

# Resources Board

## Agenda

Tuesday, 3 March 2020  
2.00 pm

Bevin Hall, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square,  
London, SW1P 3HZ

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Resources Board  
3 March 2020

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There will be a meeting of the Resources Board at **2.00 pm on Tuesday, 3 March 2020** Bevin Hall, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

**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 in advance of the meeting. Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

**Apologies:**

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

<b>Conservative:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: <a href="mailto:lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk">lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Labour:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: <a href="mailto:Martha.Lauchlan@local.gov.uk">Martha.Lauchlan@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Liberal Democrat:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: <a href="mailto:libdem@local.gov.uk">libdem@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Independent:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: <a href="mailto:independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk">independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk</a>

**Location:**

A map showing the location of 18 Smith Square is printed on the back cover.

**LGA Contact:**

Jonathan Bryant  
[jonathan.bryant@local.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.bryant@local.gov.uk) / 020 76643004 / 07464652746

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As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme a Carer's Allowance of £9.00 per hour or £10.55 if receiving London living wage is available to cover the cost of dependants (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

## Resources Board – Membership 2019/2020

Councillor	Authority
<b>Conservative ( 7 )</b>	
Cllr Tim Oliver (Vice Chairman)	Surrey County Council
Cllr Philip Atkins OBE	Staffordshire County Council
Cllr David Finch	Essex County Council
Cllr Daniel Humphreys	Worthing Borough Council
Cllr Peter Jackson	Northumberland Council
Cllr Roger Phillips	Herefordshire Council
Cllr Richard Wenham	Central Bedfordshire Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Andrew Leadbetter	Devon County Council
Cllr David Leaf	Bexley Council
Cllr Byron Rhodes	Leicestershire County Council
<b>Labour ( 7 )</b>	
Cllr Richard Watts (Chair)	Islington Council
Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE	Stevenage Borough Council
Cllr Tony Newman	Croydon Council
Cllr Tom Beattie	Corby Borough Council
Cllr Peter Marland	Milton Keynes Council
Cllr Sue Murphy CBE	Manchester City Council
Cllr Erica Lewis	Lancaster City Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Terry Paul	Newham London Borough Council
Cllr John Merry CBE	Salford City Council
<b>Liberal Democrat ( 2 )</b>	
Cllr Keith House (Deputy Chair)	Eastleigh Borough Council
Cllr Adam Paynter	Cornwall Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Mike Bell	North Somerset Council
<b>Independent ( 2 )</b>	
Cllr Jason Zadrozny (Deputy Chair)	Ashfield District Council
Cllr Phelim MacCafferty	Brighton & Hove City Council
<b>Substitutes</b>	
Cllr Loic Rich	Cornwall Council

## LGA Resources Board – Attendance 2019-2020

	10/09/19	19/11/19
<b>Councillors</b>		
<b>Conservative Group</b>		
Cllr Tim Oliver	Yes	Yes
Cllr Philip Atkins OBE	Yes	No
Cllr David Finch	Yes	Yes
Cllr Daniel Humphreys	Yes	Yes
Cllr Peter Jackson	No	Yes
Cllr Roger Phillips	No	No
Cllr Richard Wenham	Yes	Yes
<b>Labour Group</b>		
Cllr Richard Watts	Yes	Yes
Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Yes	Yes
Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE	Yes	No
Cllr Tony Newman	Yes	Yes
Cllr Tom Beattie	Yes	Yes
Cllr Peter Marland	Yes	No
Cllr Sue Murphy CBE	Yes	Yes
<b>Lib Dem Group</b>		
Cllr Keith House	Yes	Yes
Cllr Adam Paynter	No	Yes
<b>Independent Group</b>		
Cllr Jason Zadrozny	Yes	No
Cllr Phelim MacCafferty	Yes	Yes
<b>Substitutes/Observers</b>		
Cllr Andrew Leadbetter	No	Yes
Cllr David Leaf	Yes	No
Cllr Byron Rhodes	No	No
Cllr Terry Paul	Yes	Yes
Cllr John Merry CBE	No	No
Cllr Erica Lewis	Yes	No
Cllr Mike Bell	No	No
Cllr Loic Rich	No	Yes

## Agenda

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### Resources Board

Tuesday 3 March 2020

2.00 pm

Bevin Hall, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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**Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday, 12 May 2020, 2.00 pm, Westminster Room,  
8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ





## **Local government finance update**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

This report provides an update on local government finance work which is not covered under other items on the agenda.

#### **Recommendations**

That members note this update paper.

#### **Action**

Officers will proceed with the delivery of the LGA work programme.

