Local Government Association

Improvement and Innovation Board

Agenda

Tuesday, 20 January 2015
11.00 am

Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

To: Members of the Improvement and Innovation Board
cc: Named officers for briefing purposes

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There will be a meeting of the Improvement & Innovation Board at **11.00 am on Tuesday, 20 January 2015** Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

A sandwich lunch will be available at 1.00pm

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 from 10.00 -11.00am. 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.

Labour: Aicha Less: 020 7664 3263   email: aicha.less@local.gov.uk
Conservative: Luke Taylor: 020 7664 3264   email: luke.taylor@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat: Group Office: 020 7664 3235   email: libdem@local.gov.uk
Independent: Group Office: 020 7664 3224   email: Vanessa.Chagas@local.gov.uk

Location:
A map showing the location of Local Government House is printed on the back cover.

LGA Contact:
Patrick McDermott
020 7664 3342 patrick.mcdermott@local.gov.uk

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The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgaiib

Improvement & Innovation Board – Membership 2014/2015

Councillor	Authority
Labour (7)	
Cllr Judi Billing (Deputy Chair)	North Hertfordshire District Council
Cllr Claudia Webbe	Islington Council
Cllr Phil Davies	Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Darren Cooper	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Bob Price	Oxford City Council
Cllr Kate Hollern	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Cllr Imran Hussain	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Sean Fielding	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Sue Whitaker	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Sue Woodward	Staffordshire County Council
Conservative (7)	
Cllr Peter Fleming (Chairman)	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Roy Perry	Hampshire County Council
Cllr Teresa O'Neill	Bexley Council
Cllr Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Glen Miller	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Cllr Tony Jackson	East Herts Council
Substitutes	
Cllr David Finch	Essex County Council
Cllr Dominic Gilham	Hillingdon London Borough Council
Cllr Janet Blake	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
Liberal Democrat (2)	
Cllr Jill Shortland OBE (Vice-Chair)	Somerset County Council
Cllr Theresa Higgins	Essex County Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Paul Tilsley CBE	Birmingham City Council
Independent (2)	
Cllr Shirley Flint (Deputy Chair)	North Kesteven District Council
Cllr John Blackie	North Yorkshire County Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Adrian Naylor	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Cllr Michael Haines	Teignbridge District Council
Cllr Laura Conway	North Kesteven District Council

Improvement & Innovation Board

Attendance 2014-2015

Councillors	13.10.14					
Labour Group						
Judi Billing	Yes					
Claudia Webbe	Yes					
Phil Davies	No					
Darren Cooper	Yes					
Bob Price	Yes					
Kate Hollern	No					
Imran Hussain	No					
Conservative Group						
Peter Fleming	Yes					
Keith Glazier	Yes					
Roy Perry	Yes					
Teresa O'Neill	Yes					
Richard Stay	Yes					
Glen Miller	No					
Tony Jackson	Yes					
Lib Dem Group						
Jill Shortland OBE	Yes					
Theresa Higgins	Yes					
Independent						
Shirley Flint	Yes					
John Blackie	Yes					
Substitutes						
Barry Wood	Yes					
Adrian Naylor	Yes					
Susan Woodward	Yes					
Sue Whitaker	Yes					
Observers						
Philip Sellwood	Yes					
Richard Priestman	Yes					
Lead Peers						
Paul Bettison	Yes					

Agenda

Improvement & Innovation Board

Tuesday 20 January 2015

11.00 am

Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 12 May 2015, 11.00 am, Smith Square 3&4, Ground Floor, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

The Planning Advisory Service

Purpose

For information and discussion.

Summary

Cllr Mike Jones, Board Member, Alice Lester, Programme Manager and Richard Crawley, Programme Manager will present an update on the work of the Planning Advisory Service (PAS).

The presentation is attached for reference.

Recommendation

That the Improvement and Innovation Board note the presentation and comment on it.

Action

Officers to proceed with a steer from members.

Contact officer:	Alice Lester
Position:	Programme Manager, PAS
Phone no:	020 7664 3168
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Improvement and Innovation Board
PAS Update

Councillor Mike Jones

Alice Lester, Richard Crawley

Date: 20 January 2015

www.pas.gov.uk

Contents

1. What is PAS?

2. What do we do?

3. An example of our work

4. Looking forward

Agenda Item 2

What is Planning Advisory Service for?

"The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) is part of the Local Government Association. The purpose of PAS is to **support local planning authorities to provide effective and efficient planning services**, to **drive improvement** in those services and to **respond to** and deliver **changes** in the planning system"

(Grant offer letter for 2014-15)

Key Facts

- Started in 2004
- Part of the LGA
- Fully funded by DCLG (to March 2016)
- Sector led – governance board
- 11 staff, supplier framework, peer community
- Always subsidised, mostly without charge
- £2m budget this year (and next)
- Councils (not neighbourhoods, parishes, LEPs, private sector)

As a funded programme we …

- Understand how much things cost
- Evaluate each piece of work
  – including cost and 'excellence'
- Ask for a "state of the nation" each year

PAS 2013/14 impact assessment results

1,890 responded to our surveys and the headline results are that PAS:

- **are worth using**: 97% rated our service a good use of their time

- **remain relevant**: 88% think we are and are getting even more so

- **help people improve**: 92% said we improved their ability to do their work

- **have depth in the sector**: 75% shared information they received from us

- **provide value for money**: 88% felt our service was value for money

What do we do ?

- Work programme agreed each year by our board
- 29 separate activities on it
- Gathered into four themes
  - plans = 50%
  - leadership = 12%
  - collaboration = 12%
  - performance = 25%

Plans in place

Essentials
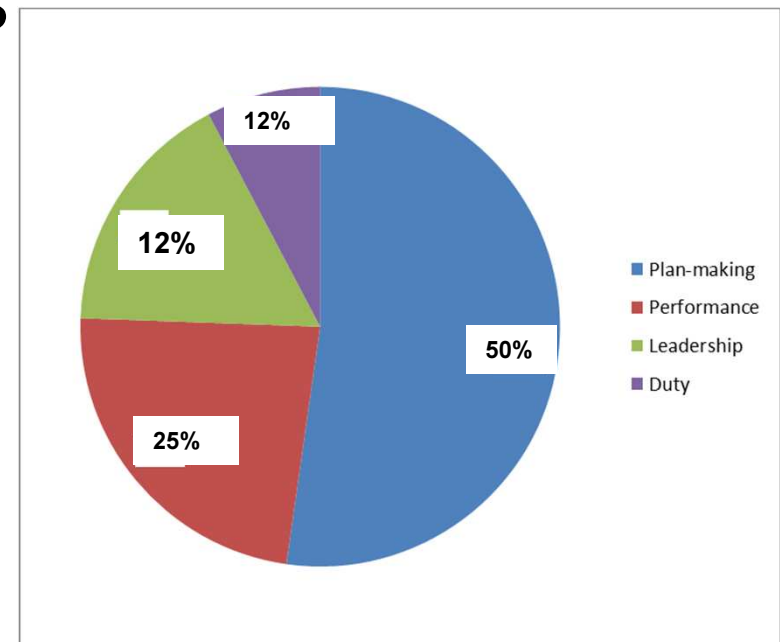
Duty to Cooperate

Strategic planning

Pre-app, PPAs, charging

Leadership

CIL

Delivery

Fracking, housing, flooding

Benefits of growth

Evidence

Viability

Viability Training

Sustainability Appraisal

Local plans

Project mgmt

Successful plan-making

Good decisions

Peer challenges

Objectively assessed needs

Community engagement

Improvement

Councillor involvement

Neighbourhood plans

Designation
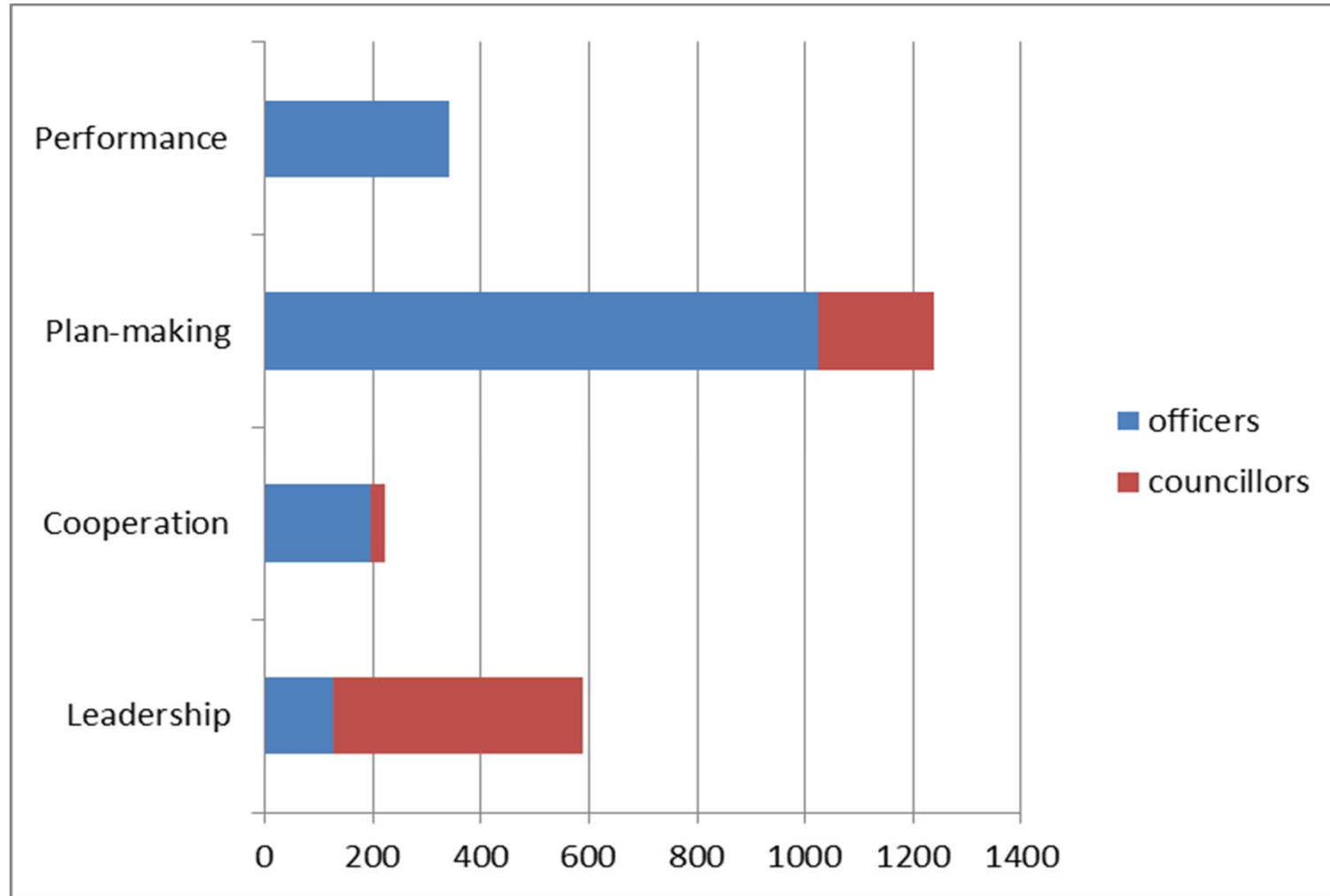
Improvement cohorts

Benchmark

Improvement Peer Challenge

Toolkits and materials

Planning Quality Framework

We worked with (at least) 2,539 people in 2013-14

What do we do ?

- Make things
  - toolkits, 'how to' guides, briefings eg objectively assessed housing needs, 'positive planning', Local Development Orders
  - often through pilots / working parties
- Deliver things
  - consultancy, cohorts, events
- Offer to everyone
  - online
  - forum
  - share best practice

For example: Planning Quality Framework

- What is it ? A new product / service that
  - compares planning application databases (and benchmark performance)
  - surveys customers (staff, ward members and amenity groups)
  - includes new templates for capturing "quality"
- Allows councils to understand performance in a holistic way so they can
  - unpick, understand, improve
 - be accountable, demonstrate quality

Planning Quality Framework

- 40 councils helped us to pilot it
  - launching in January 2015
  - our goal is to get the majority of councils using it
- Once set-up, the process is very easy to run and keep up to date
  - not a snapshot, tracks things over time
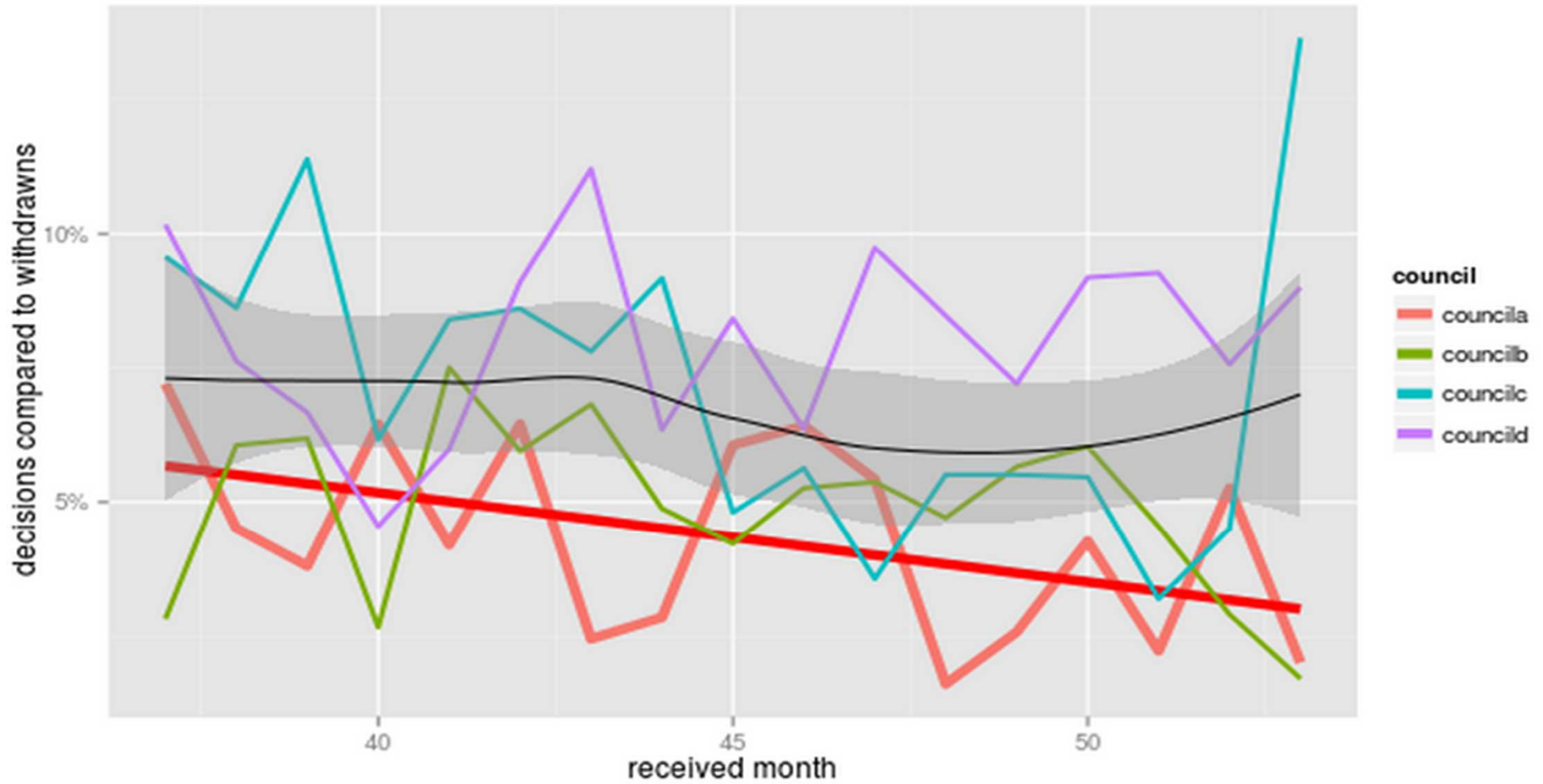- No targets, but use of peer groups can easily show where improvement is possible

Planning Quality Framework

- Some example visuals to illustrate the information that the PQF provides to local authorities to use for improvement

- We will explain...........

