

Note of Business Rates Retention Steering Group meeting

Title: Business Rates Retention Steering Group

Date: Monday 5 March 2018

Venue: 18 Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note.

Item	Decisions and actions
------	-----------------------

1	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies
----------	---

Sarah Pickup welcomed members to the meeting.

2	Minutes of the last meeting
----------	------------------------------------

The minutes were agreed as an accurate summary of the discussion held at the previous meeting.

3	Calculating retained growth in business rates since 2013/14
----------	--

Mark Barnet, MHCLG, introduced the paper which set out the methodology used to calculate retained growth in business rates. The paper included the most up to date growth figures which were broken down by region and type of authority.

The Steering Group noted the figures and discussed the following points:

The Steering Group discussed:

- The need to factor the levy and safety net into the figures.
- The benefits of more detailed figures.
- The cost of the pilots.

Some felt that the paper was open to misinterpretation and concerns were raised about how the data was presented.

The Steering Group felt that it would be useful for Mark to rewrite the paper to include the impact of the levy and safety net to get the actual figures on what local authorities are retaining.

The Group also suggested that a covering report ought to be written to explain why the paper was being circulated. It was agreed that the revised version would be distributed to members before it is published on the LGA's website.

4 The Central and Local Rating Lists

Leon Clement and Aimee Powell, MHCLG, took members through the papers, the first of which was the first of a series of technical papers, and the second was a summary of the feedback and discussion which took place at the previous working group meeting.

Aimee noted the five questions listed in the paper and sought the Steering Group's views on each.

The Steering Group discussed:

- The need to publish clear and transparent criteria for central and local lists
- The process of identifying hereditaments
- The expectations that hereditaments would be on local lists.
- Long term reform and future legislation and proposals to allow the Secretary of State to designate properties between lists.

MHCLG confirmed that the paper would be published on the LGA's website and that authorities would be invited to comment. A full consultation would be launched once all of the technical papers had been discussed.

5 Media Lines

The Steering Group looked at an early draft of some figures setting out growth in business rates retained by councils from 2013/14. The Steering Group asked for further work to be done on this, including a look at the impact of the levy and safety net, some additional analysis and a cover note for the paper before it is published on the LGA's website.

The Steering Group went on to look at the technical paper around central and local rating lists. The Group heard the views of the technical working group, and all grounds around the table commented on proposals to have transparent criteria for establishing what should and shouldn't go on the lists. Representatives around the table will take this discussion back to their organisations and a timeline to take this work forward will be established.

The Steering Group also agreed, as we move forward, to discuss the issue of quantum of resources distributed and retained through business rates and the fair funding mechanism. The Group was informed that the next Spending Review (SR) would be held in early 2019, and it was agreed that it would be appropriate to expand the Group's remit to include the conversation between the sector and the Government on the SR.

6 AOB

The Group noted the dates of future meetings:

14 May
23 July
15 October

Appendix A - Attendance

Name	Organisation
Pete Moore	Society of County Treasurers
Sheila Little	County Councils Network
Mike Curtis	Society of London Treasurers
Guy Ware	London Councils
Duncan Savage	Fire and Rescue Authorities
Richard Paver	Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Mike Heiser	LGA
Alex Skinner	MHCLG
Sarah Pickup	LGA
Nicola Morton	LGA
Charlotte Sewell	VOA
Joanne Pitt	CIPFA
David Mason	IRRV
Leon Clement	MHCLG
Aimee Powell	MHCLG
Tony Kirkham	SOLACE
Sophie Broadhead	MHCLG
Trevor Henman	MHCLG
Anne Stuart	MHCLG
Peter Lilford	HMT
Mark Barnett	MHCLG
Joe Chesterton	Society of Unitary Treasurers
Bevis Ingram	LGA
Martin Mitchell	Greater London Authority