



Annual Report 2019

Liberal Democrat Group Local Government Association



LGA Liberal Democrat Group 2019 Annual Report contents

- 3 A message from the Leader of the LGA Liberal Democrat Group
- 6 LGA Liberal Democrat Group Executive 2017-2019
- 7 Your Liberal Democrat LGA Board Representatives
- 8 The 2019 Election and the LGA's Political Balance

REPORTS:

- 9 Children and Young People Board
- 10 LGA Liberal Democrat Group Whip
- 12 Community Wellbeing Board
- 13 Culture, Tourism and Sport Board
- 14 Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport Board
- 15 Improvement and Innovation Board
- 16 Resources Board
- 17 Safer and Stronger Communities Board
- 18 Fire Service Management Committee and Fire Commission
- 19 City Regions Board
- 20 People and Places Board
- 21 Liberal Democrat Retained Peers Report
- 23 District Councils Network Report
- 24 County Councils Network Report
- 25 Brexit Task and Finish Group
- 26 The LGA Liberal Democrat Group Office

Front page: Liberal Democrats celebrate taking control of Bath and North East Somerset Council in May 2019. *Photo: Clive Dellard*

A message from The Leader of the LGA Liberal Democrat Group



Councillor Howard Sykes MBE -
on behalf of the
LGA Leadership Team:
Councillor Ruth Dombey OBE,
Councillor Heather Kidd,
and
Councillor Alan Connett

Welcome to your 2019 Annual Report. This is your organisation please take a few minutes to read what we are doing on your behalf.

It's important all Liberal Democrat councillors know about the work of the LGA Liberal Democrat Group over the past year and you see what your lead members have been doing on your behalf.

Thank you

Firstly, thank you all for allowing the current leadership of the group to be elected unopposed. I know I speak for us all in saying it is a great honour to lead our LGA Liberal Democrat Team, and the trust you have shown us is not taken lightly.

Still smiling - hope you are?

I must start my report this year with the two sets of excellent election results we had in May.

First the local elections on May 2 – a great set of results, and down to really hard work over many months by candidates and councillors. Do not let anybody tell you it was anything different.

For the first time in many years we had a fair wind behind us but in it was also hard grassroots graft that delivered these results. Thanks to all involved who made these results the best for many a moon. But more on this later.

Secondly, the cracking results in the European Elections. Again, a great set of results and well and truly teed-up by those local election results. Other factors also made a massive contribution but do not underestimate the momentum the great local elections results created.

I still have a smile from ear to ear. Like many of you I have weathered less favourable results nights and for once did not need my game face!

Work for the LGA corporately

We continue to input into areas including: Britain's exit from the EU; Devolution and fair funding for local government; inclusive growth, jobs and housing; children, education and schools; adult social care and health; supporting councils; and a single voice for local government.

Specifically, our input into Fair Funding, Brexit, post Grenfell fallout, and Standards in Public Life has made a substantial impact on the final position taken by the LGA.

A message from

The Leader of the LGA Liberal Democrat Group

Work with the Liberal Democrat family

We work very closely and in a co-ordinated way with ALDC. I have a fortnightly video conference with the Chair of ALDC (Mayor Dave Hodgson). The LGA Office also has a weekly conference with ALDC along with regular informal contact and information sharing.

We have a joint ALDC/LGA Local Government Offer at both Spring and Autumn Conferences and we also sponsor the Group Leaders Day along with support for Kickstart campaigning and the Councillor Weekend events.

I have regular senior level meetings across the party, including Leader, Deputy Leader, President, Local Government Spokespersons in both Houses of Parliament, Chief Executive; Head of Campaigns, and Chair of English Party among others.

In addition, I hosted an LGA lunch for the team in both Houses of Parliament, as well as holding several other meetings with many colleagues.

We have made repeated and continuing representations about how the Party can do more to treat local government, local councillors and the local elections with the same enthusiasm, noise and volume as it does with other matters. Brexit is IMPORTANT, but it is not the only thing we are about and must not be the sole thing that defines us.

We all know that the road to recovery is through electing more councillors, winning more councils and rebuilding our campaigning base. We all want to see Liberal Democrats everywhere.

In my view, we could have done even better in the council elections with more support from the centre. For example, more emails to members encouraging people to stand, help deliver leaflets or contribute in some way locally.

We were spreading that message from before last Autumn because our job is to stand up for the Liberal Democrat Local Government family.

I was delighted that when Vince heard our calls, he arranged a round-table meeting and gave us his support. It was a real help.

And it demonstrated the value of the close working arrangements we want to build and develop so we get more Liberal Democrats elected at all levels.

Our results in May brought us 700+ more councillors; some 30 more councils now run or influenced by Liberal Democrats; and a massive additional £1M into the party coffers.

Work with the Liberal Democrat LGA team

Your Leadership Team (Howard Sykes, Ruth Dombey, Heather Kidd and Alan Connett) meet face-to-face at least six times a year. More informal contact is on a weekly basis via phone, email and video conferencing.

Our events have included Group Leader's Day, Councillors' Weekend and the Kickstart joint offer.

We were pleased to welcome Rt Hon Vince Cable MP, Wera Hobhouse MP and Tim Farron MP to LGA Liberal Democrat Executive meetings with Layla Moran MP joining us on the phone, and we look forward to meeting with others such as Christine Jardine MP. Their help and support are greatly appreciated.

We have also continued to punch above our weight corporately within the LGA. I have good working relations with the other Vice Chairs, the Chair of the LGA and its President, Lord Kerslake.

The Chair of the LGA will change this year. The leader of the Conservative Group already has. These will be two new key relationships that will be high on my agenda.

We promote Liberal Democrat values within the LGA on our boards; chairing: Culture, Tourism and Sport; and playing a lead role in areas like Community Well Being; Resources; Environment, Economy, Housing, Transport; and Fire Services.

We have promoted local government policy within the Liberal Democrats - for example on social care.

We have active involvement in policy development in the Party. With LGA support Heather Kidd and Lucy Nethsingha chaired policy reviews on Rural Affairs and Education, as does Tim Pickstone on Local Government. Also, very pleased Lucy is now one of our 16 MEPs!

2019 Elections

This was one of the best sets of local elections in the party's history, certainly since the merger. Headlines include:

- ✓ Net gains of 704 councillors.
- ✓ Defending six Liberal Democrat controlled councils (Eastbourne, Eastleigh, Oadby and Wigston, South Lakeland, Three Rivers and Watford) with increased majorities in four of these.
- ✓ Re-electing the Liberal Democrat Directly Elected Mayor of Bedford and becoming the largest party on Bedford Borough Council.
- ✓ Gaining majority control of 12 councils - Bath and North East Somerset; Chelmsford; Cotswold; Hinckley and Bosworth; Mole Valley; North Devon; North Norfolk; Somerset West and Taunton*; South Somerset; Teignbridge; Vale of White Horse and Winchester.
- ✓ Significant increases in many areas – in many cases with the Liberal Democrats now becoming the largest party with the opportunity to take minority or joint control. Examples include Arun (where we gained 17 seats); Bedford (6); Guildford (7); Mendip (11); South Oxfordshire (11) and York (9).

