



commonwealth
LOCAL GOVERNMENT FORUM

Bulletin

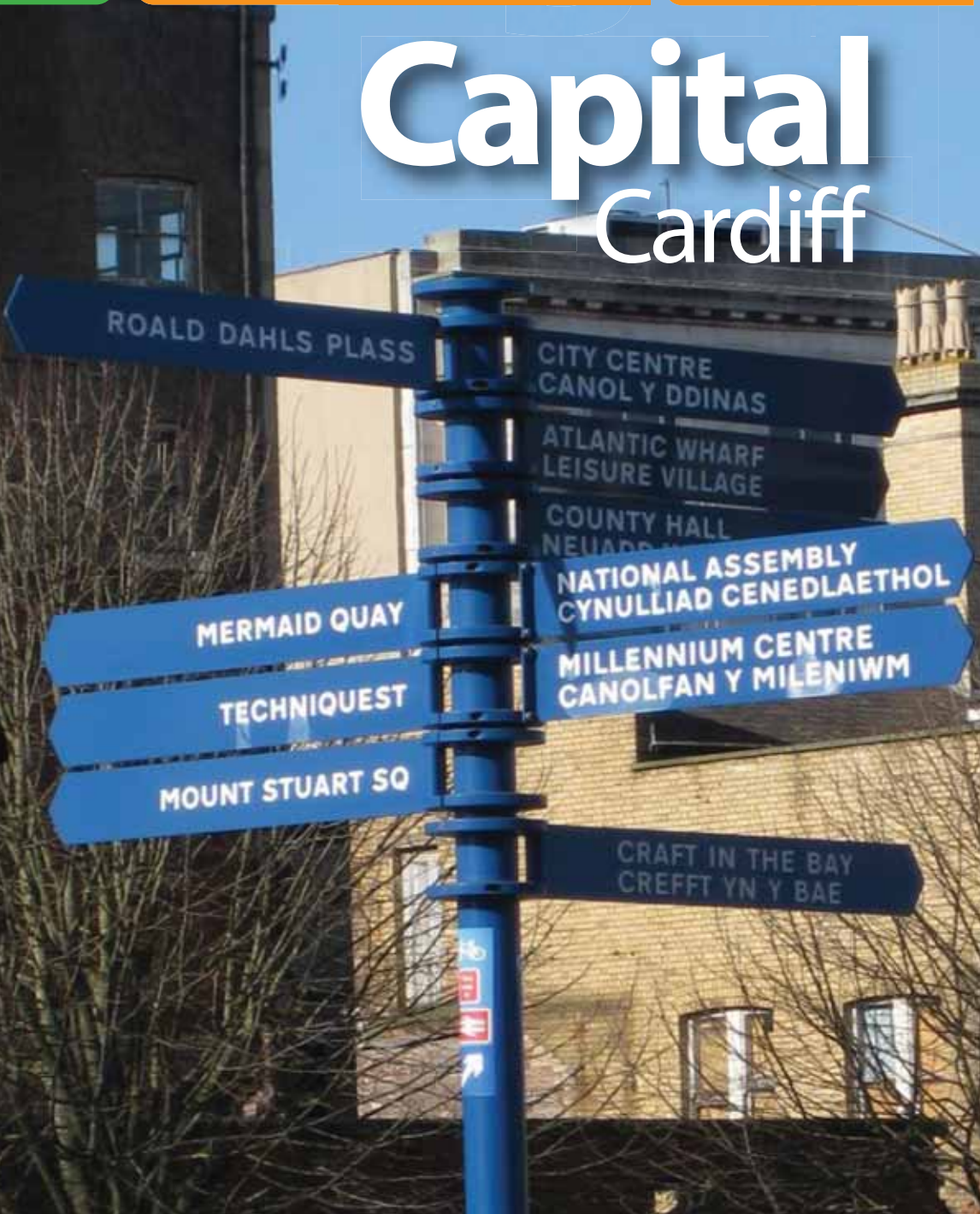


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News in brief

Local government is a critical partner in the Pacific

Local governments in the Pacific can play a fundamental and positive role in local economic development, according to the outcomes of the Regional Pacific Symposium in Port Vila, Vanuatu in October.

