Doc 1 - Local Government reform Autumn 2016 External Engagement Events

Emails between WG and WLGA officials re planning and marketing of events and email from WLGA with timetable of other relevant WLGA events

From: WLGA *(names & email addresses redacted)*
Sent: 22 December 2016 12:42
To: WG *(names & email addresses redacted)*
Subject: RE: WLGA Events

Attached is a quick summary of the main points from the members' sessions, which will give you something to work with whilst the rest of the notes are being typed up (although inevitably there was a lot of repetition across the 3 events, so the summary has picked out the main common issues). I don't think much will be of huge surprise or too controversial; overall, members were generally supportive of the direction of travel (although a few voices disagreed), but there was a need to protect local accountability in any move to more regional services.

The WLGA will also be sendng WG a separate note shortly followng the Cabinet Secretary's 5 questions to Coordinating Committee in November, this will also include early thoughts from the 3 regions. Hopefully Steve will send this to you tomorrow, as I'm on leave after today.

Summary.docx

Contents of attachment:

Local Government Reform: Member Engagement Events

Summary of Feedback

December 2016

3 x regional events in Carmarthen, Conwy and Nantgarw: 72 members including 5 leaders attended, from 15 authorities[1].

General Comments:

- Members were broadly supportive of the Cabinet Secretary's proposed reforms (although some disagreed or had concerns about certain aspects).

[1] Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Vale of Glamorgan, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey, Wrexham, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and Powys

- There was a consistent message from all sessions that strong local accountability and local democracy needed to balance any move towards greater regional service commissioning or management. In particular:
    - **Funding should continue to be distributed to the 22 local authorities** via the RSG, who would then agree the budgets and funding of any regional services'
    - **Statutory duties should remain with the 22 local authorities**, who would then determine how such duties would be discharged, either jointly or via another lead authority; and
    - **Local accountability through local councillors' oversight and scrutiny is essential** in holding regional services to account and ensuring that the needs of local communities are being met and outcomes are being delivered.
- A number of members however felt the timing was wrong ahead of the local elections and that newly elected councils needed to be engaged after the elections
- There was a general lack of understanding of what the terms 'mandatory' and 'systematic' meant. This will need to be clarified in the White Paper.

Footprints

- There was general, though not unanimous, support for the Cabinet Secretary's proposed LHB and Economic Development footprints.
- Some members also expressed cynicism about the direction of travel and concerns about complexity and the risk of diminution of local accountability and local democracy.
- North Wales members were most comfortable with the proposed footprints given the footprints are coterminous and their experience of working across these existing footprints. There were some comments regarding economic development however, suggesting that the North Eastern authorities looking increasingly to the North West of England with the Mersey Dee Alliance.
- There was more discussion in South West and South East Wales about the respective 'fit' of different footprints, given the different regions covered by LHBs and economic development regions, as well as the fact that a number of existing collaborations crossed these boundaries.
- A number of members therefore called for existing and successful collaborations to remain and also more scope for bottom-up collaborations based on business case rather than 'mandating'. 'Form should follow function' was a phrase that was used frequently.
- A number of members expressed concern about the risk of marginalization for those councils or communities in rural areas or on the periphery of the regions, in particular in city region areas.
- The potential for sub-regional working was a theme in North and South West sessions, particularly as Betsi Cadwallader and Hywel Dda Health Boards operate sub-regional management arrangements given their geographical scale.

- A number of members stressed the role to be played by community and town councils.
- South East Wales noted the impact on regionalization on third sector partners ability to engage in and deliver certain services, given the third sectors' strength often lay in their community links.

Services

In addition to the Cabinet Secretary's proposed services, the following were suggested, though some had greater support than others:

- Social services generally agreed, although the point was made that certain functions within social services were more appropriately delivered regionally/locally.
- Strategic planning on economic development footprint, although local development control should remain local
- Back-office functions - ICT, payroll, audit, legal and HR
- Public protection – mixed views, some recognized links to health, others to economic development, others felt this should remain a local service.

