

Children and Young People Board

Agenda

Friday, 13 January 2017
11.00 am

Rooms A&B, Ground Floor, Layden House,
76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG

Dial in: 0808 164 1004 (561561#)

To: Members of the Children and Young People Board
cc: Named officers for briefing purposes

www.local.gov.uk

This meeting is



Guidance notes for members and visitors

Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG

Please read these notes for your own safety and that of all visitors, staff and tenants.

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Security

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Most LGA governance structure meetings will take place on the **ground floor** of Layden House which is open access and therefore does not require a swipe enabled security pass. **Access** to the rest of the building (floors 1-5) is via swipe enabled security passes.

When you visit Layden House, **please show your Local Government House security pass to reception** and they will provide you with a temporary pass which will allow you access to floors 1-5 if required. **Please don't forget to sign out at reception and return your security pass when you depart.**

If you do not have a LGH Security Pass, please email [member services](#) with your name and a recent photo and a pass will be made for you. You can pick this up from the Layden House reception desk on your next visit.

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DO NOT USE THE LIFTS.
DO NOT STOP TO COLLECT PERSONAL BELONGINGS.
DO NOT RE-ENTER BUILDING UNTIL AUTHORISED TO DO SO.

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Guest WiFi in Layden House

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Further help

Please speak either to staff at the main reception on the ground floor, if you require any further help or information. You can find the LGA website at www.local.gov.uk

Why have the LGA’s Headquarters moved?

The LGA has temporarily relocated from Local Government House (LGH) in Smith Square to Layden House in Farringdon, effective from Monday 31 October 2016. This is to allow extensive refurbishment work to be carried out to LGH.

The refurbishment works will see the ground floor conference centre and all meeting rooms fully refurbished. Floors 1, 2 and 3 will be upgraded and released for commercial letting to enable the LGA to maximise the income from this building as part of its drive for financial sustainability. A new and larger Open Council will be located on the seventh floor. The refurbishment is expected to last for nine months and we expect to be back in LGH by September 2017.

We appreciate your understanding and flexibility during this time.

Children & Young People Board
13 January 2017

There will be a meeting of the Children & Young People Board at **11.00 am on Friday, 13 January 2017** Rooms A&B, Ground Floor, Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG, dial in: 0808 164 1004 (561561#).

A sandwich lunch will be available directly after the meeting.

Attendance Sheet:

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

Political Group meetings:

The group meetings will take place prior to the meeting. Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

Apologies:

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting.

Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3334	email: Labour.GroupLGA@local.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk

Location:

A map showing the location of Layden House is printed on the back cover.

LGA Contact:

Joseph Ling
Joseph.ling@local.gov.uk / 0207 664 3166

Carers' Allowance

As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme a Carer's Allowance of up to £6.70 per hour is available to cover the cost of dependants (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

Social Media

The LGA is committed to using social media in a co-ordinated and sensible way, as part of a strategic approach to communications, to help enhance the reputation of local government, improvement engagement with different elements of the community and drive efficiency. Please feel free to use social media during this meeting. **However, you are requested not to use social media during any confidential items.**

The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgacyp

Children & Young People Board – Membership 2016/2017

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (7)	
Cllr Roy Perry (Vice-Chair)	Hampshire County Council
Cllr Gareth Barnard	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Cllr Liz Hacket Pain	Monmouthshire County Council
Cllr Ian Hudspeth	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Dick Madden	Essex County Council
Cllr Ian Parry	Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Janet Walton	Borough of Poole
Substitutes	
Cllr Matt Bennett	Birmingham City Council
Cllr Ryan Brent	Portsmouth City Council
Cllr Peter Oakford	Kent County Council
Labour (7)	
Cllr Richard Watts (Chair)	Islington Council
Cllr John Kent	Thurrock Council
Cllr Bob Cook	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Cllr Anne Burns	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Anntoinette Bramble	Hackney London Borough Council
Cllr David Mellen	Nottingham City Council
Cllr Roz Gladden	Liverpool City Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Megan Swift	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE	Southwark Council
Cllr Rachel Harris	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Independent (2)	
Cllr Gillian Ford (Deputy Chair)	Havering London Borough Council
Cllr Paul Cullen	Richmondshire District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Helen Grant	Richmondshire District Council
Cllr Rebecca Novell	Lancaster City Council
Liberal Democrat (2)	
Cllr Liz Green (Deputy Chair)	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
Cllr Christopher Coleman	Cheltenham Borough Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Jon Hubbard	Wiltshire Council

Children and Young People Board Attendance 2016-2017

Councillors	29/9/16	3/11/16
Conservative Group		
Roy Perry	Yes	Yes
Gareth Barnard	Yes	Yes
Liz Hackett Pain	Yes	No
Ian Hudspeth	No	No
Dick Madden	Yes	Yes
Ian Parry	Yes	No
Janet Walton	Yes	No
Labour Group		
Richard Watts	Yes	Yes
John Kent	No	No
Bob Cook	Yes	Yes
Anne Burns	Yes	Yes
Anntoinette Bramble	No	Yes
David Mellen	Yes	Yes
Roz Gladden	No	Yes
Independent		
Gillian Ford	Yes	Yes
Paul Cullen	Yes	Yes
Lib Dem Group		
Liz Green	Yes	Yes
Christopher Coleman	Yes	No
Substitutes		
Peter Oakford	Yes	
Rachel Harris		Yes
Helen Grant		Yes

Agenda

Children & Young People Board

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Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, 23 March 2017, 11.00 am, Rooms A&B, Ground Floor, Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG

Regional adoption agencies

Purpose

For information.