The symposium declaration notes the diversity of local governments in the Pacific, and that there is no single model for improvement that fits all. It says "strengthening the institutional and service delivery capacity of local governments remains a critical and ongoing objective; increasing challenges of urbanisation, climate change, disaster risks, rising youth populations and community expectations are placing pressure on local budgets. Councils need to make use of greater efficiencies and improvements to maintain standards."

Hon Edward Nipake Natapei, Prime Minister of Vanuatu addressed the meeting and participants were welcomed by Hon Willie Pakoa, Lord Mayor of Port Vila.

The event reviewed country strategies for local government in the Pacific and examined the common challenges which it faces. It also identified CLGF's work priorities for 2011-15, highlighting a new focus of activity in promoting local economic development.

Copies of *The Port Vila Declaration* are available at <http://www.pacific.clgf.org.uk/index.cfm>. Following the symposium and discussion between CLGF and the NZ AID Program officials, the development of the next phase of the CLGF Pacific Regional Programme is at an advanced stage.

Programme to address gap between policy and practice in Southern and Eastern Africa

There is a growing understanding of the role local governments play in promoting good governance and effective service delivery in Southern Africa according to a report produced by the Municipal Development Partnership for Eastern and Southern Africa (MDP-ESA) in cooperation with CLGF, UNDP and UNCDF for the regional workshop on decentralisation in Windhoek in November. However, the report says that there is a gap between policy goals and practice in terms of decentralisation and local government powers and resources. The report recommends capacity building programmes at individual, organisational and systemic levels, including for local government associations and ministries of local government.

CLGF Secretary-General Carl Wright presented the draft report to a meeting of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Local Government Ministers' Forum in Luanda, Angola in February. Mr Wright said following consultation with ministers and other stakeholders, a practical programme of technical and other support will be developed to implement the recommendations of the study. He also confirmed CLGF's support for establishing a SADC local government desk.

C O M M E N T



by Carl Wright, Secretary General



One of CLGF's strengths is its Commonwealth-wide membership and its formal status within the Commonwealth family, which gives official recognition to the role of local government.

In practice, this means that we can draw on an extensive range of practitioner expertise for our work, can cut through much bureaucratic red tape and have access to high level support from other Commonwealth institutions and international development agencies.

The Commonwealth is currently undergoing a review of its work. This is being undertaken by the Eminent Persons' Group (EPG), headed by former Malaysian Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badwi, which is tasked to develop options for reform to sharpen the impact, strengthen the networks and raise the profile of the Commonwealth.

The EPG has met on three occasions to date and CLGF was able to make a submission at its second meeting, held in London in October. In our submission, we argued strongly for better coordination, avoidance of duplication and the establishment of more strategic partnerships between ourselves and other key Commonwealth agencies, notably the Commonwealth Secretariat. Scarce member state resources are not being used effectively across different Commonwealth agencies if they undertake similar work without effective coordination.

We therefore welcome the EPG call for '*strengthening the co-ordination and effectiveness of Commonwealth organisations and agencies working together*' at its third meeting in Malaysia in January. The EPG also made a number of other key proposals including for expanding the range of measures in response to the violation of Commonwealth values and establishing a Commonwealth Commissioner on the Rule of Law. These are areas which CLGF will follow-up in the run up to this October's Heads of Government Meeting in Perth, Australia, working closely with its members and with other partners such as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Commonwealth Business Council.

We look forward to seeing the recommendations of the review and a more effective working relationship with other Commonwealth organisations.

