

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

BOARD MEETING

1 April 2014

Minutes

Present:

- Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (from 12.30)
- Brandon Lewis MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
- Baroness Stowell, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
- Nick Boles MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (for part)
- Stephen Williams MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (for part)

- Sara Weller, Lead Non Executive Board Member (Chair for part)
- Stephen Hay, Non Executive Board Member
- Nick Markham, Non Executive Board Member
- Grenville Turner, Non Executive Board Member

- Sir Bob Kerslake, Permanent Secretary (from 12.30)
- Helen Edwards, Director-General
- Peter Schofield, Director-General
- Andrew Campbell, Director-General
- Louise Casey, Director-General
- David Hill, Director of Strategy, Communications and Private Office

- Jason Cotta, Managing Director Costa Coffee (Item 4)
- Philip Cox , Director Land and Development (Item 4)
- Mark Livesey, Deputy Director, Town Centres & High Streets (Item 4)
- David Morris, Deputy Director, Local Growth (Item 4)
- Patrick White, Director Local Government Policy and Productivity (Item 5)
- Edward Scully, Deputy Director, Joint DCLG/DH Team (Item 5)

Apologies:

- Kris Hopkins MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
- David Rossington, Director of Finance

Secretariat:

- Tom Wechsler
- Nina Shuttlewood
- Julie Nelson

Introduction and matters arising

1. Sara Weller welcomed attendees to the meeting. The Secretary of State and Sir Bob Kerslake were at the Local Growth Committee and would join the Board shortly.

Item 1: Performance

2. Andrew Campbell introduced the item and gave a summary of the paper. Key points Andrew highlighted were:
 - i) Performance against the business plan has been strong, with the expected end year figure for actions completed on time at 81%.
 - ii) The interruption of ERDF has been lifted, which was a very good result.

Item 2: Board Effectiveness Evaluation

3. Sara Weller introduced this item. She had received good engagement on the evaluation with positive feedback on the level of Ministerial attendance; the use of external speakers and the flexibility the 'hot topics' item allowed for. The frequency of the Board had been raised; the Secretary of State was keen to keep the current format for this year.
4. Dame Barbara Stocking had conducted an independent review, which was congruent with Sara's report.

Item 4: Local Growth and Town Centres

5. Brandon Lewis introduced the item, setting the context for this work. The Country's shopping habits continue to change. Online shopping had risen to almost 15% (compared to 1% a few years ago) and continued to rise. Consequently the High Street must continue to adapt.
6. Brandon Lewis introduced Jason Cotta, MD of Costa Coffee, and member of the Future High Streets Forum. Mr Cotta outlined the work he had been leading to develop a "The Great British High Street" brand and website, which aimed to share a compelling vision of how high streets could develop in the future.
7. The Group hoped to publish a short report soon which would set out lessons learned and next steps. The proposed website would bring together best practice. The creation of umbrella branding over the High Streets Forum would help engage businesses as well as make it more visible to the public, around a single coherent message.
8. In discussion the following points were made:
 - a) A local government/local people/commercial partnership was the most effective way to transform a place. The council can improve the public realm

whilst the commercial sector can help with business plans and give other commercial expertise. But clarity of responsibility was essential to effective delivery.

- b) The Board discussed the elements of the Great British High Street brand and noted that it could be adapted to suit each local area and that it needed businesses to support it.
9. Peter Schofield introduced the next item on Local Growth, noting this was a crucial stage of the Local Growth Fund. All 39 plans were now in and should be high quality drafts. Money would be allocated in return for greater leadership in local growth where the most is made of opportunities.
 10. In discussion the following points were made:
 - a. A detailed assessment and evaluation process was in place covering every aspect of the plans.
 - b. Whilst the plans would differ from each other according to local circumstances there were core elements that could be set out for each.

Item 5: Health and Social Care Integration

11. Helen Edwards introduced her paper, scoping the Government's objectives in relation to integrated health and social care. These were to enable people to live independent and dignified lives; to remain in their homes for longer; and reduce the need for hospitalisation.
12. In discussion the following points were made:
 - a. Local government needed to be engaged fully in this agenda. Equally, NHS buy-in locally was critical.
 - b. There was a need to learn lessons about best practice from the Troubled Families programme.
 - c. Measuring people's experiences would be done partly through metrics and partly through case studies.
 - d. Acute services needed to be brought in and given a role, for example within Health and Wellbeing Boards. .
13. In summary it was noted that success would mean better care available at home, reducing demand for acute services.

AOB and concluding remarks

14. Louise Casey provided a brief update on the Troubled Families programme.
15. The Board agreed that the agenda for the next meeting on 1 July should include the topics as set out in the Forward Look, subject to the Secretary of State's approval:
 - a. Housing Delivery

- b. Transformation Funds
- c. Performance

16. The Chair thanked attendees for their contribution to the meeting.

Board Secretariat
April 2014