

PAPER H106

HELA MEETING 21 MARCH 2006

Agenda item: Matters for consideration at 1st meeting between Local Government Panel (LGP) and HSC on 9 May 2006

Issue

1. To recommend agenda items for the 1st LGP/HSC meeting on 9 May 2006.

Background

2. Attached are the draft aims, terms of reference, membership and ways of working for the LGP/HSC interface. In summary, this forum is intended to:

- enable a strategic dialogue on local, central & devolved government health and safety issues; and
- provide a mechanism to review the effectiveness and performance of the LA/HSE partnership.

Argument

3. It is suggested that the agenda should include the following items:

- (a) Agreement of terms of reference
- (b) Local government strategic issues eg funding pressures and the Lyons inquiry into local government funding, local PSAs and LAAs, and future changes to the performance assessment regime
- (c) Central and devolved government strategic issues eg Local Better Regulation Office and regional relationships
- (d) Contribution of LAs to development of HSC strategy – current issues & horizon scanning eg penalties, risk aversion
- (e) Outstanding work and issues from LAs & HSE Working Together Strategic Programme:
 - i) The legal and enforcement framework (results of the November 05 consultation workshops with LAs) including the Enforcing Authority Regulations
 - ii) Performance management,
 - iii) s.18 HSWA guidance to LAs
- (f) Effectiveness & performance of the LA/HSE partnership: agree the framework for reporting
- (g) Raising the health and safety profile with LA elected members: e.g. communications opportunities around LGP/HSC meetings
- (h) [Discuss any strategic issues emerging from post-Strategic Programme review of arrangements in HSE and relationships with other key stakeholders?]

Action

4. Members are invited to comment on the suitability of the proposed agenda items above and to suggest other possible items for the agenda, taking into account issues raised at the 21 March HELA meeting.

LAU/LACORS, March 2006

LGP/HSC MEETINGS: DRAFT AIMS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE, MEMBERSHIP AND WAYS OF WORKING

Aim

Local Government Panel (LGP) meetings with HSC will have two distinct strategic purposes:

- To enable a strategic dialogue on local, central and devolved government issues that impact on health and safety regulatory functions, and vice versa, thus allowing effective discussion of local government's contribution to HSC policies and strategies.
- To review the effectiveness and performance of the local authority (LA/HSE) partnership in relation to stated objectives and assess its impact on health and safety outcomes.

Terms of reference

- To enhance opportunities for the wider agenda of local government to influence national health and safety policy and strategy over a 3 year cycle and beyond including implementation of European Directives.
- To raise the profile of health and safety enforcement in the local government community and more generally.
- To strengthen the link between LA health and safety enforcement and HSC's Strategy.
- To strengthen the link between HSC's strategy and LA health and safety enforcement, and LA corporate priorities to enhance social, environmental and economic well-being.
- To demonstrate how the principles of effective enforcement can be furthered through an effective central/local government partnership.
- To contribute to the development and implementation of HSC's Strategy and commend its adoption by the LA Associations as the basis for regional and local partnership activities.
- To take an overview of LA performance information and audit reports, including the annual "Partnership Report", prepared jointly by HSE and LACORS (on behalf of the LA Associations), which will provide a report on partnership arrangements (planning, delivery, auditing), the overall state of the partnership and the impact of the partnership on health and safety outcomes.

Membership

- The LGP will comprise elected members, through nominations from each GB LA Association – the LGA, WLGA and COSLA plus LACORS' Chairman. The LGP should approximate to, but be no greater than, the size of HSC (i.e. currently 9 Commissioners, including a local government Commissioner, plus the Chair).
- The length of membership and terms of re-election will be agreed at the first meeting.

Ways of working

The LGP will meet HSC twice a year:

- An autumn meeting to take a forward look at HSC's Strategy and factors influencing local government's contribution to it.
- A late spring/early summer meeting with an emphasis on reviewing the performance of the partnership in the previous year for the annual "Partnership Report"
- The dates for the LGP/HSC meetings are likely to be set for the same day as the HSC's monthly meetings to ensure that there is maximum attendance across the HSC and LGP.

LGP/HSC meetings will be jointly chaired.

The LGP will meet the joint chairs of the national HSE/LA officer enforcement liaison group (HELA) and the local government commissioner twice a year – timed to inform LGP/HSC meetings. In practice, this is likely to be in the form of a pre-meeting prior to the LGP/HSC meetings.

The outcome of the LGP/HSC meetings to be formally reported to each LA Association for necessary action and communication to member authorities.

The LGP's elected members will require consistent, high quality support to ensure that they are able to make best use of their meetings with HSC. This will be provided by LACORS.

LGP/HSC will review annually the efficacy of the interface arrangements.

January 2006