International knowledge sharing to help local government address global issues

Local government must be part of the solution to address the global economic downturn and issues of international development according to CLGF. This was one of the key issues discussed by senior leaders from the Commonwealth at the CLGF Board Policy and Resources Committee meeting in London, at the end of November.

The meeting discussed how the current economic downturn was impacting on local government in the UK and across the Commonwealth and how the CLGF could assist its local and central government

members in identifying appropriate policy options by international knowledge sharing.

Members of the Committee also discussed implementation of the recommendations of the strategic review and received the new business and financial plans. The meeting was held at the CLGF headquarters in central London.

While in London, CLGF leaders also met with Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General, Mr Ransford Smith at Marlborough House to consider closer cooperation on political and technical

issues within the Commonwealth and met with senior officials from the UK Department of International Development.

Speaking after the meeting, CLGF Chairperson Mayor Zenaida Moya-Flowers said:

"Local government throughout the world is facing serious challenges arising out of the global recession, cuts in public expenditure and developmental problems. However our members in many countries are successfully dealing with the problems they face and we can learn much from each others' experiences."



Municipal finance for inclusive development

Higher levels of grant funding along with the design and implementation of a series of innovative financing methods are needed to address the enormous funding requirements of cities and urban municipalities in South-Asia to help them tackle past infrastructure deficits and meet current and future service demands, according to a report on Municipal Finance for Inclusive Development, produced by Richard Slater for CLGF.



It is estimated that by the middle of this century, half of South Asians will live in urban areas, resulting in an urban population of 1.2 billion. With this increase in urban population, cities and towns have been experiencing tremendous fiscal stress and are having difficulty operating and maintaining adequate levels of services, let alone planning to meet future demands.

The report looks at some of the financing mechanisms that can help municipalities to raise adequate resources to meet the increasing expenditure on services and infrastructure including innovations such as equity investment, bond issues, public-private partnerships and municipal development funds as ways of raising finance

for infrastructure projects. The paper highlights a wide range of issues that municipalities face in terms of being able to adopt or replicate various financial innovations more widely.

The report also looks at the role of external assistance in South Asia. According to the report many development programmes in the region aimed at strengthening revenue mobilisation have resulted in some marginal improvement but have not been sufficient to meet the extent of increase in demand and improvement of services.

The report will be available through the CLGF website www.clgf.org.uk or e-mail info@clgf.org.uk for further information.

Promoting gender equality

Women as agents of change

This year's theme for Commonwealth Day on 14 March is women as agents of change. It will celebrate women whose work has made a positive difference to the lives of others and emphasise the Commonwealth message that by investing in women and girls we can accelerate the social, economic and political progress in member states.

Promoting gender equality

Millennium Development Goal 3 is to Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women. At the 2009 Commonwealth Local Government Conference in the Bahamas, delegates asked CLGF to work with the Commonwealth Secretariat and other organisations to develop a gender and local government action plan as part of the agenda on improving local government.

Since then CLGF has set up various initiatives to help encourage and support women in local government and worked in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific (UCLG-ASPAC). The partnership aims to put the millennium commitment on women's representation in sub-national governments on the national, regional and global agenda.

Participants at the 2011 Commonwealth Local Government conference will have a chance to discuss how to encourage more women into leadership in local government at a special breakfast meeting to be hosted by CLGF Chair Mayor Zenaida Moya-Flowers at City Hall on Friday 18 March.

Space on the mat

CLGF's Pacific office has set up a networking site for Pacific women in local government to exchange experiences, perspectives and ideas on ways in which local government can promote women's voices, address women's needs and provide opportunities for women's political representation alongside men in consultation processes, governance policies and service delivery.

Space on the Mat is a networking site for women who work, have worked or aspire to work in local government in the Pacific or for those who wish to influence the programmes and activities of local government in their villages, towns and cities.

This website has been developed by CLGF in partnership with the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) and with the assistance of the United Nations Democracy Fund. <http://wilgpacific.org/>

Commonwealth gender priorities agreed

The annual meetings of Commonwealth women's affairs ministers and officials took place in February in New York, with an assessment of the progress and challenges in implementing the Commonwealth's 10-year Plan of Action for Gender Equality.

