

PRESENT: Councillor Karen Shore (Chairman)

Councillors Andrew Dawson, Carol Gahan, Lynn Gibbon,
Sam Naylor and Bob Rudd

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mark Stocks

Officers in attendance:	Andrew Lewis	Chief Executive
	Charlie Seward	Deputy Chief Executive (Place)
	Laurence Ainsworth	Director of Public Services Reform
	Matthew Dodd	Senior Strategy Manager
	Rob Butler	Strategy and Innovation Manager
	Deborah Ridgeley	Democracy Business Manager

Invited Speakers:	Jamie Cross & Ian Hughes	Local Government Association
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30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions around the table were made.

Members declared the following interests:-

Councillor Andrew Dawson – declared Outside Bodies Interests as he

- worked regularly with the LGA;
- regularly worked with organisations that were in receipt of EU Funding;
- provided legal advice to organisations working in the supply chain for the automotive industry; and

He had a pecuniary interest in a company (Indigo Environmental Group Limited) that recycled plastics under EU regulations.

31 MINUTES

AGREED: that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Commission: Planning for a Post Brexit Future held on 6 February 2019 be noted.

32 EMERGING FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Members were reminded of the work carried out by the Commission to date, and the National context. It was only 45 days until the leaving date of 29 March 2019, and the series of events leading up to it.

The two part meeting process outlined, with the discussions around the emerging recommendations being held first, and then representatives from the Local Government Association being held, which would include updates from central Government and local considerations and issues.

The six themes discussed at previous Commission meetings were outlined as follows:

- Local Economy
- E U Funding
- Public Sector Workforce
- Regulations and Rules
- Rural Matters
- Citizenship and Democracy

Within each theme, short, (immediate actions to be taken over the coming 6 months) medium (considerations for 6 – 18 months including any potential transition period) and long term (strategic goals requiring partnership alignment) recommendations were summarized. Members were advised to note that as the timetable grew closer to the Brexit date, guidance and suggested action discussed at meetings could be liable to alterations and any final report would need to take this into account.

Items raised by Members included:-

- Short term – Use of the Growth Hub to support communications to business, and links to websites regularly updated.
- Short term – The additional funding provided by Government could be utilised for improved communications and links with partner organisations, with clarity around its specific purpose.
- Not time specific – Concerns raised about trading arrangements in and around Europe, lack of clarity about detail, and how the Council would be able to support local businesses beyond signposting.
- Short term – The LEP had received additional funding to establish the Growth Hub, and were working closely with the authority and at Sub-regional level. Evidence provided through the Commission would help the LEP signpost businesses to the right advice and support.
- Short term – With a No Deal scenario, the impact on Regulatory services was anticipated to be significant, and all local authorities were planning for this scenario, but with limited resources and clarity.
- Short term – The suggestion of including information in Council Tax/Business Rates bills was made.
- Not time specific – The promotion of the Council at Sub-regional, National and international levels was suggested, and it was confirmed that both the Council and Marketing Cheshire/LEP were actively involved in this.
- Short term – The impact on Third Sector funding was highlighted, with the loss of EU Funding and no immediate replacement, Based on the concerns raised by the CVA at the recent Call for Evidence meeting
- Not time specific – Impact on animal health, in relation to movement, selling, buying, disease control, exporting certificates, delays on borders, loss of TRACES European tracking system.
- Not time specific – Brexit could be seen as an opportunity to “grow our own” with apprenticeships, training, re-skilling and supporting residents.
- Short term – Impact on the introduction of the Settled Status Scheme, and signposting residents to the right process. Building on the pilot scheme outlined by the Countess of Chester Hospital who had found a good early take-up of non-EU citizens apply for the status.

- Not time specific – Role of the CAB in signposting residents and ensuring consistent messages from the Council (Information Centres), LEP and all partner agencies.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and confirmed the arrangements for the circulation of the draft report. Should Members have any further points of areas of concern, they should be submitted to officers for possible inclusion in the final report.

33 NEXT STEPS AND MEETING CLOSE

The Commission were advised of the next stages, and the deadlines relating to the submission of the recommendations to Cabinet, at their meeting on 20 March 2019.

The draft report would be circulated to Members by 22 February 2019 for comments, which would be amended and re-circulated. The report would encompass Government announcements as they happen and reflect guidance from the LGA and Cheshire Resilience Forum and comments submitted by partner organisations, local businesses, the third sector and local residents.

Members with any issues not covered by the Commission were encouraged to forward them to officers prior to the circulation of the draft report.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending, and for all contributions submitted to officers. The meeting organisation, background reading, presentations and draft recommendations produced by officers was commended by the Chairman and the Commission expressed their thanks to all officers involved.

Chairman

Date