Conferences and events

Our Peer Support Team is led by Alan Connett working with Sarah Butikofer and Lisa Smart and supported by our Peer Pool.

We have published good practice guides on the Environment, Planning and how South Cambridgeshire was won. We held numerous fringe meetings at Party conferences.

We continue to provide support for Group Leaders, Council Leaders, new councillors, and council Groups across the country as well as Group researchers.

Local Government is represented on Federal Policy Committee and Federal Board. We are trying to have a more co-ordinated approach to this led by Chris White.

In summary, your Liberal Democrat Team at the LGA is working hard to support our councillors and promote Liberal Democracy across local government. Working together, let's keep campaigning. Thank you.



Councillor Howard Sykes MBE
Leader, LGA Liberal Democrat Group



We won seats in South Gloucestershire (above) and in Mid Sussex (right)



LGA Liberal Democrat Group Executive and Leadership Team 2017 - 2019

Elected in August 2017 for two years, the Liberal Democrat Group Executive represent the political leadership of Liberal Democrats in local government inside and outside the LGA Group. The Executive consists of the Leadership Team and the lead Liberal Democrat members of the LGA Group boards and panels, along with the Liberal Democrat representative on each of the other bodies in the LGA. The Leadership team, listed below, were returned unopposed to serve another two years from 2019-2021.



**Group Leader
(and LGA Vice Chair)**
Councillor
Howard Sykes MBE
howard.sykes@
oldham.gov.uk



Group Chair
Councillor
Heather Kidd
heather.kidd@
shropshire.gov.uk



Deputy Group Leader
Councillor
Ruth Dombey OBE
ruth.dombey@
sutton.gov.uk



Group Whip
Councillor
Alan Connett
alan.connett@
btinternet.com

Other LGA Liberal Democrat Executive members 2017 - 2019:

Culture, Tourism & Sport

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE, Portsmouth
geraldvj@gmail.com

Community Wellbeing

Councillor Richard Kemp CBE
Liverpool
richard.kemp@liverpool.gov.uk

Children & Young People

Councillor Lucy Nethsingha
Cambridgeshire
lucynethsingha@icloud.com

Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport

Councillor Adele Morris
Southwark
adele.morris@southwark.gov.uk

People & Places

Councillor Heather Kidd
Shropshire
heather.kidd@shropshire.gov.uk

Safer Communities

Councillor Anita Lower
Newcastle City Council
anita.lower@newcastle.gov.uk

Cities

Councillor Abi Bell
Hull
councillor.bell@hullcc.gov.uk

County Councils Network

Councillor Jon Hubbard
Wiltshire
jon.hubbard@wiltshire.gov.uk

Fire (Chair)

Councillor Keith Aspden
York City Council
cllr.kaspden@york.gov.uk

ALDC Representative

Councillor Tim Pickstone
Bury
tim.pickstone@bury.gov.uk

Policy Co-ordinator and Brexit working group rep

Councillor Chris White
St Albans
chris.white.stalbans@gmail.com

Improvement & Innovation

Mayor Dave Hodgson MBE
Bedford
dave.hodgson@bedford.gov.uk

Audit and District Councils Network

Councillor David Neighbour
Hart
david.neighbour@hart.gov.uk

Resources

Councillor Claire Hudson
Mendip (*until May 2019*)
Councillor Adam Paynter
Cornwall (*from May 2019*)
adam.paynter@cornwallcouncillors.org.uk

FPC representative

Councillor Paul Tilsley CBE
Birmingham
paul.tilsley@birmingham.gov.uk

Who are the Liberal Democrat members on LGA Boards 2019-2021?

LGA Boards cover all areas of a local authority's remit and provides guidance to the LGA as it represents local government at Westminster and advises councils around the country. The newly elected members to serve from 2019-2021 are as follows:

Children and Young People

Mark Cory*	Colchester (Lead)	markcory@hotmail.co.uk
Nick Cott*	Newcastle	nick.cott@newcastle.gov.uk

Community Wellbeing

Richard Kemp	Liverpool (Lead)	richardkemp68@yahoo.co.uk
Doreen Huddart	Newcastle	dorhud@btinternet.com
Carl Quilliam	Merton (Sub)	carl.quilliam@merton.gov.uk

Culture Tourism and Sport

Gerald Vernon-Jackson	Portsmouth (Lead and Chair)	geraldvj@gmail.com
Chris White	St Albans and Hertfordshire	chris.white.stalbans@gmail.com
Chris Hogg	Cumbria (Sub)	chris.hogg@cumbria.gov.uk

Environment, Economy, housing and Transport

Adele Morris	Southwark (Lead)	adele.morris@southwark.gov.uk
Peter Thornton	South Lakeland & Cumbria	ubarrow@icloud.com
Stuart Golton	Leeds City (Sub)	stewart.golton@leeds.gov.uk

Improvement and Innovation

Liz Green	Kingston Upon Thames (lead)	liz.green@kingston.gov.uk
Dave Hodgson	Bedford	Dave.Hodgson@bedford.gov.uk
Caroline Leaver	North Devon (Sub)	caroline.ndlibdems@gmail.com

Resources

Keith House	Eastleigh and Hampshire (Lead)	Keith.House@eastleigh.gov.uk
Adam Paynter	Cornwall	adam.paynter@cornwallcouncillors.org.uk
Mike Bell	North Somerset (Sub)	mike.bell@n-somerset.gov.uk

Safer Communities

Bridget Smith	South Cambridgeshire (Lead)	cllr.bridgetsmith@scambs.gov.uk
Jeremy Hilton	Gloucestershire	jeremy.hilton@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Jon Ball	Ealing (Sub)	jon.ball@ealing.gov.uk

City Regions

Anita Lower	Newcastle (Lead)	anita.lower@gmail.com
Gareth Roberts	Richmond	cllr.groberts@richmond.gov.uk

People and Places

Heather Kidd	Shropshire (Lead)	heather.kidd@shropshire.gov.uk
Sarah Osborne	East Sussex	sarahosborne2000@yahoo.co.uk
Karen Ward	North Norfolk	karen@littlefoxhill.com
Stan Collins	Cumbria (Sub)	stanstheman@cix.co.uk

Fire Services

Keith Aspden	York (Lead)	cllr.kaspden@york.gov.uk
Carolyn Lambert	East Sussex	cllr.carolyn.lambert@eastsussex.gov.uk
Roger Price	Hampshire (Sub)	roger49price@btinternet.com

Policy Co-ordinator and LGA Brexit working group rep

Chris White	Hertfordshire and St Albans	chris.white.stalbans@gmail.com
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FPC rep

Paul Tilsley	Birmingham	Paul.Tilsley@birmingham.gov.uk
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LGA Properties Board and Audit lead

David Neighbour	Hart	david.neighbour@hart.gov.uk
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(Properties and Audit to be confirmed for 2019-2020)

(Notes: Elections are underway for lead member on the District Councils Network and the County Councils Network. * = Lucy Nethsingha MEP is currently on sabbatical for 6 months following her election to the European Parliament, so Nick Cott is the second Board member until December 2019).