Members discussed the prioritisation of work areas over the remaining five years of the plan – and how best to collaborate and assess the needs of women across the five regions of the Commonwealth.

At the meeting, it was decided that regional groupings would play a bigger role in monitoring the Plan of Action. The Plan of Action promotes women's advancement and gender equity in the Commonwealth – and focuses on four areas: democracy, peace and conflict; human rights and law; poverty eradication and economic empowerment; and HIV and AIDS.

Inclusive Cities Network to be expanded

CLGF member cities and cities/councils affiliated to national local government associations which are members are invited to join the CLGF Inclusive Cities Network (ICN).

The Network was launched as a pilot in 2009 to promote inclusiveness and social cohesion and to share good practice on the many issues around urbanisation and inclusion – slum dwellers, migrants, minority groups, women and young people. The challenges of urbanisation are huge and this network will help cities learn from others across the Commonwealth. Following meetings of the pilot group of cities in Ahmedabad and

Johannesburg, the network is now being expanded to other CLGF member cities and councils.

The ICN offers an opportunity to learn from and contribute to wide-ranging practitioner-led exchange of experience and provide a forum in which to raise and discuss issues around inclusion.

For further information contact the coordinator CLGF ICN info@clgf.org.uk or mike.murray@birmingham.gov.uk or check out the info on the CLGF website: <http://www.clgf.org.uk/inclusive-cities-network/>.



Rt Hon Carwyn Jones



Hon Kamla Persad-Bissessar



Rt Hon Helen Clark

Energising local economies: partnerships for prosperous communities is the theme of this year's Commonwealth Local Government conference. Key speakers include Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago Hon Kamla Persad-Bissessar, UNDP Administrator Rt Hon Helen Clark, First Minister of Wales Rt Hon Carwyn Jones, Commonwealth Secretary-General HE Kamalesh Sharma, Tata Consultancy Services Vice-President Tanmoy Chakrabarty, and Chairman of Microsoft Europe Jan Muhlfelt.



Energising local economies

Local authorities often do not have a statutory responsibility for Local economic development (LED). However, local economic development is becoming increasingly important in the work of local government, especially in the current financial climate, as part of its strategy for development and poverty reduction. LED is critical for job creation, increasing affordability, broadening the tax base to allow for capacity and service improvements, and linking developed and less developed areas.

According to Prof Reddy, author of the conference background paper *Energising local economies: local economic development around the Commonwealth*, LED has focused on different types of activities:

- marketing of locations to external investors – including incentives such as reduced costs, supporting economic potential in areas which have been traditionally strong,
- providing business support and links and supporting entrepreneurs, and
- individual business support and sectoral development through public/private partnerships, workforce development and cluster growth.

There is no blueprint for LED – every locality or municipal area has its own opportunities and challenges. Plans and strategies will depend on many factors such as the availability of land, infrastructure, natural resources and the skills of the workforce. On top of this, local governments must be able to adapt rapidly to the dynamic local, national and international markets and circumstances.



Transforming Cardiff

Cardiff presents an excellent example of how a city has been transformed through local economic development. From the development of Cardiff Bay and the Millennium Stadium to restructuring from heavy industry to the service industry, Cardiff has developed over the last 20 years and responded to its role as cultural, commercial and political capital of Wales.

It has done this though developing financial and business services, attracting new creative and scientific industries, tapping in to the talent of citizens through skills development, and improving business infrastructure and connectivity.

The council set up and led a Cardiff Regional Skills vehicle to bring together the various council departments and outside agencies and organisations in the region to provide a mechanism to satisfy the demand for skilled labour, and to ensure that local people and communities received the economic benefits of larger developments. This approach was very successful in the development of the recently opened St David's 2 shopping centre.