Approvals over time
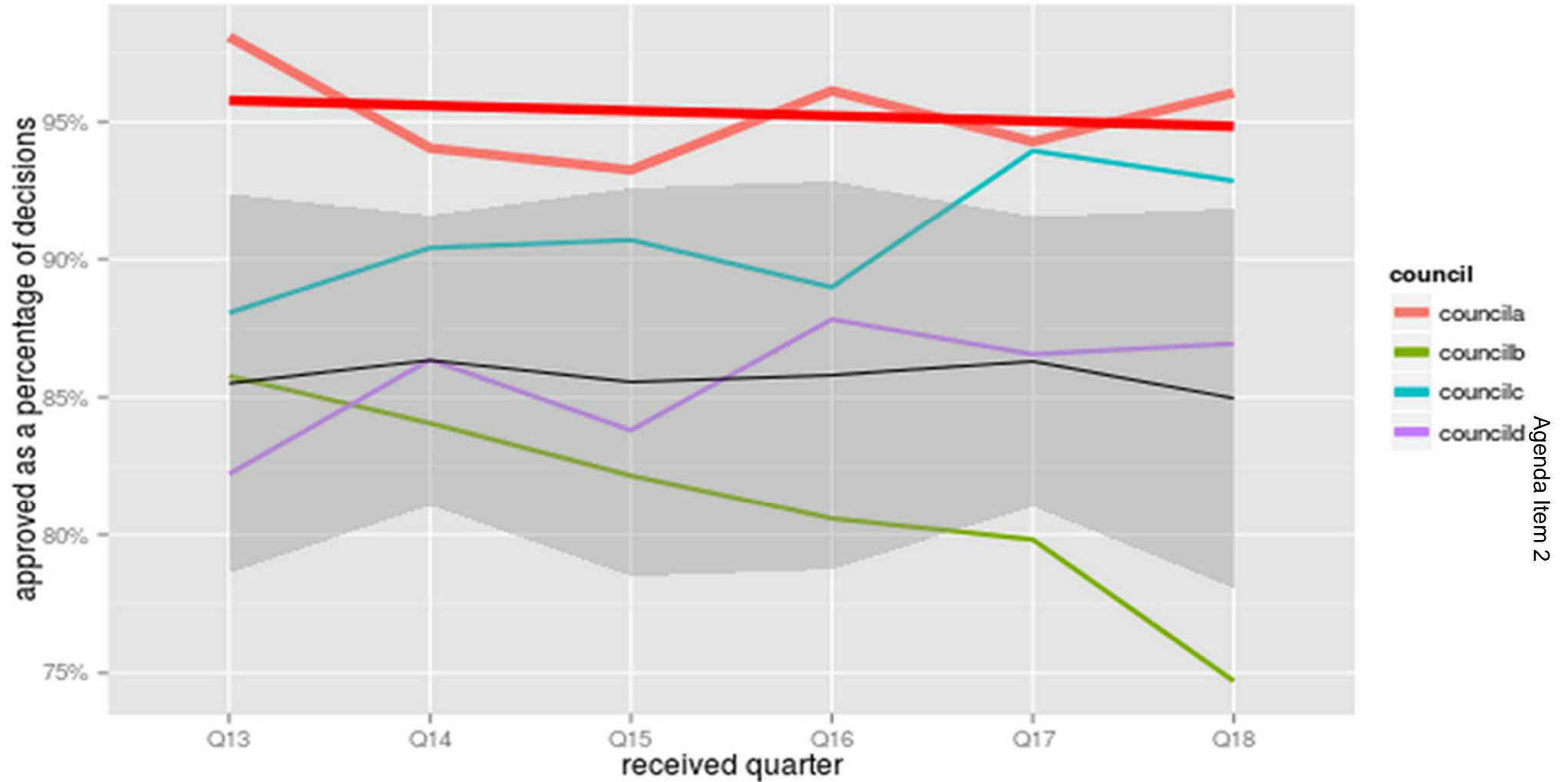
Waste over time

Workload over time
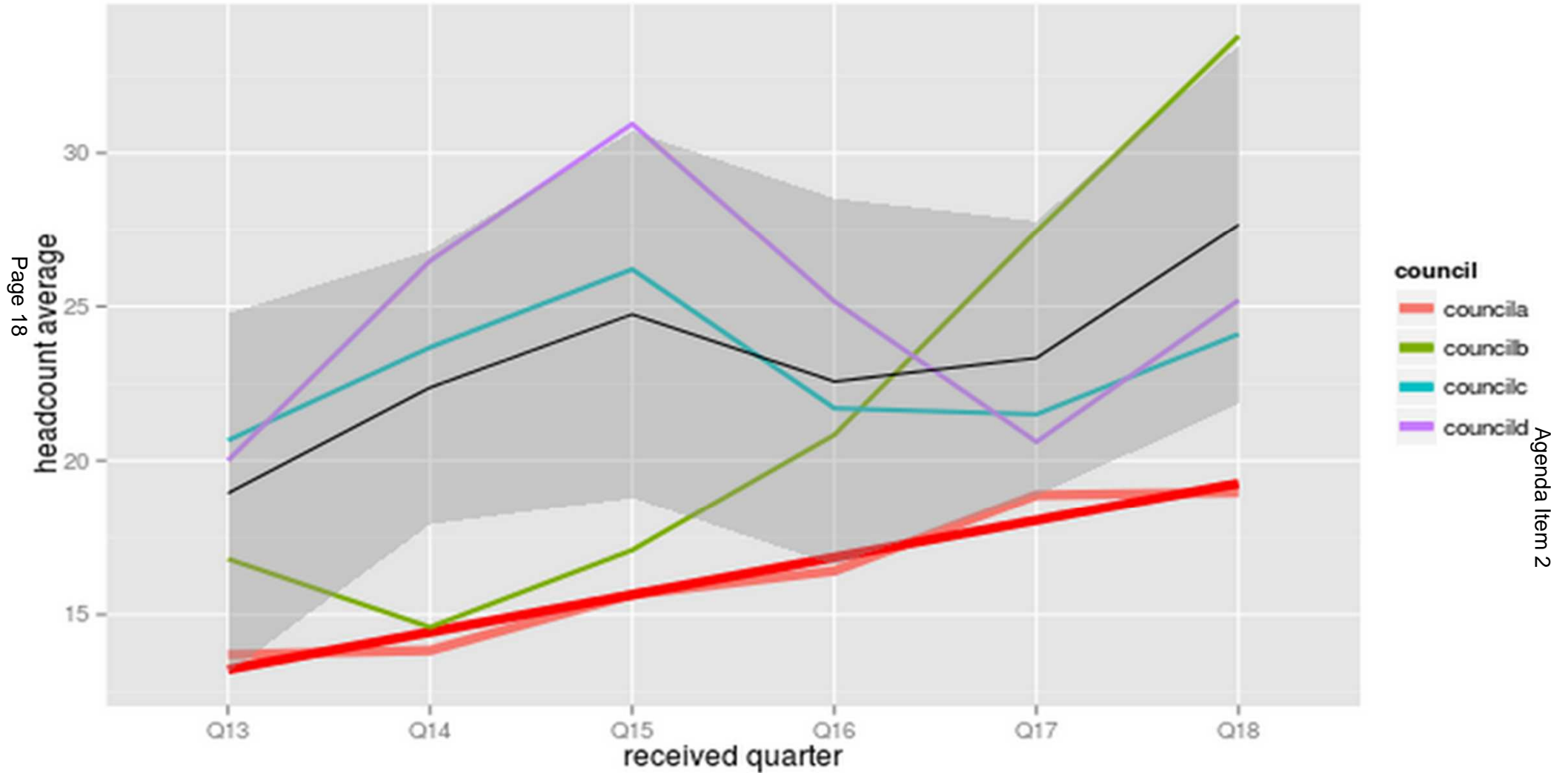
New ways of looking at performance

4.4 Your data

4.4 Their data
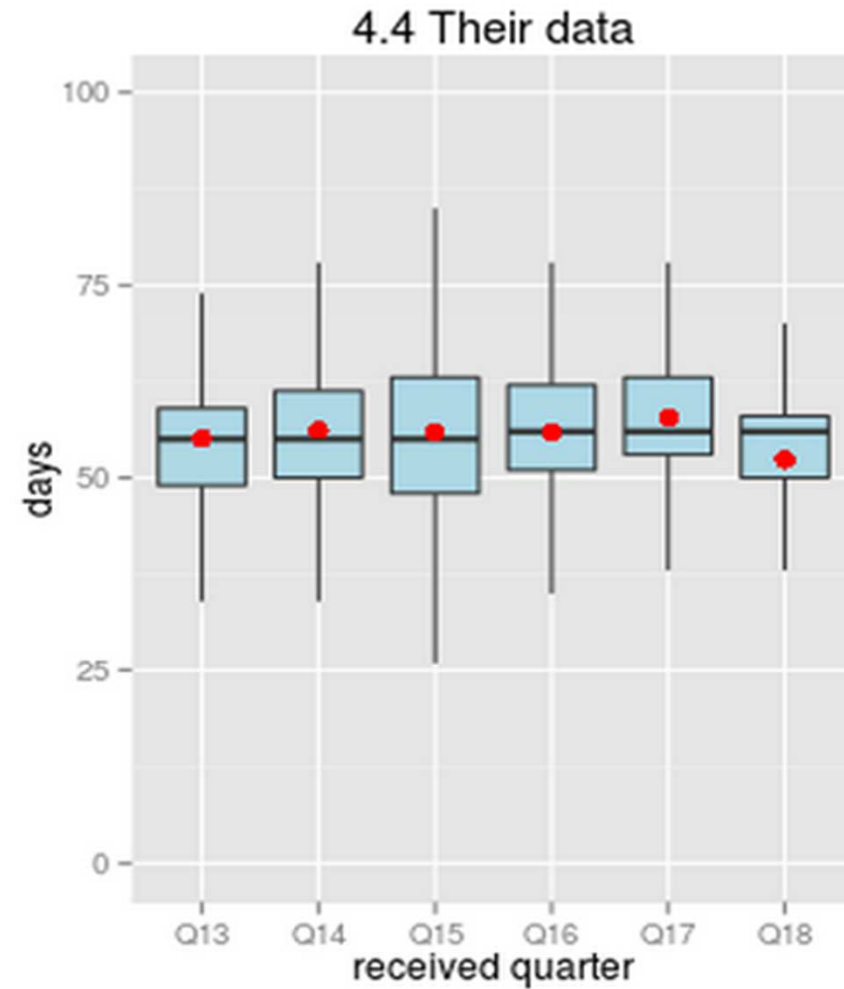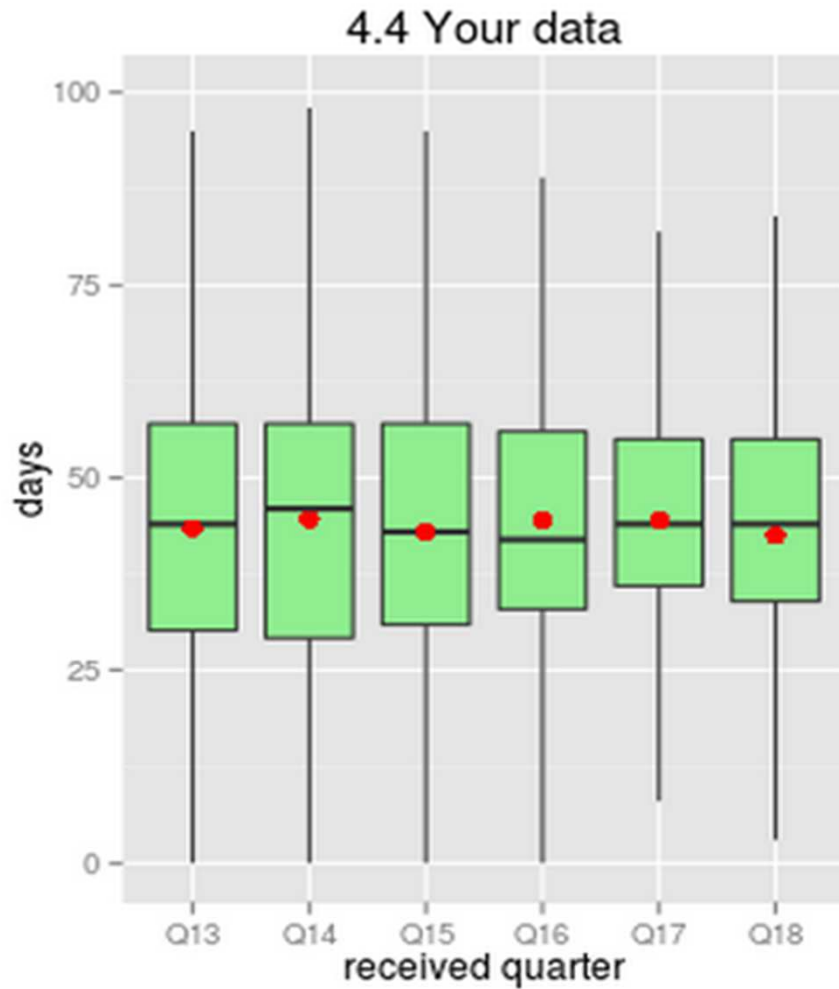
Still work to do getting quality data
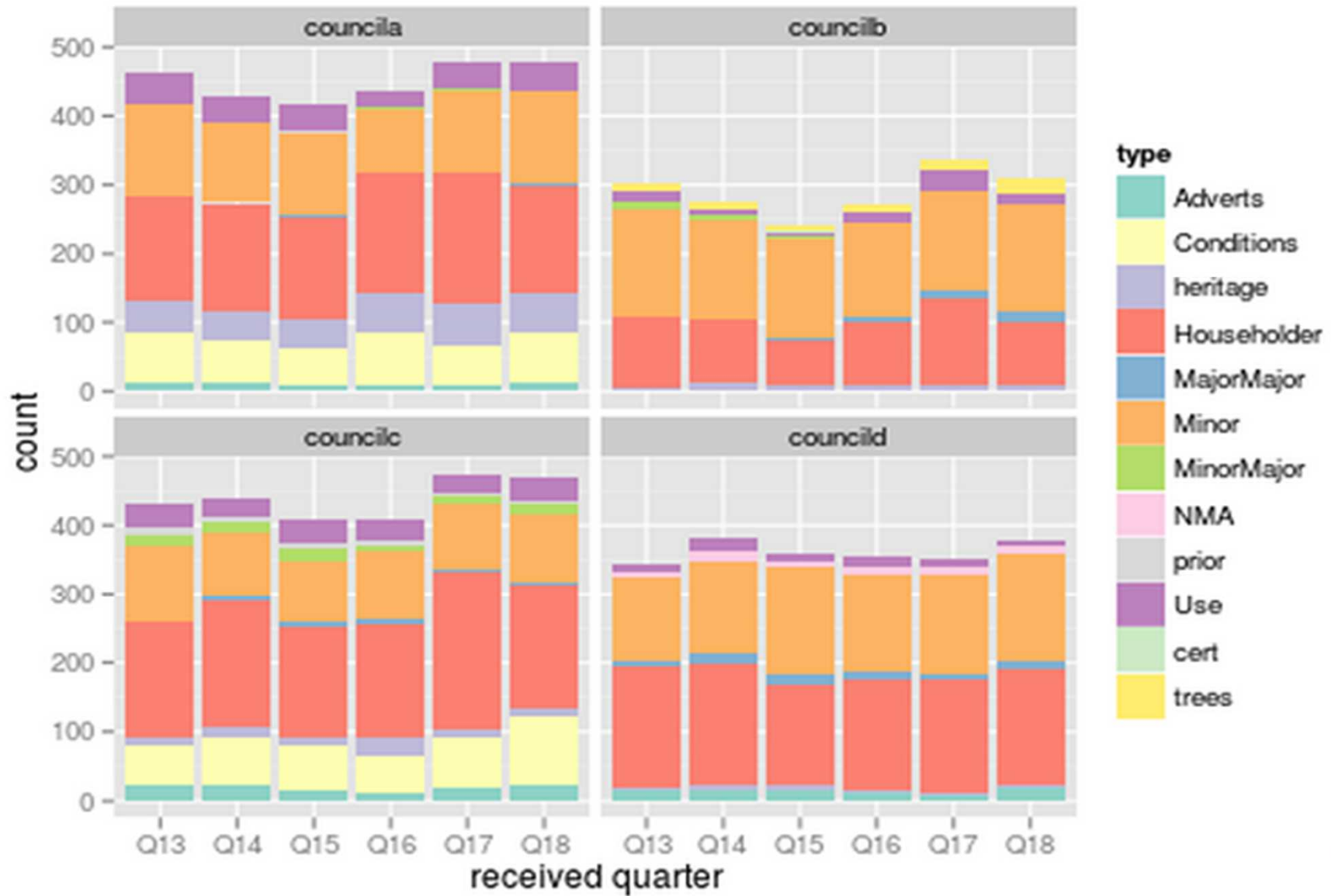
Planning Quality Framework