Summary

This paper provides a brief overview of recent work to establish regional adoption agencies across England, as background for a presentation by Mark Owers, Independent Professional Adviser to the Adoption Leadership Board. Mark will present emerging findings from work with the five demonstration projects over the past 12 months, before opening up for discussion with Members.

Recommendations

The Children and Young People Board is asked to;

1. Note the current activity taking place to regionalise the adoption system
2. Feedback on emerging issues or areas of concern to inform the LGA's work on the Adoption Leadership Board.

Action

Officers to take action as directed by members.

Contact Officer: Ian Dean
Position: Senior Adviser, Children's Social Care
Telephone No: 0207 665 3878
Email: ian.dean@local.gov.uk

Regional adoption agencies

Background

1. Adoption has become an increasingly high profile issue in recent years, with a number of initiatives underway aimed at improving the adoption system and making it easier to find permanent, loving homes for children who need them without unnecessary delay.
2. This work is driven by the government-led Adoption Leadership Board (ALB), which brings together central government, local authorities (including the LGA, represented by Cllr Chris Coleman) and voluntary adoption agencies in an attempt to drive improvements across the system.
3. Andrew Christie CBE became chair of the ALB in April 2016, replacing Sir Martin Narey, and has set three clear priorities for the coming year:
 - 3.1. Addressing the decline in numbers of children entering the adoption system
 - 3.2. The effective development and implementation of Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs)
 - 3.3. Defining the future of Adoption Support, particularly in a regionalised system.
4. The LGA has been supportive of this work, with local government central to recent improvements in areas such as timeliness, post-adoption support and the number of children waiting to be placed. While we have consistently cautioned that the strong focus on adoption must not come at the expense of other care options for young people, such as long-term fostering or special guardianship, we have been encouraged by the recent launch of a national fostering stocktake and moves to extend support for adopted children to those cared for under a Special Guardianship Order.
5. Last year, the government stated its intention for all local authorities to become part of a regional adoption agency (in practice, these are often sub-regional arrangements) by 2020, with reserve powers available to enforce compliance through the Education and Adoption Act 2016.
6. Nineteen RAAs are currently underway, involving 132 local authorities (see appendix A for details). Five of these arrangements have been categorised as Demonstration Projects, providing an opportunity for closer analysis of the opportunities and challenges presented by this programme. These projects are Adopt Central England (ACE); Aspire (Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole); Coram East; Greater Manchester; and Yorkshire & Humber.
7. Mark Owers, Independent Professional Adviser to the ALB, has been working closely with the Demonstration Projects, other RAA projects and national adoption stakeholders,

and will present the emerging findings from the past 12 months before opening up for discussion with Members. The role of elected members in regional adoption agencies has been a particular focus at recent ALB meetings, and the LGA has consistently warned that some regional arrangements appear to have been pursued and agreed without sufficient engagement with elected members.

8. We would therefore welcome a broader discussion with CYP Board members on their view of regionalisation, the extent to which elected members have been involved in these developments locally, and any emerging issues to feedback to the ALB.

Recommendation

9. Members are asked to note the current activity taking place to regionalise the adoption system, and feedback on emerging issues or areas of concern to inform the LGA's work on the Adoption Leadership Board.

Financial implications

10. There are no specific additional financial implications for the LGA arising from this report.

Implications for Wales

11. As the Adoption Leadership Board covers England only, the above paper contains no implications for Wales.

Update on Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs)

January 2017

Mark Owers

(Professional Adviser to the Adoption Leadership Board)



Owers Advisory Ltd

LAs and VAAs are all helping to make adoption better

- 4,690 children were successfully adopted in 2015-16
- Fewer children with a placement order are waiting for adoption – 1,960 as at 30 June 2016
- Child timeliness has improved – latest quarterly data show average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adopted family is 515 days (17 months)
- The adoption support fund is supporting more families each year – over 7,000 families supported, over £27m spent, a range of vital therapeutic support delivered to families



But we need to make further improvements

- Adoption numbers are falling. Data suggest that the number of **adoptions** fell slightly between quarter 4 2015-16 and quarter 1 2016-17, from 1,120 to 1,060. 4,690 adoptions in 2015-16 is a decrease of 670 from 5,360 in 2014-15
- data suggests that the number of new **decisions** has continued to fall from 1,850 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 1,080 in quarter 1 2016-17, a decrease of 42%
- Quarterly data also suggest new **placement orders** granted have continued to fall from 1,630 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 890 in quarter 1 2016-17, a decrease of 45%
- Projected uplifts suggest that new decisions and placement orders **may have plateaued between quarter 4 2015-16 and quarter 1 2016-17**
- The number of **adopter registrations** decreased by 14% between quarter 4 2015-16 and quarter 1 2016-17, from 840 to 730. The number of **adopter approvals** increased by 1% from 700 to 710.



There is a clear vision on RAAs and there is broad engagement

In 'Regionalising adoption' in June 2015 the Government set out its commitment to markedly improve outcomes for children through the delivery of a regional adoption system where:

- children are **matched** with the most suitable adopter as quickly as possible;
- **recruitment** takes place at an efficient scale to provide a pool of 'adoption ready' adopters large enough and well enough matched to the needs of children waiting; and
- enough high quality **adoption support** services are available nationwide.

- 19 RAA projects (132 LAs) are in place with the first projects planning to launch in April 2017
- All projects have plans for the RAA to carry out functions that relate to matching, recruitment and support and a few are considering extending the RAA's function to special guardianship.
- The statutory and voluntary adoption sectors are trying to work together to provide real and lasting improvements.



