

OFFICIAL

**DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

**BOARD MEETING**

**14 OCTOBER 2014**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

- Brandon Lewis MP, Minister of State
- Penny Mordaunt MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
- Stephen Williams MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
  
- Sara Weller, Lead Non Executive Board Member (Chairman)
- Stephen Hay, Non Executive Board Member
- Nick Markham, Non Executive Board Member
- Grenville Turner, Non Executive Board Member
  
- Sir Bob Kerslake, Permanent Secretary
- Helen Edwards, Director-General
- Andrew Campbell, Director-General
- David Hill, Director of Strategy, Communications and Private Office
- David Rossington, Director of Finance
  
- Sarah Benioff, Director of Integration (Item 1)
- Neil O'Connor, Director Fire, Resilience & Emergencies (Item 2)
- Graham Duncan, Deputy Director, Local Public Service Reform (Item 2)

**Apologies:**

- Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
- Lord Ahmad, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
- Kris Hopkins MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
- Peter Schofield, Director-General
- Louise Casey, Director-General

**Secretariat:**

- Nina Shuttlewood
- Ruth Candlish

**Introduction and matters arising**

1. In the Secretary of State's absence Sara Weller welcomed attendees to the meeting.
2. The minutes from the July Board meeting were agreed.

**Item 1: Integration**

3. Helen Edwards introduced this item. The department had focused its work on inter-faith issues, promoting integration, and combating hatred. More recently the Government had set out a new cross Government counter extremism strategy was led by the Home Office. DCLG would be supporting this work.
4. Sarah Benioff outlined the department's current approach to integration and faith. She noted that this had focused mainly on engaging with community sector organisations. DCLG worked closely with the Home Office on these issues. .
5. In summary the Board endorsed the direction of travel set out and supported the steps being taken to strengthen evaluation of existing work.

**Item 2: Winter Pressures**

**Health and Social Care**

6. Graham Duncan introduced an item summarising the work in hand with the Department of Health and NHS England in respect of winter pressures on health and social care services. One aspect of tackling winter pressures had been to focus on delayed transfers of care; where NHS beds were occupied by those medically well enough to be discharged but awaiting other arrangements to be made.
7. The Board agreed that the Department had an important contribution to make, to support the Department of Health in identifying and communicating with local authorities in areas which faced the greatest winter-related pressures.

**Severe Weather**

8. Neil O'Connor gave a brief summary of the current situation and contingency preparations for severe winter weather. Key points to note were:
  - a) Progress supporting recovery from last winter's floods had been strong, with the proportion of households and businesses back in their homes and premises comparing favourably with previous major floods
  - b) The majority of the recovery/support funds had been paid
  - c) The majority of coastal defence and transport damage had been fixed

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9. Work was underway with other government departments to agree plans for how any future support package should be managed should there be further incidences of severe weather. The Board noted with approval the progress made to date.

### **Item 3: Performance**

10. Sara Weller noted that recent performance against departmental commitments was strong and invited comments from Board members. The Board briefly reviewed the performance reports.

### **Open Forum**

11. There was a short discussion about current trends in the housing market. Brandon Lewis and Grenville Turner agreed to a follow up discussion.

### **Action 1: Board Secretary to arrange for a follow up discussion between Brandon Lewis and Grenville Turner.**

12. The Board agreed that the agenda for the next meeting on 2 December should include the topics as set out in the Forward Look, subject to the Secretary of State's approval:

- a. Ebbsfleet
- b. Autumn Statement
- c. Performance

20. The Chairman thanked attendees for their contribution to the meeting.

Board Secretariat  
October 2014