

Business Rates Retention Responsibilities Working Group

Terms of reference

In October 2015, the Government announced that, by the end of this Parliament, local authorities will be able to keep 100 per cent of the business rates they raise locally. In order to ensure that the reforms are fiscally neutral, the main local government grants will be phased out and additional responsibilities will be devolved to local authorities.

Achieving these reforms will require a radical overhaul of the local government finance system. To implement this, government wants to work closely and in full collaboration with the sector, in particular the Local Government Association (LGA), as well as other representatives of local government, local councils and interested bodies.

The Business Rates Retention Steering Group is a forum through which local government representatives and other interested bodies will provide information and expert advice to support the LGA and Department of Communities and Local Government in advising Ministers on the implementation of the reforms, with whom the final decision on the design and operation of the scheme will rest.

Reporting to the Steering Group, the Responsibilities Working Group will develop options for the devolution of responsibilities and funding and provide advice on a package or packages of responsibilities and funding that should be devolved to local government in implementing 100% rates retention. We will produce advice to the Steering Group on options that should form the sector's proposal to Government by the Steering Group's June meeting.

The Responsibilities Working Group will be co-chaired by Bevis Ingram LGA and Vicky Jones, DCLG.

The Group will aim to meet monthly and will have the following membership (plus LGA and DCLG representatives).

Member	Organisation
Anthony May	County Councils' Network (CCN)
Allen Graham	District Councils' Network (DCN)
Barry Hastie	Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (SIGOMA)
TBC	Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE)
Leigh Whitehouse	Association of Local Authority Treasurers' Societies (ALATS) - SLT
Nikki Bishop	Association of Local Authority Treasurers' Societies (ALATS) - SMT
Joanna Walker	Association of Local Authority Treasurers' Societies (ALATS) - SCT
Steve Richardson	Association of Local Authority Treasurers' Societies (ALATS) - SDCT
Sean Clark	Association of Local Authority Treasurers' Societies (ALATS) - SUT
Joanne Pitt	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA)
Alistair Townsend	Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV)
Jeremy Skinner	Greater London Authority
Paul Honeyben	London Councils

If group members are unable to attend a nominated substitute may attend in their place. The Group may, as necessary, co-opt additional or substitute members, for example for the purposes of discussion of specific issues.

These terms of reference and membership will be kept under regular review to ensure they remain relevant.