Governance

- Governance arrangements should be the building blocks built into collaborations from the beginning – finance, governance and scrutiny.
- 'Horses for courses' was a frequent comment and the general theme was that arrangements should be appropriate and proportionate to the functions/services concerned.
- The most familiar form of governance model was a lead authority or joint committee.
- Local accountability to local members was a consistently strong theme, with a common view that regional arrangements should be subject to local scrutiny. Whilst joint scrutiny at certain stages was appropriate, local scrutiny remained critical in holding regional services to account and ensuring that the needs of local communities are being met and outcomes are being delivered.
- It was generally felt that, despite some exceptions, scrutiny of collaborative arrangements had not been as effective as it could have been to date.
- Similarly, concerns were raised by some councillors about the governance and scrutiny arrangements of emerging city region developments.
- Pre-decision scrutiny was seen as important and many felt that had been largely missing in current collaborative models with members only able to scrutinize once a decision had been made.
- Regular information-flow and reporting back to councils is therefore important to ensure members can engage through scrutiny and so they can keep informed and inform the public.
- Collaborative governance brings with it administrative complexity and bureaucracy and a need to align or coordinate council meeting calendars to allow timely pre-decision scrutiny, decision-making and scrutiny call-in

- Larger, more complex collaborations will have implications in terms of individual and collective audit and risk management.

Funding

- Funding should continue to be distributed to the 22 local authorities as this was key to local accountability;
- Issues in terms of formula distribution and equity across very diverse (economy, population and deprivation) councils;
- Issues in terms of standardization of services across a region, councils currently investing at different levels, this will cause huge disruption and volatility;
- Similarly, pay and terms and conditions harmonization across regions will be challenging.
- Concerns about the future finances of social services and that regionalized services will only go so far in managing the financial pressures.

Local Councillor and the Citizen

This session explored some of the local accountability issues in more detail:

- Role of councillor ever more challenging
- Councillors need support, guidance and training to understand role.
- Councillors need ready access to information to signpost the public e.g clear guide for all councillors – A-Z of who does what (locally and regionally), named officers and partners
- Constitutions should be fit for purpose with clear rights and entitlements for councillors clearly outlined.
- Impact of regional footprints on councillors' travelling time – may have to attend meetings further afield. Options for video-conferencing?
- Scope for increased use of IT including apps on phones (e.g. photographing potholes, flytipping etc.), councillor referral systems and webcasting/remote attendance
- Councillors need to be part of designing new services, it's not just about designing services with communities – informal briefings, workshops through to formal sessions with scrutiny.
- Some members expressed concerns that a councillors' role would become a 'signposters' rather than a representative.

From: WG *(names & email addresses redacted)*
Sent: 20 December 2016 09:52
To: WLGA *(names & email addresses redacted)*
Subject: WLGA Events

Hope your events went well. I know that you won't have had chance to catch breath yet, but how do you plan on letting us know feedback from the events. Obviously the guys are doing

notes of what they heard from their perspective. But I was just wondering how I would get 'official' feedback.

Thanks

From: WLGA *(names & email addresses redacted)*
Sent: 15 November 2016 13:31
To: WG *(names & email addresses redacted)*
Subject: Regional Member Engagement Events

Following on from our chat of last week, the attached and below is where our latest thinking is. The 3x member events would be held on:

- **Monday 12th December (AM or PM) – Mid and South West Wales** - Halliwell Centre, Carmarthen
- **Friday 16th December (AM) – South Wales** - - South Central Education Consortium, Nantgarw - I'm conscious this clashes with the Central South West Wales Regional Board, but our session won't target leaders (who attend the board) and it's a different region too, that said, I appreciate some of you will be attending the Regional Board meeting.
- **Monday 19th December (PM) – North Wales –** Conwy Business Centre, Llandudno junction

In terms of facilitation, given the nature of the engagement we don't feel that it will be necessary to bring in external support, but will have a serious of round-table discussions (with members split into groups of executive members, scrutiny members, planning members etc.) to go through a prepared set of questions with tables reporting back key points. Sarah and I will do any necessary facilitation.

I know you mentioned WG colleagues would attend and take notes at the back, but it would be good if we could also have a senior WG colleague set the scene with regards 'systematic and mandated' options for which services (or which parts of services), on what footprint and why (this could hopefully have been shaped by the earlier regional officer meetings). This will be useful in setting the shape of the event, which will focus on governance, accountability and how members would be involved – on that, as I'm proposing that I do a brief session on governance options for members to get their teeth into, I'm hoping you could share a note on governance options that have been considered, pros and cons of each etc?

We can reflect on key questions/issues following initial feedback from the officer events which will precede these member events, but I anticipate we'd follow some of the key questions as you outlined in your note the other day.

I'm also assuming that you will be able to provide a video from the Cabinet Secretary as originally suggested?