The Capital Cardiff Fund offers start-up and growing business support through a range of financial assistance packages. This includes a Development Capital Fund operated as a co-investment arrangement with fund managers and business syndicates, in which the council has equity investments in high-growth companies. In the current economic climate, when the supply of capital is severely constrained, this has enabled new high-growth businesses to develop.

"Through creating the right environment for the business of tomorrow and providing responsive support for the business of today, Cardiff is putting in place the foundations for present and future prosperity," said Cardiff Council leader Cllr Rodney Berman.

"The purpose of local economic development (LED) is to build up the economic capacity of a local area to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all. It is a process by which public, business and non-government sector partners work collectively to create better conditions for economic growth and employment generation."

World Bank

Local authorities provide leadership in developing LED strategies, but must work in partnership with other spheres of government, with business and with civil society to ensure that policies are community-driven and complement national and provincial/state strategies. Much of what they do, including many regulatory procedures, impacts on business.

Prof Reddy says that it should also be remembered that local authorities are not just policymakers, but are themselves entrepreneurs and developers, promoters and catalysts, coordinators, facilitators and enablers for local enterprise.

Prof Reddy outlines the main approaches to LED and some of the strategies to help deliver LED including:

- Infrastructure development and service provision
- Strategies to retain and expand existing business
- Increased spending on local manufactured products
- SMME development
- Human capital development
- Community economic development, and
- Linking profitable growth to redistributive development.

Current challenges

The current world economic climate poses more challenges than ever for LED:

- **Resources:** the gap between what is expected from LED and the funding and resources for local government to be able to make it happen.
- **Lack of uniform development:** Many countries and localities have uneven development from pastoral to industrial, so there is a wide difference between highly developed areas and those with very little economic development. Effective local economic pathways for more remote areas are important - island states, for example, may be very spread out.
- **Coordination of LED services:** Different departments and organisations deal with aspects of LED and there is often no joined-up working or integration of services.
- **Skills gap:** Local authority staff often lack the necessary skills and understanding of the needs of business.
- **Overdependence on a particular industry or a few large employers** can put a local economy at risk if there is a downturn or other external factors which impact heavily on these employers.

The global financial crisis has impacted more on Europe and North America than Africa or Asia: there has been a big impact on local authorities as a result of reduced revenue for the public sector, especially local government; this has made it more difficult to attract private sector investment, and has made donors more cautious about how they use their funds.

Delegates at the conference will be discussing these issues and challenges and sharing good practice to help them develop their own solutions. The outcomes of their discussions will help inform CLGF's future work plans and be presented to Commonwealth Heads of Government at their meeting in Perth, Australia later this year.

The 2011 Commonwealth Local Government Conference will be held at City Hall, Cardiff, capital city of Wales, UK from 15-18 March.

Energising local economies: local economic development around the Commonwealth, authored by Prof P S Reddy, University of KwaZulu Natal will be made available to delegates and through the conference website www.clgc2011.org.



Monitoring local elections in the Maldives

The Maldives is an archipelago of islands, made up of more than 1,192 islands in total. It held its first multi-party local elections on 5 February 2011. CLGF Chairperson Mayor Zenaida Moya-Flowers headed the CLGF-Commonwealth Secretariat election assessment team monitoring the recent local government elections at the invitation of the Elections Commission in the Maldives. The team of four people comprised Mayor Moya-Flowers, Mrs Florence Kebbie, Electoral Commissioner from Sierra Leone, supported by CLGF Asia Project Officer Anuya Kuwar and Alison Pearman, Acting Advisor for Asia-Europe to the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Monitoring local elections in Commonwealth countries that are undergoing decentralisation and reform is one of the areas where CLGF works closely with the Commonwealth Secretariat. While not every election can be monitored, local election observer teams provide very valuable support when a country is starting down this road.

