

| Health and Safety Commission Paper |                | HSC/06/24         |            |
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## HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

### LIAISON BETWEEN HSC AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES: ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT PANEL FOR MEETINGS WITH HSC

A Paper by Allan Davies

Advisor(s):

Cleared by Justin McCracken on 30 January 2006

#### Issue

1. The establishment of a "Local Government Panel" (LGP) to meet with the Commission twice a year; first meeting 9 May 2006.

#### Timing

2. Routine; the first meeting of the LGP and HSC is planned for 9 May 2006 (from 14.30 to 16.00 – to follow the main HSC meeting).

#### Recommendation

3. That the Commission note this important step in the establishment of new governance arrangements between HSC/E and local authorities' (LAs) and arrangements for implementation.

#### Background

4. Following work under the "Local Authorities and HSE Working Together Strategic Programme", the Commission accepted proposals for future governance of the partnership (HSC/05/45) in July 2005, including the setting up of a Local Government Panel that would meet the Commission twice a year.
5. The Programme Steering Group (chaired by Joyce Edmond-Smith) concluded at its meeting in January 2006 that its work was complete and the LGP/HSC meetings would fulfil its role. We understand from LACORS that, for continuity, for the first LGP/HSC meeting the former Steering Group members will form the LGP i.e. Cllrs. Graham Brown, Peter Kent, Caroline Seymour, Andy Sutton, (all LGA), Alison Hay (COSLA), Jeffrey James (WLGA).

6. HSC/06/09, for discussion at HSC's 14 February meeting, contains further information on sustaining the partnership between local authorities LAs and HSE, and closure of the Programme.
7. Attached as an Annex are the draft terms of reference for the LGP/HSC meetings together with the proposed aims, LGP membership, and ways of working. Work on the agenda will start shortly. It will include a recommendation made by the Steering Group concerning the results of recent consultation workshops with LAs on the legal and enforcement framework, and of course will reflect the outcome of the Commission's discussions on 14 February.

### **Argument**

8. The establishment of a forum for local government representatives to meet with the Commission is an important development. It is intended that this forum will enable a strategic dialogue, and a mechanism for the Commission to review the effectiveness and performance of the partnership and its impact on improved health and safety outcomes. Other important benefits include raising the profile of health and safety enforcement in the local government community; more generally, strengthening the link between LA health and safety enforcement and the HSC Strategy; and demonstrating how the principles of effective enforcement can be delivered through effective central/local government partnerships.

### **Consultation**

9. This paper with LACORS and Programme Director/Manager. The draft terms of reference were circulated, and amended accordingly, following discussion at the Steering Group and Programme Board. They are for approval at the first meeting between LGP/HSC.

### **Presentation**

10. There is a need to ensure that LAs, HSE and key stakeholders are clear about the "new arrangements". An information document is proposed that will clearly set out the structures and expected outcomes from the partnership. Other communication channels are currently being considered for the launch of this first meeting between the LGP and HSC and may include a joint press release, an article in the HSC Newsletter, HSE's LAU Newsletter and LACORS newsletter.

### **Costs and Benefits**

11. The partnership seeks to fully integrate LAs into the development of national policy, programmes and the delivery of operational activities. Whilst cost neutral for LAs, the principal benefits are from the greater impact on health and safety that HSE and LAs can have by working more closely together.

### **Financial/Resource Implications for HSE**

12. There will be minor resource requirements in terms of servicing this new forum.

### **Environmental Implications**

13. None.

### **Other Implications**

14. None.

### **Action**

15. The Commission is asked to note the arrangements being put in place for the first meeting with the LGP. Members are invited to comment to LAU on any particular aspects of the new arrangements in advance of the first meeting on 9 May or if they would like specific briefing on any particular aspects of LA working.

### **Contact**

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## **ESTABLISHMENT OF A LOCAL GOVERNMENT PANEL FOR MEETINGS WITH HSC: DRAFT AIMS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE, LGP 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