The 2019 Local Elections and the LGA's Political Balance

As a cross-party membership organisation, the LGA's governance is determined by the strength of its four political groups.

Following the local elections each year, Plymouth University's Elections Centre calculates the proportionality figures using a formula that takes account of the number of council seats held by each group and the population and type of authority that they represent.

Political Balance of the LGA at the time of calculation for 2018-19 was:

CON	38.8% (-4.6%)
LAB	38.0% (-0.8%)
LIB DEM	12.5% (+2.8%)
IND	10.7% (+2.6%)

(Figures in brackets show change from previous year)

This has strengthened the LGA Liberal Democrat Group representation, gaining one place on the People and Places Board and one place on Fire Services Management and again means that no group has majority control of the LGA.



Liberal Democrats have taken the leadership of Arun District Council this year

Children and Young People Board

Councillor Lucy Nethsingha MEP



Following on from the Bight Futures report there has been a major campaign by the board and LGA more widely to get Government to recognise the scale of the funding challenge in Children's Social Care. The number of children coming into care across the system continues to rise, (although slightly less steeply) and the costs of placements are also increasing.

During the course of this year the Newton work, looking in depth at the funding issues in children's social care have been augmented by another major study from Isos looking at the challenges of supporting children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities. This was a fantastic piece of work, well worth reading, and can be found here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y5ho746a>

The report points out that costs are rising fast for providing education for young people with SEND, which combined with increasing numbers of children coming into the system is likely to lead to a deficit of between £1.2 and £1.6 billion by 2021.

The report is also very clear in demonstrating how the key drivers for schools, both financial and in the quality judgements schools face, discourage mainstream schools from keeping SEND pupils within the mainstream system.

This is likely to mean that more children than in the past are being judged by schools as not able to cope in mainstream school. While there is clearly a need for some children to be educated in special schools the over-whelming evidence is that where children can cope with mainstream education, they do better. It is thus unhelpful for both the children concerned and for council finances if children are not encouraged and supported to remain in mainstream schools. (The report is clear that many schools do try to keep SEND pupils, but that they do this in spite of the system, not because of it.)

The National Adoption Leadership Board changed its name this year, to become the National Adoption and Special Guardianship Board, and has focussed strongly on the pressures facing Special Guardians this year. Special Guardians (SG) are usually adults in the same family as a child who offer to "adopt" the child. The process for becoming a Special Guardian is rather shorter and with fewer checks than for Adoption, although there has been some tightening up of the processes recently. The ASGB has been concerned that there is often far less support available for SGs than for Adoptive parents, although they are likely to be dealing with many of the same issues, and often have added complications as the birth parents are members of the family and thus around, sometimes causing difficulties.

During this year a skills taskforce has been running looking into the skills shortages in the UK and at how the apprenticeship levy and wider system are working. There have been a range of Round-table events, which have been very well attended. The overwhelming view appears to be that the apprenticeship levy is not working well at all, and there is a very serious failure in ensuring that 16-18 year olds are being trained with the right skills for the future needs of the economy. There will be more work on this in the coming year.

During the year I have worked closely with Layla Moran, the Parliamentary team and the Liberal Democrat Education Association. The LDEA held two fringe events at autumn conference on home schooling and on youth work, which I chaired. At spring conference we were successful in getting a motion on knife crime and youth work passed, with support from ALDC. I also chaired a session on SEND at the LGA conference, launching the initial findings of the Isos report.

lucynethsingha@icloud.com

Whip's Report

Councillor Alan Connett



Conference for Smaller Groups

Our first conference for smaller groups proved both popular and successful. The sessions were bespoke, meeting the needs identified by Group Leaders through an earlier survey. Scrutiny, Standards and finance were the core themes.

More than 80% of delegates found the overall experience very good or extremely good and everyone who responded found the speakers and workshops to be extremely good or very good.

We have taken account of comments on how the conference could be improved and the date for this year's Smaller Groups Conference will be announced soon.

Standards Committees

I reported last year how we had assisted some colleagues who found themselves on the sharp end of a Standards complaint. There is a continuing need for support. Standards complaints sap the energy and can cause real distress to councillors.

The length of time it takes to deal with complaints alongside the lack of access in most cases to independent legal advice and support is a real concern.

We contributed to the LGA response on the Government's consultation on the national Standards system and highlighted the 'inequity of arms' referred to above.

The proposed new 'punishment' of suspending a councillor for six months with loss of Allowances will, I fear, inhibit the 'enquiring councillor' from probing too far for fear they are accused of bringing their authority into disrepute!

Standing Orders

The amendments to our Group Standing Orders for the LGA were put to the annual meeting last year and approved. The changes permit temporary amendments to ensure we are compliant with regard to Party policy arising from the Alderdice and Morrissey reports and greater clarity about filling casual vacancies on the Executive. Standing Orders also now include reference to the District Councils Network and the County Council Network.

Reports & Attendance

I am grateful to colleagues for submitting their reports on time. Where they have been late, it is with good reason.

The summary of attendance is included within this report and has, overall, been good. I will continue again this year to focus attention on attendance at LGA Boards and Panels.

If colleagues serving on Boards find they are not able to attend, the requirement is for them to ensure the substitute member attends in their absence and to report back on the meeting.

General Summary

Stepping into the Group Whip role two years ago, I was not sure what to expect. I have enjoyed working as part of the Liberal Democrat team representing you at the LGA and am grateful to all of my colleagues on Boards and Panels for their support.

In particular, my appreciation to the team in the LGA Liberal Democrat Group Office, Terry Stacy, Rob Banks and Amy Haldane for not only sharing the difficult issues, but also identifying possible solutions.

