

Business Rates Retention Steering Group – Terms of Reference

1. In October 2015, the Government announced that, by the end of this Parliament, local government, as a sector, will be able to keep 100 per cent of the business rates it raises locally. In order to ensure that the reforms are fiscally neutral, the main local government grant (Revenue Support Grant) will be phased out and additional responsibilities will be devolved to local authorities. Together, these will equal the value of additional funding received by the sector as a consequence of the reforms.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. The Steering Group will consider and provide information and advice on the mechanisms needed to set up and run the 100 per cent rates retention system, and the timing and implementation of the reforms. Alongside making its own proposals, the Steering Group will both consider representations from individual local authorities, as well as oversee the work of three technical working groups that will look specifically at key aspects of the reforms. These will be:
 - The design of the retention system
 - Needs and distribution
 - New service responsibilities.
5. The Steering Group will be co-chaired by Sarah Pickup, Deputy Chief Executive of the Local Government Association and Stuart Hoggan, Deputy Director for Local Government Finance Reform and Settlement, DCLG. The Group will aim to meet monthly and will have the following membership:

Member	Organisation
Margaret Lee	County Councils' Network
Sandra Dinneen	District Councils' Network
Frances Foster	Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities
Paul Martin	Society of Local Authority Chief Executives
Pat Richie	Society of Local Authority Chief Executives
Richard Paver	Greater Manchester Combined Authority
Alison Griffin	Society of London Treasurers
Chris West	Society of Municipal Treasurers
Sheila Little	Society of County Treasurers
Norma Atlay	Society of District Treasurers
Tim Hannam	Society of Unitary Treasurers
Sean Nolan	CIPFA
Andrew Edwards	Valuation Office Agency
David Magor	Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation
Martin Clarke	Greater London Authority
Guy Ware	London Councils
Duncan Savage	Fire and Rescue Authorities

6. Both the Steering Group and technical working groups may, as necessary, co-opt additional or substitute members, for example for the purposes of discussion of specific issues.