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## **Local government finance update**

### **Background**

1. This report provides an update on local government finance work which is not covered under other items on the agenda.

### **2020/21 Local government finance settlement**

2. [In the 2019 Spending Round](#), the Chancellor announced a one-year settlement for the year 2020/21. The LGA issued [an on-the-day briefing](#) and [a press reaction](#).
3. Further details were provided in a [technical consultation in advance of the local government finance settlement](#) which ran from 3 October to 31 October 2019, to which [the LGA responded](#).
4. The [provisional 2020/21 local government finance settlement](#) was announced on 20 December. The LGA [submitted its response](#) to the provisional settlement on 16 January, and the [final settlement](#) was announced on 6 February.
5. The settlement followed the proposals in the technical consultation very closely. In total, assuming that councils use their council tax flexibility in full, core spending power will rise by 6.4 per cent (£2.9 billion).
6. Key features of the settlement included the following:
  - 6.1. Uprating the business rates baseline and Revenue Support Grant in line with inflation.
  - 6.2. Continuing the elimination of 'negative Revenue Support Grant' funded through central resources.
  - 6.3. 2020/21 council tax referendum principles:
    - 6.3.1. a core council tax referendum principle of up to 2 per cent for shire counties, unitary authorities, London boroughs, the Greater London Authority (GLA) general precept, and fire authorities;
    - 6.3.2. a bespoke council tax referendum principle of 2 per cent or £5, whichever is higher, for shire districts;
    - 6.3.3. continuing the adult social care (ASC) precept at an additional 2 per cent;
    - 6.3.4. setting no council tax referendum principles for mayoral combined authorities (MCAs) or parish councils;
  - 6.4. A new social care grant of £1.41 billion in 2020/21 of which £1 billion is new money, most of which is to be distributed using the Adult Social Care Relative Needs Formula but including a sum of £150 million to equalise the impact of the council tax adult social care precept;

- 6.5. Maintaining existing improved Better Care Fund funding at 2019-20 levels (£1.837 billion), as well as incorporating the £240 million which was allocated as Winter Pressures Grant in 2019-20 into the improved Better Care Fund, with the same distribution as 2019/20;
  - 6.6. Retaining the £900 million top-slice of Revenue Support Grant to fund a new round of New Homes Bonus (NHB) allocations in 2020-21, in addition to an estimated £7 million from departmental budgets. The 2020/21 element of NHB will be paid for one year only. The legacy payments of the bonus in respect of growth in 2019/20 and previous years will continue to be paid in 2020/21. The Government stated that it will consult on the future of the housing incentive in the Spring, including moving to a new, more targeted approach which is “aligned with other measures around planning performance”.
7. The local government finance settlement was confirmed in Parliament following a debate on 24 February. LGA provided a briefing for MPs ahead of the debate.

#### **2020 March Budget**

8. On 14 October, the Chancellor announced that the 2019 Budget would take place on 6 November. However, this was cancelled on the announcement of the General Election. Following the Election, the Chancellor announced that the Budget will take place on 11 March 2020.
9. The LGA [submitted its representation](#) in line with the 7 February deadline. This submission is an updated version of the LGA's 2019 Autumn Budget submission which was cleared by LGA Executive in October 2019. It focusses on the following themes:
  - 9.1. Infrastructure investment – on the expectation that this is the final chance to influence the National Infrastructure Strategy before it is launched;
  - 9.2. Climate change and the environment;
  - 9.3. UK's exit from the European Union and devolution;
  - 9.4. Local government finance – with a primary focus on business rates reform;
  - 9.5. Sustainable funding for local services – to set the stage for our 2020 Spending Review work.
10. Officers will prepare an on-the-day briefing summarising the key announcements of the Budget as usual.

#### **Fair Funding Review**

11. On 24 January, the LGA [published its illustrations](#) of the potential percentage change to the relative needs shares of individual councils under the proposed adult social care relative needs formulas. The LGA's stated aims were:

- 11.1. to provide a high-level indication of the impact of these two new formulas on individual councils on the basis of best available information, with clear caveats around the limitations of the analysis and making clear that no conclusions should be drawn;
  - 11.2. to reinforce the point that the results of the Review need to be introduced alongside additional funding to avoid any individual council losing out; and
  - 11.3. to encourage Government to publish official exemplifications as soon as possible to allow councils to meaningfully plan their future budgets.
12. This was followed by information releases from other stakeholders:
- 12.1. On 25 January, the LGA Labour Group released its exemplifications of what the percentage changes illustrated by the LGA could mean in cash terms (this was [published by the Guardian](#)). This required an assumption to be made about how much funding would be distributed by each formula.
  - 12.2. On 31 January, the [Local Government Chronicle featured information](#) from a confidential briefing by the County Councils' Network to its members on its modelling of the overall impact of the Review.
13. These releases stimulated the political debate on the direction of the Review. In particular, the LGA analysis featured heavily in the 5 February Parliament debate on local government finance. Closing the debate, the Minister for Local Government and Homelessness confirmed that the Government hoped to share the emerging results of their work with the sector by the end of the month, with a full consultation in the spring.
14. A meeting of the needs and redistribution technical working group is scheduled for 25 March.