I continue as Group Whip for the next two-year period and look forward to working with colleagues elected to the LGA Boards, Panels and the Executive team – Howard Sykes, Group Leader, Ruth Dombey, Deputy Leader, Heather Kidd, Chair.

alan.connett@btinternet.com

Attendance and reports, 2018-19

Record of Attendance

	19/07/18	13/09/18	18/10/18	24/01/19	7/03/19	06/06/19
Howard Sykes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ruth Dombey	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Heather Kidd	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Alan Connett	Apologies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lucy Nethsingha	Yes (phone)	Yes	Yes	Apologies	Yes	Apologies
Richard Kemp	Apologies	Yes	Yes	Apologies	Yes	Apologies
Gerald Vernon-Jackson	Yes	Apologies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Apologies
Adele Morris	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dave Hodgson	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Claire Hudson	Yes	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	N/A
Anita Lower	Apologies	Apologies	Yes	Apologies	Yes (phone)	Yes
Abi Bell	Apologies	Yes (phone)	Yes (phone)	Yes (phone)	Yes (phone)	Apologies
Heather Kidd	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Keith Aspden	Apologies	Apologies	Yes (phone)	Yes	Yes	Apologies
Dave Neighbour	Yes (phone)	Yes (phone)	Yes (phone)	Yes	Yes (phone)	Yes
Jon Hubbard	Apologies	Yes(phone)	Yes (phone)	Apologies	Apologies	Yes
Chris White	Yes	Yes	Yes	Apologies	Yes	Apologies
Paul Tilsley	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies	Yes (phone)	Phone

Reports update

	19/07/18	13/09/18	18/10/18	12/18*	24/01/19	7/03/19	06/06/19
Alan Connett	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lucy Nethsingha	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Late tabled	Y
Richard Kemp	Y	Y	Y	Y	Late tabled	Late tabled	Y
Gerald Vernon-Jackson	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Adele Morris	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dave Hodgson	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Claire Hudson (Adam Paynter 06/19)	Late tabled	Y	Y	N	Y	Late tabled	Y
Anita Lower	Y	Y	N	Y	Late tabled	N	N
Abi Bell	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Late tabled	Y
Heather Kidd (People and Places)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Keith Aspden	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Dave Neighbour	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	N
Jon Hubbard	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N
Chris White	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Paul Tilsley	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Doreen Huddart	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y

* = Note: no meeting in December but Executive Members were still asked to submit reports

The LGA Lib Dem Group work with ALDC all year round - for example organising the "Next Generation" and "Be a Councillor" programmes.
Photo: 2018-19 Next Generation participants meeting



Community Wellbeing Board

Councillor Richard Kemp CBE



The 2018/19 LGA year can be summed very simply. There has been a total lack of strategic decision making; policy discussion or intelligent allocation of resources. Not by the Lib Dem Group or the LGA I must hurriedly say - but by the Government!

The biggest problem facing local government today is the ever-increasing number of people who are growing older and frailer. This is not only a question of conventional old age but also a huge number of people whose lives have been saved by medical intervention but who will need support for the whole of their lives.

We were promised a Green Paper on Adult Social care in June 2017, December 2017, June 2018, December 2018, and March 2019. The report has yet to be written! There are too many complexities and difficult decisions to be made by the Government who continue to throw us short term sums of money to paper over the cracks but will not deal with the long-term issues.

Public Health is another concern. Mutterings were made about PH going back to be part of the NHS service. We were reassured by the Secretary of State that this was not going to happen not least

because it would need legislation. The Government is, in theory, moving money within the service to meet their ambition of 'prevention not cure'.

However, its way of doing this is to look at NHS services like inoculation rather than the joining up of services at a local level in order to holistically look at wellbeing issues. In the meantime, we have little idea of what our PH budgets will be because of the lack of decisions on the CSR and the moving of the business rate etc.

The LGA's response to this has been robust. I have met numerous Health and Social Care Ministers over the past year who appear acutely embarrassed by all this. Their own departmental financial ineptitude has meant that money that was supposed to come to the LGA for training and support of local NHS/Council initiatives has been suspended. I am delighted that every single appropriate council has voluntarily adopted a prevention of suicide strategy but sad that we cannot assist councils in achieving their ambitions to the extent that we would like.

The Lib Dem response has been to work together both in local government and with our colleagues in both houses of Parliament. Shortly after we meet in Bournemouth, I will be meeting Dr Sarah Wollaston, the Chair of the Health Select Committee and who is now an Independent MP.

We have continued to try and help Lib Dems on councils do their best in these circumstances. With our increased level of influence or control of councils there is much that we can practically do to assist with public health activities. This is not just a unitary or upper tier function. Every council controls facilities such as parks and community centres where more could be done to encourage prevention and wellbeing activities. I hope to produce a 'check list' of what can be done over the summer.

I have tried to keep people informed of what is going on through a Facebook site – Lib Dem Cllrs Health & Social Care. Please get your relevant portfolio holder to join and to contribute. My contact email is below.

I'd like to thank Doreen Huddart from Newcastle who has been the other Lib Dem on this Board and Rob Banks in the LGA Lib Dem Office for their great support and advice.

richardkemp68@yahoo.co.uk

Culture, Tourism and Sport Board

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson
CBE



Over the last year the Culture Tourism and Sport Board has had an active year. On my suggestion we now hold meetings outside London, and are the only LGA Board to do this. Last year we went to Birmingham, to meet in the wonderful new library the City Council has built. This year we went to Sheffield to meet in their wonderful contemporary art gallery. I hope other boards will follow our lead and start to meet outside London.

The main areas of work have been on Cultural led Regeneration, and on skills gap in the visitor economy all around the country.

In Cultural led Regeneration the Board commissioned and launched a major report looking at different sorts of cultural regeneration. It looked at case studies were done in many different council areas all around the country. It looked at both major projects like the Turner, but also small scale festivals and projects. The hope is that this will be a resource for councils all over the country to use.

This year the concentration is the skills gap in the visitor economy all across the country.

We have commissioned work looking at the problem in both rural, seaside and urban areas. The issues are very much the same all over the country. Local funding for local skills work seems a much better way to draw employers, local colleges and employees together to get the training needs met in each area. The national system does not seem as effective.

The Board has also looked at the Parks Action plan, but the frequent changes of Ministers has meant this has not had the attention it is due. I've tried to get Ministers and officials to think about parks in smaller towns, instead of just thinking about major cities. The test case I have given them is "What about markets towns like Barnstaple?"

The Libraries Task force continues and we have been successful in moving it to become more of a helping hand, offering peer reviews and peer help to councils who need help. There is also a series of Leadership Essential Courses (free) for portfolio holders in both the Sports and Cultural sectors.

This year we will be developing a "Cultural Strategy in a box" to help councils in this area of work, and next year I hope we will do the same for Sporting Strategy.

My thanks everyone who has been in touch about this area of the LGA's work. My email address is below if you have any thoughts or questions.

geraldvj@gmail.com

Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board

Councillor Adele Morris



This has been another busy year for me and Peter Thornton on the EEHT board, with its wide remit and many central government consultations for the LGA to respond to. Here is a sample of what we covered.

DEFRA published their Resources and Waste Strategy, linked to the 25 Year Environment Plan.

I chaired an event on this. We responded to the consultations on: consistency in local authority recycling and waste services; a deposit return scheme; a tax on plastic containers without a 30% recycled content; reforms to the packaging waste system through changes to extended producer responsibility.

The response from councils across the country is that whilst there is an ambition to reduce waste and increase recycling, there is no 'one size fits all' process due to different geographies, demographics and existing recycling/incineration systems. The key ask from local councils is that any new requirements must be properly funded. Ultimately the best way to reduce waste and recycling is for less of it to be produced in the first place, and for there to be consistency in the use of materials when packaging is necessary.