132 LAs out of 152 are engaged in the RAA programme

- 132 local authorities are involved in a project to form an RAA. They are covered by 18 projects with a 19th project on intercountry adoption.
- 13 of the 20 local authorities not yet engaged have spoken to DfE about joining the programme. Most of them are interested in forming a new RAA project rather than joining an existing project.
- DfE plan to help the remain 7 local authorities to join the programme in 2017.



Projects will launch in a phased way

Projects going live in 2017

April – June 2017

Greater Manchester
and Cheshire East

Yorks and Humber
(phased launch)

July – Sept 2017

Aspire Adoption
Wigan

Thames Valley
Merseyside

Oct – Dec 2017

Adopt Central
England

Tees Valley
West Pennine

Projects going live in 2018

March/April 2018

Adopt Central East

Yorks and Humber (final launch)

Adopt South West

Adopt@heart

Adopt West

East Midlands

Adopt North East

Adopt South Central

Adopt East

London



The following LAs and VAAs make-up the five demonstration projects

Adoption Central England	Aspire Adoption	Central East	Greater Manchester	Yorkshire & Humber
After Adoption Barnardo's Coventry Solihull Warwickshire	Bournemouth Dorset Families for Children Poole	AdoptionPlus Bedford Buckinghamshire Cambridgeshire Central Beds Coram Northamptonshire Norfolk St Francis	Adoption Matters Caritas Care Cheshire East Manchester Trafford Salford Stockport	After Adoption, Adoption Matters, Adoption UK, Barnardo's, Barnsley, Bradford, Calderdale, Doncaster, East Riding, Hull, Kirklees, Leeds, North Lincs, North East Lincs, North Yorkshire, PAC UK, Rotherham, SSAFA, Sheffield, Wakefield, York, Yorkshire Adoption



Together we have started to identify the features of a good RAA

Clear objectives for improving practice

- Early permanence is the norm
- More targeted recruitment of adopters
- Better tracking
- Streamlining processes to speed up matching
- Strategic commissioning of adoption support
- Better links with specialist services

RAA is organised to maximise impact

- Roles, responsibilities and accountability clearly defined
- Single entity drives consistency & efficiency
- Scale enables investment in expertise & staff support
- Better commissioning and understanding of need
- Strong links with LA child care teams
- Processes benchmarked and levelled up to the best

Effective use of interagency placements

- RAA & VAA adopters in region as one pool
- Agency neutral matching
- Funding mechanism responsive to demand
- Immediate national search for some children

Clear roles for VAAs and other partners

- RAA delivering in-house where there is a clear rationale
- Voluntary sector run services when best placed to do so
- Partners contribute to service design based on expertise
- VAA partners have a clear service offer



We have also identified a number of key questions to answers

1. How exactly will the adoption system be better – the devil is in the detail?
2. How will accountability work and what about corporate parenting responsibilities?
3. What practice arrangements will enable children to be placed without unnecessary delay?
4. How much will it cost and how will the funding arrangements work?
5. What legal form should RAAs take and how should they operate?
6. How will we minimise the impact of the change on service users and staff?
7. How will voluntary agencies be involved in RAAs?
8. How can we properly understand the performance of the system as a whole?
9. What regulation and inspection framework do RAAs need?



Crucially, bigger does not mean better, it just means bigger. Better is better.



It has been difficult to understand costs of adoption and it is too early for RAAs to provide information about future costs

- There are many issues when attempting to understand costs of adoption.
- The range for current costs of adoption were between £27,000 and £38,000.
- These initial data would suggest that adoption costs for LAs and VAAs and not that dissimilar considering the interagency fee is £27,000.
- This should not be a surprise give Selwyn et al (2009) found actual costs to a LA similar to a VAA.
- There is evidence that the current level of the interagency fee is insufficient to cover VAA costs - estimates are between £33,100 and £36,905.
- In preparing to understand the costs of RAAs, all projects have begun to consider RAA Funding Principles and RAA Funding Options.
- Most options produce 'winners and losers' so individual LAs and the RAAs are considering the most palatable options.



We need to get the balance right between placements provided directly to LAs by 'their' RAA and those provided by other RAAs and VAAs. This is no easy task however.

- Demo Projects expect to increase the number of children placed within RAAs and to reduce the use of interagency placements purchased from LAs and VAAs outside of the RAA.
- RAAs recognise that they will never be self-sufficient and so they will need to budget to allow for all interagency placements needed. This will give RAAs flexibility to pursue interagency placements and reduce their exposure to the risk of a mismatch between the adopters they recruit and the children needing placements.
- But we do not yet have a consensus on the services RAAs want from VAs and the voluntary sector's offer is not yet clearly enough defined or sufficiently compelling.
- At a time when the statutory sector is being told by Government that individual LAs are inefficient, the voluntary adoption sector should collectively consider how they could deliver at greater scale and be more efficient and effective.



Questions for discussion

1. How well sighted are you on the RAA programme?
2. What do you think are the opportunities and risks?
3. To what extent do you feel enabled to support and challenge the programme effectively?
4. What does the ALB need to hear and do to ensure the programme is a success?



Hopefully this has been
useful and thank you for
your time!



Children and Social Work Bill: Power to test different ways of working

Purpose

For information.

Summary

This paper updates members on recent amendments to the Children and Social Work Bill, with a particular focus on the controversial “power to test different ways of working”, and seeks member guidance on the LGA’s future position in relation to these clauses.

Recommendations

The Children and Young People Board is asked to;

1. Note the update.
2. Advise on the LGA’s future position in relation to the power to test different ways of working.

Action

Officers to take action as directed by members.