We're also very thin in terms of administrative support, so depending on likely numbers (60-100) we might need some WG support first thing with 'registration' i.e. handing out badges, if that was ok?
It's all covered in the attached, so just wondered what your thoughts are? Happy to discuss.
I'd like to send an invite out to members by the end of the day if possible.

Regional Events.docx

Contents of attachment:

LG Reform: Member Engagement Event

When and Where:

- **Monday 12th December (AM or PM) – Mid and South West Wales** - Halliwell Centre, Carmarthen
- **Friday 16th December (AM) – South Wales** - - South Central Education Consortium, Nantgarw
- **Monday 19th December (PM) – North Wales –** Conwy Business Centre, Llandudno junction

Aims

- To engage with wide range of elected members to seek views on WG's initial proposals for local government reform and help shape the forthcoming White Paper. NB members and authorities will have further opportunities to provide input during the Spring, during planned consultation events on the White Paper.
- c60-100 members at each – cabinet members, scrutiny members and other non-executive members, cabaret style with tables split into cabinet members, scrutiny members, planning members etc.

Organisational responsibilities

- **WLGA to**
  - organise, promote and pre-register for events
  - organise simultaneous interpretation
  - speak and 'facilitate' at events – Daniel Hurford and Sarah Titcombe
- **WG to**
  - provide 'video address' from Cabinet Secretary
  - 1 x speaker covering 'Regional Services – Systematic and Mandatory'
  - registration support and note takers at each event.

Programme

- Half day (c3 hours):

Morning Event:

9.30 – 'Registration' & Refreshments

10.00 – Session

13.05 – Lunch and Close

Afternoon Event

12.15 – 'Registration' & Lunch
13.00 – Session
16.05 – Close

- 5 Mins - Welcome – Daniel Hurford, WLGA
- 20 Mins – Video Address from Cabinet Secretary
- 25 Mins - Regional Services – Systematic and Mandatory – Welsh Government Speaker
- 5 Mins - Q&A
- 35 Mins - Round-Table Discussions & Feedback (key questions provided)
- 15 Mins - Refreshment Break

- 25 Mins - Regional Governance Models – Daniel Hurford, WLGA
- 5 Mins - Q&A
- 25 Mins - Current Approaches - Round-Table Discussions & Feedback (key questions provided)
- 25 Mins - Accountability & Role of Elected Members- Round-Table Discussions & Feedback (key questions provided)

- 5 Mins - Close

From: WLGA *(names & email addresses redacted)*
Sent: 20 October 2016 10:53
To: WG *(names and email addresses redacted)*

Apologies for the delay, but attached is a timetable of planned meetings/events for the coming months which has been pulled together from a range of sources. It's a varied list and I appreciate some groups may not be a priority at this stage.

I've tried to clarify who is likely to attend the meetings (where the title of the network/meeting isn't immediately obvious) and highlighted the member meetings in blue. I've also added relevant contacts for you to follow-up as appropriate - all the WLGA contacts are aware of the potential for an approach from you re. having a session, some of the networks aren't WLGA coordinated however, whilst contact details for these have been included they may not be aware of the proposed 'guerrilla' approach.

Hope the attached helps. Let me know if you need anything or want to explore any issues further.

Date	Meeting/Network	Location	Officer/Member	WLGA Contact
27th October	Environment Directors	Mid Wales		tim.peppin@wlga.gov.uk
2nd November	Regeneration Officers network meeting	Mid Wales		tim.peppin@wlga.gov.uk lowri.gwilym@wlga.gov.uk
3rd November	WLGA Annual Conference	Cardiff		As per email, opportunity for Cab Sec to announce approach to engagement, but event itself doesn't lend itself to engagement due to agenda.
4th November	Directors of Public Protection (liaison meeting with WG)	TBC		WG contact for organising the meeting is Chris Brereton, Chief Environmental Health Officer simon.wilkinson@wlga.gov.uk
7th November	Cabinet Members Waste	Cardiff		tim.peppin@wlga.gov.uk craig.mitchell@wlga.gov.uk