- An excellent example of improvement and innovation
  - but not all in one go – years, reputation, confidence
- Councils able to use evidence to improve at almost no cost = better leadership = better outcomes
- It will continue to improve with feedback
- At the moment it is based on the needs of single councils but also great value in using the data in aggregate - what *really* happens in planning departments

Agenda Item 2

Looking forward

- Issues
  - resources
  - (Compulsory) Plan making (and strategic planning)
  - de-regulation (Autumn Statement)
  - demonstrating value of planning

LGA Business Plan 2015/16

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report invites members' comments on the development of the LGA Business Plan for 2015/16.

Recommendation

The Improvement and Innovation Board are invited to comment on and approve the contribution to the LGA Business Plan 2015/16 on sector-led support, improvement and innovation, attached at **Appendix A**.

Action

Officers to develop the business plan as necessary in the light of members' comments.

Contact officer:	Dennis Skinner
Position:	Head of Leadership and Productivity
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Email:	Dennis.Skinner@local.gov.uk

Improvement and Innovation Board

20 January 2015

LGA Business Plan 2015/16

Background

1. The LGA's Business Plan for 2014/15 sets out priorities for the organisation, which are based on those issues that matter most to our membership. For 2014/15 the three top priorities for local government are:

   1.1 **funding for local government** – reform of the finance system so councils have confidence their financing is sustainable and fair, opportunities to raise more funds locally, and greater ability to promote collective working across local public services

   1.2 **economic growth, jobs and prosperity** – councils are recognised as central to revitalising local economies

   1.3 **public service reform** – independent councils are at the centre, and seen to be at the centre, of public service reform, delivering more effective services for local people and holding other providers to account.

   A copy of the Business Plan is accessible here
   http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/12129/L14-99+LGA+business+plan+2014-15_A5_v13/4391618f-454e-406c-ba8c-6d5dadf5da56.

2. At the LGA Leadership Board in October 2014, members considered the LGA's direction of travel for 2015/16 and agreed that in addition to the current three top level priorities, the LGA should now also signal that it will be focusing on:

   2.1 devolution - given developments following the Scottish referendum

   2.2 sector-led support, improvement and innovation (the direct support we provide to councils) in view of some of the significant reputational and performance issues for councils that have emerged in recent months (rather than this being presented as part of our underlying core offer).

3. Members also agreed the outline budget framework for next year, in which resources are broadly allocated as for 2014/15.

4. The Improvement and Innovation Board is therefore invited to agree an appropriate contribution to the Business Plan for 2015/16. A draft is attached at **Appendix A**. This has been drafted in the light of the priorities agreed by the Board at the last meeting and has been structured around the Board's five priority themes. In addition, because this activity is funded through Revenue Support Grant (RSG) top slice, it closely mirrors relevant parts of the top slice submission for 2015/16 and includes an indication of the scale of activities to be provided.

5. Members will be aware that on 17 December 2014, Eric Pickles MP announced, as part of the provisional local government finance settlement that DCLG intend to provide a

grant of £23.4 million to the IDeA to deliver effective support to councils. The SoS also announced that they intend to explore how the budget given for improvement services can be opened up to competition. The IDeA Board and LGA's Leadership Board will be considering the implications of this announcement at their meetings this month.

Next steps

6. An outline LGA Business Plan for 2015/16 is currently being prepared for final approval by the Leadership Board and LGA Executive in March 2015.

Financial Implications

7. The level of top slice funding for 2015/16 represents a reduction of £2.5million from 2014/15 but is in line with expectations. The budget strategy adopted at the start of 2014/15 assumed a reduction of this quantum for 2015/16.

<u>Draft</u> LGA Business Plan 15/16

Sector-led support, improvement and innovation – our core services

We will support councils with improving performance, effectiveness and efficiency.

Our approach is based on four key principles:

- councils are responsible for their own performance

- councils are primarily accountable to their local communities

- stronger local accountability and increased transparency drive improvement

- councils have collective responsibility for the performance of local government as a whole.

Our role is to provide and coordinate the necessary tools and support to help councils improve their performance, efficiency and effectiveness. We also maintain an overview of local government's performance offering direct support for councils at risk, so that the number of councils the Government has to intervene with is kept to a minimum.

Councils are making good use of the support we offer and a sector-led approach is proving effective in driving improvement, as well as identifying potential performance challenges and opportunities.

Strong political leadership: effective political leadership is at the heart of local democracy and an essential pre-condition for continuous improvement. In 2015/16 we will:

- provide development for at least 500 councillors with leadership roles in their councils – including those in opposition – through our newly refreshed suite of leadership programmes

- support at least 50 ambitious and talented councillors with the potential to progress in their political careers through our **Next Generation** programme

- support at least 50 leaders and chief executives through our **Leading Edge** programme giving them the opportunity to work together on developing their leadership roles and exploring new models of delivery in the light of the financial challenges facing the public sector

- help councils, political groups and the national parties attract new talent to get involved in civic life through our '**Be a Councillor**' programme

- provide member peer support for councils where there has been a change of political control and provide new e-learning opportunities for all councillors particularly in relation to induction and community leadership skills

- recruit at least 100 high calibre graduates in to local government, working with councils to secure interesting and challenging placements, as part of a two year **National Graduate Development Programme**, building links with other public sector graduate programmes.

Peer challenge and support: challenge and support from one's peers lies at the heart of the sector's approach to improvement. In 2015/16 we will:

- deliver at least 100 **peer challenges** involving councillor and senior officer peers from: the sector, other organisations including the voluntary and business sectors, and from government departments, spending between three and five days in an authority challenging what the authority is doing, identifying good practice and areas for improvement

- provide **direct support** to at least 50 councils and groups of councils, tailored to their particular challenges, but especially councils with the most severe performance challenges and where support would be helpful to resolve issues between the political and managerial leadership

- develop our programme associated with **sharing best practice** so that councils who are finding new and effective ways of working to secure outcomes for their communities at significantly less cost share and support others to do likewise

- provide direct support to at least 20 councils, through our partnership with the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS), in developing **scrutiny skills and expertise**, holding local government and other parts of the public sector to account as democratically elected local representatives

- through our partnership with Local Partnerships, provide direct support to councils to help them make savings, for example through Private Finance Initiative contracts, and disseminate best practice and develop new programmes in key areas of council activity.

Efficiency and productivity: helping councils to continue to be the most efficient part of the public sector. In 2015/16 we will:

- deliver a programme of projects to help councils deliver savings and improve productivity, including work on **commercialisation, commissioning, digitisation and service integration in health and social care**. This will include providing practical support to at least 60 councils helping them realise efficiency savings through our productivity expert programme

- provide bespoke political and officer support for at least 25 councils to help them address issues around **financial sustainability**, integrated budgets, and managing the risk of new delivery models

- provide a matchmaking service for councils that wish to share **services/management teams** and promote good practice in shared services through our web-based interactive shared services map

- provide practical guidance and support to help councils better identify the causes and triggers of demand and to use this insight to **better manage demand** across key services in the future

- develop more opportunities for councils to enter collaborative improvement arrangements – including the establishment of an independent body to oversee national **procurement of external audit.**

Open data and transparency: access to comparable information is a key driver for improvement and productivity, and strengthens local accountability, engagement and service transformation. In 2015/16 we will:

- continue to provide free access to authorities, and also to the public, to transparent and **comparable information** through LG Inform. This online data benchmarking service enables the comparison and analysis of performance, financial and contextual information about authority areas to support the monitoring and scrutiny of performance, and inform decision-making, increasing authorities' accountability to local voters and taxpayers. LG Inform Plus will provide authorities with access to small area data reports and tools, and give support and guidance to authorities to drive improvements

- develop a **transparency strategy** for the sector, helping councils to be open and make the best use of data and data services so that they continue to be the most transparent and efficient part of the public sector. The strategy will build on the good practice developed in local authorities and the support we give to councils to make data comparable and reusable. Being open and making better use of data will drive local engagement and support effective public services transformation and the digitisation of services.

Innovation: supporting councils that are taking risks and are trying out innovative ways of dealing with the challenges they face. In 2015/16 we will:

- build on the lessons from the LGA/NESTA Creative Councils programme and continue to work with councils and national innovation partners to support councils with developing, implementing and sharing innovative approaches to the medium - and long-term challenges facing local communities and services. Our particular focus will be to share lessons through the Innovation Zone at the LGA annual conference.

In addition to the direct support funded through Revenue Support Grant topslice, we will provide sector-led improvement programmes in specific service areas, for which additional funding is being provided by sponsor bodies, including:

- the Planning Advisory Service
- culture services in partnership with Arts Council England and Sport England
- the Department of Health funded Integrated Sector Led Improvement Programme for Health and Care covering: Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care (TEASC), adult safeguarding, support for Integration and Better Care Fund
- support to Health and Wellbeing Boards, implementation of the Care Act and the Winterbourne View Joint Improvement programme, delivered with partners such as the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services
- our Highways Maintenance Improvement and Efficiency programme.

Improvement and Innovation Board

20 January 2015

Sector-led Improvement: Taking Stock

Purpose

To note the consultation paper "Taking Stock – where next for sector led improvement" has been issued to councils and other interested parties.

Summary

The Board has previously decided to review, with the sector, the current approach to sector-led improvement in the light of the evaluation research findings and potential policy changes in the run up to the next General Election. At its last meeting, the Board commented on a draft consultation paper, which has been revised in the light of comments received from Board members and tested with councils through discussions with Principal Advisors and following a meeting with a group of Chief Executives.

Recommendation

That the Improvement and Innovation Board note the consultation is underway and to encourage councils to respond.

Actions

Officers to promote the consultation with the sector, analyse responses and report back to members on any implications for the current approach to sector-led improvement.

Contact officer:	Dennis Skinner
Position:	Head of Leadership and Productivity
Phone no:	020 7664 3017
Email:	Dennis.Skinner@local.gov.uk

Sector-led Improvement: Taking Stock

Background

1. The Board has previously agreed that it would be timely to review the current approach to sector-led improvement, in light of the findings from the evaluation research and in the run up to the next General Election. A refreshed and strengthened narrative about sector-led improvement and the effectiveness of the approach in supporting councils to continue to deliver efficiencies and improved outcomes will also be helpful in reinforcing the LGA's broader lobbying for further devolution, as expressed in our Rewiring and 100 Days campaign work.

2. Members agreed that it would be helpful to prepare a consultation document setting out where we have got to on sector-led improvement, the results of the evaluation, some of the current pressures and asking a range of consultation questions. This was considered at the last meeting in October 2014 and has been revised in the light of members' comments. The draft paper was also discussed with a representative group of Chief Executives designed to test how the paper would be received by the sector and to ensure it provides councils with the opportunity to raise the issues they want to. A copy of the final consultation paper, which has now been issued to the sector, is attached at **Appendix A**.

3. The consultation is being promoted widely with Leaders, Chief Executives, councils, professional bodies and national stakeholders. The timing fits well with our Leadership Board's decision that sector-led improvement should be one of the LGA's campaigns for 2014/15. This has led to greater prominence on the homepage of the LGA website, a revamp of the website content on sector-led improvement and the exploration of podcasts as a way of promoting the benefits of the LGA's support offer to councils.