Contact Officer: Ian Dean
Position: Senior Adviser, Children’s Social Care
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Email: ian.dean@local.gov.uk

Children and Social Work Bill: Power to test different ways of working

Overview

1. The Children and Social Work Bill completed its passage through the House of Lords on 23 November, and has now entered Committee Stage in the House of Commons. Although the Bill contains important provisions in relation to corporate parenting principles, a local offer for care leavers, care planning and new flexibilities around multi-agency safeguarding partnerships and serious case reviews, much of the debate so far has centred on a series of controversial “power to test different ways of working” clauses.
2. These clauses would allow local authorities to apply for the relaxation of specified aspects of children’s social care legislation, initially for a three-year period with the possibility of a further three-year extension and a permanent exemption if deemed successful. The provisions were removed by the Lords, but the government has since tabled them again in the Commons with a number of additional safeguards.
3. The LGA has briefed strongly on the Bill, and the power to test different ways of working in particular, throughout its passage through Parliament. While we have been broadly supportive of the principle of allowing councils to shape provision around the needs of children and young people rather than the constraints of legislation, we have also been clear that any decision to exempt an authority from social care legislation must always be shown to be in the best interests of local children and young people.
4. With a number of important concessions having now been granted, we would welcome the Board’s steer on whether the LGA should now fully support the amended clauses.

The amended power to test different ways of working

5. The powers are designed to allow local authorities to apply for exemption from a requirement imposed by children’s social care legislation, or to modify the way in which that requirement applies.
6. We are pleased that the government has listened to our concerns and more closely linked the proposed powers to outcomes for children and young people. Additional safeguards have also been introduced to limit the range of legislation that councils can be exempted from (excluding, for example, sections 17 and 47 of the 1989 Children Act, which covers support for children in need and children at risk of harm), and to prevent the exemptions being used to overturn the prohibition on profit making bodies carrying out children’s social care functions.
7. The government has also now proposed the creation of an expert panel to oversee any applications for legislative exemptions. While we were pleased the government listened to arguments made by the LGA and stated during earlier stages in the Bill that the expert panel would include representation from the voluntary sector, a practice expert, and local government, we remain concerned that only the Children’s Commissioner and Ofsted Chief Inspector are listed as members on the face of the Bill.

8. Throughout the Bill's progress, we have been clear that any applications to use these powers should always be council-led, allowing local authorities to make decisions based on the needs of local children and young people that they know best. We are therefore particularly pleased that the government have removed provisions that would have allowed the Secretary of State to make these decisions on behalf of local authorities in intervention without any form of local democratic scrutiny or consultation with local partners.

Opposition to the provisions

9. In spite of these concessions, opposition to the proposals remains widespread. In particular, concerns continue to be raised that the Bill will introduce a profit motive into children's social care services, that the freedoms proposed are not necessary for innovation, and that it is wrong to "experiment" with services for vulnerable children.
10. Together for Children, a network of organisations and individuals, has formed to oppose the innovation clauses "because they threaten to remove or change vital, universal duties which have evolved over many decades to meet the needs and protect the rights of vulnerable children and young people."¹ The network includes the British Association of Social Workers, the Care Leavers' Association, the Fostering Network, the National Association of Independent Reviewing Officers, the Refugee Council and UNISON.
11. Together for Children argues that in the face of significant funding cuts to local government, non-statutory early intervention services have been significantly reduced because meeting legal duties towards the most vulnerable children has been prioritised. They argue that any relaxation of the legal framework governing children's services could leave councils "tempted or pressured into making cuts to services and support that days, weeks and months before were accepted as vital."²

Support for the provisions

12. Putting Children First, the policy paper outlining the government's social care reforms, stated that the intention behind the clauses was to "create a controlled environment in which we could enable local authorities to test deregulatory approaches that are not currently possible, before taking a decision to make substantial changes to existing legislation that would apply across the board". Government have consistently denied that they have any plans to "privatise" child protection.
13. A number of local authorities have publically stated their interest in making use of these powers, including the Tri-borough, Achieving for Children (Kingston and Richmond), Lincolnshire and Leeds. Some authorities have provided examples of potential uses of the powers, including:

¹ <https://togetherforchildren.wordpress.com/>

² <https://togetherforchildren.wordpress.com/risks/>

- 13.1. Hampshire has suggested using the powers to explore whether Independent Reviewing Officers could be used in a more targeted way, allowing for more support for children who need it, while removing IROs from reviews where children are in stable placements and say they do not want an IRO present.
 - 13.2. Hampshire has also highlighted that if a disabled child uses intensive break provision for more than 17 days at a time or the short breaks account for more than 75 days of the year, then by law the child must have the full care planning and review process for looked after children, which families do not always want and can find intrusive. They have suggested working with families to look at flexibilities in cases where there are no safeguarding concerns, to look at how it can work better for children and families.
 - 13.3. North Yorkshire has suggested trialling freedoms around assessments for friends and family for looked after children, who currently have to go through the same assessments as those carers joining the fostering workforce and committing to a range of placements over a length of time, despite only looking after one young person who they already have a relationship with.
14. There has also been support for the clauses from organisations including the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, Catch 22 and the Chief Social Worker, as well as Professor Eileen Munro, whose Independent Review of Child Protection in 2011 argued for a children's services system that reflected the complexity and diversity of children's needs.