	meeting			
8th November (All day)	Member Support and Development Lead Members and Officers Network	Media Resource Centre, Llandrindod Wells	• Chairs of Democratic Services Committees • Member Development Champions • Heads of Democratic Services	sarah.titcombe@wlga.gov.uk Frank Cuthbert already attending
10th November	ADEW	Quay Hotel, Deganwy	Directors of Education	pierre.bernhard-grout@WLGA.GOV.UK
11th November	North Wales Board	TBC	Leaders Chief Executives of public service partners	stephen.jones@wlga.gov.uk
11th November (AM)	Central and South West Wales Regional Partnership Board – CEs only	Carmarthenshire	Chief Executives	richard.dooner@wlga.gov.uk
11th November	Heads of Adults Services	TBC		Not WLGA meeting but contact is Lance Carver - lcarver@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk stewart.blythe@wlga.gov.uk
11th November	All Wales CCLOW (Chief Culture & Leisure Officers)	North Wales (location still TBC, but mostly likely Parc Eirias, Conwy).		Not WLGA meeting but contact is Ian Jones (Chair) (IJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk steve.cushen@wlga.gov.uk
11th November	Heads of Procurement Group			chris.chapman@wlga.gov.uk
18th November	North Wales CEOs Meeting (LA only)	TBC	Chief Executives	stephen.jones@wlga.gov.uk
23rd November	Principal Youth Officers' Group	Media Resources Centre, Llandrindod		tim.opie@wlga.gov.uk
23rd November	Planning Chairs and Cabinet Members meeting	Cardiff		tim.peppin@wlga.gov.uk jane.lee@wlga.gov.uk
25th November	WLGA Coordinating Committee	Cardiff City Hall	Leaders	susan.perkins@wlga.gov.uk
25th November	Society of Welsh Treasurers			colin.wallbank@wlga.gov.uk I think Rob and Debra normally attend these meetings anyway
1st December	Heads of Children's Services	TBC		Tanya.Evans@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk stewart.blythe@wlga.gov.uk

7th December	European Officers Group	TBC		lowri.gwilym@wlga.gov.uk
8th December	Welsh Unitary Heads of IT [SOCITM]	TBC		Not WLGA meeting but WLGA contact is chris.chapman@wlga.gov.uk
9th December	North Wales CEO and Leader Meeting – LA only.	TBC		stephen.jones@wlga.gov.uk
9th December	Lawyers in Local Government	Llandrindod	Monitoring Officers	Not WLGA meeting but contact is iwangdevans@gwynedd.llyw.cymru daniel.hurford@wlga.gov.uk
9th December	ADEW Exec in Cardiff (CP2)	CP2	Directors of Education (Exec)	pierre.bernhard-grout@WLGA.GOV.UK Already meeting with WG DfES SMT and Estyn
16th December (AM)	Central and South West Wales Regional Partnership Board	Swansea	Leaders Chief Executives	richard.dooner@wlga.gov.uk
TBC Dec	Heads of Policy	Llandrindod Wells		daniel.hurford@wlga.gov.uk

- We could organise a South East Regional Board meeting during November/December to accommodate a discussion with the Cabinet Secretary as appropriate.
- ADSS Governance and Executive Council meet regularly (main point of contact is Gabe Conlon - gabe.conlon@adsscymru.org.uk)

From: WG *(names and email addresses redacted)*
Sent: 19 October 2016 11:01
To: WLGA *(names and email addresses redacted)*

Following our conversation below, I will be on leave tomorrow and Friday, so please could you copy any emails to my colleague (cc'd to this email).

From: WLGA *(names and email addresses redacted)*
Sent: 18 October 2016 09:19
To: WG *(names and email addresses redacted)*

I'll try to get you something later today.

From: WG *(names and email addresses redacted)*
Sent: 17 October 2016 15:17
To: WLGA *(names and email addresses redacted)*

Following the conversation below, I was just wondering if there is any update on this, please?

From: WLGA *(names and email addresses redacted)*
Sent: 11 October 2016 15:12
To: WG *(names and email addresses redacted)*

I'm on the case don't worry, judging from what's come back from colleagues it may be a bit of a long-list and you can decide which might be the best meetings/networks to engage with. I'm not sure we can really accommodate anything in the conference though as the agenda is already very full; it's not really the best place to get reflective engagement either as it's all a bit frenetic on the day with various things happening at the same time. Obviously there's an opportunity for the Cabinet Secretary to highlight your planned *guerrilla engagements*™ and some of our planned network meetings will include members too, so there will be an opportunity for political engagement.
Hopefully I'll have a full list of possible events (with organisers' contacts) available by end of play tomorrow, so I'll copy Claire, Claire and Joan into that as you'll be enjoying yourself on the other side of the world whilst the rest of us are still working! Have a great break!