Housing continues to be high on the agenda and rising homelessness remains of particular concern. In April I appeared before a House of Commons Select Committee to discuss the LGA's findings on the Homelessness Reduction Act. Many councils are doing good work, however the main concerns are around: insufficient funding from government; pressure on staff from increased workload; not enough homes that people can afford; local housing allowance cap must rise to meet increasing cost of private rented accommodation.

I chaired an event on the LGA report on speeding up housing delivery, and produced a booklet highlighting Lib Dem best practice approaches to planning and ran sessions on it at the LGA and Lib Dem autumn conference. With many councils declaring a Climate Emergency, there will be much more work for the LGA and the Lib Dems to do on this going forward. In partnership with Green Lib Dems we produced a booklet on environmental good practice, with a session at spring conference. Peter sits on the SUSTRANS "Paths for All" steering committee, looking at ways to increase walking and cycling.

The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) now reports directly to the EEHT board. Their support to councils includes: responding to the new housing delivery test and assessing the effect of the 20% fee increase on planning departments.

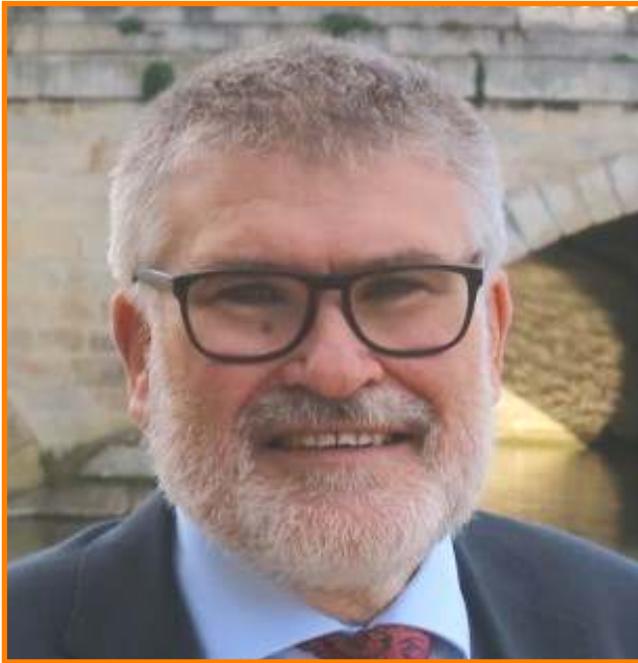
Board members visited two councils to hear about their approaches to town centre regeneration. One is also buying commercial property in order to stop it from being changed to residential without the need for planning permission, which is allowed under the new permitted development rights. This is causing major problems in some areas, not just from the loss of commercial space but also from the poor quality of some of the housing. It also means that councils cannot collect any contributions towards affordable housing or infrastructure from these developments.

I continue to meet regularly with the Lib Dem Parliamentary Local Government team. Peter keeps in touch with the transport group, chaired by Baroness Jenny Randerson. Many of the EEHT board consultation responses, case studies, publications and press releases can be found on the LGA website.

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Improvement and Innovation Board

Mayor Dave Hodgson MBE



The Board offers support for improvement and sets a strategic framework for LGA activity designed to help and support councils drive their own improvement and strengthen local accountability and transparency.

Sector-led Improvement – Leadership & Improvement

The Board leads on the continued offer of a wide range of development opportunity for councillors. Alongside flagship programmes such as the Leadership Academy and Next Generation, the LGA offers specialised masterclasses and residential courses on topics such as scrutiny, finance, children's services and planning. 2018/19 showed over 800 participants. With Liberal Democrats only taking up 64 of these we need to make sure we make full use of these programmes.

Key Highlights:

- 842 councillors in total attended all our leadership courses
- 145 peer challenges delivered, with 71 of those councils having a Corporate/Finance peer challenge (next most popular Health 18 & Children's 18)
- Productivity experts deployed in 42 councils, helping them to save a projected £42.6m

- Maintained the shared service map which identifies cumulative efficiency savings in excess of £971m (up from £657 in previous year)
- Provided support to 26 councils to improve how they engage and communicate with their communities
- Held a very successful Innovation Zone at the LGA conference
- Provided financial advice to 42 councils
- Recruited 123 graduates as part of the National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP).

Of the 52 deliverables agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding with MHCLG, 50 were green and there were 2 reds. The two reds were:

- To reduce the number of councils who have not had a corporate peer challenge since 2012 by 50% to 56. The number was reduced to 63 therefore missing the target. With so many new Council leaders (many Lib Dems!) it is hoped this this will be sorted!
- Publish a workforce strategy by September 2018 (this was delayed due to the need to take into account new data and the NHS workforce strategy). It has now been published.

Productivity

- Supported shared service arrangements and continues to run a "matchmaking" service.
- Delivered commercial skills masterclasses for elected councillors, commissioned commercial experts to work with councils as local government's interest in commercialisation and income generation continues.
- Continues to run a productivity experts programme to help councils realise ambitious efficiency and income targets.
- Provided support on procurement, with additional support for councils in dealing with the collapse of Carillion.

Transparency and Data

- Maintained LG Inform (a tool you should use if you don't already!), and ran training events.
- Continued to support the delivery of the National Cyber Security Strategy
- Delivered a comprehensive programme of support around better use of data and digital transformation.

There are many ways that the LGA can support and help new Liberal Democrat Councillors and Councils – please make sure that as Liberal Democrats we make full use of the opportunities. If you wish to know more drop me an email.

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Resources Board

Councillor Adam Paynter



Claire Hudson has ably led this board for us over the last 6 years and I would like to thank her for her work and I have enjoyed working with her for the last 2 years.

Simon Shaw (Sefton) has continued to actively engage in the Resources Board and substituted when necessary.

The LGA's Resources Board shapes and develops the Association's policies and programmes in line with the LGA priorities in relation to: Local Government Finance; Strategic Finance; Welfare Reform; EU Funding and Workforce issues.

2018/19 has been a frustrating year for the board as inactivity from Westminster has seen very slow progress for many of the key issues facing councils.

The updates on the Spending Review, Shared Prosperity Fund and The Adult Social Care Green Paper have really made no progress over this year.

Things that have made progress have been the launch of The Local Government Mutual to provide an alternative to traditional insurance.

Work on the gender pay gap and pension issues across local government.

A long-term work programme looking at issues such as securing extra business rates, designing the retention system, managing risks and incentives.

Continue to ensure that all challenges arising from the implementation of Universal Credit are recognised and funded, and that councils have both the information and the funding to support claimants, particularly in relation to 'managed migration' of claimants on legacy benefits from July 2019.

Let's hope for more action for this board when Brexit is rejected and we can get on with important resources work for local government.

Finally, special thanks to Michael Headley for all his hard work as the Liberal Democrat representative on the Business Rates retention working party.

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Safer and Stronger Communities Board

Councillor Anita Lower



This is my final report from the Board since my term of office is up this year.

It has been a very busy and varied year for the Board; we have seen the implementation of the reduction to the betting limit for the FOBT's now £2, rather than £100. As a member of the Board I was part of the APPG chaired by Caroline Harris MP to lobby for this change.

