

Agreed LG Group priorities for EU lobbying November 2010

The European Commission 2011 programme, equivalent to the Queen's Speech, was published in October, and contains legislative proposals to be put forward during the 2011/2012. Following an [LG Group briefing](#) to highlight all possible EU proposals which could have implications for our member authorities, the following EU lobbying priorities were endorsed at the LGA European and international programme board in November 2010. This priority list covers issues which we feel will affect councils in coming years from a funding, cost, or regulatory point of view.

EU proposal and expected impact on member authorities	Launch of proposal
<p>Review of the EU budget (2014-2020) including structural funds is crucial to councils as they can currently benefit from the £7 bn EU regeneration and skills funding which comes to the UK. The LGA seeks a more coherent, locally responsive and accessible EU future funding package. This is a live issue, and the LGA has taken clear lead in the debate.</p>	<p>Concrete spending proposals expected from June 2011.</p>
<p>Working time directive review: will affect services provided by local authorities (care homes, and fire services etc). While ensuring the health and safety of our workforce, we expect to lobby to keep the 48 hour opt-out; ensure not all on-call time is classed as working time; and that compensatory rest is taken in a flexible way. LGE currently influencing pre-legislative phase through social partners.</p>	<p>Expected Autumn 2011 Joint work with LG Employers</p>
<p>Review of EU procurement rules: welcomed by councils, since current rules are uncoordinated and create some legal uncertainties on the ground. The LGA will lobby to ensure the review simplifies legislation, separating mandatory from voluntary rules.</p>	<p>Expected autumn 2011</p>
<p>Initiative on concessions: depending on the scope, it may affect councils' franchise arrangements (leisure centres, toll bridges, bus franchises, waste concessions). We will lobby for light touch regulation.</p>	<p>Expected 2011</p>
<p>Review of the Market in Financial Instruments Directive: local authorities should continue to be classified as 'professional' investors rather than 'retail' to continue to invest public funds. In line with the principle of subsidiarity, national and local government should decide if local authorities should assess and manage financial risk, taking into account national regimes to ensure prudential borrowing / investments.</p>	<p>Expected spring 2011</p>

<p><u>New rules on VAT affecting public authorities:</u> councils' ability to claim back VAT from government for goods/services they buy for the public sector (crèches etc) may be threatened by a common EU approach for public bodies in the EU. This must remain a national competence.</p>	<p>Expected 2012</p>
<p><u>New Directive on water efficiency in buildings:</u> this is expected to set binding thresholds – this will have a significant cost to councils who own significant numbers of municipal buildings and social housing.</p>	<p>Expected 2012</p>
<p><u>New Directive on energy efficiency and savings:</u> proposals are expected to highlight the public sector's exemplary role; it could be accompanied by national energy efficiency targets.</p>	<p>Expected autumn 2011</p>
<p><u>EU environmental legislation:</u> although non legislative, the European Commission will look at ways to enhance EU environment law compliance and strengthen inspections. Since councils implement EU environment rules, LGA will need to influence this process and work closely with Whitehall.</p>	<p>Expected 2011</p>
<p><u>Simplification of EU waste/recycling laws:</u> many of these laws are implemented by councils, and the review is welcome. It is expected to cover directives on End-of-life Vehicles, Batteries and Packaging. The review should not add to councils existing duties.</p>	<p>Expected 2012</p>
<p><u>Watching briefs</u> <i>Economy and Transport: Future of transport white paper; strategies on youth unemployment; new skills and jobs; and EU 2020 strategy on smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.</i> <i>Workforce: Posting of Workers; white paper on pensions; free movement of workers</i> <i>Regulation: Animal health; tobacco sales; product safety</i></p>	
<p><u>Ongoing priorities:</u> <i>Environment and Housing: Directives on Waste of Electronic and Electronic Equipment revision, Soil, and Climate Change, Energy efficiency funding</i> <i>Workforce: pregnant workers Directive</i></p>	