LGA view

15. The LGA is generally supportive of greater freedoms for local authorities to test different ways of working. The children's social care landscape has changed significantly since the last major legislative reform brought about by the 2004 Children Act. Demand for child protection services has increased significantly, funding has fallen across the public sector, and a heightened understanding of threats such as child sexual exploitation, gang activity and radicalisation has necessitated new approaches to safeguarding outside of family settings. The structural landscape has also changed considerably and continues to do so, with greater devolution and combined authorities offering the potential for new delivery models that may not fit comfortably within the existing legislative framework.
16. We have therefore been broadly supportive of these clauses in our briefings to Parliament, particularly in light of the concessions granted during the Bill's progress through the Lords. The amended clauses leave decision making firmly in local authority hands, and include a number of safeguards which aim to allow for proper scrutiny of any exemption requests.
17. However, we are conscious that considerable opposition to these powers remains both within and outside Parliament, and we would therefore welcome the CYP Board's steer on the LGA's future position.



**Children & Young People
Board**

13 January 2017

Financial implications

18. There are no specific additional financial implications for the LGA arising from this report.

Implications for Wales

19. Although some elements of the Children and Social Work Bill apply to England and Wales, the freedom to test different ways of working outlined in this paper apply to England only.

Education funding announcements

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

The second stage of the Department for Education (DfE) consultation on a schools national funding formula was announced before Christmas. New funding to support school improvement, including significantly reduced funding for councils to support schools to improve was also announced at the end of November. This report provides a brief summary of the proposals and invites initial views from the Board to inform the LGA's response to the consultation.

Recommendation

Members of the Children & Young People Board are asked for initial views on the proposals.

Action

Officers to take action as directed by members.

Contact Officer: Ian Keating
Position: Principal Policy Adviser
Telephone No: 0207 664 3032
Email: ian.keating@local.gov.uk

Education funding announcements

1. On 14 December the Education Secretary Justine Greening MP launched the second stage of the consultation on introducing a national funding formula for schools which will see each school's budget set nationally by 2019 – 20. This will replace the current system whereby councils set local formulae in consultation with local schools through their Schools Forum.

Key elements of the proposed reforms

2. In 2018 – 19 'notional' budgets will be calculated according to the national formula, but will be aggregated and will continue to be allocated to councils for distribution to schools according to a local formula to ease the transition to the 'hard' national formula in 2019 – 20. In the first consultation it was proposed that there should be a two-year transition with a 'soft formula' to the national formula. However, following the one year delay to the introduction of the new arrangements announced before the summer last year, there will now just be a one year transition from a 'soft' to a 'hard' formula.
3. Schools funding is currently distributed in three 'blocks' covering early years, schools and high needs but councils, in discussion with schools, have flexibility to move money between blocks. The first consultation proposed ending this flexibility and ring-fencing the schools block to prevent resources being transferred to other blocks. The LGA, among others, raised strong concerns that this inflexibility could potentially have a negative impact on pupils with high needs.
4. Although the consultation paper confirms that the Government intends to ring-fence the schools block in 2018 – 19, there will now be some flexibility for councils, with the explicit agreement of schools, to move funds between the schools and high needs block. DfE also intend to look at retaining some flexibility from 2019 – 20 when the full national formula comes into force. Each authority's high needs block will be protected from any loss in cash terms as a result of the introduction of the national formula and funding will be provided to councils to support them in preparing and implementing strategic plans for allocating high needs funding.
5. Much of the detail in the consultation paper focuses on the inclusion and weighting of different factors in the proposed national formula. As this is a distributional issue, with different factors affecting schools and council areas in different ways, it is unlikely that the LGA will be able to comment on this aspect of the consultation.

Transitional protections

6. Probably the most significant protection given to schools is that no school will lose more than 3% per pupil as a result of the introduction of the national funding formula. There will also be a minimum funding guarantee that no school will lose more than 1.5% per pupil year on year. To partly fund these protections schools due to gain will be limited to increases of up to 3% per pupil in 2018 – 19 and 2.5% per pupil in 2019 – 20.
7. At a local authority level, 101 council areas will see an increase in funding as a result of the proposed changes and 49 will see losses. The range of gains and losses will be

between +8.6% and -2.8% per pupil. The majority (81%) of council areas will experience a change in overall funding in the range of +3% and -3%.

Central school services block

8. As proposed in the first consultation, a fourth block will be created – the central schools services block – to hold the funding councils will be left with for their continuing education funding responsibilities. £600 million will be cut from the Education Services Grant (ESG) paid to councils and academies, but councils will continue to receive ESG for the duties they retain for all local schools, including academies.
9. Councils also ‘top slice’ the schools block to fund some of their statutory duties such as admissions, the funding of Schools Forums and historical commitments such as equal pay and PFI contracts – a national total of nearly £700 million. As well as the residual ESG funding, this centrally held funding will be paid into the central school services block.
10. The amounts councils hold centrally in this way varies significantly from authority to authority and DfE intends to move to a per-pupil rate of central funding (in line with ESG), so some councils will lose in this change and some may gain. There will be transitional protections to ensure no council loses more than 2.5% funding as a result of this change in 2018 – 2019 and 2019 – 2020 and gains will be capped at 2.5% each year.
11. The Government acknowledges that the loss of the majority of ESG funding may mean councils need to find alternative sources of funding for the statutory services they are required to provide to maintained schools. So councils will be able to agree a top slice of the schools block with maintained schools to fund these statutory duties – but only with schools’ agreement. In effect maintained schools will be asked to fund council statutory duties from their own budgets.
12. In the transitional year of the ‘soft formula’ councils will also be able to agree with maintained schools a top slice for additional school improvement support. However, from 2019 – 20 when the hard formula is introduced, the consultation paper says that the expectation is that “all school improvement provision by local authorities at no cost to schools will have ended or will be offered through traded services”.