## **Business rates**

15. In the [Queens Speech](#), the Government announced business rates reliefs for 2020/21. The Financial Secretary to the Treasury confirmed in a [Written Ministerial Statement](#) that the discretionary reliefs for 2020/21 relating to the retail discount, pubs and local newspaper will be fully funded including new burdens funding for administrative and IT costs. This is something the LGA called for. The Government expects local authorities to ensure changes are applied for the start of the 2020/21 billing period. The Government published a [Business Rates Information Letter](#) giving further details with links to amended [guidance for the retail discount](#) and [pubs relief guidance](#) for local authorities.
16. As regards continuing work on business rates retention, the System Design and Implementation Working Groups met on 28 January. They continued discussing the alternative model of business rates retention which, if implemented, will adjust for the impact of appeals. The papers are on our [website](#). Discussions also covered:
- 16.1. how to deal with provisions, safety net and levy arrangements;
  - 16.2. proposed changes to the Central Rating List; and

- 16.3. the distribution of any levy surpluses to authorities.
17. In January 2020 the LGA [published](#) the results of a 2019 survey on Business Rates avoidance. This estimated that around one per cent of total business rates income, or £250 million, is lost to business rates avoidance each year and [called](#) on the Government to bring forward changes to legislation to tackle this avoidance, along the lines of those being proposed in Wales and Scotland, to be implemented in 2021. In a [written answer](#) the MHCLG minister welcomed the survey and said the Department would work with the Local Government Association to evaluate its findings and better understand the causes of business rates avoidance.
18. Wider LGA work on business rates is covered elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.
- LGA funding gap analysis**
19. One of the underpinning elements of the LGA's Spending Review campaign has been our analysis of the funding gap facing local services. This effectively highlighted the extent of the financial challenge on the following basis:
- 19.1. Resources needed to maintain current level of access to, and quality of services, and meet future demand and inflation pressures; which is compared to
- 19.2. an estimate of funding that might be available to local government in the future under the current Government policy direction.
20. Following the 2019 Spending Round, officers have been revisiting the analysis. This also includes a reassessment of the underlying assumptions on demand pressures.
21. The technical work needed to re-set the LGA's funding gap and cost pressure analysis is nearly complete. Officers are waiting for new forecasts from the Office for Budget responsibility which will accompany the 2020 Budget. This is so that the underlying figures can be updated on the basis of these revised forecasts and relevant decisions made by the Government as part of the Budget.
22. At the time of writing, the LGA Chairman and Group Leaders were due to sign off the refreshed set of underlying assumptions in their meeting on 26 February, in line with authority delegated by the LGA Executive Advisory Board.

**Public Works Loans Board Interest rates**

23. As reported to the last meeting of the Board, on 9 October [HM Treasury announced](#) an immediate 1per cent increase in the rate charged by the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) on new loans to local authorities.
24. Since then it has been clear that local authorities have been reviewing their approach to borrowing. The amount of borrowing from the PWLB fell dramatically in the months following the rate rise. For example, before the rise, in September 2019 local authorities borrowed £1.6 billion from the PWLB, but in November 2019, after the rise, the amount borrowed was only £80 million.

25. We have continued discussions on the impact of the increase in rates with officials at both MHCLG and HM Treasury and have supplied some examples of capital schemes that are now being reviewed by councils in the light of the increased cost of borrowing. The issue was raised by members with the Local Government Minister early in the new year.
26. In the Budget Submission made in February (referred to above) we called for two actions relating to this to be included in the forthcoming March Budget
- 26.1. All the additional profit made by the PWLB from the increase in interest rates to be ring-fenced and used to provide additional funding for local government.
- 26.2. The implementation of a similar scheme to the local infrastructure rate scheme, which made lending available at gilts plus 60 basis points. This scheme to be for crucial projects, including housing, would enable councils to deliver projects vital to the National Infrastructure Strategy which would otherwise be under threat.
27. Councils may also wish to seek alternative sources of loan finance such as the Municipal Bonds Agency. The Agency has launched its first bond, for Lancashire County Council, and the first pooled bond is expected to follow close behind.