4. Members are encouraged to promote the paper within their own authority and networks.

Next steps

5. The results of the consultation will be brought back to members, highlighting any particular messages that might require a potential adjustment or change to the current approach. The LGA could then publish a revised statement as a companion piece to the 100 Days work, reinforcing our arguments for further flexibility and devolution.

Financial Implications

6. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

Local Government Association

Taking Stock: Where next for sector-led improvement?

Introduction

1. Sector-led improvement is the approach to improvement put in place by councils and the Local Government Association (LGA) following the abolition of the previous national performance framework. It is based on the fundamental principles that councils are responsible for their own performance and are accountable for it locally (not nationally) and that the role of the LGA is to support the sector.

2. The success of the approach is demonstrated by the results of the independent evaluation of sector-led improvement which has been used to track the impact of the approach and LGA's contribution to it since 2011. Despite having to deliver savings amounting to almost 40 per cent, councils have continued to deliver high quality services which are accountable to local people and trust in councils from the public remains high. The support provided by the LGA has had an impact and has been very well received by councils. A summary of the key facts and some of the research findings are set out in Appendix A. However, external stakeholders and the public still remain to be convinced about the robustness of the sector led approach when there is no national system or obligation to be involved.

3. While inspection in many areas has ended, children's services are still subject to an inspection regime. Increasingly, many in the sector are now starting to question the credibility and objectivity of Ofsted given the increasing number of councils being rated in the lowest 2 categories and the consultation provides an opportunity to comment on the future of inspection in children's services.

4. The publication of the evaluation findings, coinciding with the run up to the next General Election, provides a good opportunity to "take stock" and consider, with councils and our key stakeholders, whether any changes to the approach are necessary. While it is unlikely that political parties will be highlighting issues around improvement in their forthcoming manifestos, it is the case that they are starting to develop their thinking and Appendix B summaries the position as we understand it at the moment.

5. All these factors provide an opportunity for the sector to review the suitability of the current approach to sector-led improvement. This consultation invites your views. Please take the time to respond to this consultation. Details on how to respond can be found at the end of this document.

Key principles and future challenges

6. The context within which councils operate continues to change. A key starting point must be to ask whether any of these changes challenge the fundamental basis and principles on which sector-led improvement rests. Government funding to councils for local services will have been cut by 40 per cent by May 2015. Councils have responded well, rising to the challenge. But there is more to come. At the same time public expectations remain high and demographic trends signal further pressures on already stretched services.

Sector-led improvement: key principles

At the heart of the approach to sector-led improvement are a set of core principles that have been developed with and re-affirmed by the sector. They are that:

a)   Councils are responsible for their own performance and improvement and for leading the delivery of improved outcomes for local people in their area.

b)   Councils are primarily accountability to local communities (not government or the inspectorates) and stronger accountability, through increased transparency, helps local people drive further improvement.

c)   Councils have a collective responsibility for the performance of the sector as a whole (evidenced by sharing best practice, offering member and officer peers, etc).

d)   The role of the LGA is to maintain an overview of the performance of the sector in order to identify potential performance challenges and opportunities – and to provide the tools and support to help councils take advantage of this approach.

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7. Place-based approach: The momentum towards a stronger place-based approach to local public service delivery continues unabated – from the early days of community strategies and local strategic partnerships through local area agreements, total place pilots to community budget pilots – getting stronger at each stage. A place–based approach to the integration of local public services and associated spending decisions is a key ask we and councils are making of central government. In recent months, there has also been a focus on the work of combined authorities and agreement by government to devolve some more government programmes to them.   How should sector-led improvement respond to the move towards a more place based approach?

8. Local Accountability: One of the earliest actions of the incoming coalition Government was to dismantle much of the old top-down performance management framework to which councils had been subject. It had lost any

ability it might have had to drive improvement and the cost of maintaining the complex architecture (estimated at £2 billion) was simply unsustainable.

9. Councils have always been at the forefront of the accountability and transparency agenda.   Almost all decisions are made in public.   Decisions are subject to scrutiny by the public, media and scrutiny committees. They consult and engage with the communities they serve far more than other parts of the public sector. But is there more that councils should be doing to strengthen local accountability or for councillors to exercise effective scrutiny?

10. All councils make available information about their performance on their websites and through other means. In the field of adult social care, LGA and ADASS have encouraged all councils to produce a "local account" on an annual basis setting out for the public an account of what has been achieved with the resources available.   More broadly, LG Inform, the LGA's online data comparison service, has now been made available to the public. LG Inform stores around 2,000 different measures, allowing officers, councillors and the public to assess council performance against a wide range of metrics and also compare performance with other councils and areas. But is there more that councils or the LGA should do to provide opportunities for the public and others to have comparative data about councils? For example should all councils be expected to carry out and make public a self-assessment each year?

Consultation questions:

1. Given the current and future challenges facing the sector are the principles on which sector-led improvement is based still the right ones?

Answer options:
Yes, they are still all relevant exactly as they are
Yes they are generally relevant, but I suggest some changes
No, none of them are relevant now
Don't know

2. If you answered no, or suggested changes, what would you suggest as alternatives/additions?

3. How should the increasing role that councils play in working with other parts of the public sector on a place-based approach be reflected in sector led improvement?

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4. Is there more that all councils should do to strengthen local accountability in their areas? If so what?

5. Do councils or the LGA need to do any more to ensure that local people and others have the comparative performance data they need to hold councils to account? If so what?

6. Is there anything more that needs to be done to help councillors exercise effective scrutiny?

Improvement, assurance and intervention

11. One of the key underlying principles of sector-led improvement is that councils are accountable to local people and communities, not to central government or the inspectorates and as part of our offer to the sector we made available a range of support to help councils strengthen local accountability.   The LGA has always been clear that while our role is primarily to provide support to councils we will also maintain an overview of the performance of the sector so that we can ensure that we continue to develop the right forms of support but also to ensure we can respond quickly to challenges with individual councils or groups of councils and offer appropriate support.

12. Yet government continues to collect huge amounts of data from the sector (estimated at around 40,000 data items per council per year) and in some instances this data is being used to make judgements about performance. For example, Department for Communities and Local Government uses data returns to monitor the speed with which councils process planning applications. Planning authorities who process 40 per cent or less of major applications within 13 weeks may be "designated" as poorly performing and as a result applicants may choose for their application to be handled by either the local planning authority or the Planning Inspectorate.

13. Some stakeholders believe that the lack of a national framework or system allows some authorities to effectively opt out of sector-led improvement and therefore there is a danger that councils that are "coasting" or where performance is declining, are not being sufficiently challenged by the sector to improve. The fact that corporate peer challenge is voluntary is held up by many as an example of why sector-led improvement may lack sufficient rigour and coverage.

14. The Public Accounts Committee have raised concerns about what is perceived to be a lack of knowledge by government about the performance of councils, on the basis that government still fund local government to a significant extent and are relying on councils to deliver many of their policy objectives. The current government have so far resisted re-entering this space but there are concerns that a future government could be minded to introduce at least some form of a national performance management system.

15. Some commentators within local government and central government have suggested that the LGA should take a tougher line and that sector-led improvement should have more bite. This includes an expectation that all authorities should have a corporate peer challenge and that without everyone participating it undermines sector-led improvement. While it is the case that the overwhelming majority of councils have published their peer challenge report and many have published a response or action plan, the fact that this is not always the case can also undermine our approach to sector-led improvement.

16. Moreover, in the past few months, there have been two high profile cases where central government has used their inspection powers to go into a council to gather evidence which allows the secretary of state to decide whether to formally intervene or not. This is the first time that government has used such powers since 2008 and could signal a growing appetite by government to intervene.

17. The Government has adopted a different approach to inspection in these two cases. In the case of Tower Hamlets, they commissioned PWC but in the case of Rotherham they appointed Louise Casey, a DCLG official, as the 'inspector'. The way these inspections have been carried out and the formal engagement with the council has therefore varied and there appears to be no clear or standard process in place. This is in contrast to the way "Corporate Governance Inspections" were carried out previously which included a clear methodology and process for clearing a report with the council and often member or officer peers participating as part of the inspection team.

18. In addition, Sir Bob Kerslake has recently completed a review of the governance and organisational capabilities of Birmingham City Council. The methodology he adopted for the review was based on the principles of the LGA's peer challenge model and included an advisory panel of member and officer peers.

19. In the light of all this activity, do we need to re-position sector led improvement slightly and in particular the peer challenge element.

20. All Corporate Peer Challenges look at the things we know are critical to council performance and improvement, as well as providing councils with lots of flexibility about the rest of the scope of the challenge. The 5 core areas are:

   1. Understanding of local context and priority setting:

   2. Financial planning and viability

   3. Political and managerial leadership

   4. Governance and decision-making

   5. Organisational capacity.

21. Do we need to make any changes to the way we deliver corporate peer challenge including the core components?

22. The stakeholder (particularly government's) concerns about sector-led improvement could largely be dealt with if every council committed to a peer challenge every 4 or so years with the reports all made public and a commitment to an action plan and follow up. This would re-position peer challenge as more than just an improvement tool but it is likely to be seen as attractive to whichever party is in control after the general election and would mean that pressure for government to fill this space would be significantly reduced. A possible alternative is that government decide that if peer challenge remains voluntary that they will create some form of diagnostic or inspection to provide them with the reassurance they need to be carried out in authorities which do not participate in peer challenge.

23. In addition, it is likely that there may continue to be occasional instances in the future where government may want to use their powers of intervention. Even in these cases, there could be value in offering to work with government on the methodology they adopt when carrying out such inspections and potentially play a role.

Consultation questions:

7. Do you have any views on the core components of a corporate peer challenge?

8.   Should all authorities be expected to have a corporate peer challenge on a regular basis, say every four years?
Answer options:
Yes
No
Don't know

9. Should all corporate peer challenge reports be published?
Answer options:
Yes – all should be published

Yes – unless there are exceptional circumstances
No – this should be a matter of local choice
Don't know

10. Should all councils be expected to produce an action plan following a peer challenge?
Answer options:
Yes
No
Don't know

11. Are there other things we should do to limit government's potential appetite for inspection?

Improvement support

24. In summary the LGA's core support offer has included:

- Support to assist local politicians to lead both their places and their councils through a range of **leadership programmes**.

- At no cost, a regular corporate **peer challenge to** every council.

- **LG Inform** the sector's own on-line data sharing and benchmarking service.

- Helping the sector to capture and **share good practice** thought the web including the creation of Knowledge Hub.

- Helping councils to drive down costs through our **productivity programme.**

- Working with the regional and other infrastructure to ensure that the most is made of the resources available.

25. Councils have valued the support that has been provided but looking ahead are there some key changes you would like to see? For example, should we do more to support councils to make savings?   Is there more that can be done to share good practice or foster innovation?

> **Consultation questions:**
>
> **12. What changes would you like to see from the LGA's improvement offer?**

Children's services, adult social services and health

26. Over the last 3 years, the LGA, working with Solace, the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) has developed a comprehensive programme of support across children's social care, adults and health improvement building on the elements of the 'core' offer. ("Sector-led improvement in local government". LGA June 2012).

27. **Children's services:** The LGA offers a range of support to councils for children's services including safeguarding children peer reviews, safeguarding practice diagnostics, care practice diagnostics, leadership essentials for lead members for children's services and a new diagnostic for Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

28. The recent events in Rotherham have brought renewed focus on child sexual exploitation and there is an element of tackling this within the LGA's existing offer but councils may want more support in this area. Similarly, events surrounding the Trojan Horse letter in Birmingham have demonstrated the unclear and overlapping accountability arrangements for schools and a number of councils have suggested that the LGA should now develop a specific improvement offer to help councils adapt.

29. The current inspection regime for children's social care, through Ofsted's Single Inspection Framework, is onerous and to date no council has received the highest rating of outstanding. Inspections can impact on staff morale and councils' ability to attract and retain staff. A new integrated inspection programme is being piloted to assess the effectiveness of all agencies in an area in keeping children safe. Rather than a single inspection across all agencies, as the LGA and others have called for, it is proposed that separate inspections will continue through individual inspectorates within a similar timeframe and with the addition of a joint assessment of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

30. Questions have been raised about public confidence in Ofsted following a number of cases where judgements have been downgraded after a high profile incident, both in schools and councils. The LGA has called for an independent review of the inspectorate.

Consultation question

13. Is there a continued need for the inspection of services that protect and care for children and young people?
Answer options:
Yes
No
Don't know

14. If you answered yes, should that inspection be carried out by Ofsted?
Answer options:
Yes
No
Don't know

15. Is there a continued need for the inspection of councils' school improvement services?
Answer options:
Yes
No
Don't know

16. If you answered yes, should that inspection be carried out by Ofsted?
Answer options
Yes
No
Don't know

17. Should separate inspections of agencies contributing to the protection and care of children, such as councils, health and the police, be replaced by a single inspection of services across all agencies in an area?
Answer options:
Yes
No
Don't know

18. If a new multi-agency inspection for the protection and care of children is developed, should this be delivered through Ofsted, another existing inspectorate or a new inspectorate?
Answer options:
Ofsted
Another existing inspectorate (e.g. Care Quality Commission, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation)
A new inspectorate
Don't know

19. Do councils need further support, such as bespoke models of peer review for child sexual exploitation or schools improvement, to meet the challenges faced in children's services? If so, what?

31. **Adult social care and health:** Continuous sector-led improvement in adult social care is led and coordinated by TEASC (Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care). A Board chaired by ADASS with membership from the LGA, DH, CQC and TLAP oversee a programme of regionally based improvement which is robust, transparent and has the increasing respect and confidence of sponsors and stakeholders.

32. At a national level LGA and ADASS work with experts in the sector to develop self-assessment and reporting tools - Managing Risk, Use of Resources, Commissioning for Better Outcomes, Safeguarding Adults, ASCOF performance – which DASS's use in peer challenge at a Regional level. In some Regions, there is an improvement board chaired by a Chief Executive who oversees the improvement work and in some it is chaired by Regional DASSs – often the Chair of the ADASS region.

33. The ASCOF data shows that nationally, performance in adult social care is increasing, despite having to make significant budget savings (over 20%) over recent years. Whether this would have been achieved without a continual focus on improvement, supporting leaders to lead, ensuring authorities who are struggling are picked up and supported by peers and the LGA, making the tools for improvement available to the sector is a major part of the debate. The strong links between the national team and the regional programme support teams and with the DASSs through ADASS contributes to the increasing transparency which makes this approach more robust. Capacity in this system is currently stretched and we have recently introduced the Adult Improvement Advisors (AIA's) to support the LGA Principal Adviser's and the Regional DASS lead to embed the programme of improvement in each Region and to support LAs on particular areas of challenge.

34. Continuous sector led improvement is therefore a major part of how adult social care has managed to maintain their performance and has become the way change is embedded in adult social care. More recently the LGA, ADASS and the regions have been commissioned by the Department of Health (DH) to help councils deliver a number of specific changes in adult social care and health. This has led to a number of joint programmes dealing with the Better Care Fund, Care Act and Winterbourne View.