“Local elections are essential for citizen empowerment and ensuring that local services are delivered”, said Mayor Moya-Flowers. “These were the first local elections that the people of the Maldives have experienced, so they were very important and having a Commonwealth team allowed us to give a broader perspective and insight; media coverage of this helped both the candidates and citizens have a more confident view of the conduct of the elections.”

The team spent a total of a week, before, on and after election day assessing and monitoring; they visited polling stations in several islands to see how things were being run, met elections officials to see they were fully aware of their roles and responsibilities, met with the Elections Complaints Board to assess whether the process was fair and



Widespread poster campaigns helped publicise the elections

transparent and where there might be any issues or problems, and met with representatives from different political parties, the Human Rights Commission, relevant NGOs and the media to get their views on the elections.

As the only elected official in the team, Mayor Moya-Flowers said that having a political perspective on the elections and the relevant legislation was very helpful, as was the Commonwealth perspective in that many of the Commonwealth states are also small island states which have similar difficulties in setting up local governments when some islands are very remote, with limited means.

According to Mayor Moya-Flowers, as with many Commonwealth countries, raising finance for local government is a big issue to ensure sustainability and reduce dependence on national government. She was also able to offer advice on the formation of a local government association to help coordinate the remote islands and give them a voice to ensure they are part of the future development of local democracy, and to help councils learn from each other.

Mayor Moya-Flowers said that, now the elections have taken place, she hopes that CLGF will be able to assist in technical and capacity-building with the help of CLGF's regional project officer.

The Commonwealth has been supporting the Maldives throughout its transition to multi-party democracy. A constitution was adopted in 2008 which provided for local elections for atoll, island and city councils. Following the enabling legislation on decentralisation and local government in July 2010, referenda were held to determine how islanders would like their islands to be demarcated for local elections and administration. As a result of this the Election Commission announced that elections would be held in 184 constituencies, including islands, merged islands and newly created municipal/city councils.

The Commonwealth assessment team's report will be presented to the Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma and then made available to the Government of the Maldives.



Mayor Moya-Flowers in Male during the elections



CLGF Chairperson
Mayor Zenaida
Moya-Flowers

Members

Africa

Mayor Amos Masondo, Chairperson, South African Local Government Association (*Vice-chairperson*)+

Cllr Rosina Hoabes, President, Association of Local Authorities in Namibia, Namibia (*alternate*)

Hon Dr Didas Massaburi, Chairman, Association of Local Authorities of Tanzania

Cllr John Karazaarwe, President, Uganda Local Government Association, Uganda (*alternate*)

Hon Felix Godsent Akhabue, President, Association of Local Governments of Nigeria

His Worship Cllr Herbert A George Williams, Mayor, Freetown City Council, Sierra Leone (*alternate*)

Hon Senator Lindiwe Dlamini, Minister of Housing and Urban Development, Swaziland

Hon Lebonaamang T Mokalake, Minister of Local Government, Botswana (*alternate*)

Hon Adolf Mwesige, Minister of Local Government, Uganda (*Vice-chairperson*)+

Hon Capt(rtd) George Huruma Mkuchika, Minister of State for Regional Administration and Local Government, Tanzania (*alternate*)

Hon Marafa Hamida Yaya, Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation, Cameroon

Hon Dauda S Kamara, Minister of Internal Affairs, Local Government and Rural Development, Sierra Leone (*alternate*)

Americas

Mayor Zenaida Moya-Flowers, Mayor, Belize City Council, Belize (*Chairperson*)+

Mayor Orlando Nagessar, Chairman, Trinidad and Tobago Association of Local Government Authorities (*alternate*)

Cllr Marvin Hunt, Director, National Board of Directors, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Canada

Mayor Milton Brown, Association of Local Government Authorities, Jamaica (*alternate*)

Hon Robert Montague, Minister of State for Local Government, Office of the Prime Minister, Jamaica+

Hon Bryan Woodside, Minister of State for Lands and Local Government, The Bahamas (*alternate*)