### **Audit Issues**

28. At the last meeting of the Board members approved the LGA's [response](#) to the [consultation](#) by the National Audit Office (NAO) on the Local Audit Code of Practice. This code will come into effect from April 2020. The NAO published the [outcome of the consultation](#) in January and has published the [new draft code](#) to be laid before Parliament. The new draft code is in line with the consultation last year. The NAO will now work on detailed statutory Auditor Guidance Notes that will support the new code and will consult on them publicly later in 2020.
29. Public Sector Audit and Appointments (PSAA) are undertaking their [annual consultation](#) on the scale of audit fees, for 2020/21. It proposes to leave the fee scale unchanged from 2019/20. The consultation has been held back to wait for the publication of the Local Audit Code of Practice referred to above. Consequently, the deadline for responses is very short. We will be drafting a response which will be submitted to Resources Board lead members for approval. Any comments from Resources Board members on the content of the response are welcomed either at the meeting or by email to [bevis.ingram@local.gov.uk](mailto:bevis.ingram@local.gov.uk).
30. The Resources Board also approved, subject to minor changes, the LGA's [submission](#) to the [call for views](#) for the Independent Review of Local Authority Financial Reporting and External Audit in England (the "Redmond Review") That review is still ongoing and the review team have re-commenced discussions with stakeholders in the sector, following a pause during the General Election period (members will recall that Sir Tony Redmond was unable to attend the last Board meeting as originally planned).
31. The issue of delays to the completion of the 2018/19 audits is also still being pursued. Following the September meeting of the Board the Chair wrote to Local Government Minister to raise concerns. A response to this letter was received in February and is

included as **Appendix A**. In his response the Minister acknowledges that this is an important issue and that MHCLG are monitoring the situation and liaising with other Government departments affected, notably Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). We called for the audit deadline to be put back to September. In his response the Minister said he would review this in the light of recommendations made by the Redmond Review.

32. In February 2020 the Chief Executives of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales (ICAEW) and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (Cipfa) wrote a joint letter to the Minister on the issue of audit delays. In this letter they called for the audit deadline for local authorities to be put back to September.

### **Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally Strategy**

33. The Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally (FFCL) Board is an officer level partnership between local authorities and expert partners. The Board is supported by both the LGA and by MHCLG and under their guidance it produces a [Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally Strategy](#). All time spent by Board members is provided on a pro bono basis by the organisations supporting the Board. The strategy is a good example of how councils can come together for the overall benefit of the sector and a testament to local government's ability to organise itself to respond to challenges.
34. Over the past year the Board has been working on revising the strategy which was last published in 2016. It has carried out research into best practice in the sector and has run a series of workshops that have involved representatives from over 250 councils, widening the scope of the strategy beyond councils as corporate bodies, to include the impact on individuals and communities and the role councils can play in prevention and detection. The refreshed strategy will be launched at a conference on 26 March in central London. The strategy will include a forward in the name of the Chair of Resources Board, to be cleared in discussion with the Board's lead members.

### **National Audit Office (NAO) report on local authority commercial property investments**

35. The NAO have published [a report](#) on investment in commercial properties by local authorities. The report recognises that councils are using these investments to help address funding shortfalls, and to contribute to their local economy and environment. The report includes a lot of useful data about the scale of investment and estimates of related borrowing undertaken by councils. We issued [a press release](#) in response, in which we reiterated that councils follow strict rules to ensure they invest wisely.

### **Next steps**

36. Members are asked to note this update paper.
37. Officers will proceed with the delivery of the LGA work programme.

**Implications for Wales**

38. Local government funding is a devolved matter and business rates retention and the Fair Funding Review policies are limited to English local authorities. We will engage with the Welsh LGA on matters that relate to both England and Wales.

**Financial Implications**

39. This is part of the LGA's core programme of work and as such has been budgeted for in core work programme budgets.





Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

Cllr Richard Watts  
Chair, Resources Committee  
Local Government Association  
18 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3HZ

Agenda Item 2  
**Luke Hall MP**  
*Minister for Local Government and Homelessness*

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local  
Government**

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Our Ref: 5032914

03 FEB 2020

Thank you for your correspondence dated 11 October and 3 January about the delay in finalisation of the audit of 2018/19 local authority accounts. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

I note your views about the change to the timing of local government accounts publication contributing to the delays. As part of his independent review into the arrangements in place to support the transparency and quality of local authority financial reporting and external audit in England, Sir Tony Redmond will be considering the current publication deadline for accounts. I am pleased to hear that the LGA is actively engaging with the Review. I await Sir Tony's recommendations with interest and we will consider them carefully.