35. Some of these programmes might more strictly be thought of as providing implementation support as opposed to 'improvement'. The LGA working jointly with DH and other partners, has developed stocktakes to support local planning and inform national support and resource discussions, providing reassurance at all levels. This has sometimes felt uncomfortable for some in the sector but by being part of the process we have played a key role providing confidence back to government about the sector's ability to deal with these challenges.

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Consultation question

20. Do you have any comments about the arrangements and support put in place to help councils and their partners implement changes across adults

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and health programmes?

Conclusion

36. It is now over three years since we launched 'Taking the lead' setting out the approach to sector-led improvement and the LGA's support offer. A lot has happened since then. We have the experience of providing a wide range of support; we have the lessons from the independent evaluation and the policy and financial context within which councils work is becoming clearer, if no less challenging. It is therefore opportune to 'take stock'. We are keen to do this with councils and for their views to inform how the approach and offer develops.

Consultation question

21. Any other comments?

How to Respond

37. This consultation invites the sector's views about the future of sector-led improvement and the shape of the LGA's support offer to the sector. We are keen to receive a wide range of views, from leading members and officers in councils (including those involved in scrutiny), from national stakeholders in government departments and the Inspectorates and from partners with which councils work locally.

38. **The closing date for the consultation is XXX**. An online form has been set up to provide a quick and convenient method for responding.

39. All leaders and chief executives have been sent their own unique link to the online form. If you are a chief executive or leader and you have not received your unique link, please contact kate.cooper@local.gov.uk, who will forward this to you.

40. Anyone else wishing to submit a response can generate their own unique link by clicking here: XXX.

41. Please note that unique links should not be shared with colleagues unless you would like them to fill them in on your behalf, as their response will overwrite your own.

42. We have set up the online form to provide a quick and convenient method for responding to the consultation. However if you would rather respond by email or another method, please feel free to do so. Responses can be sent directly to kate.cooper@local.gov.uk.

43. All responses will be treated confidentially by the LGA. Information will be aggregated, and no individual or authority will be identified in any publications without consent.

44. If you have any queries about this consultation, please contact nick.easton@local.gov.uk.

Sector-led Improvement: Key facts

a)   Nationally, nearly three quarters of almost 100 indicators had improved since 2010.

b)   Residents trust in councils is high: when asked in July 2014 whether they most trusted their local council or the government to make decisions about how services are provided in their local area, 80 per cent said their local council (significantly higher than the 70 per cent a year previously), while just 14 per cent most trusted the government.

c)   The percentage of leaders and other senior councilors agreeing that the LGA understands what councils need to help improve their service and organiszational capacity has increased from 70 per cent in 2012 to 79 per cent in 2013.

d)   Over 350 peer challenges have been delivered, making use of thousands of peer days donated by councils and the research found that the challenges were helping councils drive forward improvements.

e)   93 per cent of leaders and chief executive said the support from the LGA had had a positive impact on their authority.

f)   Support from the LGA's productivity programme had helped councils achieve savings in excess of £400 million, equivalent to a saving of £8 for every £1 of investment.

g)   Over the three years over 2,000 councillors had been trained and developed through the LGA's leadership programmes and a further 300 graduates had been recruited through the national graduate development programme.

h)   LG Inform has received over 250,000 hits since it was launched and is now available to the public.

Policy Context

In the run up to the next General Election the political parties will be reviewing their thinking about local accountability and performance. The impact of the Scottish Referendum and the subsequent debate around devolution continues, but in the meantime:

For the Conservatives the commitment to localism and local accountability is likely to remain a key feature of the approach to local government, maintaining the reduced burden of data reporting and inspection. There has been a noticeable focus on transparency and this may remain, with ministers also continuing to make their views known about specific issues as they arise (of which the recent joint letter from Eric Pickles MP and Nicky Morgan MP about safeguarding vulnerable children is an example). Separately, the government have recently announced that they intend to explore how the budget given for improvement services can be opened up to competition.

The Liberal Democrats pre-Manifesto document re-affirms the party's commitment to decentralisation and commits to a reduction in DCLG's powers to interfere in democratically elected local government in England and to the establishment of a commission "….. to explore the scope for greater devolution of financial responsibility to English local authorities….." At the same time there is a commitment to spread democracy in everyday life, including by "……..increasing the opportunities for people to take democratic control over the services on which they rely". (A Stronger Economy and a Fairer Society: Enabling every person to get on in life. August 2014).

The Labour Party in the final report from their Innovation Task Force (People-powered public services. Local Government Innovation Task Group. July 2014) has suggested that the next government should review existing data reporting requirements to ensure they are fit for purpose in a more devolved system. This should focus on fewer strategic outcomes rather than a larger number of narrowly defined targets. Local authorities would need to publish data on outcomes being delivered in their communities in a clear, comparable and accessible way so that they can be held to account by local people for their performance.

In addition to accountability by people, a 'light touch' approach to performance management is suggested and would need to be agreed with central government. This would seek to detect and respond appropriately to underperformance:
- For authorities improving outcomes: no need for any action.
- For authorities not improving outcomes: a toolkit of options would be available which range from self-improvement measures to peer challenges, which have been shown to effectively drive improvement by identifying unique issues with a council's performance and taking bespoke measures to overcome them.
- For authorities persistently failing to make progress: the centre retains reserve powers to intervene as a last resort. Options would be available to initiate appropriate special measures such as the direct appointment of time-limited commissioners, a boundary review or a governance review.

The Taskforce recommends a separate and more intensive approach to challenging safeguarding to ensure standards are monitored and constantly driven up. Safeguarding peer challenges (both child and adult) should be conducted every three years, and the challenges should cover all services with safeguarding responsibilities in the area including the council, health bodies and the police.

The Public Accounts Committee have been pressing government about how they ensure they are better informed about the situation on the ground among local authorities across England, in a much more active way, in order to head off serious problems before they happen. To date government have stopped short of re-creating a performance management or inspection regime which provides them with such reassurance but the debate about this has not gone away.

Finally, the DCLG select committee have said in the next parliament they will launch a review of Councils' scrutiny functions.

Improvement and Innovation Board

20 January 2015

Care and Health Integration Programme 2015/16

Purpose

To seek Board approval and direction on the broad range of activities and approach to the 2015/16 Care and Health Integration Programme.

Summary

Over the last three years the LGA has been delivering an increasing number of programmes, primarily sponsored by the Department of Health, aimed at bringing about leadership developments, improvement or implementation support in the areas of care and support, health and wellbeing, and service integration with health. The programmes include Winterbourne View, Health & Wellbeing and Better Care Fund (BCF).

We have been commissioned to continue these programmes in 2015/16. We have developed, with stakeholders, proposed objectives to help authorities to:

  i.   improve outcomes for local people
  ii.   deliver better quality health and care
  iii.   embed health and wellbeing boards as place-based health and care leaders
  iv.   make health and care sustainable locally
  v.   increase public, regulator and government confidence in local health and care services.

We also plan to complete the transition to a single programme to ensure that we have a more coherent offer to councils, that it is firmly based on the sector-led improvement principles, to ensure that it is complementary to the LGA's policy objectives and to deliver this at a reduced cost.

Recommendations

The Improvement and Innovation Board is recommended to provide guidance and direction on the draft objectives, range, scope and direction of the programme for 2015/16.

Actions

This Board's direction and advice, and that of the Community Wellbeing Board (CWB), will be taken into account in the negotiations and agreements with the programme sponsors.

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Care and Health Integration Programme 2015/16

1.   Background: Sector-Led Improvement (SLI) in Care and Health

1.1.   SLI is firmly embedded within the wide, and growing, range of transformation and improvement programmes across the health and social care agenda. The LGA has been commissioned by the Departments of Health, and Communities and Local Government to support councils to achieve a number of transformational changes. These include implementing the Care Act reforms and BCF, and supporting SLI through our Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care (TEASC), Health and Wellbeing System Improvement Programme (HWSIP) and Winterbourne View Joint Improvement programmes. There is also on-going activity around Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP), systems resilience and delivering outcomes as well as personalisation, deprivation of liberty safeguards and mental health.

1.2.   This activity is complemented by, among many other developments, LGA support of the Integrated Care Pioneer programme that intends to expand in 2015, the Integrated Personal Commissioning programme and the New Models of Care Network. These are in addition to programmes such as the Year of Care Commissioning Model and also within the context of policy developments such as the LGA's 100 Days, the NHS Five Year Forward View, the Barker Commission, the 2015 Challenge Manifesto and the Dalton Review among many others.

1.3.   The principal programmes in 2014/15 were:

      1.3.1   BCF
      1.3.2   Care Act Implementation and Support Programme
      1.3.3   HWSIP
      1.3.4   Health and care informatics
      1.3.5   Integration and Public Sector Transformation Network
      1.3.6   MSP
      1.3.7   TEASC
      1.3.8   Winterbourne View Improvement Programme (joint with NHSE).

1.4.   The sector led improvement approach continues to support improved outcomes for and accountability to local communities as well as increased confidence from government, the sector and the public alike in the sector's ability to drive improvement itself. These benefits have also been achieved despite significant on-going reductions in government funding to councils.

1.5.   Each programme has developed independently, with a range of governance and delivery vehicles. All stakeholders have recognised the need to develop a more cohesive set of arrangements, particularly in the context of both the proliferation of support needs and how these increasingly blur the lines between programme boundaries. National policy developments too are promoting a more holistic approach across the agenda, for example the Five Year Forward View signalling a move towards place-based inspection and intervention activity, with coordination by regulators across a local health economy.

2.   Taking forward the programmes as a single offer to the sector in 2015/16

2.1.   The Department of Health has asked the LGA, in discussion with stakeholders, to develop a programme for 2015/16 that would deliver a similar broad range of objectives.

2.2.   The joint programmes in 2014/15 represented a first step towards developing a single overarching programme, underpinned by a joined-up approach and narrative. It is now considered the right time to take the programmes forward as a single programme with a more coherent offer to the sector.

Enhanced locally accountable systems leadership

2.3.   The joint programmes are already demonstrating their credentials and strengths in leading and supporting the sector to achieve better outcomes, underpinned by a clear focus on strengthening the systems leadership role of health and wellbeing boards as the key local accountability mechanism for the health and wellbeing of local populations.

2.4.   Bringing greater coherence to the programmes would provide opportunity to respond to sector needs, in particular to support health and wellbeing boards to develop the competence and capacity to act as the single commissioner of health and care services locally, and crucially to build the system's confidence in boards to deliver this.

Increased insight across the system

2.5.   Councils are increasingly using the SLI approach to learn from each other, to address barriers to transformation and innovation as well as performance challenges, particularly in response to funding constraints. This rich source of insight into the sector includes activity ranging from peer support, performance comparison and self-assessment to mentoring, training and networks. In addition, collective assurance work, such as through the Care Act stocktakes, or advisory activity to influence policy and regulatory developments, are providing further opportunities for the sector itself to identify risks, understand issues and develop solutions.

2.6.   This intelligence would help evidence the programmes' capabilities to the sector and funders, as well as inform ways to develop further the SLI approach. It would be possible, by taking a more disciplined approach to pooling and sharing intelligence, to take a more codified approach, which would increase consistency, enable the sector collectively to push for greater freedoms from data reporting or blanket assessment, and to urge greater transparency of government-held intelligence.

2.7.   In addition, there is significant potential to take forward innovations such as the outcomes based commissioning framework through the TEASC network, or address existing challenges, such as how to embed isolated activity, for example Winterbourne View improvement. There would also be greater capacity to respond to new local demand or to occupy new change agenda, such as the introduction of the Dilnot recommendations.

Stronger, streamlined governance and accountability

2.8.   The role of local government leaders, regional peers and local areas themselves is crucial in developing collaborative leadership at a system level, and in engendering localist partnership approaches. Accountability and governance arrangements currently include our Community Wellbeing Board, which is reshaping its members' roles to strengthen its leadership of key portfolio areas including integration, and the Health Transformation Task Group (HTTG). This latter group has continued to evolve in response to a changing landscape, to provide a mechanism for consultation and advocacy, and is increasingly becoming an operational partnership space. There are also governance vehicles for other NHS integration programmes as well as sub-national and regional networks.

2.9.   There are multiple boards overseeing the delivery of each programme. As programmes have been established, there is increasing overlap in membership and delivery mechanisms, and

some partnership arrangements have become more unwieldy as membership and remit have extended. It is proposed therefore that we look to amalgamate these to create a more streamlined governance structure, which sets the direction and steers delivery across all programmes.

2.10.   Such streamlined arrangements would enable a reframing around key stakeholders and outcomes rather than programme silos, bringing strategic coherence to narrative and approach. In this way, it would make possible a more systematic approach to driving SLI and sharing good practice. Councils, for example, could be viewed holistically across a range of policy areas but be supported by discrete elements of the programmes managed within a strategic framework. These revised arrangements would also provide a mechanism for the sector to commission its own SLI activity beyond grant-funded joint programme work.

2.11.   Within such arrangements, the role of HTTG could evolve to encompass wider stakeholder groups, providing opportunities for widespread engagement and influencing. In addition, this stakeholder forum could be widened to encompass regional networks, which would both strengthen the governance around SLI approaches and feed greater alignment at a local and regional level.

Greater efficiency and capacity through a thematic programme management approach

2.12.   The centrepiece of the SLI approach remains the peer-led improvement model, which local areas strongly support. They tell us too that they would like:

2.12.1   support beyond diagnostic activity that builds their capacity and skills to achieve cultural, organisational and system-wide change

2.12.2   more access to best practice, exemplars and hands-on advice, support and development, in particular receiving this from peers in a timely, flexible manner

2.12.3   more opportunities to network, share learning and collaboratively develop solutions

2.12.4   greater coordination across programmes and partners operating in a locality or region, and to use available resources to extend existing capacity.

2.13.   From feedback, local areas – regardless of which programme they are accessing – tell us they would welcome advice and support around common issues including strengthening governance arrangements or developing risk sharing mechanisms, to help with financial modelling or workforce reconfiguration. It is proposed, therefore, that existing activity is grouped around three common themes to maximise benefit for local areas, backed by more systematic coordination and communication across programmes:

2.13.1   leadership and governance: such as strengthening system leadership behaviours including shared visioning, risk-sharing, mitigation and contingency planning, and building confidence in the system

2.13.2   finances and resources: such as joint efficiency developments, financial modelling of integrated care models, joint or shared commissioning models

2.13.3   operational delivery development: such as around data sharing, workforce, multi-disciplinary working, care coordination, provider models, person-centred care and personalisation, and shifting resources to prevention and self-care.

2.14.   This development would enable the peer-led approach to be expanded to include a wider range of discrete and interlocking packages of support using a 'deep dive' methodology, which brings additional operational capacity to support councils to implement their improvement or transformational plans. In this deepened peer support offer, peer reviewers

and facilitators will be able to call on this expert advice or support as needed, which where possible would be recruited from within the sector.