School improvement support funding

13. On 30 November the Education Secretary made a separate announcement about new funding for councils and schools to support improvement. This includes, from September 2017, a £50 million a year fund for local authorities to continue to monitor and commission school improvement for low-performing maintained schools. This will be allocated to local authorities on the basis of the number of schools they maintain; an area cost adjustment; and top-up to ensure each local authority receives a minimum allocation of £50,000.
14. In addition, a £140m per year ‘Strategic School Improvement Fund’ will be established for academies and maintained schools. The announcement said that it will be “targeted at the schools most in need of support to drive up standards, use their resources most effectively and deliver more good school places”. However, no further details of how it will be allocated are currently available.



**Children & Young People
Board**

13 January 2017

Financial implications

15. There are no specific additional financial implications for the LGA arising from this report.

Implications for Wales

16. As the above announcements concern only England, there are no implications for Wales in the above report.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

Purpose

For information.

Summary

This paper updates members on the resettlement of unaccompanied children seeking asylum across the UK, including information on funding arrangements.

Recommendations

The Children and Young People Board is asked to;

1. Note the recent and upcoming activity in this area.
2. Feedback any issues or local learning that they would like us to share as part our ongoing dialogue with government.

Action

Officers to take action as directed by members.

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Unaccompanied Asylum Children

Arrivals from Europe

1. The Government has confirmed that more than 750 children have come to the UK from the Calais camp since 10 October. While the majority of these children were reunited with family under the Dublin Treaty, approximately 200 children were placed in local authority care under the “Dubs Amendment” via the National Transfer Scheme (NTS).
2. The children’s eligibility for transfer was clarified by Home Office officials in Calais, and social workers were seconded from English local authorities to assess the children in France prior to arrival in the UK. However, the clearance of the Calais camp led to local authorities being involved in the development of a significantly more rapid process than had been planned for during the development of the NTS. The level of local, regional and national leadership shown in building capacity for this group of children at pace and at scale should not be underestimated.
3. The government has now confirmed that a much smaller number of eligible children will be transferred from Greece under the Dubs Amendment in the coming weeks, alongside ongoing family reunions under the Dublin Treaty.
4. Any placements that had been made available by local authorities for Calais transfers but have yet to be taken up will be used for this new cohort, or for other unaccompanied children resettled via the NTS.
5. Home Office officials have confirmed that use of the NTS to support those councils which continue to care for disproportionate numbers of unaccompanied children will be a priority in the coming weeks. There were over 3,000 asylum applications from UASC in the year as of [September 2016](#), a 15% rise from the previous year¹. At [31 March 2016](#), unaccompanied children represented 6 per cent of the looked after children population².

Funding

6. Local authorities are currently receiving enhanced rates for unaccompanied children arriving after 1 July 2016: £114 a day for under 16 year olds, £91 a day for 16-17 year olds; and £200 per week for those leaving care.
7. Although the LGA is continuing to press for full funding, we have seen some important concessions from Government in response to sustained and strong lobbying:

- 7.1. It has been confirmed in Parliament that there is no intention to reduce the current daily rate for unaccompanied children;

¹ Immigration Statistics: July to September 2016, Home Office

² Children looked after in England year ending 31 March 2016, DfE

- 7.2. There will be a funding review in spring 2017, alongside publication of a new government strategy;
 - 7.3. Local authorities may also be able to use the £100m Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) to support initiatives for these children, such as foster care recruitment campaigns, training for social workers or specialist counselling. Interested authorities can contact their Regional Strategic Migration Partnership or migrationfund@communities.gsi.gov.uk for more information.
 - 7.4. English local authorities undertaking assessments for family reunification of children coming from Calais under the Dublin Treaty will automatically receive a payment via the CMF. Payments will be £300 for each relevant assessment, and these will be paid once all relevant assessments are concluded through a single s31 grant payment, based on Home Office data. This payment is expected around the end of January 2017. These payments relate to the family assessment, associated report writing and liaison with Home Office on the outcome of the assessment.
 - 7.5. Grant instructions have now been amended so that local authorities can claim funding for children coming into care as a result of family reunification arrangements breaking down;
 - 7.6. Local authorities can now claim funding for all care leavers transferred via the NTS who were supported as unaccompanied children, removing the requirement to bear the costs for the first 25 in each area;
 - 7.7. Changes are being implemented under the Immigration Act which allow care leavers with status to apply for student loans, subject to certain conditions, reducing the costs to local authorities if those young people go on to further education.
 - 7.8. A £3 million Child Trafficking Protection Fund has also been announced, which aims to enable the delivery of new and innovative projects or initiatives to provide positive outcomes for potentially trafficked children.
8. It is important to note that current UASC funding rates were set on the basis of analysis by the Home Office of grant claims from local authorities for the costs incurred in caring for unaccompanied children. We are aware that many local authorities do not currently claim for all costs incurred, and it is therefore important that full costs are included in any grant claims to ensure that the forthcoming review of funding is based on accurate information on the support provided for this cohort of children.

9. LGA asylum and migration lead members met the Immigration Minister on 22 November to raise ongoing concerns around funding, lack of fostering capacity and the resulting upward pressure on independent foster agency prices. They also fed back concerns about new arrivals who may not be looked after long enough to qualify for leaving care support, and the need to prevent children going missing.