Hon Chandresh Sharma, Minister of Local Government, Trinidad and Tobago

Hon Sntnr Saboto Caesar, Minister of Housing, Informal Human Settlements, Lands and Surveys, Physical Planning and Local Government, St Vincent and the Grenadines (*alternate*)

Asia-Pacific

Mayor Lawrence Yule, President, Local Government New Zealand+

Cllr Genia McCaffery, President, Australian Local Government Association (*alternate*)

Hon Kouraiti Beniato, Minister of Internal Affairs and Social Development, Kiribati

Hon Simon Crean, Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, Australia (*alternate*)

Dato' Wira Chor Chee Heung, Minister of Housing and Local Government, Malaysia

Hon Ahmed Mujthaba, Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs, Maldives (*alternate*)

Europe

Cllr Pat Watters, President, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), UK (*alternate*)

Dr Lazaros Savvides, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the Interior, Cyprus (*alternate*)

Members at large

Father Smangalisso Mkhathshwa, President, United Cities and Local Government of Africa, South Africa

Ratu Peni Volavola, former Lord Mayor of City of Suva, Fiji (*alternate*)

Cllr April Crowther-Gow, President, Caribbean Association of Local Government Authorities

Mayor Irving John, Castries City Council, St Lucia (*alternate*)

Cllr Rodney Berman, Leader, Cardiff Council, UK

Associates

Professor Graham Sansom, UTS Centre for Local Government, Australia+

Dr Philip Amis, International Development Dept, University of Birmingham, UK (*alternate*)

Dr Bishnu Ragoonath, University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago

Prof P S Reddy, University of Kwazulu Natal, South Africa (*alternate*)

Co-opted

Hon Samuel Ofofu-Ampofo, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Ghana

Hon Kumari Selja, Minister for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, India

Hon Brig Brian Chituwo, Minister of Local Government and Housing, Zambia

Hon Herve Aimé, Minister of Local Government, Rodrigues and Outer Islands, Mauritius

Hon Rodney Hide, Minister of Local Government, New Zealand

Ex officio

Basil Morrison, New Zealand (*Immediate Past Chairperson*) +

Carl Wright, Secretary General+

Simon Baker, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, UK (*Hon Treasurer*) +

+ Member of Policy and Resources Committee

Publications

Commonwealth e-Journal of Local Governance

The 7th edition of the Commonwealth e-Journal of Local Governance was published in December and is available on-line at <http://epress.lib.uts.edu.au/ojs/index.php/cjlg/index>.

This edition has a focus on planning with articles on community-led strategic planning with studies from Australia, Ghana and New Zealand. It also looks at local government and effective service delivery in Botswana, and mainstreaming HIV/AIDs in municipalities in one province of South Africa.

The journal also features an in-depth practice article on the CLGF Alotau - Sunshine Coast Good Practice Scheme project to improve waste management practices to ensure that the town is kept clean and tidy and help it to become a tourist destination and to promote job creation, and notes on the CLGF Good Practice Scheme Mt Hagen - Orange City partnership.

Women's Representation in Local government in Asia Pacific - Status Report 2010

Women's Representation in Local government in Asia Pacific - Status Report 2010 was prepared jointly by the United Nations Development Programme Asia-Pacific Regional Centre, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum and the United Cities and Local Governments Asia-Pacific.

The report looks at the progress made towards the Millennium Development Goal 3, Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women, by introducing a sub-national measure of women's political representation. It forms a baseline measure of women's representation in sub-national government on a country by country basis. Copies can be downloaded from

<http://asia-pacific.undp.org/reports/documents/WomenInLocalGovernmentStatusReport2010.pdf>

CLGF Bulletin is produced by the CLGF Communications team. CLGF, 16a Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5AP, United Kingdom

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March 2011

CLGF Research Colloquium 13-15 March, Cardiff University, Cardiff, UK

The colloquium provides an opportunity for presentation and discussion of research papers on the theme *Sustainable local governance for prosperous communities*, for exchange information and ideas on key directions for local government research across the Commonwealth, and to strengthen collaboration to address those priorities, and provide research-based inputs to the 2011 Commonwealth Local Government Conference.