I acknowledge the LGA's continuing concerns about the delays in closing accounts this year, which has affected many councils and agree that this is unacceptable. Councils rely on the timely auditing of their accounts to be able to make budgeting decisions and to provide reassurance to others of their financial health in relation to grant claims, applications and borrowing requests. My understanding is that most of the outstanding accounts are due to be closed by the end of January.

I am also pleased to hear that you are engaging with PSAA directly on this issue and would like to reassure you that we are also working closely with PSAA and other stakeholders to monitor progress and assess the impact of these delays, especially where there may be a knock-on effect in relation to payment of claims going forward, such as the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) housing benefit claim mentioned in your letter.

We are continuing to monitor the situation and are in contact with other Whitehall departments - including DWP - to make them aware of the reason for the delays and ensure that councils are not penalised for something that is beyond their control. This is certainly not a situation that we would want to see repeated next year and we are working hard to ensure that as far as possible, sufficient mitigations are in place to ensure that this does not happen.

Thank you for writing in on this important matter.

LUKE HALL MP



## **Council Tax Recovery**

### **Purpose of report**

For information and discussion

### **Summary**

This presentation will provide members with an opportunity to hear about Citizens Advice research on council tax recovery in the context of LGA's work on Reshaping Financial Support.

### **Recommendation**

That Resources Board members note the report and advise on appropriate next steps for Citizens Advice and LGA.

### **Actions**

As directed by members

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## Council Tax Recovery

### Summary

1. Debt recovery and support for indebted households are key strands within the LGA's work on Reshaping Financial Support (RFS).
2. Citizen's Advice are one of a range of partners and stakeholder we are working with at both a national and local level.
3. The LGA worked with Citizens Advice to introduce a [voluntary protocol for council tax recovery](#) to support good debt collection practices.
4. In April 2019 the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) announced a [review into the way council tax debt is recovered](#). We have yet to see the results of the review. It has not considered the impact of Government regulation.
5. [Citizen's Advice have recently done further work and research](#) to understand the problems faced by households who may be struggling to pay council tax or council tax debts, and what constraints councils face in developing fair and effective approaches to recovery and debt advice / support
6. This presentation will give Resources Board members an opportunity to hear from Citizens Advice about their research and to advise both Citizens Advice and LGA officers on appropriate next steps

### Background

7. The LGA is delivering a programme of work on Reshaping Financial Support (RFS), to identify and share good practice and inform policy development across the full range of direct and indirect financial support and advice that councils provide to low income households.
8. Fair and effective debt recovery and support for households in problem debt are key strands within the RFS programme. The LGA is contributing to discussions with Government, councils and key stakeholders on several pertinent policy areas including:
  - 8.1. Support for people moving on to, or adjusting to, Universal Credit and other aspects of welfare reform
  - 8.2. The Cabinet Office Fairness Group and the cross-Government debt strategy
  - 8.3. HMT Breathing Space scheme, which is bringing in legislation to give people in problem debt the right to legal protection from creditor action while they receive debt advice and enter an appropriate debt solution.

8.4. MHCLG review of approaches to Council Tax recovery

9. The LGA is keen to ensure that it is working with key partners and stakeholders, including Citizens Advice, at both a national and local level to develop effective integrated approaches to improving outcomes for low income households and people in financial difficulty.

**Citizens Advice and Council Tax Recovery**

10. Citizens Advice is pushing for changes to how council tax debt is collected because they have identified that council tax debt is a significant issue for their clients, and collection is the key problem. In their experience many people in council tax debt can't afford to pay and have other problems, but the debt collection process isn't designed with this in mind and can push people further into hardship.
11. Citizens Advice has worked closely with councils to design asks around how to make the system better and more efficient for councils themselves, speaking to representatives from 40 councils and with the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV).
12. The Council Tax Protocol was agreed and introduced to try and make change without the need for a change to regulations, but Citizens Advice research shows there are limits to what can be achieved with a voluntary approach.
13. There's currently a Government review underway into the guidance around council tax collection but based on their research it is Citizens Advice's view that for meaningful improvements to be enabled the regulations need to be changed. The system needs to be flexible, fair, and effective for councils. Citizens Advice has proposed changes to the regulations that include stopping people becoming liable to pay an annual bill when they miss a payment and giving councils the power to collect debt more fairly.

**Next steps**

14. LGA to integrate further work on debt recovery into its work on Reshaping Financial Support



## **LGA Business Plan for 2019-22**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

The LGA business plan sets out how the Local Government Association (LGA) will continue to support and be an advocate for councils in the next three years. Through our #CouncilsCan campaign we will make the case for a new settlement for English local government that gives councils and councillors the powers, freedoms, funding and certainty to transform lives and local economies, respond to climate change and lead the sustainable development agenda.