Next steps

10. A meeting is planned in mid-January for key stakeholders including the LGA, ADCS, Regional Strategic Migration Partnerships and a range of government departments to share key learning from the Calais operation.
11. We would welcome any additional feedback from CYP Board members to inform our ongoing discussions with government. We have been in daily contact with local government colleagues throughout this process, and are aware of the remarkable levels of support that councils have provided to these vulnerable children, often at very short notice. We are also aware of the significant pressures that this effort has caused locally, both logistically and financially.
12. LGA policy in this area is led by the LGA Asylum, Refugee and Migration Task Group, made up of regional member and RSMP representation covering all of the English regions, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. The Task Group, chaired by Cllr David Simmonds, will report to the Children and Young People Board and the Community Wellbeing Boards. The Task Group is seeking a meeting with the Immigration Minister to discuss the need for clearer links across all the programmes that resettle asylum seekers and refugees that minimise the pressures on local authorities, local communities and vulnerable individuals. Updated information will continue to be placed on the LGA website at www.local.gov.uk/refugees.

Financial implications

13. There are no specific additional financial implications for the LGA arising from this report.

Implications for Wales

14. While the Dublin Treaty covers both England and Wales, the Immigration Act 2016 that allows for the transfer of legal responsibility of children applies in England only. The Welsh LGA continues to work with Welsh local authorities and the Home Office on how the NTS and separate child care and protection legislation can support this cohort in Wales.

LGA Task Group: The Future of Children's Social Care Improvement - Terms of Reference

Purpose

For information.

Summary

This paper updates members on the terms of reference for the Board's task group on the future of children's social care improvement.

Recommendation

Members of the Children & Young People Board are asked to note the task group terms of reference.

Action

Officers to take action as directed by members.

Contact Officer: Ian Dean
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LGA Task Group: The Future of Children's Social Care Improvement - Terms of Reference

Overview

1. This task group was established by the LGA Children and Young People Board to develop a coherent, evidence-based narrative of the current state of children's social care improvement support in England, and a clear vision for how this support should be designed and delivered in future.

Core activity

2. In order to undertake this task, the group will:
 - 2.1. Review the range of children's social care improvement activity currently taking place across local and central government.
 - 2.1.1. This strand will include analysis of the DfE's Innovation Programme and Partners in Practice initiatives, intervention support provided to areas judged inadequate by Ofsted (including the development of new delivery models such as children's trusts), proposed legislative changes such as the power to innovate and the introduction of greater flexibility in the design of multi-agency safeguarding partnerships, and sector-led improvement programmes led by the LGA and ADCS.
 - 2.2. Collate and analyse existing evidence on the impact and effectiveness of this activity.
 - 2.2.1. This strand will include recent studies from the National Audit Office (*Children in need of help and protection*) and the Rees Centre (*Evaluation of the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme*), published LGA research from iMPower (*A brave new world: is inspection improving children's services?*) and the Isos Partnership (*Action research into the enablers of improvement in children's services*), and ongoing LGA research from the Early Intervention Foundation (*Improving the effectiveness of the child protection system*) and the Isos Partnership (*Improvement in children's service: models of improvement support*).
 - 2.3. Commission and oversee new research to fill any identified gaps in this evidence base.

Membership and ways of working

3. The task group will consist of:
 - 3.1. Cllr Dick Madden (Essex, Conservative) - Chairman
 - 3.2. Cllr Anntoinette Bramble (Hackney, Labour)
 - 3.3. Cllr Jon Hubbard (Wiltshire, Liberal Democrat)
 - 3.4. Cllr Gillian Ford (Havering, Independent)
 - 3.5. Ian Dean, Clive Harris and Louise Smith (LGA)
4. The group will meet six times until September 2017, with the first meeting scheduled for 13 January 2017.
5. The task group is accountable to the full LGA Children and Young People Board. The Task Group Chair will provide regular updates at future CYP Board meetings, and a final report will be presented to the Board in September 2017.

Note of last Children & Young People Board meeting

Title:	Children & Young People Board
Date:	Thursday 3 November 2016
Venue:	Manchester Central Convention Complex, Windmill St, Manchester M2 3GX

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>The Chair, Cllr Richard Watts, welcomed the members to the meeting and thanked the Rt Hon Edward Timpson MP, Minister of State for Vulnerable Children and Families for attending. No declarations of interest were made.</p>	
2	<p>A discussion with the Rt Hon Edward Timpson MP (Minister of State for Vulnerable Children and Families, Department of Education)</p> <p>The Chair facilitated questions for Minister Timpson from the floor. Questions from members focused on corporate parenting, unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASCs), home educated children and young carers, 'inadequate' Ofsted ratings and the introduction of new school structures, including academies and grammar schools.</p> <p>The Minister answered these questions by referring to the intentions of the Children and Social Work Bill, the need to find better ways to accommodate UASCs, the need to intervene earlier in failing children's services, developing corporate parenting abilities, the recent National Audit Office report.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p>The Board noted the update from the Minister and thanked him for his attendance.</p> <p>Action</p> <p>Officers to progress work in line with direction from members.</p>	

3 The future of children's services improvement

The Chair introduced the item by addressing the recent National Audit Office (NAO) report which had been unfavourable to devolving further responsibilities around children's services. He explained that the newly proposed task and finish group would seek to address this argument in an attempt to make the case for more involvement of local government in children's services.

Cllr Dick Madden explained that the task and finish group was an opportunity to engage central government, especially concerning the Children and social work Bill.

Decision

The Board;

1. **Noted** the current context in which children's services are delivered.
2. **Directed** officers to continue establishing the task and finish group.