From: WG *(names and email addresses redacted)*
Sent: 11 October 2016 14:51
To: WLGA *(names and email addresses redacted)*

When we met last week you agreed to send me dates of any network meetings that the WLGA might be hosting over the autumn that we can use to engage with officers on the regional working proposal.

We also discussed the WLGA conference and how we might use that to start political engagement. You were going to have a think about how it might be used to further the conversation and how this would feed into engagement with Councillors over the autumn.

I'm emailing today in case I forget tomorrow in the excitement of going on holidays! Those copied in can be a point of contact whilst I'm away.

Letter from WG to WLGA inviting nominees for stakeholder workshops

Y Grŵp Addysg a Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Education and Public Services Group

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Chief Executive WLGA

16 November 2016

Dear Colleague

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government made an oral statement to the National Assembly on 4 October, setting out broad proposals for local government reform based on the discussions over the summer with all twenty-two local authorities. The emerging proposition for structural change is summarised below:

- The 22 Local Authorities would remain, subject to any voluntary mergers, and would act as the democratic tier which councillors would be elected to and be the front-door for citizens to access services.
- Welsh Government would offer support to enable voluntary mergers to take place.
- There would be an enhanced level of regional working which would be systematic and mandatory, and include a rationalisation of the multiple footprints on which current arrangements operate.
- Two footprints emerged from the summer engagement as having particular relevance: one based around the City Regions and other economic development groupings, which was relevant to functions like strategic transport, strategic land-use planning and economic development; and the other based on the Health Board footprint, which could be relevant to functions like social services, education and public protection.
- A greater development of shared services.

Welsh Government is keen to work with local government and other stakeholders to test and develop the detail of the proposals ahead of formal consultation next year. We will be holding three workshop events, as follows:

- 2 December 2016, 10:00-16:00, (Brangwyn Hall, Swansea)
- 6 December 2016, 10:00-16:00, (Coleg Cambria - Deeside, Connah's Quay)
- 9 December 2016, 10:00-16:00, (Orbit Business Centre, Merthyr Tydfil)

BUDDSODDWYR MEWN POBL | INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
Parc Cathays • Cathays Park
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Ffôn * Tel 02920 826734
Claire.bennett@wales.gsi.gov.uk
Gwefan/Website: www.cymru.gov.uk

The outline agenda is attached. Please note the afternoon session will draw in delegates from wider public services organisations to test the implications of potential changes on them and on integration of services.

These events are aimed at officers from the executive and senior management teams in local authorities and will provide opportunity to consider key questions

about the structural reform proposals using workshops to discuss and begin to tease out potential benefits and other implications. We have been working with you on this and the separate events you are arranging for elected members

Places are limited and I am inviting you to nominate up to 1 representative to attend each event. I should be grateful if you could email RLGProgramme@wales.gsi.gov.uk confirming which date and venue you/your representatives would prefer to attend, the names and contact details, stating whether those due to attend would wish to contribute in Welsh or English by 22 November 2016. Please note that while we will aim to accommodate you/your representatives at your preferred venue, places are limited and will be allocated in order of request received.

Agenda for external engagement events

Agenda

1. Arrival & registration
2. Presentation on plans for Local Government Reform
3. Q & A
4. Workshops: Group discussions on key themes
5. Lunch & Networking
6. Plenary: feed back and recap on mornings' discussion
7. Workshops: Group discussions on key themes and wider impact on other public services
8. Feedback
9. Closing remarks and next steps

Detailed Agenda

Agenda

Local Authorities

10:00 – 10:30: Arrival & registration

10:30 – 11:15: Presentation on plans for Local Government Reform

11:15 – 11:30: Q & A

11:30 – 13:00: Workshops: Group discussions on key themes

13:00 – 14:00: Lunch & Networking [**DN** time for facilitators to feed in electronically on key themes emerging & for officials to take stock]

[DN Other Partners arrive from 13:30 for 2:00pm start - coffee on arrival]

14::00 – 14:30 Plenary - feed back and recap on mornings' discussion [**DN** serves as a recap for LG delegates & introduction for wider PS delegates]

14:30 – 15:30: Workshops: Group discussions on key themes and wider impact on other public services)

15:30 – 16:00: Feedback

16:00: Closing remarks inc next steps

[DN: agenda for afternoon delegates to include the afternoon session only with coffee on arrival]