The LGA Business Plan for 2019-22 is attached as **Appendix A**

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the new Business Plan and reflect on how the Resources Board work programmes link to it.

### **Action**

Officers to take forward comments for future board work.

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# LGA business plan 2019-2022

We are the national voice of local government, working with councils to **support, promote and improve**

# Introduction

Every day councils make a difference, delivering essential services that improve the lives of millions. By building new homes, creating jobs and school places, providing dignified care for vulnerable people and boosting economic growth, councils support our nation to succeed.

Residents trust their councillors to make the right decisions for them and their families, now and in the future. As democratically elected leaders, councillors play a central role in meeting the challenges we face – whether by providing quality care, giving children and young people the best start in life, combatting climate change and its impacts or helping local businesses to flourish. Councils provide clear and effective leadership to their places and communities that is successful, transparent and accountable.

This business plan sets out how the Local Government Association (LGA) will continue to support and be an advocate for councils in the next three years. Through our #CouncilsCan campaign we will make the case for a new settlement for English local government that gives councils and councillors the powers, freedoms, funding and certainty to transform lives and local economies, respond to climate change and lead the sustainable development agenda.

Promoting the value of local government and supporting councils in their roles as community leaders remains our central mission. As we move into a critical period for local public services – a three-year spending review, greater devolution of powers to local areas and the opportunity to make the case for a long-term settlement for social care – we will continue to prioritise the things that you tell us are important, working with government and Parliament to ensure that those priorities are reflected in national decision-making. Through our sector-led improvement offer we will continue to support councils continuously to improve and innovate.

This is our promise to you, our members, and we look forward to continuing to work on your behalf.



**Councillor James Jamieson**  
Chairman



**Mark Lloyd**  
Chief Executive

# Working for councils

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The LGA is the national membership body for local authorities. Our core membership is made up of English councils and Welsh councils through the Welsh LGA.

We are politically-led and cross-party and we work on behalf of councils to give local government a strong, credible voice with national government.

We aim to influence and set the political agenda on the issues that matter to councils so they can deliver local solutions to national problems. We fight local government's corner, supporting councils through challenging times and focusing our efforts where we can have real impact.

We also provide membership services to other organisations through our associate scheme, including fire and rescue authorities, national parks authorities, town councils, police & crime commissioners and elected mayors of combined authorities.

## Our vision for local government

Our vision for local government is one of a vibrant local democracy, where powers from Westminster are devolved to local areas, and citizens have a meaningful vote and real reason to participate in civic and community life.

Economic growth offers prosperity to every place, with well-targeted and planned investment in infrastructure, training and housing that leads to jobs and a supply of affordable homes.

Public services focus on preventing problems as well as picking up the pieces, delivering positive outcomes for people of all ages in an environmentally sustainable way. Joined up services are built around people and their needs, enhancing the lives of individuals, families and communities and continuing to make local areas better places to live now and for future generations.

# Our purpose and priorities

Our work on behalf of local government falls under two overarching themes

**National voice of local government**

We campaign to influence the political agenda and secure funding and powers on behalf of councils and we promote and defend the reputation of the sector

**Supporting councils**

We support councils continuously to improve and innovate through our programme of practical peer based support underpinned by strong local leadership, through our support for collective legal actions and through our service delivery partnerships.

Our business – Underpinning our work on behalf of councils is an efficient, cost effective and forward-thinking business; we are politically led, committed to equalities and diversity and we aim to operate in an environmentally and financially sustainable way.

This three-year rolling business plan sets out our key priorities and commitments and demonstrates how our work will contribute to the delivery of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

# The national voice of local government

We lobby and campaign to influence the political agenda and secure funding and powers on behalf of councils and we promote and defend the reputation of the sector. Over the next 12 months we will focus on the six areas that councils tell us matter most to them:

- Funding for local government**

Fair and sustainable funding enables councils to plan and deliver essential public services beyond the short term, to raise more funds locally and to promote greater collective working across local public services.
- Adult social care, health and wellbeing**

Sustainable funding and better integration with health services enable councils to continue to support people to live safe, healthy, active, independent lives and to promote wellbeing and resilience for all ages.
- Children, education and schools**

Councils have the powers and resources they need to bring partners together to deliver inclusive and high quality education, help children and young people to fulfil their potential and offer lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Places to live and work**

Councils lead the way in building the homes that people need, driving inclusive and sustainable economic growth and creating safe and resilient communities that are great places to live.
- Strong local democracy**

A refocus on local democratic leadership and a shift in power to local communities leads to greater diversity of elected representatives, high standards of conduct and strong, flexible local governance.
- Sustainability and climate action**

Councils take the lead in driving urgent actions in their local areas to combat climate change and its impacts and to deliver zero net carbon by 2030.