There has been a joint programme with SSCB, GamCare and M&C Saatchi to produce anti-gambling adverts for TV. These were supported by Sky Sport and BT Sport. I was a member of the focus group and the adverts were aimed at 16 to 35 year olds.

There has been a lot of work done around Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls, including attending meetings of the National Oversight Group on Domestic Abuse. The Board has submitted responses to Government consultations on Violence Against Women and Girls, Online Harm and the investigation by the Competition and Markets Authority into the funerals and cremation market.

We have continued to be involved with the aftermath of Grenfell, including regulations

around cladding and fire prevention in high rise blocks.

We have been involved as a consultee with Taxi Licensing and a national register for taxi drivers. I briefed the parliamentary group on the main issues for local councils, and several LGA suggestions made their way to the Bill.

We have held several events, which were residential across the country, connected to Counter Extremism, including the far right, and these were well attended.

I continue to chair the FGM National Advisory Committee. The Centre is managed by Barnardo's and this year we have been working hard to promote our online toolkit with launches in London, Manchester and Cardiff. The toolkit has been acknowledged nationally with an award for The Best Use of Technology in Learning from the Training Journal. We were at the US Embassy when an agreement on FGM was signed between the Metropolitan Police and Homeland Security. The Centre was funded for 3 years, this is year two so, a lot of effort is being put into raising awareness and identifying further funding.

Following the final report from Baroness Newlove on ASB, we are looking at a refresh of ASB legislation and the call in the report for more restorative justice.

The Board continues to work well together and there have been some new workstreams, including County Lines, Modern Day Slavery and Dangerous Dogs. We have also had security briefings to help understand the issues around PREVENT and Counter Extremism.

There have been several conferences this year, including CTSI (Chartered Trading Standards Institute), CIEH (Chartered Institute of Environmental Health), Prevent, PCC Association, Public Space Protection Orders and Licensing to name a few.

The Board has been asked to joint committee to discuss children and young people's mental health and wellbeing wo work across areas.

I would like to thank the staff in the Lib Dem office at the LGA for all their support and my colleague on the Board, Cllr Jeremy Hilton, who has provided support throughout the past two years and finally to the Lib Dem councillors for electing me to the post.

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Fire Services

Councillor Keith Aspden



It has been another busy for the LGA Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) and Fire Commission for 2018/2019. During this year we:

- Lobbied against Police and Crime Commissioners 'taking over' Fire and Rescue Authorities, including supporting affected fire services with professional advice.
- Responded to the Grenfell Tower tragedy, including through the Hackitt Review. Having made the impact of the recommendations on fire and rescue services clear, we have lobbied for national investment.
- Created a new Senior Sector Group with the Home Office, in order to respond to the Fire Spending Review.
- Hundreds of councillors, including an active Lib Dem Group, attended the LGA Fire Conference in Brighton.
- I have sent occasional E-Bulletins and published a Lib Dem Voice article on fire services issues, to our fire spokespeople and fire authority members. This included advice on how to turn fire service issues into local and national campaigns.

If you would like to receive a copy of the bulletin next year please send me a message.

We have started work to draft new Liberal Democrat ideas and policies for Fire and Rescue services. We will continue to work on this as a fire services team in advance of the 2020 LGA Fire Conference in Blackpool, where Baroness Kath Pinnock, as our local government, communities and fire spokesperson, will speak.

As we approach 2020, our priorities at the LGA will focus on implementation following the national reviews of fire safety and regulations, governance, workforce, collaboration, procurement and funding. I would welcome any input or questions on these priorities that councillors have.

I would like to thank all those that have been involved with fire services issues this year. In particular thanks goes to the Lib Dem members of the Fire Commission.

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City Regions Board

Councillor Abi Bell



I would like to start by thank Cllr Paul Crossley and Cllr Ben Dowling for their support on the Board this year. It is much appreciated.

Also, many thanks to Terry, Rob and Amy for their support and ideas over the past 12-months.

There has been somewhat of a state of hiatus over the work of the Board over the past year, Government has been pre-occupied with Brexit which has meant several anticipated announcements have not been forthcoming.

There has also been frustrations with Board dates being moved and the feeling that the agenda is not moving forward.

The City Regions Board has worked on the following priorities:

Skills and Employment: Jointly with the People and Places Board, work has taken place to propose a devolved solution for skills and employment. Work Local will be re-launched at the LGA Conference.

Industrial Strategy: Lobbying work took place to ensure that all areas will be invited to agree a Local Industrial Strategy and ensure access to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Additionally, the work took place around the Government's review of LEP Boards.

Urban Leadership: It was agreed by the Board to work with other groups with similar aims in order to speak with one voice. This included Core Cities, Key Cities, SIGOMA and London Councils.

Fiscal Devolution: WPI have been commissioned to look at the case for fiscal devolution and funding pressures in urban areas. Surveying and round table research has taken place.

As members of the Board, we have sought to ensure that the work of the Board focuses on its benefit to citizens in urban areas. It is not enough to have a strategy on paper without it looking at how it improves the lives of people we represent.

Looking forward to 2019-20 we have requested that climate change is looked at in an urban area, particularly focusing on the impact that density, travel and deprivation has on working towards carbon neutrality.

Additionally, we have suggested that it is important the City Regions board continues to understand how issues can be concentrated in urban areas and inadequate funding can compound the impact.

Homelessness and pressures on social care budgets are examples of this.

This is my last report for the LGA Lib Dems. I would like to thank colleagues for an interesting and insightful time while I have served on the LGA.

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People and Places Board

Councillor Heather Kidd



The Lib Dem group on the People and Places Board have only 2 members since the 2017 elections but since the 2019 elections this will now be 3!

Cllr Sarah Osbourne – formerly of Lewes District and also now East Sussex County Council– has continued to work on rural transport issues especially around home to school transport for 16-18-year olds.

She also represents us on the Rural Digital Connectivity working group. We continue to make our voices heard in a sea of blue but which has a remarkable amount of consensus. Several of the long-term members of the Board are now no longer Councillors and July will see a change of personnel. The Chair is also standing down.

Our meetings with our rural representatives in Parliament, Tim Farron MP and Baroness Cathy Bakewell, have continued and now with Alistair Carmichael, MP as he took up the rural role. We had w phone in and then a meeting at Spring conference. These were very productive and we engaged support to help recruit candidates in the District elections.

Major issues for the Board continue to be:

- Broadband and mobile phone signal
- Brexit and its impact on the rural economy.
- Food, farming and the Environment and a green rural Brexit. Post Brexit England Commission report. This will be presented at the LGA Conference this July.
- Shrinking Rural transport
- Skills and employment

Your Lib Dem People and Places Board members are working to raise the groups profile and engaging with rural Councillors and Campaigners. We have posted several items on Lib Dem Campaigners and ALDC's Facebook to get some feedback on items going to the Board. Examples below.



