

London Councils

Minutes of the London Councils Leaders' Committee held on 5 February 2019
Cllr Peter John OBE chaired the meeting

Present:

BARKING AND DAGENHAM
BARNET
BEXLEY
BRENT
BROMLEY
CAMDEN
CITY OF LONDON
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

Cllr Syed Ghani
Cllr Daniel Thomas
Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE
Cllr Muhammed Butt
Cllr Colin Smith
Cllr Georgia Gould
Mr Simon Duckworth
Cllr Tony Newman
Cllr Julian Bell
Cllr Nesil Caliskan
Cllr Danny Thorpe
Mayor Philip Glanville
Cllr Sue Fennimore
Cllr Joseph Ejiofor
Cllr Graham Henson
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Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE
Cllr Steve Curran
Cllr Richard Watts
Cllr Elizabeth Campbell
Cllr Malcolm Self
Cllr Lib Peck
Mayor Damien Egan
Cllr Stephen Alambritis
Mayor Rokshana Fiaz OBE
Cllr Jas Athwal
Cllr Gareth Roberts
Cllr Peter John OBE
Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE
Cllr Rachel Blake
Cllr Clyde Loakes
Cllr Jonathan Cook
Cllr Nickie Aiken

Apologies:

BARKING AND DAGENHAM
BARNET
CITY OF LONDON
HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM
HAVERING
KINGSTON
TOWER HAMLETS
WALTHAM FOREST
WANDSWORTH

Cllr Darren Rodwell
Cllr Richard Cornelius
Ms Catherine McGuinness
Cllr Stephen Cowan
Cllr Damian White
Cllr Liz Green
Mayor John Biggs
Cllr Clare Coghill
Cllr Ravi Govindia CBE

Officers of London Councils and Mr John Barradall, Town Clerk and Chief Executive of the City of London Corporation were in attendance.

Before the meeting started, the Chair offered congratulations to Cllr Lib Peck on her appointment as the Director of the new Violence Reduction Unit set up by the Mayor of London.

He also offered the Committee's thanks to Derek Gadd, London Councils' Head of Governance, who was retiring after 20 years' service. The Committee had greatly valued the support that Mr Gadd had provided to them.

1. Apologies for absence and announcement of deputies

The apologies and deputies listed above were noted.

2. Declarations of interest

No interests were declared.

3. Minutes of the Leaders' Committee meeting 4 December 2018

The minutes of the Leaders' Committee meeting on 4 December 2018 were agreed.

4. Exiting the EU – Update on local engagement

The Chief Executive introduced the report saying:

- There has been active engagement with Government, the Mayor of London and the LGA to ensure that London's particular needs in relation to exiting the EU were heard, engaging with boroughs, Chief Executives, single points of contact in each borough and relevant professional networks to support local preparatory activity and promote the exchange of local insights and practice
- London Councils was contributing to the MHCLG information sharing process and acting as the regional hub to facilitate information flow between central Government and local councils on the medium and longer term policy and delivery issues. This was not a point for co-ordinating action by individual councils. London Councils was working with resilience colleagues on collating

and exchanging information within London seeking to manage the demands on boroughs by aligning this exercise with the information that was being collated for contingency planning purposes

- Contingency planning and resilience aspects – the immediate short-term issues in the run-up to exiting the EU and immediately afterwards – were being taken forward under the auspices of the statutory London Resilience Forum at the request of Government. The Local Authorities' Panel (LAP) was part of the LRF and its Chair, John Barradell – who was also Deputy Chair of the LRF – was present
- Government had been pressed around funding issues and had recently announced allocations to each borough of £210,000 to support preparatory work on Brexit. Clearly, the amounts involved were insufficient should there be on-going additional burdens resulting from Brexit. The case would continue to be made for proper recognition of any such burden that arose as part of London Councils' broader financial lobbying work
- Borough Heads of Communications have helped co-ordinate some communications messages across boroughs
- Members continued to be represented at political level meetings via the Ministerial Brexit Delivery Board.

Mr John Barradell (Chair of the Local Authorities Panel) addressed Leaders' Committee:

- There was a clear thread between the work required to consider potential short, medium and long term effects of Brexit
- The London Resilience Forum (LRF) was looking to align communications in London and with other LRFs across the country
- Single points of contact had been identified in each borough, to help gain an understanding of boroughs' preparedness
- Should strategic co-ordination groups be involved, they would be chaired by London local government

Members of Leaders' Committee commented as follows:

- The letter to borough leaders from the Secretary of State, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP had generated some concerns as it could imply that Government was seeking to

shift responsibility to councils without having previously shared its assumptions and preparations about context or content with authorities

- The potential loss of care workers was a particular concern and the need for co-ordination with CQC and others was highlighted.
- There was a potential impact on the availability of officers for local policing if abstraction to Central London for particular events became necessary.

Cllr Colin Smith (Conservative, Bromley) said he was pleased to report no major problems had yet been identified in his borough and questioned the clarity of purpose for the additional resources that had been announced.

Mr Barradell concluded by stressing the importance of the role of borough Leaders and Directly Elected Mayors in being the voice of local communities to and from Government and the Chair emphasised the importance of awareness of the work that was being done.

Leaders' Committee agreed to note the report.

5. London Councils' finance lobbying strategy – update

The Director of Finance and Performance introduced the report:

- The report sought a steer on the key lines for London Councils to adopt in responding to the Consultation on Relative Needs, as part of the Fair Funding Review. The response would be submitted in late in February
- The final settlement had now been published, it was no different to the provisional settlement
- If the Government had used existing formulae, £136m more of the additional funding would have gone to urban areas, £44m of which would have gone to London boroughs
- There was a parallel consultation on Business Rate retention.
- In recent months there had been an increased intensity to the work on Finance – launching London Councils' lobbying document at its Summit in November, following that up with a complementary business related document in January, holding an engagement event with business and working actively with Core Cities, Key Cities

and other urban interests to ensure that there was a strong, concerted message about the interests of such authorities in the Fair Funding Review.