For further information contact: info@clgf.org.uk.

Commonwealth Local Government Young Professionals Forum 13-15 March, City Hall, Cardiff

CLGF in association with Cardiff Council, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council, and Youth Business International, is holding a two-day international forum to celebrate 2011 International Year of Youth. The forum will explore the role of local government in assisting young people to be agents for local economic development (LED) through enterprise and political engagement.

For further information contact:
Cecillia.Makonyola@clgf.org.uk

Commonwealth Day 14 March; events around the Commonwealth

The theme for 2011 is *Women as agents of change*. The Commonwealth will celebrate women whose work has made a positive difference to the lives of others, and will emphasise the Commonwealth message that by investing in women and girls we can accelerate social, economic and political progress in our member state. Cardiff will host a number of events including a Communities Cultural Day at the Wales Millennium Centre and the Cardiff International Square Mile Project.

Commonwealth Local Government Conference 2011: Energising local economies, partnerships for prosperous communities

15-18 March, City Hall, Cardiff, UK

Local government increasingly plays an important role as one of the main promoters and facilitators of economic development in their areas. This three-day international event that will look at local government's role in economic development, particularly in the current global financial climate, and successful strategies for driving and delivering prosperous communities.

For further information contact:
clgc2011@clgf.org.uk or check out the conference website at www.clgc2011.org.

CLGF General Meeting 18 March, City Hall, Cardiff UK

CLGF members are invited to attend the CLGF General Meeting which is held every two years. Delegates will elect the CLGF Board for 2011-13, hear about CLGF's recent achievements and future work plans, and approve the accounts.

May 2011

CLGF/UNDP/UNCDF Regional Workshop on Decentralisation

May, Kigale, Rwanda (tbc)

By invitation. For further details contact CLGF Project Officer Nyasha Simbanegavi
Nyasha.simbanegavi@clgf.org.uk.

International Meeting of the Royal Commonwealth Society(RCS) 15 - 17 May 2011, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - **Reinvigorating Commonwealth Civil Society**

This meeting will bring together the RCS' international branch network and other Commonwealth organisations and engage participants in debates on the future of the Commonwealth.

The programme will include a presentation on the RCS' vision for the Society, discussions on the reform of the RCS' international network, a session on the future of the Commonwealth and a discussion on the future of Commonwealth civil society.

For further info contact
international@thercs.org or on +44 (0) 20 7766 9227.

October 2011

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 28 - 30 October 2011, Perth, Australia

CHOGM is held every two years and is the highest consultative and policy-making mechanism of the Commonwealth. It provides an opportunity for Commonwealth leaders to discuss world issues relevant to building a strong and secure future for all.

For further information see
<http://www.chogm2011.org>

Support

for emerging
local government
associations

African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) countries that do not have a local government association but are considering setting one up have the chance for assistance thanks to an EU-funded project run by the Netherlands Local Government Association (VNG) in partnership with CLGF.

Effective and efficient local government associations are important to ensure that local governments have their voice heard and they provide opportunities to share information and good practice. However, not all countries in the Commonwealth in the African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) region have local government associations.

The Emerging Local Government Association Facility (ELGAF) project has been set up as part of the ARIAL programme to help ACP countries establish local government associations where there are none. Projects that are approved will have two phases: phase one will be drafting and developing a project plan with the support of ARIAL experts; phase two will be for implementation of the plan. Support of up to 69,000 euros will be given for two years from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2013.

Anyone from an ACP country who is trying to set up an association and is interested in applying for this can find further information and the application form on the ELGAF at www.arial-programme.eu or contact the ARIAL project team by e-mail at arial@vng.nl. Proposals should be submitted before 1 June 2011.

