial strategy
- Agreed, in the light of a point made by Cllr John on the urgency of the matter to get a note round to members of the Executive, in first instance, in the next 48 hours.

The meeting ended at 10:50am.

## Action points

	Item	Action	Progress
4.	<b>Equalities Impact Research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Circulate to members of the Executive information regarding Table 1 <i>Poverty level thresholds (weekly income)</i></li><li>• The development of the policy work to be monitored by the Executive and not to go to Leaders' Committee at this stage</li><li>• Draw on the evidence base which had been collected through the research in developing</li></ul>	<b>PAPA Strategic Policy</b>	Further information is being sought and should be available for circulation during February 2018

	the London Councils Business Plan and Equality Objectives for 2018/19 onwards		The evidence base is being used as a foundation for business planning discussions during February 2018.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include the following wording in the 2018/19 business plan: <i>Promoting the local authority role in providing joined-up support in relation to poverty, in-work poverty, homelessness prevention and welfare (including access to Universal Credit).</i></li> </ul>		
<b>5.</b>	<b>Devolution of the Criminal Justice System</b>	<b>PAPA C&amp;PP</b>	The draft MoU has been amended accordingly
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoU to be pursued without any reference to the Youth Justice pilot.</li> </ul>		Done
<b>AOB</b>	<b>Pensions Common Investment Vehicle (CIV)</b>	<b>Pensions CIV/CX's office/CG</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate a note to members of the Executive, in first instance, in the next 48 hours, and thereafter to all borough leaders.</li> </ul>		