2.15. These proposals recognise that success often relies on strong relationships and commitment from colleagues across the system, backed by ad hoc arrangements, for example in inputting into the BCF assessment process, which increasing demands have strained. These proposals also acknowledge the reductions in capacity, including across NHS England, coupled with a growing number of requests for help that span the boundaries between programmes.

2.16. It is therefore proposed that a 'support' network is developed to underpin insight, advisory and improvement work in a more systematic way, improving coherence and connections. It is intended that this is about better supporting peers and regional leads to carry out their roles, as well as helping to identify and share better intelligence across the system. It is proposed that this 'support' network is developed using existing regional and specialist resources such as Principal Advisers, Care Act Adult Improvement Advisers and regional programme teams, in a light-touch way. The network would be intended to provide the connections across programmes and regions, improve coordination of support, and signposting to, and enhancing local resources, such as developing virtual networks on local issues.

2.17. Further, it is proposed that this 'support' network includes a more aligned central resource drawn from existing programmes, which could provide some project management functions such as coordinating responses to demand, sharing intelligence through internal networks or promoting awareness of activity, such as through a weekly bulletin.

3. 2015/16 Care and Health Integration Programme

3.1. It is therefore proposed that we develop a single programme for 2015/16 with a coherent focus point for local authorities with the objective of helping the sector to:

3.1.1 improve outcomes for local people

3.1.2 deliver better quality health and care

3.1.3 embed health and wellbeing boards as place-based health and care leaders

3.1.4 make care and health sustainable locally

3.1.5 increase public, regulator and government confidence in local care and health services.

3.2. We would achieve this by developing a range of flexible improvement and support products (across the three domains of leadership and governance, finances and resources, and operational delivery) that will support:

3.2.1 sustained and embedded sector-led improvement to deliver excellence in social care and health locally

3.2.2 Health and Wellbeing Boards to be effective system leaders

3.2.3 councils to implement and embed the Care Act reforms

3.2.4 local areas to implement the Better Care Fund

3.2.5 the Public Service Transformation Network to take a whole system approach to public services and funding

3.2.6 the Integration Pioneers to remove barriers, promote confidence and spread good practice

3.2.7 efforts to best use and share data and intelligence

3.2.8 local areas to ensure those with learning disabilities are supported in their communities (Winterbourne View).

3.3. We would also support the development of an effective governance and delivery infrastructure at the regional level to ensure that the programme adequately focuses on local needs and that there is an effective feedback mechanism for local issues and concerns. We would look for regions to develop a single unified approach that will be supported through a single funding stream.

4.   Conclusion and next steps

4.1. This paper will also be discussed at our CWB in February 2015. Discussions are also underway with key stakeholders, principally the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care, the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and others over the coming weeks in order to develop the programme offer. We are also in on-going discussion with the Department of Health about their requirements and the total cost of the programme.

4.2. Final approval of the scope and costs of the programme is expected to be agreed in early March for a 1 April 2015 commencement.

5.   Financial Implications

5.1. The cost of the programme will be fully met from Department of Health grants to the LGA.

Improvement and Innovation Board

20 January 2015

Productivity Update

Purpose

This report updates the Board on the progress being made in the Productivity Programme.

Recommendation

That the Improvement and Innovation Board note the updates and progress on the Productivity Programme.

Action

Officers to pursue the activities outlined in the light of member guidance.

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Productivity programme update

Background

1. The Board has previously agreed the Productivity Programme to develop and operate a range of programmes to help improve productivity and efficiency in councils. This report provides an update on a number of work streams within the Productivity Programme.

Issues

2. **Commissioning Academy**

   2.1. Learning more about commissioning is essential for any councillor who is interested in defining policy, shaping the future of public services or deciding how to use limited resources to achieve specific local outcomes. The LGA in partnership with the Cabinet Office held a pilot session of the Commissioning Academy for Elected Members on 12 and 13 November 2014, and received very positive feedback from the councillors present. Attendees included a good mixture of both cabinet and backbench members from councils including Birmingham, Staffordshire, the London Borough of Barnet, Newcastle City Council and North Kesteven District Council.

   2.2. The course was well received. Quotes from those who attended on the benefits of the course included:

   "Learning about challenges faced by different types/layers of councils was most useful – gaining a wide view and understanding; picking ideas that have been successful in other councils."

   "It mixed expertise with stimulating and facilitated discussion and exchange of views."

   "[The main learning point was] how different councils can be in dealing with the same issues – similar challenges faced by unitaries down to parish councils."

   2.3. A second session will be held on 10 and 11 February 2015 at Roffey Park in Sussex and at the time of writing 10 councillors have signed up to attend. The costs of both Commissioning Academy for Elected Members sessions have been funded by the Cabinet Office and after the February session they plan to take stock and decide whether to continue to fund the programme.

3. **Commercialisation**

   3.1. For the past year, support on the issue of commercialisation has generally been focussed on raising councils' awareness of the ways in which they can take a commercial approach to all activity, including income generation, procurement and contract management. We have done this through regional events hosted in

partnership with the private sector in Bristol, Manchester and London as well as the production of a new webpage http://www.local.gov.uk/income-generation.

3.2. As part of the next stage of this support, those councils who are most advanced in commercial activity have been brought together into an "Advanced Commercial Group". A first meeting was held in November 2014 involving 15 authorities facilitated by Stephen Hughes. Although it is intended that the group will become self-supporting, the LGA will enable further meetings until sufficient momentum has been built up for this to happen.

4. **Procurement**

National Procurement Strategy

4.1. Work is continuing to gather and disseminate good practice across the four strategy themes of making savings, enabling local communities, leadership and modernisation. We have initiated supplier relationship discussions with Kier and Capita (the top two suppliers to local government by spend), and with our professional buying organisations. We have launched consultations on our category strategies for construction and health and social care.

Lord Young Reforms

4.2. We are continuing to promote the views of local authorities on the proposals set out in the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill, which is now in the House of Lords stages. It is believed that the Government intends to use the powers set out in the Bill to centralise procurement processes, which could undermine local authorities' ability to take into account local social value and local economic growth.

4.3. We have also responded to the consultation on the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Many of the procurement changes outlined in the Regulations will help local government to simplify procurement processes for high value procurement (over the £173,000 threshold) and are welcomed. However, the Regulations would also abolish 'pre-qualification questionnaires' (PQQs) below the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) threshold and mandate the Government's contracts finder tool outlined in this Board's November 2014 productivity update. Again this could work against councils working with their local business communities to deliver better, more cost effective services.

5. **Digital offer to Councils**

5.1. To help more councils benefit from the good work already done by the sector to implement technology and digital approaches to deliver more efficient public services, the LGA has launched a digital 'offer'. This consists of three elements:

5.1.1   a series of strategic roundtables for senior officers and councillors to enable them to understand better the opportunities and risks

5.1.2   the direct funding of a small number of projects to implement approaches and or tools already working well in other councils

5.1.3   an offer to Cabinet Office to work with them to extend the Commissioning Academy model to pilot a Digital Academy.

5.2. As demonstrated in our recent publication, "Transforming local public services using technology and digital tools and approaches", councils have been developing and implementing innovative technology and digital solutions to enable them to target and support particular customers. This includes: developing apps to enable citizens to report fly tipping and other street scene issues, or to pay bills including rent and council tax, applying Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to plan more efficient routes for rubbish collection, and creating a website to match up residents who are prepared to cook a meal for a neighbour for the Casserole Club scheme.

5.3. However, though there is lots of excellent work going on in many councils, our focus must not only be on innovation – we also need to support improvement. Therefore this programme seeks specifically to help councils take on and adapt already effective tools and approaches implemented in other councils. Our aim is to give a helping hand to those councils that may not be at the cutting edge but who are keen to draw on the learning of their peers and to quickly implement what works effectively elsewhere. This is increasingly important at a time when councils are trying to manage increasing levels of demand with reduced finances.

5.4. We will work with the sector's established networks and representative bodies that operate in this space to ensure we join up and complement each other and avoid duplication to enable us to maximise our limited resources. We have already gained support from Socitm, Solace and LocalGov Digital.

5.5. For the Digital Experts element, a prospectus was published on the LGA website in early December inviting councils to submit a bid for funding by 23 January 2015. This has been promoted via various LGA bulletins (including the District Councils' Network newsletter and Chief Executive's bulletin), the Department for Communities and Local Government's digital newsletter, and Socitm's and LocalGov Digital's newsletters.

5.6. The Productivity Team will update members of the Improvement and Innovation Board on progress at a future meeting.

6. **Children, Adult and Families Projects and Programmes**

Efficiency opportunities through health and social care integration

6.1. In the Autumn the Productivity Team launched a new project to look at efficiency opportunities through health and social care integration, which complements current LGA work on integration, care and reform. Following a competitive tender process, Newton Europe won the contract to deliver the work and are currently working with teams across the LGA to identify up to six areas to work with to better understand the efficiency opportunities across the system. The project will run to September 2015 with initial findings reported in spring 2015.

Adult Social Care Efficiency (ASCE) Programme

6.2. Following the publication of the ASCE Programme Final Report in July 2014 the Productivity Team hosted a workshop at the National Children and Adult Services Conference in Manchester in October 2014, which was attended by nearly 200 people. A series of regional events has taken place to disseminate findings from the programme, which have been tailored in response to local challenges. Further events are being planned for the new year. The annex of the Report, which comprises nearly 50 case studies, is being re-launched in the new year in a more accessible, searchable format. This will be available on the LGA website at www.local.gov.uk/childrenadultsfamilies.

Learning Disability Services Efficiency (LDSE) Project

6.3. The first meeting of the five authorities participating in the LDSE Project (Barking and Dagenham, Cumbria, Darlington, Kent and Wiltshire) took place in November 2014. All have used the grant funding to undertake a diagnostic review of their learning disability services and as a result have developed a transformation plan to be delivered over the coming two years. An initial report that sets out the baseline position of the authorities and early lessons will be published in February 2015.

Sharing learning in services to support troubled families

6.4. The Productivity Team will be working with the sector to help share learning from local evaluation of services to support troubled families. The project will complement the work of the national Troubled Families Programme and will specifically help to share information and learning for members.

7. **One Public Estate**

7.1. An extension to the One Public Estate programme was announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement. The extension will see One Public Estate opened to all local authorities with a significant asset base over the course of the next Parliament. We are currently working with Cabinet Office colleagues to shape the future model for the programme. It is expected this model will see One Public Estate operate in its current philosophy of encouraging public and central government bodies to work with local authorities on land and property issues that generate capital receipts, reduce running costs, integrate services and stimulate economic growth. The context of the projects delivered through the programme will however be expanded:

7.1.1   to local authorities with a significant asset base to take forward 'whole place' strategic agendas, similar to those councils already on the programme

7.1.2   to allow local authorities to take forward individual projects of work, such as the release of a single large government site key to local regeneration.

7.2. Subject to Ministerial approval additional authorities will be invited to apply to become part of the programme in the first half of 2015.

8. **Housing development programme**

8.1. Members will recall that we have been developing a support offer to help councils access funding for new housing from institutional or other corporate sources. The intention is to assist a group of councils collectively to access institutional or other corporate finance to build new homes outside of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) system.

8.2. In August 2014, expressions of interest were invited in general terms, from member authorities who are interested in accessing significant funds to develop their own new housing outside of housing revenue accounts (where councils have an HRA).

8.3. To date, 40 authorities have made contact in varying levels of detail following the invitation to express an interest. Subsequently in November 2014, an event was held for interested Councils at the LGA in Bevin Hall, with 26 authorities attending, and 14 of these have since provided additional information with a view to being considered for an initial consortium. Informal discussions have also taken place with representatives from financial institutions to test their general interest in a scheme and how the offer should be framed in order to deliver the best outcome for authorities.

8.4. The Commercial Advisory Board (CAB) was due to consider this matter further at its meeting on 5 January 2015. Since there is evidently a taste for such an offer both from councils and from the financial services market, then subject to CAB approval, the next stage will be to build an initial consortium and to approach the market formally to identify a preferred finance provider.

9. **Collective Energy Switching**

9.1. Eighty-five authorities took part in the LGA collective switch held on 14 October 2014, which created market leading tariffs for the third consecutive auction. The lowest in market price of the OVO Energy prepayment tariffs were publicly available, whereas the E.ON tariffs offered rates that cover most payment types and were not available on price comparison websites. 17,055 new residents registered to take part in this auction, including 1600 paper registrations. The average saving per household was £221 and 98 per cent of people registered would have saved money by moving on to the winning tariffs.

9.2. Preparations are underway for the next energy auction, which will take place on 2 February 2015. This includes continued work to move the Big London Energy Switch (BLES), a scheme involving 23 London Boroughs, on to the LGA Collective Switching Framework.

9.3. Next steps

LGA officers will keep the Improvement and Innovation Board informed and provide regular updates to the sector via various established networks and bulletins.

10.   2015/16 Work Programme

10.1. The Revenue Support Grant business case and plan for 2015/16 largely determines the Productivity Team's work programme for the year. The key themes set out in the report above will therefore be continued, enhanced and developed over the coming year.

10.2. For many authorities the productivity benefits gained during the early years of austerity will need to be maintained and substantial further progress made to unlock further savings and income generation. Significant further gains are likely to come from four areas:

10.2.1 commercialisation in all its forms, to enable councils to generate additional forms of income by marketing their skills and optimising the use of assets

10.2.2 service integration, as exemplified by new health and social care delivery models, to redesign services around the user and support prevention

10.2.3 digitisation, to enable systems to be redesigned to make the best use of technology, enable customer engagement and self-service where appropriate and promote better use of data in targeting need

10.2.4 delivery models based on community action and enablement to change the way citizens engage with public services.

10.3. The Productivity Programme is engaged in most of these areas, with the exception of community enablement, and we will look with policy colleagues at how we can contribute in this latter area over the coming months, perhaps by identifying the actions councils have taken.

10.4. The rollout of the National Procurement Strategy will continue, as will the successful and popular Productivity Experts programme. Subject to evaluation, the Commissioning Academy both for officers and members will admit further cohorts and the Growth Advisors programme will also be rolled out. Members of the team will also continue to work with the Cabinet Office as it further expands the One Public Estate programme. The Shared Services map will be maintained and kept up to date.

10.5. We will continue to support authorities to generate energy and other saleable products from waste. Following on from work on health and social care integration, there will be a piece of work on public health to identify good practice from use of resources in the first two years that the service has been back in local government.

10.6. As previously reported to the Board, a review of the sector-led improvement offer for finance has been undertaken involving a wide consultation of local government officers and members and other sector experts. As part of this revised offer, extended 'Spidergrams' were distributed to councils in November 2014, and a survey to identify good financial practices was issued to councils at around the same time.