# 17 Goals to Transform Our World

The Sustainable Development Goals are a call for action by all countries – poor, rich and middle-income – to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection.

1

NO POVERTY



2

ZERO HUNGER



3

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



4

QUALITY EDUCATION



5

GENDER EQUALITY



6

CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



7

AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



8

DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



9

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



10

REDUCED INEQUALITIES



11

SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



12

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13

CLIMATE ACTION



14

LIFE BELOW WATER



15

LIFE ON LAND



16

PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17

PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



For more information click on each button above to be taken through to its respective goal.



# Funding for local government

Fair and sustainable funding enables councils to plan and deliver essential public services beyond the short term, to raise more funds locally and to promote greater collective working across local public services.

## #CouncilsCan

With the right funding and powers, councils can continue to lead their local areas, improve residents' lives, reduce demand for public services and save money for the taxpayer.

### **The benefits to the country of investing in local government are clear and understood – we will:**

- in advance of the 2020 Spending Review, and through our #CouncilsCan campaign, continue to highlight the pressures on all services and press for funding that reflects current and future demand, particularly in the areas of housing, homelessness, adult social care and children's services
- produce evidence of the impact, value and efficiency of local government services
- continue to take a lead with local and central government on the implementation of further business rates retention and press for full retention of business rates
- work with local and central government on a distribution mechanism for local government funding that supports effective long term planning, is an evidence-based reflection of needs and resources and is simpler and more transparent with appropriate transition mechanisms.

### **People have a meaningful local voice on a wide range of tax and spending decisions – we will:**

- press for freedoms that lead to greater local financial autonomy with a view to achieving local control over and retention of both council tax and business rates
- lobby for improvements to the system of business rates to help tackle business rates avoidance and develop proposals to improve the system, including valuation and the appeals process
- press for legislation to allow councils to raise more funds locally including new local taxes and set fees and charges which fully recover costs.



**Councils are able to access a range of sources of finance to encourage investment and create jobs, supported by an appropriate financial framework – we will:**

- further develop policy on capital financing and investing and contribute to national reviews in these areas so that they support and enable prudent investment and financial management
- contribute to reviews of the accounting and financial regulatory framework for councils to ensure it is appropriate, not over restrictive and balanced with local freedom and accountability
- work with the United Kingdom Municipal Bonds Agency to develop and promote this new borrowing vehicle for councils and help them achieve a first bond issue.

**Fair and affordable pay awards enable councils to recruit and retain good staff – we will:**

- convene the employer side of the collective bargaining arrangements to agree equitable and affordable pay awards for more than two million local authority employees
- provide evidence to the school teachers' pay review body and Low Pay Commission in relation to the National Minimum and Living Wages.





# Adult social care, health and wellbeing

Sustainable funding and better integration with health services enable councils to continue to support people to live safe, healthy, active, independent lives and to promote wellbeing and resilience for all ages.

## The lives we want to lead

We want to build a society where everyone is supported to live a healthy, fulfilled and independent life, staying at home and contributing to family and community life for as long as possible. However escalating funding pressures and increasing demand are threatening services that improve lives and communities.

Our campaign builds on our 2018 green paper and consultation and calls for sustainable long-term funding that gives people the care and support they need now and in the future.

### **Councils secure sufficient resources to deliver effective, integrated social care services – we will:**

- continue to lobby for the short, medium and long-term financial sustainability of adult social care and support that is fit for the future
- through our campaign 'The lives we want to lead', and building on the findings of our green paper consultation, press for real change in the funding of adult social care, arguing that all options, including national taxation, should be considered
- work with government to agree a sustainable, long term funding deal for public health.

### **Councils lead the debate on the future vision for health and social care – we will:**

- develop a clear vision of councils' role in planning and delivering integrated health and care systems and continue to promote health and wellbeing boards as leaders of health and care
- support councils and their partners to develop place-based and person-centred care and support, delivered through community-based multi-disciplinary settings

- continue to press for a long term policy framework for the Better Care Fund (BCF), with lighter touch reporting and greater emphasis on local targets
- continue to lobby for councils and councillors to have a key role in sustainability and transformation partnerships, integrated care systems and wider NHS planning arrangements.

