

Leaders' Committee

Revising London Councils Priorities Item no: 5

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Summary At the meeting of the Leaders' Committee on 5th June 2018, the new Chair of London Councils began a conversation about establishing a revised set of London Councils priorities. He informally canvassed members at the meeting about the sort of priorities that underpinned Leaders' own work in their boroughs. This report summarises the results from that initial exercise and sets out a proposed process for engaging in the development of revised London Councils priorities.

Recommendations (i) That Leaders' Committee note the summary of key priorities each individual borough Leader identified at the meeting on 5th June

 (ii) That Leaders' Committee agree the process for establishing revised priorities for London Councils.

Revising London Councils Priorities

Background

London Councils' business plan is considered annually by its Executive and is subsequently reported to Leaders' Committee.

The plan is currently structured around the following key pillars:

- A statement of overall purpose;
- A description of the key roles that an organisation such as London Councils undertakes in support of that purpose;
- The over-arching themes that sit across all of London Councils' work;
- Individual work programmes that govern detailed activity.

The overall frame of the plan reflects the distinct purposes and roles of London Councils which, of course, are different from individual councils. The exercise instigated on 5th June does not set out to change the overall purpose, roles or themes of London Councils and its work, but it does attempt to sharpen individual priorities and make them resonate more with the sorts of issues that councils are dealing with in their places.

Initial Feedback

At the meeting in June, the Chair asked Leaders to identify the top three priorities for them personally when reflecting on their borough. Accordingly, there were, potentially, ninety nine votes – 33 Leaders or Directly Elected Mayors x 3 Priorities. In the event, ninety six were received.

Table 1 below shows the breakdown of responses.

Subject	Number identifying
Housing	25
Crime and Policing	19
Funding	11
Infrastructure/Transport	9
Mayoral/GLA/Borough Powers and Governance	7
Employment	6
Air Quality	3
Brexit	3
Heathrow Expansion	2
Community/Civic Society	2
Industrial Strategy	1
School Performance	1
Housing and Poverty	1
Reducing Poverty	1

Crossrail	1
Releasing Green Belt	1
Health	1
Protecting Hospitals	1
Social Care	1

The vast bulk of these issues are, in some shape or form, covered in the London Councils Business Plan. That is, of course, not to say that they are reflected in exactly the way that members had in mind when focusing on the exercise in June. Getting to a more granular understanding of how such priorities can best be reflected in the work that an organisation with the sort of purposes that London Councils has is the next phase of the task.

Developing a Programme

In preparing materials for the Executive to consider as part of their Away Day in September Leaders may wish to offer further detail to the broad priorities that emerged from the Leaders' Committee discussion on 5th June. It would be especially useful to have further insights and commentary highlighting:

- Specific initiatives that London Councils might take forward within these priorities;
- Proposals where London boroughs'- influence and impact will be greater when all members align their activities around particular approaches to these policy priorities;
- Whether and how current pan London or sub regional forums, Boards or partnerships can be useful in progressing work on these areas.

Geographic Breakdown

In order to provide further context for members, the feedback from the June 5th discussion has been further broken down by the main sub-regional groupings identified for economic devolution purposes. This is set out below.

<u>Central London Forward</u> (Camden; City of London; Havering; Haringey; Islington; Kensington and Chelsea; Lambeth; Lewisham; Southwark; Tower Hamlets; Wandsworth; Westminster)	
Housing	10
Crime and Policing	10
Employment	4
Mayoral/GLA/Borough Powers and Governance	3
Funding	3
Air Quality	1
Brexit	1
Community/Civic Society	1
Crossrail	1
Infrastructure/Transport	1
School Performance	1

<u>Local London</u> (Barking and Dagenham; Bexley; Enfield; Greenwich; Havering; Newham; Redbridge; Waltham Forest. <u>Note</u> – Bromley also included in this set for reporting purposes)	
Housing	8
Crime and Policing	8
Infrastructure/Transport	3
Funding	3
Mayoral/GLA/Borough Powers and Governance	3
Brexit	1
Reducing Poverty	1

<u>South London Partnership</u> (Croydon; Kingston upon Thames; Merton; Richmond upon Thames; Sutton)	
Housing	2
Infrastructure/Transport	4
Funding	3
Air Quality	2
Heathrow Expansion	2
Social Care	1
Housing and Poverty	1

<u>West London Alliance</u> (Barnet; Brent; Ealing; Hammersmith and Fulham; Harrow; Hillingdon; Hounslow)	
Housing	5
Employment	2
Funding	2
Crime and Policing	1
Infrastructure and Transport	1
Health	1
Industrial Strategy	1
Mayoral/GLA/Borough Powers and Governance	1
Releasing Green Belt	1
Brexit	1
Community/Civic Society	1
Protecting Hospitals	1

Process moving forward

The Chair has discussed a process for moving forward with other Group Leaders at London Councils and with the London Councils Executive on 19th June. A broad outline timescale has been established as follows:

- Initial feedback from 5th June meeting provided to Leaders' Committee on 10th July (in effect, this report) and invitation to provide a further iteration re feedback (see later in this report);
- London Councils Executive consider further iterations at its Awayday session in September;
- Proposals for revised priorities submitted to Leaders' Committee on October 9th;
- New priorities reflected in reports on business planning, budgets, financial strategy and in Chair's business planning sessions with individual Executive portfolio holders between November and January.

Further iteration

At the June meeting, the Chair commented that the exercise at the meeting was only an initial part of the process and that there would be a further, structured opportunity for Leaders to input.

It is suggested that, for the top five scoring priorities identified from 5th June meeting, ie:

- Housing
- Crime and Policing
- Funding
- Infrastructure and Transport
- Mayoral/GLA/Borough powers and governance.

Leaders be asked to give some further consideration to the following two questions:

- What, in respect of each of these areas, is the most important thing boroughs want to see achieved?
- Taking account of London Councils' core roles as

- (i) an advocate/lobbyist on boroughs' behalf;
- (ii) a broker of deals and opportunities with others (eg Government, the Mayor, other London public services) on boroughs' behalf;
- (iii) a hub for sharing practice and ideas between boroughs; and
- (iv) a provider of direct services to Londoners on boroughs' collective behalf.

what collective contribution do Leaders wish to see London Councils specifically make to advance their interests?

Conclusion

It is proposed that Leaders be invited to provide responses to London Councils by the end of August to enable the findings to be discussed at the Executive Awayday in September. This would allow the broader timetable set out earlier – including the submission of a report with proposed priorities to Leaders' Committee in October – to be followed.

Financial implications for London Councils

There are not immediate financial implications for London Councils as a result of this report.

Legal implications for London Councils

None

Equalities implications for London Councils

There are no direct equalities implications for London Councils as a result of this paper.