This will be even more important now that we have so many more rural Councillors across the country. We continue to need thoughts from our Councillors. I am hoping that a Rural Fringe will raise our LGA profile further.

Other work. Both Sarah and I have worked as Peers with rural and Non-Metropolitan Councils both to learn and gather good ideas and to support Lib Dem Groups across England. I have also an active member of the ALDC Management committee.

I have continually argued for rural campaigns and have fed into a rural Housing needs survey for rural Campaigners and Councillors. I continue to mentor at Kickstart so that we have as many Councillors elected as possible. This all compliments the People and Places role.

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Liberal Democrat Retained Peers Report

Councillor Alan Connett



Change of Control

The highlight is supporting Liberal Democrat Groups as they move from opposition to running local councils. As I write this report, the finishing touches are being made to packages of Change of Control support across the country.

This year, we identified many more councils where there could be a change of circumstance as we euphemistically describe 'winning elections'. The team of 'connectors', whose job it was to make that essential early contact with Group Leaders, worked overtime in the few days as results were declared.

The headlines rightly proclaim the success of winning back over 700 council seats and taking majority control of 12 new councils. But there is more....councils where we are now in a Partnership Administration and we hold the Leader of the Council or Deputy Leader.

I want to thank the 'connectors' who, along with me and Regional Lead Peers Cllr Lisa Smart and Cllr Sarah Butikofer, did such invaluable work – Cllr Howard Sykes, Cllr Ruth Dombey, Cllr Heather Kidd, Cllr Adam Paynter, Cllr Lucy Nethsingha, Cllr Richard Kemp along with Cllr Tim Pickstone, Richard Cole and ALDC colleagues.

In total, we have organised or offered Change of Control support, or given advice and support to 65 Liberal Democrat council groups arising from their election results. We have helped many new Leaders navigate partnership agreements with other Groups to form an administration.

Utilising the Liberal Democrat Peer Pool, we have matched experience to where it is needed. I am grateful to all colleagues for their help and support throughout the year.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the support of the LGA Principal Advisors nationally who have responded quickly and positively to Change of Control issues.

Help and Support throughout the Year

We have three members of the team: Cllr Alan Connett, National Lead Member Peer, (Devon County Council & Teignbridge District Council), and regional lead members Cllr Sarah Butikofer, Norfolk County Council & North Norfolk District Council), and Cllr Lisa Smart (Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council).

Support is available ranging from help when taking control, to an event to look at a particular issue or future planning, along with general advice and to share a problem.

Please turn over...

LGA leadership offer

Liberal Democrat councillors are under-represented when it comes to attending many of the LGA Highlighting Leadership courses and events such as the Leadership Academy and Leadership Essentials. Many of the programmes are free to book and are excellent value whether in control or opposition.

To see what's available, look at the LGA website or contact the Liberal Democrat Group Office.

Support for ALDC & Party Conference

We have again worked closely with ALDC to support the training and development events for councillors. The team, along with LGA Group Leader Howard Sykes, have also led formal training sessions at Party conference and ALDC's popular Kickstart programmes.

Member Peer Pool

We have recruited additional councillors to join the Liberal Democrat Member Peers team. They undertake assignments supporting council groups, or working with LGA officers on particular programmes.

We would welcome Expressions of Interest particularly from women, young councillors and councillors with good experience in planning, adult and children's services, finance and housing.

If you would like to know more, contact Cllr Alan Connett (alan.connett@local.gov.uk) or Amy Haldane, in the LGA Liberal Democrat office (amy.haldane@local.gov.uk).

Using the Peer Pool, we have been able to place colleagues in a number of assignments, Corporate Peer Challenges, Chairing Skills, and dedicated pieces of work including Peer Mentoring supporting colleagues new to leadership roles on council executives, for example.

Co-ordinating our work

The Lead Peer team of Alan, Sarah and Lisa co-ordinate their work through scheduled telephone meetings. They also liaise with ALDC and the link is strengthened as Alan is also a member of the ALDC Management Committee.

Contact details:

Cllr Alan Connett

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T: 0784 301 3705

Cllr Sarah Butikofer

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Cllr Lisa Smart

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From Cheshire West and Chester (above) to Kirklees (right), Liberal Democrats continued our winning ways this year, and we celebrated more excellent results in Watford (below).



District Councils Network

Councillor David Neighbour



The District Councils' Network (DCN) aim is to be the national voice of District Councils, working with our authorities, partners and government to deliver national growth and prosperity at a scale that resonates and reflects how local communities live their lives.

The DCN have four core themes :

1. Stronger Economies
2. Better Lives
3. Enhancing Quality of Life
4. Sustainable Finance and Workforce

Districts must work within a financial framework that incentivises and rewards local growth, whilst supporting those areas in greatest need

Over the past 12 months we have had numerous lobbying victories on a number of key issues:

- the removal of negative RSG for 2019-20 with an average saving of £380,000 per affected district
- no further increase in the new homes bonus baseline
- lifting of HRA cap
- introduction of 20% flexibility to increase planning fees
- seeing the withdrawal of proposals for funding for short term supported housing to be delivered to County councils

- confirmation of the end of the process (sunset clause) that forced unitarisation where not all councils were in agreement
- greater recognition of the district role in prevention and establishing closer partnerships with PHE and NHS England
- engaged with parliamentarians through the APPG for district councils on LEPs, housing and finance
- successfully called for High Street Funding to be available only to districts in two tier areas
- secured a proportion of the Brexit grant for district councils who were due to receive nothing

In 2018/19 the DCN has delivered:

- Our Annual Conference
- 3 DCN Assemblies /AGM.
- Chief Executives' conference
- Finance seminar on Fair Funding
- A joint event with Homes England
- A survey on the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act
- A survey on recycling and waste services ahead of government consultation

Publications

In 2018/19 we produced 4 high profile reports which have received national coverage and have been shared with Senior Ministers:

- Transformation in Localities Toolkit - this report helps districts to achieve collaborative transformation.
- Delivering the District Difference - a joint report on the future of local government finance
- Tackling Homelessness - our report on homelessness and rough sleeping based on the results of our survey of members following the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act (2018)
- Shaping Healthy Places; exploring the district council role in health – our joint report with the LGA using case studies from a number of districts who have improved the health of their local areas.

Communications, Media

- We have introduced a bi-monthly Chief Executive newsletter alongside our bi-monthly Chairman's newsletter which provides an update on DCN activities
- We have seen an 83% increase in media coverage since 2017
- We have had over 230,000 impressions through our 120 tweets on Twitter.

My thanks to Councillor Bridget Smith who has served alongside me as the second Liberal Democrat leader on the DCN executive this year.

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County Councils Network

Councillor Jon Hubbard



The CCN has met six times over the past year, in addition to the annual conference held in Guildford which included an excellent address by Wera Hobhouse MP.

Key activities over the last 12 months include:-

Winter Pressures Funding: CCN advocacy with partners across the sector highlighted winter pressures in the health and social care system. This led to the in-year investment of £240m, funding that will be repeated in 2019/20. CCN councils will receive 44% of this funding.