10.7. We will now also be piloting a peer challenge style "Financial Review" offer in the early months of this year. The reviews will be focused on councils' plans for achieving financial sustainability and will involve officer and member peers with appropriate experience of financial and resource strategies and planning as well as expert associates to provide additional capacity to undertake the work. To ensure we learn lessons from a range of authorities, four or five pilots are proposed and the reviews will be offered to pilot authorities free of charge so the costs of these will be met from sector-led improvement budgets.

11. Financial Implications

11.1 Costs of delivering the programme will be contained within available budgets.

Improvement and Innovation Board

20 January 2015

Leadership and Localism Update

Purpose

For information.

Summary

This paper is a progress update for the Board on the delivery of key elements of our leadership development offer.

Recommendation
That the Improvement and Innovation Board note the report.

Action
Officers to action as agreed by Members.

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Leadership and Localism update

Highlighting Leadership progress update

Background

1. At its meeting in October 2014 the Board requested a more detailed breakdown of information about the number of elected members attending various political leadership development programmes available to them as part of our new Highlighting Leadership offer.

2. All of the new or refreshed programmes established as part of Highlighting Leadership are now up and running. This report provides Board members with an update on the number of councillors who have attended programmes broken down by political group, region and type of council.

3. The report also includes a progress update on the National Graduate Development Programme.

Political leadership programmes overall

4. At the end of December 2014 a total of **577** councillors from **241** councils had attended or were signed up to attend our various political leadership programmes. This compares to a total of **555** from **249** councils in the whole of 2013/14.

Leaders' Programme (LP)

5. Nine council leaders from a mix of political parties and types of council attended module one (of three) of our first Leaders' Programme, which took place at Wyboston Lakes in December 2014. A key design principle of this programme is that the content for the second and third module should be based around the specific needs of each individual cohort, which they agree on module one. The leaders on this first cohort have asked for in depth sessions on the following issues/topics:

    5.1   devolution
    5.2   leader/top team (members and officer) relationships
    5.3   demand management and strategies for maintaining acceptable levels of service delivery with significantly reduced budgets
    5.4   opportunities to explore and understand examples of excellent leadership practice from outside the local government sector.

6. We have put together programmes covering these topics, including a number of 'expert witnesses' for the leaders to question/learn from, for modules two and three which take place in mid-January and mid-February 2015

Leading Edge (LEdge)

7. Based on the very successful Leadership for Improvement workshops we ran with the District Councils' Network in 2013/14, these 24 hour events for leaders and chief executives from district councils are focused on working together on developing new

strategies for improvement and transformation. The first event, in late October 2014 was attended by **8** leaders and **6** chief executives, and **10** leaders and **15** chief executives are booked to attend the second programme, which will take place in February 2015.

Leadership Academy (LA), Leadership Essentials (LE) and Focus on Leadership (FoL) Programmes

8. So far this financial year, **92** elected members have registered to attend the **Leadership Academy**, our flagship 3 module programme for councillors holding leadership positions at their authority.

9. **Leadership Essentials** are the 'focused programmes' covering a range of portfolio areas and themes including children's services, adults and social care, health, planning, digital leadership, planning and scrutiny; and three new ones we have introduced this year cover commissioning, finance and effective opposition. To date, **319** members have registered to attend the various Leadership Essentials programmes.

10. Our **Focus on Leadership** programmes, which are designed to provide councillors with a bridge to move from their existing roles to more senior positions at their authority, include a Leadership Development Summer School, the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and Young Councillors Weekender events. So far **81** members have attended or are registered to attend these programmes.

Next Generation (NG)

11. The Next Generation programme is in its ninth year for the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat Groups. This year, for the first time, we have also run a Next Generation programme for councillors from the Independent Group. All of the 2014/15 cohorts began in the autumn and the final modules for each group will be delivered in January/February 2015.

12. Below are three tables setting out the attendees on each of these programmes broken down by political group, region and type of council:

Political Leadership programme –Stats 2014-15

Political Group	LP	LEdge	LA	LE	NG	FoL	Total
Labour	4	3	43	165	19	53	287
Conservative	3	13	23	131	15	12	197
Liberal Democrat	1	1	5	12	9	7	35
Independent	1	1	21	11	15	9	58
Total:	**9**	**18**	**92**	**319**	**58**	**81**	**577**

Region	LP	LEdge	LA	LE	NG	FoL	Total
East of England	2	3	10	43	8	11	77
East Midlands	0	2	10	27	4	3	46
Greater London	1	0	7	51	11	24	94
North East	0	0	2	9	1	0	12
North West	2	0	7	34	7	6	56
South West	0	2	7	41	8	9	67
South East	1	8	11	51	6	11	88
Wales	2	0	31	0	4	5	42
West Midlands	0	2	6	33	6	8	55
Yorkshire & Humber	1	1	1	30	3	4	40
Total:	**9**	**18**	**92**	**319**	**58**	**81**	**577**

Type of council	LP	LEdge	LA	LE	NG	FoL	Total
District	3	18	22	81	11	19	154
County	0	0	10	48	6	7	71
Metropolitan	2	0	6	46	8	9	71
London	1	0	7	50	11	24	93
Unitary	1	0	16	70	18	17	122
Welsh	2	0	30	0	4	5	41
Fire	0	0	1	23	0	0	24
Parks	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total:	**9**	**18**	**92**	**319**	**58**	**81**	577

National Graduate Development Programme (ngdp)

13. The ngdp team remains busy working with Cohorts 15 and 16, and has begun the Cohort 17 recruitment and assessment process. Cohort 15 have now completed three of their four modules and have less than nine months remaining on the programme. There has been one late addition to Cohort 16, bringing the number of national management trainees (NMTs) to 110 and the number of participating

councils to 54. The first learning and development module for cohort 16 NMTs will take place at the end of January 2015.

14. The ngdp was represented at 29 universities during this autumn's 'recruitment season' and the programme has a growing following on Twitter. Applications for the programme's national recruitment concluded on 12 January 2015. We received more than 1550 completed applications and a further 2530 registrations of interest, similar to our last intake. All applicants will now proceed to verbal and numerical testing. Those who pass will complete a bespoke situational judgement test and then proceed to an in-person assessment centre if they meet the standard. This combination of online and in-person assessment is a new system, which has been designed for the ngdp and tested by former and current NMTs. We trust it will deliver a more equitable, consistent and rigorous assessment process at a lower cost.

15. Councils have been able to sign up for Cohort 17 of the ngdp since early December 2014. To date, 11 councils have signed up and interest remains high from past partners and new authorities. The deadline for councils to apply is 30 April 2015.

Improvement and Innovation Board

20 January 2015

LGA Boards' Improvement Activity

Purpose

To note the update on improvement activity undertaken by the LGA Boards.

Summary

The report details the improvement activities undertaken by LGA Boards.

Recommendation

That the Improvement and Innovation Board note the update on improvement activity undertaken by LGA Boards.

Action

Officers to respond as necessary to any comments.

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LGA Boards' Improvement Activity

Background

1. Members have agreed that it is important for the Improvement and Innovation Board to retain a strategic or "overarching" perspective on the improvement activity currently undertaken across LGA Boards. This will help ensure consistency with the key principles underpinning the approach to sector led improvement and help avoid any potential duplication.

2. In order to achieve this, the Board agreed that:

   2.1. officers be asked to coordinate the flow of business through the Boards so that the Improvement and Innovation Board is invited to express strategic views about any significant improvement issues put before other Boards;
   2.2. during the year the Improvement and Innovation Board receives suitably timed progress reports on the major improvement programmes; and
   2.3. as far as possible, the Improvement and Innovation Board meets towards the end of each quarterly cycle of meetings so it can consider any significant issues put before other Boards and then report back to Boards at their next meeting.

3. A full report describing the improvement activity and support provided through LGA Boards was submitted to the last meeting in October 2014.

4. At this meeting today, the Board is invited to provide strategic input to the on-going work of the Planning Advisory Service and to provide views on the development of the integrated care and health improvement programme for 2015/16.

5. In addition a short update on the improvement activity undertaken by other Boards is attached at **Appendix A**. In terms of consistency with, and implications for, our approach to sector-led improvement, Members may wish to note:

   5.1. There continues to be a strong element of external inspection and intervention in children's services. The Children and Young People Board has called for an independent review of Ofsted.

   5.2. The Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care (TEASC) programme of sector-led improvement in adult social care will shortly be producing its third annual report on adult social care performance. This is an important example of the sector taking stock of its own performance and making the results publicly available.

Next steps

6. Subject to Members' views, officers will continue to update the Board on the improvement activities across all LGA Boards.

Financial implications

7. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

LGA Boards' Improvement Activity

Children and Young People Board

1. **Ofsted annual report:** The Ofsted annual report for schools and further education and skills was launched on 10 December 2014. The headline findings this year are that primary school standards are continuing on an impressive upward trajectory – with more than eight in ten schools now rated at least good but that the overall rate of improvement in secondary schools has stalled. Teaching in the further education sector has improved but Ofsted is concerned that too many college courses are still not equipping learners with the skills that employers want and the economy needs.

2. The report raised concerns about the supply of teachers; at a time when pupil numbers are rising sharply, the number of new entrants to teacher training has fallen by 16% since 2009/10 and was 7% below target in 2014/15. It also expressed concerns that too many academies are isolated – Ofsted analysis of academies that experienced a sharp fall in inspection grade last year shows that most had not made any arrangement for external support and challenge until it was too late and serious decline had set in. Finally, it highlighted the level of confusion in the system over the exact role of local authorities in relation to academies and their pupils.

3. Responding to the report, Cllr Simmonds said *"Ofsted is intended to be a key part of the improvement of schools, and in the case of academy schools are the only people councils can call on to intervene when there are signs that standards are slipping. As well as asking questions of schools, Ofsted has questions to answer about whether its regime is bringing about the improvement we need to see. Mums and dads want to know that someone has their finger on the pulse of local schools and that can't be done from Whitehall. It is time for an independent review of Ofsted so that we can all be confident in the quality of judgments which at the moment seem to change at a moment's notice."*

4. Ofsted launched its **Single Inspection Framework** for council services that care for and safeguard children in November 2013. Since then a total of 34 inspections have been completed with the following results:

   • 9 councils have been found to be good;
   • 18 are requires improvement; and
   • 7 councils are rated as inadequate.

5. As yet no council has been judged to be outstanding. The Single Inspection Framework is onerous and resource intensive and the results to date show that the bar has been raised for children's services. As a result of being found inadequate, the Department for Education has placed 23 councils in intervention. Of these, 13 are subject to an improvement notice, which sets out what the council needs to do to improve. 10 councils have had a formal direction notice from the Secretary of State

which means the council must adhere to the actions set out in the notice and must work with officials and government appointed advisers to improve services.

6. The Department for Education (DfE) is working to develop **alternative models for working with councils in intervention,** which go beyond the appointment of an improvement board and chair and, in the most serious cases, involve the appointment of a children's commissioner and establishment of a Trust. Julian Le Grand was asked by Ministers to commission work on alternative models for driving improvement in children's services and we are awaiting an announcement on the conclusion of that work.

7. The Department has also tendered for children's experts to participate in their commissioning framework to work alongside councils in intervention. DfE officials have described this as a more transparent way of recruiting expert advisers. The tender includes a call for agencies to deliver improvement support such as diagnostics. LGA has raised concerns that we are all looking to recruit from a small group of professionals, and there has been speculation in the trade press about whether this cuts across sector led improvement.

8. **The LGA, Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and SOLACE children's improvement meeting** took place on 2 October 2014 and was attended by the Chairman of the Children and Young People Board and the Chairman of the Improvement and Innovation Board. It considered how the sector can provide support to councils to ensure they come out of intervention as quickly as possible. It was recommended that LGA develops advice for councils that find themselves in intervention drawing on learning from peer challenges.

9. The LGA has developed a children's improvement offer to support councils, details of which were reported to the last meeting.

10. **Child Sexual Exploitation:** The Board received a full report at the last meeting outlining the current position on child sexual exploitation and how the LGA was seeking to support councils.

11. DCLG, Home Office and DfE are keen to identify good and emerging practice for tackling CSE and have been working with LGA, Solace and ADCS to consider effective approaches at the frontline.

Community Wellbeing Board

12. Over the last three years the LGA has been delivering an increasing number of programmes, primarily sponsored by the Department of Health, aimed at bringing about leadership developments, improvement or implementation support in the areas of care and support, health and wellbeing, and service integration with health. The programmes include Winterbourne View, Health and Wellbeing, and Better Care Fund.

13. The LGA has been commissioned to continue these programmes in 2015/16. There is a full report elsewhere on this agenda setting out the proposed approach,

objectives and activities to support councils across these programmes, including a proposition to complete the transition to a single programme to ensure that we have a more coherent offer to councils, that it is firmly based on the sector-led improvement principles, to ensure that it is complementary to the LGA's policy objectives and to deliver this at a reduced cost.

14. Responsibility for the **commissioning of public health responsibilities for 0-5 year olds** will transfer from NHS England to local government on 1 October 2015. In addition to lobbying for appropriate transfer of funding to support the new responsibilities the LGA has been working jointly with NHS England and Public Health England (PHE) to support councils and areas teams with the transfer of commissioning responsibilities. This includes:

- delivery of nine regional events to share key messages about the transfer;
- developing a dedicated LGA web resource with support tools and updates: www.local.gov.uk/childrens-public-health-transfer; and
- setting up nine Regional Oversight Groups with membership from local government, PHE and NHS England local leads to provide sector led support.

15. Once the funding allocations are confirmed, local areas will be asked to complete a light touch self-assessment, to identify areas of concern or requests for support as areas plan forthe transfer in October 2015. Support will be made available through sector-ledregional groups involving local government, PHE and NHS England if required.

16. TEASC is expected to publish its annual **National Progress Report on Adult Social Care Priorities** for 2013/14 in the next few weeks. It will offer an overview of the progress of councils in England towards Adult Social Care priorities based on Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework data.

Culture, Tourism and Sport Board

17. The Culture, Tourism and Sport Board has contributed towards William Sieghart's independent review of public libraries, making the case for recommendations that reinforce the locally-led nature of the service and build upon the considerable sector-led innovation to date.

18. The report, which was published in December 2014, recognises that libraries are locally-led, acknowledges the breadth of existing innovation and recommends setting up a local government-led Task Force that is jointly accountable to the LGA and Ministers to pursue the report's recommendations and "….to help reinvigorate the public library service in England"

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/388989/Independent_Library_Report-_18_December.pdf.

Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC)

19. Following an evaluation commissioned from Cardiff University the FSMC agreed to review the Operational Assessment and fire peer challenge (jointly developed by the LGA and Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA)) to ensure to it remains fit for purpose and responsive to developments in the sector. Members agreed to re-establish a member-led joint LGA/CFOA working group to review the Operational Assessment and peer challenge and this work was reported to the FSMC in December 2014.