Cllr Teresa O'Neill (Conservative, Bexley) pointed out that in section 25 of the report the word 'county' should, in fact, be 'country.' She urged that a counter argument be put forward to the general assumption that all of London had, or had cause, to retain low Council Tax levels.

Cllr Georgia Gould (Labour, Business, Europe and Good Growth, Camden) suggested that the arguments could have greater force if London Councils partnered with some of the large charities based in London whose work dealt with some of the consequences of lower levels of financial support for councils. The Chair pointed out that such a session had been arranged.

Mayor Philip Glanville (Labour, Grants, Hackney) raised the question of parking charges, both the ring fence and the issue itself.

Leaders' Committee agreed:

- To note the progress on finance lobbying with respect to the key events outlined in the report; and
- To endorse the proposed lines in response to the current consultations on the Fair Funding Review and 75 per cent Business Rates retention
- That the detailed submission in response to the current consultation on Relative Needs as part of the Fair Funding Review would be cleared by urgency prior to its submission by the deadline of 21st February.

6. Feedback from Joint Boards

Cllr Lib Peck (Labour, Crime and Public Protection, Lambeth) reported on the **London Crime Reduction Board (LCRB)** meeting on 16 January. The two main items discussed were:

- 1) Police and Crime Plan Priorities – which became a discussion on shaping the future role of the Board and how to set a balance between a focus on policy and on delivery. This was the beginning of a discussion on how to get the best out of the Board and followed an earlier meeting with Cllr Nickie Aiken, Cllr Liz Jaeger, Deputy Mayor Sophie Linden and herself.

2) Drugs policy

Sir Steve House, the Deputy Commissioner, had presented on this topic.

There had also been brief updates in relation to:

- The Violence Reduction Unit
- Health engagement in the work of the Victims Commissioner
- The problem of attrition in the Criminal Justice System – which the Board would examine in more detail at a future meeting.

Cllr Ray Puddifoot (Conservative, Health, Hillingdon) reported on the **London Health Board** (LHB) meeting on the 18th December. The Board had covered:

- Mental Health in Schools
- Health Inequalities Strategy
 - It was noted that the GLA would be asking organisations, including London Councils, to act as ‘mobilisers’ of the Strategy. Members’ were seeking further clarification on the role of mobilisers and their purpose. To date no clarification had been received.
- Violence Prevention: A Public Health Approach
- London’s New Primary Care Strategy
- London Health and Care Strategic Partnership Board Focus Areas
- Kings Fund Report on London Sustainability and Transformation Plans

The Chair reported from the **LEAP** meeting, Wednesday 19 December 2018. The meeting had considered:

- An update on the outcome of the Government’s LEP Review. Brexit - including concerns raised about the impact of current proposals for restrictions on Tier 2 migration for employees earning under £30,000 in London’s economy.

- The Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries presentation on the Mayor's Culture Strategy and activities and how these linked to LEAP priorities. A brief discussion on London's Local Industrial Strategy
- the approach taken towards the LEAP's work on affordable workspace

Cllr Ruth Dombey (Liberal Democrat, Sutton) reported on the **Homes for Londoners Board** held on the 4th December. The key points were:

- The total awards for use of funding for Building Council Homes for Londoners - 27 councils having bid for over £1.5bn of GLA grant, and approved grant allocations following assessment totalling over £1bn
- Marginal Viability Funding (The Housing Infrastructure Fund) the work of the Health Estates Board which was shifting focus from strategic planning to 'shadow decision-making' from a target date of April 2019
- Housing Delivery

7. Winding up of Pensions Common Investment Vehicle Sectoral Joint Committee (PCSJC)

The Chief Executive introduced the report saying that it informed Leaders' Committee of the winding up of Pensions Common Investment Vehicle Sectoral Joint Committee (PCSJC).

Cllr Smith made clear his unhappiness about both the concept and operation of the CIV, objecting in particular to the compulsion required nationally to participate. He also believed its charges and investment decisions were open to criticism and he urged Leaders and chairs of pensions committees to scrutinize these arrangements more closely.

Cllr Steven Alambritis (Labour, Merton) pointed out that he and Cllr Ravi Govindia (Conservative, Wandsworth) had been appointed to the Board of the CIV. Whilst he did not recognize Cllr Smith's characterization of the CIV, he hoped that members would feel able to discuss with Cllr Govindia and himself any concerns that they had so that they could feedback to the CIV.

The Committee agreed that, in addition to the various points of connection provided by the new governance arrangements at both officer and member level, the Chair and Chief Executive of the CIV should be invited to attend Leaders' Committee on an annual basis. Leaders' Committee agreed to note the report.

8. Capital Ambition – Terms of Reference (ToRs)

Before the report was taken the Chair proposed, and Leaders' Committee agreed to record its thanks to Edward Lord for his chairing of CAB over some years. The Chief Executive introduced the report saying that, due to an oversight, the expanded Terms of Reference – agreed in 2016 – had not subsequently been presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Leaders Committee. They were being done so now.

Leaders' Committee agreed to approve the Terms of Reference for the Capital Ambition board detailed in the appendix to the report.

9. Minutes and summaries

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

- TEC – 11 October 2018
- GLPC – 18 October 2018
- YPES – 8 November 2018
- TEC Executive – 15 November 2018
- Grants Committee – 21 November 2018
- CAB – 12 December 2018
- Executive – 15 January 2019

The meeting agreed to exclude the press and public.

The meeting ended at 12:30.