Action

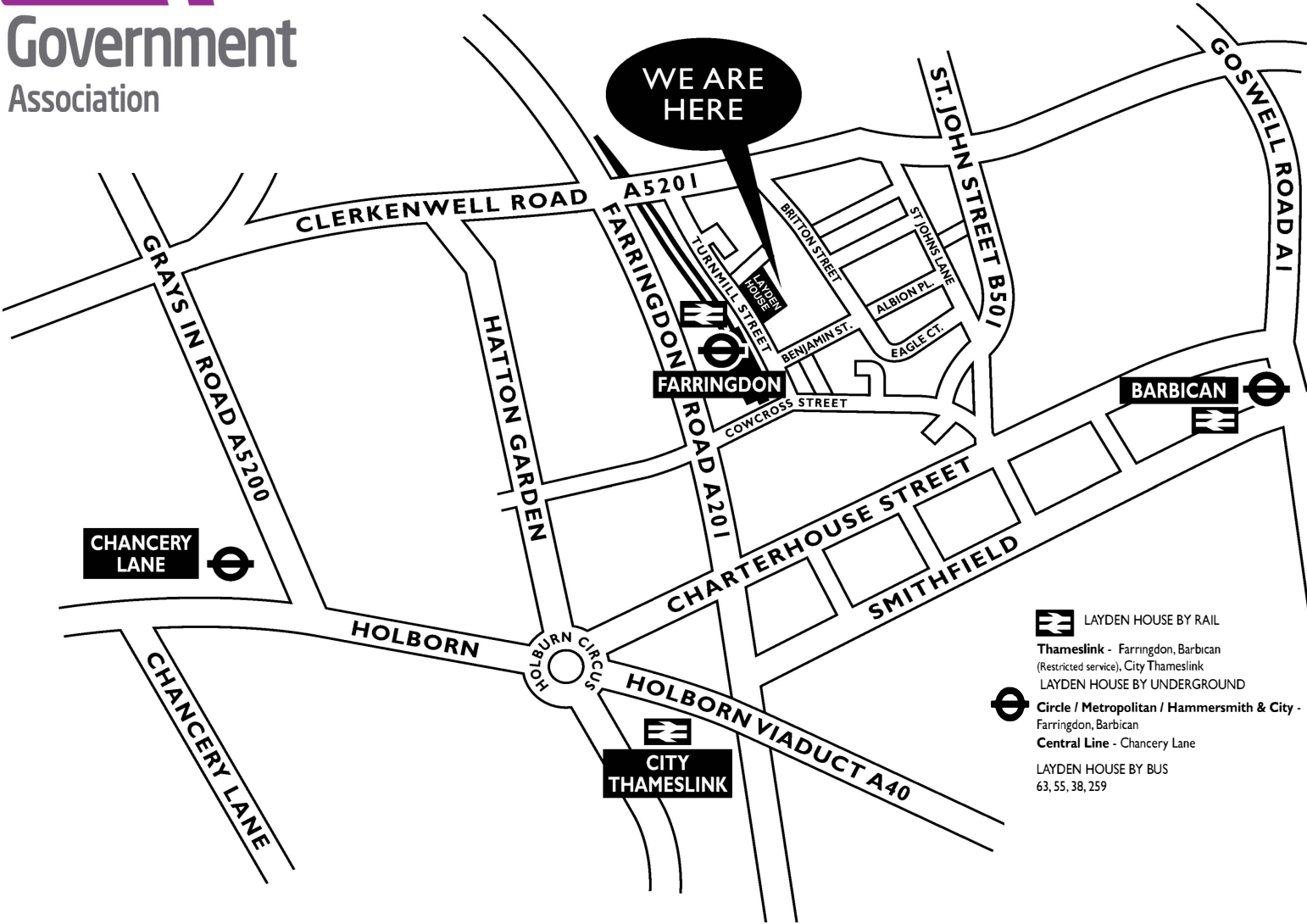
Officers to continue with the **establishment** of the task and finish group, in line with future direction from members.


4 Note of the Previous Meeting

The Board **agreed** the minutes of the previous meeting.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Richard Watts	Islington Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Roy Perry	Hampshire County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Gillian Ford	Havering London Borough Council
	Cllr Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
Members	Cllr Gareth Barnard	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
	Cllr Dick Madden	Essex County Council
	Cllr Bob Cook	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
	Cllr Anne Burns	Cumbria County Council
	Cllr Anntoinette Bramble	Hackney London Borough Council
	Cllr David Mellen	Nottingham City Council
	Cllr Roz Gladden	Liverpool City Council
Apologies	Cllr Paul Cullen	Richmondshire District Council
	Cllr Ian Hudspeth	Oxfordshire County Council
	Cllr Janet Walton	Borough of Poole
	Cllr John Kent	Thurrock Council
	Dave Hill	ADCS



 LAYDEN HOUSE BY RAIL
 Thameslink - Farringdon, Barbican (Restricted service), City Thameslink
 LAYDEN HOUSE BY UNDERGROUND
 Circle / Metropolitan / Hammersmith & City - Farringdon, Barbican
 Central Line - Chancery Lane
 LAYDEN HOUSE BY BUS
 63, 55, 38, 259

Layden House

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**The Local Government Association will be based at Layden House whilst refurbishment takes place at their offices in Smith Square.*

Public Transport

Layden House is served well by public transport. The nearest mainline station is **Farringdon** (Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan Lines. It also has Overground lines)

Bus routes - Farringdon Station

- 63 - Kings Cross - Crystal Palace Parade (Stop A/B)
- 55 - Oxford Circus -High Road Leyton (Stop E/K)
- 243 - Redvers Road - Waterloo Bridge (Stop E/K)

Cycling Facilities

The nearest Santander Cycle Hire racks are on Theobold's Road.
 For more information please go to www.tfl.gov.uk

Car Parks

- Smithfield Car Park - EC1A 9DY
- NCP Car Park London Saffron Hill - EC1N 8XA