Social Care Funding: This year, CCN's targeted advocacy helped the sector secure £410m of additional funding for social care.

Roads Investment: Our dedicated advocacy on the funding pressures highlighting planned reductions in road maintenance helped secure in-year investment of £420m for local highways.

Negative Revenue Support Grant: This year saw confirmation that Negative RSG would be cancelled.

Fairer Funding: CCN has maintained and grown the momentum on our fair funding review campaign. Our advocacy resulted in the recent consultation setting out welcome proposals that have the potential to deliver a much fairer funding formula for counties.

Social Care Green Paper: Earlier this year CCN published its own positioning paper to influence the development of the long-trailed reforms to social care. The report has been downloaded over 1,150 times and position CCN as a key stakeholder on the future of health and social care.

High-Needs Funding: CCN research highlighted escalating overspends in high-needs education funding. In December this helped secure an additional £250m of funding over two years.

Business Rates: 12 out of the 15 new 75% business rate retention pilots are in county areas. CCN has specifically argued that the London pilots should be reduced to the same level as those open to counties, with the resources reinvested to ensure more counties benefit.

Housing: CCN has become a national stakeholder on housing policy, building on its advocacy on strategic planning. We launched two research reports and hosted the first national conference dedicated to the strategic role of county and county unitary authorities in housing, planning and infrastructure.

LEP Review: Following several years of advocacy on the importance of coterminosity of LEP boundaries, the government announced in its LEP review it would seek to eliminate overlaps.

Reform: CCN continued to shape the national narrative on local government reorganisation. We have supported Dorset Council, securing their continuing membership from April 2019 and our advocacy helped turn the Government's minded-to decision in Buckinghamshire into a final decision.

Devolution: After officially adopting CCN's call for a more open, transparent and structured approach to devolution through the publication of a 'common framework', the network has continued to make the case for ambitious devolution deals for counties. CCN has been engaging government to ensure non-mayoral and combined authorities' models are considered, while ensuring the integrity of county geographies.

On a sad note, the CCN Group and indeed the whole of the CCN, were devastated by the untimely death of Cllr Ian Stewart during the year. Ian had been a stalwart of the Lib Dem team on the CCN as well as a highly respected spokesperson for CCN on communities and his loss was felt deeply.

This report marks pretty much my last act as the Lib Dem lead on the CCN and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team for their hard work and support over the past few years and I wish my successor every success.

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Party Liason

Councillor Chris White



Campaigning opportunities for Liberal Democrat Councillors

Campaigning is handicapped if Party Policy or Party governance do not reflect issues on the ground, especially local government issues. Work I and my Lib Dem Board colleagues have done since the last report:

1. The Independent Group

I have kept the headline from my last report just to remind us of how far we have come. TIG is no more and Change UK a doubtful successor. At a few hours' notice we were called together last week for a phone briefing about Chuka Umunna who joined the party an hour or so afterwards. My impression was that the PPC and council group leader had been kept in the loop (unlike previously with South Cambs) and were content with the outcome and the process.

2. Other Federal Board matters

The Federal Board continues to spend a great deal of time in policing and management. Recently it spent the best part of two hours in dealing with Lib Dem Friends of Palestine.

3. Federal Policy Committee

The European manifesto was fabulous. But the committee has struggled to understand the importance

of social care. Even in a paper entitled Health and Social Care, the latter falls off the spectrum in paragraph after paragraph. I kicked off and representations have been made via ALDC and the LGA Lib Dem office. I understand that the message got home. Amazing what happens when you threaten to walk out.

4. ALDC Policy Committee

Colleagues agreed to look at whether there could be a motion on what councils could do at local level in dealing with the climate emergency.

Work I am planning to do

Continue to work with colleagues in ALDC and on the Boards to make sure that we do not repeat the mistake of thinking that health care is mainly about what happens in acute hospitals.

What is going well

Working with ALDC

More relevant conferences

What areas need future improvement

Recognition that local government is the key player rather than having to kick off each time we are overlooked.

Meetings that have been held with the appropriate Parliamentary Spokesperson

I do attend most Federal Board and Federal Policy Committee meetings, alongside Terry Stacy who has observer status on the Federal Board. I have also worked on the Transport portfolio holder's paper on railways.

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The LGA Liberal Democrat Group Office

The Liberal Democrat Group office provides direct support and advice to Liberal Democrat council groups and councillors whilst also acting as the day-to-day voice of the Liberal Democrats within the LGA.

We currently have three full-time members of staff. Terry Stacy, the head of office, Rob Banks and Amy Haldane. They all have experience as Liberal Democrat Councillors.

We help the Group to achieve its political objectives within the LGA and the party, working closely with LGA officers, Liberal Democrat HQ, our parliamentarians in both the House of Commons and House of Lords and with our colleagues at the Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors with whom we organise joint events as well as sessions and fringes at both spring and autumn party conferences.

In addition to supporting the LGA Liberal Democrat Group we are also the first port of call for Liberal Democrat councillors in relation to a variety of policy, governance or legal issues.

We do weekly joint emails with ALDC to all councillors and ALDC members on a range of issues, news from the Liberal Democrats, local government news, good practice from council groups and councillors, highlight lobbying successes and details of events for councillors and campaigners. We also use twitter to keep our followers up to date, follow us on @libdemlocalgov.



Terry - terry.stacy@local.gov.uk - Head of the Group Office - Terry is responsible for the operation of the LGA Liberal Democrat Group. He also provides specific support on housing, welfare, fire and culture.
020 7664 3295



Rob – rob.banks@local.gov.uk – Political Adviser – provides support for: environment; economy and transport; community well-being; and safer communities.
0207 664 3204



Amy – amy.haldane@local.gov.uk – Political Assistant – provides support for children and young people; culture tourism and sport in addition to improvement /peer work.
0207 664 3293

Publications available on our website include...



Think Global, Act Local – Liberal Democrat Local Action for our Environment

Take a look at some case studies from Liberal Democrat councils and Liberal Democrat Groups on what they are doing to take action on environmental issues ranging from tackling climate change, reducing plastic waste and improving our local environment.

Going for Gold – the South Cambridgeshire Story

Hear how the Liberal Democrats turned round their fortunes in South Cambridgeshire and through perseverance, hard work and staying focussed swept to an amazing victory in May 2018.



Getting the balance right: a Liberal Democrat approach to planning

How do we balance competing needs when it comes to planning new homes and developments? The Liberal Democrat Group have published a booklet on planning policy, with good practice examples and challenges for you to consider.



Stand for what you believe in: be a Liberal Democrat District Councillor

This guide contains information about how councils work, the role of a councillor and most importantly, what being a Lib Dem councillor looks like. Inside the guide, four Lib Dem councillors from different district councils share why they are Lib Dem councillors and why it is important to them to represent their communities.



www.local.gov.uk/lga-libdem-group/our-publications

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