20. There is a very good level of buy in to the current process (all 46 fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) have undertaken the Operational Assessment and fire peer challenge over the last three years) and the working group therefore agreed that the approach needed a refresh rather than a radical overhaul.

21. In the terms of the fire peer challenge it is proposed that:

- there is an increased focus on:
  - leadership, governance, corporate capacity, financial planning and outcomes for communities;
  - the specific priorities and challenges of the FRA – discussed and agreed at the scoping meeting; and
  - gathering and sharing notable practice
- team composition – potential to include a peer from beyond the sector;
- flexible approach to on-site activity and formal follow-up;
- benchmarking – suite of comparative data being developed; and
- refresh of the officer and member peer pool plus training as appropriate.

22. It is proposed that the revised approach is piloted in the first part of 2015, adjusted further as necessary and then applied to all FRAs commissioning a peer challenge to take place from April 2015 onwards.

23. In February 2015, the LGA will be delivering its next **Fire Leadership Essentials Programme**. The LGA has now delivered three free fire leadership essentials programmes drawing attendance from 32 councillors across 22 authorities. The feedback we have received from members has been positive about this programme, and it provides a useful platform for discussion and learning.

24. Following the closure of the FiReControl project in December 2010, the Department consulted on the future of **fire and rescue control services** in January 2011. The overwhelming response to the consultation was that improvements to control rooms remained important, and that locally determined solutions, with central Government support, were the preferred way forward. To deliver these, Government made £81 million available for local improvements. The purpose of the grant was to help fire and rescue authorities improve the efficiency and strengthen the resilience of their local control services, and their ability to interoperate with each other and with other emergency services, thereby strengthening resilience at all levels.

25. The Government's latest update of the future control room services scheme in October 2014 shows the progress being made by the 22 control room projects. The projected savings of the schemes now stand at £130 million, £1 million more than reported in the March 2014 update and, significantly, £2 million more than the original early estimates.

26. Also in October 2014, the Government announced the projects receiving a share of a £75 million transformation fund. In total 37 projects from across the sector received support from the fund. Further information can be found on the Government's website: www.gov.uk/government/news/fire-services-improvement-fund-public-get-a-win-win-better-local-services-and-at-lower-cost

27. In response to a CFOA consultation on **collective procurement** 30 FRAs have indicated they would be willing to start the process of joining up on procurement. The project has received funding to set up a back office function to coordinate procurement activity. This will be based in Devon and Somerset. The spending categories are currently being finalised. The next step will be to agree which authority acts as the technical lead and how the procurement will be done, which could either be via a Professional Buying Organisation or another authority.

People and Places Board

28. The People and Places Board, working jointly with the City Regions Board, has commissioned research to work with a small number of places to exemplify what can be achieved for residents through a **community budgeting type approach** at the local level.

29. The case studies (see **Appendix A)** will map the different approaches in order to provide insights into how a community budget or similar approach can lead to improved outcomes for residents, as well as allowing us to explore the barriers and enablers to this way of working. They will be brought together for publication in February.

30. The People and Places Board along with the City Regions Board and the LGA Executive are considering potential support to areas pursuing the **devolution** agenda. This will be discussed at the LGA Executive on 22 January 2015.

Council	Theme for case study	Brief overview	Emerging cross-cutting themes (please note these will continue to be refined)
Surrey County Council	Surrey Families Programme	Building upon Surrey's response to the Troubled Families programme, this case study will focus on how transformation is leading to innovative approaches in service delivery that will improve outcomes for residents with complex needs.	**Locally flexible governance arrangements and approaches** – all nine places have developed their own structures and approaches to transformation that reflect local circumstances. Within this variability, some common themes are emerging, including: building on existing projects and partnerships, integrating networks and collaborations, developing agreements on pooling resources and staff and practical solutions that can be implemented quickly. **Shared outcomes** – agreeing with partners key indicators of progress to enable a shared focus on service improvements for residents. Many partners felt this was an essential enabler of pooled budgets and transformation. Innovative use of evidence **and data management** – a robust analysis of information on public services and local need was the starting point for all of the places. In many places transformation has been a key driver of new and multi-agency approaches to evidence and data management across whole places, communities and/or cohorts of residents. In turn, this enables a fuller understanding of the challenges to be addressed, and underpins collaborative working. **Culture and behaviours** – the wider shift towards multi-agency working is resulting in changes in organisational culture and behaviours. In particular, more collaboration and willingness to compromise. Many places emphasised the importance of "bottom up"
Essex County Council	Skills for Growth	This case study will allow us to show how implementing a whole-place community budget approach can help to drive local growth by using devolved funding to achieve a better match between local skills provision and the labour market.	
Suffolk County Council	Lowestoft Rising	Drawing upon the Our Place neighbourhood community budget project, the Suffolk case study will explore how pooled funding in one locality enables public agencies to better meet very local challenges and how transformation can be a vehicle for regeneration.	
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Integrated and early support for people with complex needs	The Cheshire West and Chester case study will enable us to examine how public agencies working together across services within an integrated case management system can offer improved services for people with complex needs and achieve efficiency savings through early intervention.	
Derbyshire County Council	Public assets and geospatial mapping	This case study will focus on the use of public assets in Derbyshire and how geospatial mapping and customer segmentation tools are enabling the council to better understand how well the supply of assets is meeting demand from residents and to plan strategically.	
Devon County Council	Local communities identifying and solving their needs	We will focus on Devon County Council's "Delivering Differently" programme, which is a community-led conversation in three towns on public service transformation and the role of communities. This will allow us to focus on approaches to supporting and involving local communities in identifying needs and services, reflecting local characteristics.	
Cornwall Council	Integrated health and social care	This case study will examine how Cornwall is approaching health and social care in Newquay, with a view to scaling it up and rolling out across the county. This will enable us to focus on how multi-agency working can better enable prevention and early intervention and approaches to scaling-up transformation initiatives.	

Council	Theme for case study	Brief overview	Emerging cross-cutting themes (please note these will continue to be refined)
West Yorkshire Combined Authority	Partnership and demand management	Building upon successful collaboration on economic growth, this case study will identify the key lessons to date and share how the Combined Authority is moving into a new phase of deeper joint working, starting with a shared understanding of demand for key services and what this might reveal about different and more efficient ways of organising services.	change that increases the willingness of staff, external partners, and communities to engage with the transformation process. **Leadership** – effective senior leadership was a key factor identified in many places. Enablers include a willingness to collaborate and base discussions on the wider evidence available, providing staff with the skills that empower them to understand and act upon the change process and encouraging external expertise and approaches.
Cambridgeshire County Council	Growth and associated challenges	This case study will focus on economic growth. By analysing partnerships between the county council, city council, district councils and neighbouring Peterborough Council, it will enable us to draw out learning on cross-border transformation and insights into cooperation that are highly relevant given the current debate on greater devolution.	

Note of last Improvement & Innovation Board meeting

Title:	Improvement & Innovation Board
Date:	Monday 13 October 2014
Venue:	Smith Square 3&4, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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

Item	Decisions and actions	Action

1 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

2 Improvement and Innovation Board Membership, Terms of Reference and Outside Bodies

The Chairman welcomed new members and outlined the work of the Improvement and Innovation Board.

The Chairman introduced the report which detailed the Membership and Terms of Reference of the Improvement and Innovation Board. The Chairman brought the new overarching responsibility for improvement across LGA Boards to the attention of Members.

The Chairman clarified that Substitute Members are welcome to attend the Board when not officially substituting. Members are requested to inform their group office and member services if this is the case.

Decisions
Members **noted** the report.

Members also **noted** the rules on the LGA nominations for advisory panel on EU fines adjudication, where they apply.

Members **agreed** to appoint Cllr Tim Cheetham to the Knowledge Navigator Steering Group.

3 Priorities and Work Programme for 2014/15

Dennis Skinner, Head of Leadership and Productivity, introduced the report which detailed the Priorities and Workplan for 2014/15.

In the discussion that followed, members made a number of comments, including:

- The continued need for sector-led support and improvement and for it to be available for all councils.
- The Board's overarching responsibility for improvement across LGA Boards.
- The need to continue to make effective use of public data as a driver for improvement.
- The importance of support and training for member peers.
- The importance of the LGA influencing the current devolution debate.
- The opportunity to continue to learn from good practice, including that from around the world.
- Articulating the finance offer as a core area of work.

Members discussed the strategic themes and the Chairman explained that, in previous years, members had been invited to express a preference for involvement in one or more of the five strategic themes to allow for work to take place between board meetings. The Chairman would write to members to ask their preference and also to fill the vacant post as Transparency lead.

Decisions
Members **noted** the report.

Members **agreed** the five strategic themes for the board and **appointed** portfolio holders to lead on each area, as follows:-

Innovation	**Cllr Peter Fleming**
Leadership	**Cllr Judi Billing**
Sector-led Improvement	**Cllr Jill Shortland OBE**
Transparency	**Vacant**
Productivity	**Cllr Shirley Flint**

Actions
- To take away feedback and further develop the Priorities and Workplan for 2014/15.
- To write to members regarding their strategic theme preferences.

4   **LGA Boards' Improvement Activity**

Dennis Skinner, Head of Leadership and Productivity, introduced the report which detailed the improvement work being undertaken by other LGA Boards and the Improvement and Innovation Board's oversight of this work.

Members discussed their overarching responsibility for improvement and the need to add value to the work of the other Boards. They discussed the

need to find new approaches to engage with Board work.

Regarding the work of other Boards, members made a number of comments, including:
- The importance of helping councils and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) reps to understand each other's agenda and language.
- Health improvement programmes surrounding the Better Care Fund and the Care Act.
- Promoting and sharing innovation in skills and jobs.

Decision
Members **noted** the improvement activity undertaken by LGA Boards as detailed in the report.

5   **Productivity programme update**

Cllr Shirley Flint introduced the Productivity Programme update, which, as well as an update, detailed the proposed LGA response to the EU Procurement Directive consultation.

Members very much supported the programme and highlighted the need to continue promoting aspects of the programme further.

Members discussed the response to the EU Procurement Directive consultation and in particular raised:
- Concerns about the procurement system denying opportunities for smaller and medium sized enterprises to complete Pre-Qualification Questionnaires and its impact on social enterprises.
- The impact of portal based systems on smaller enterprises.
- The potential impact of the Trans-Atlantic Trade Treaty.
- As regards the wider productivity work, members question the impact and value for money of Broadband investment.

Decisions
Members **noted** the report.

Members **agreed** the response, with some additions being made following their discussion.

Actions
- To take away feedback on the consultation and make the necessary additions prior to submission.

6   **New Highlighting Leadership Programme - Progress Update**

Cllr Judi Billing introduced the report which provided an update on the new Highlighting Leadership Programme provided by the LGA.

Members discussed the increased number of graduates and councils involved in the National Graduate Development Programme (ngdp). Members were very positive about the scheme and its importance. Members discussed the high levels of uptake, by both graduates and councils, in London and the South East and asked about efforts to increase engagement in other regions.

Members discussed the increase in uptake of the political leadership programme and the need for similar offers regarding effective and responsible opposition. They highlighted opportunities to link the programme with other external public health and care integration programmes.They also raised the need to react to demand for programmes and support depending upon the electoral cycle.

Decision
The report was **noted** by members.

Actions
  • To provide members with breakdowns similar to that provided for the ngdp for other programmes.

7   Developing the LGA's Sector-Led Improvement Finance Offer

Cllr Jill Shortland OBE introduced the report which focused on the need to support councils in maintaining financial stability against a background of change and increased financial risk.

Members discussed the proposed revised sector-led improvement finance offer, focusing on a need for a wider discussion with the sector on the topic. While the finance offer is well received, it is possible that it may not go far enough in some cases and it would be important to understand what councils feel they need.

Decision
Members **noted** the report.

Actions
  • Continue to develop the Sector-led improvement finance offer and engage the sector in a wide discussion on the subject.

8   Transparency

The Chairman introduced the report which provided details of the Local Government Transparency Code and the proposal for a transparency strategy for the sector.

Members welcomed the proposed transparency strategy.

Decisions

Members **noted** the report and the progress on the open data Breakthrough Fund programme.

Members **agreed** the outline transparency strategy.

9   Centre for Public Scrutiny and Local Partnerships

The Chairman introduced the annual reports of the Centre for Public Scrutiny and Local Partnerships.

Decision
Members **noted** the reports from the Centre for Public Scrutiny and Local Partnerships.

10   Sector-led improvement: a review

Decision
Members **noted** the report.

Actions
- To take away feedback and develop further.

11   Child Sexual Exploitation

Decision
Members **noted** the report.

12   Note of the previous meeting - 15 July 2014

The minutes were agreed.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks District Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Jill Shortland OBE	Somerset County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Judi Billing	North Hertfordshire District Council
	Cllr Shirley Flint	North Kesteven District Council
Members	Cllr Claudia Webbe	Islington Council
	Cllr Darren Cooper	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Bob Price	Oxford City Council
	Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
	Cllr Roy Perry	Hampshire County Council
	Cllr Teresa O'Neill	Bexley Council
	Cllr Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Cllr Tony Jackson	East Herts Council
	Cllr Mrs Theresa Higgins	Essex County Council
	Cllr John Blackie	North Yorkshire County Council
	Mr Richard Priestman	Local Government Improvement and Development
	Mr Philip Sellwood	Energy Saving Trust (EST)
Apologies	Cllr Phil Davies	Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Kate Hollern	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
	Cllr Imran Hussain	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr Glen Miller	Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Local
Government
Association

LGA location map

Local Government Association

Local Government House
Smith Square
London SW1P 3HZ

Tel: 020 7664 3131
Fax: 020 7664 3030
Email: info@local.gov.uk
Website: **www.local.gov.uk**

Public transport

Local Government House is well served by public transport. The nearest mainline stations are: Victoria and Waterloo: the local underground stations are **St James's Park** (Circle and District Lines), **Westminster** (Circle, District and Jubilee Lines), and **Pimlico** (Victoria Line) - all about 10 minutes walk away.

Bus routes – Millbank

87 Wandsworth - Aldwych

3 Crystal Palace - Brixton - Oxford Circus

For further information, visit the Transport for London website at **www.tfl.gov.uk**

Cycling facilities

The nearest Barclays cycle hire racks are in Smith Square. Cycle racks are also available at Local Government House. Please telephone the LGA on 020 7664 3131.

Buses 3 and 87 travel along Millbank, and the 507 between Victoria and Waterloo stops in Horseferry Road close to Dean Bradley Street.

Bus routes – Horseferry Road

507 Waterloo - Victoria

C10 Canada Water - Pimlico - Victoria

88 Camden Town - Whitehall - Westminster - Pimlico - Clapham Common

Central London Congestion Charging Zone

Local Government House is located within the congestion charging zone.

For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at **www.cclondon.com**

Car parks

Abingdon Street Car Park (off Great College Street)

Horseferry Road Car Park Horseferry Road/Arneway Street. Visit the website at **www.westminster.gov.uk/parking**