**Councils support older people, disabled people and people in vulnerable circumstances – we will:**

- support councils to tackle the challenges and exploit the opportunities of a population with increasingly complex needs, including improving dementia and mental health services, carers' support and support for those with autism and/or learning difficulties
- continue to support councils to deliver the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

**Councils work actively with the NHS to build health and care services around the needs of local populations – we will:**

- work to ensure that sustainability and transformation partnerships and integrated care systems drive genuine and sustainable transformation in patient experience and health outcomes
- support councils to manage and develop their local care market, commission services and put in place contingency arrangements to mitigate against provider failure
- influence implementation of the NHS long term plan to reflect local government's priorities.

**Councils have a central role in promoting health and wellbeing locally – we will:**

- develop a full cost benefit case for investing in prevention, demonstrating how different sectors can contribute, including by encouraging the public to live well and provide self-care
- work with partners to continue to improve public health and promote the role of wider preventative work within local areas' overall health and care systems
- work with the NHS and partners to develop a system-wide approach to public health workforce planning and address urgent staffing issues in children's public health.



# Children, education and schools

Councils have the powers and resources they need to bring partners together to deliver inclusive and high quality education, help children and young people to fulfil their potential and offer lifelong learning opportunities for all.

## Bright Futures: children's social care and mental health services

Helping children and young people to fulfil their potential is the ambition of all councils, but services that support them to do so are under increasing pressure.

Our campaign calls for the services that change children's lives to be properly funded so that all children can have the bright futures they deserve.

### **Councils lead the way in driving up educational standards – we will:**

- set out a clear vision for councils' role in promoting high educational standards, with the resources, powers and flexibilities to give every child access to a place at a good local school
- lobby for a stronger role for councils in investing in schools, ensuring that new schools are fit for purpose, high quality and value for money, and that councils have a lead role in decisions about new free schools
- lobby for a stronger council role in ensuring admissions are fair for all pupils across the school system.

### **Schools have the funding they need to deliver the best education for all pupils – we will:**

- lobby to ensure the national funding formula for schools retains an element of local flexibility to allow councils and schools to reflect local needs and priorities
- highlight the growing pressures on the high needs budget and lobby government to provide councils with sufficient funding and flexibility to meet rising demand
- lobby for flexibility in the use of the apprenticeship levy and work with partners to increase take up of quality apprenticeships in schools.

**Councils have the flexibility and resources to deliver services that meet the needs of children and young people – we will:**

- continue to paint a positive vision for the future role of local children's services and call for proper funding for the services that change children's lives through our Bright Futures campaign
- highlight the funding gap and press for adequate funding in children's services, including making the case for investment in early intervention
- support councils to take a preventative and place-based approach to children and young people's health, including early years, childhood obesity and support for children's mental health
- work in partnership to improve life chances for disadvantaged households, particularly those with young children, making the case for early intervention and improved integration of services for families.

**Councils protect children's wellbeing and keep them safe – we will:**

- support councils to protect children and young people from harm and improve outcomes for all children, in particular children in care and care leavers
- work with government and councils to support child refugees and unaccompanied asylum seekers safe, pressing for improved funding to better cover costs, including for those leaving care
- support councils to tackle the challenges of child criminal exploitation and county lines issues.



# Places to live and work

Councils lead the way in building the homes that people need, driving inclusive and sustainable economic growth and creating safe and resilient communities that are great places to live.

## **Councils drive the increase in housing supply the nation needs – we will:**

- continue to press for additional powers for councils to increase housing supply, promote affordable homes and make more effective use of surplus public sector land
- support consortia of councils to access significant housing development funds through the creation of new partnership models
- press for powers for councils to ensure the provision of homes integrated with health and care that positively support us to age well
- lobby for a well-resourced and locally responsive planning system, funded by locally set fees with the tools to ensure developers build quality homes that meet local need.

## **Councils have access to funding to create communities where people want to live – we will:**

- continue to press for additional infrastructure funding, including a review of the current rules governing developer contributions
- support councils to work with partners to maximise the value of local and national infrastructure investment, including in road, rail, broadband, culture, heritage and recreation
- work to secure the £5 billion of regeneration investment guaranteed to local economies from EU structural funds to 2020 up until we leave the EU and lobby for alternative UK sources after we leave.

### **Councils continue to drive higher safety standards across the housing sector – we will:**

- lobby for resources and tools to enable councils to shape a good quality private rented sector that meets the needs of their local communities
- work with government and councils to identify high-risk, high-rise residential buildings and lobby for support for councils to make changes and take urgent remedial action
- respond to government consultations, including on the new building safety regulatory framework.

### **Councils lead the way in ending homelessness through prevention – we will:**

- lobby for the funding and tools to enable councils to manage the housing impacts of welfare reform and achieve the ambitions of the Homeless Reduction Act and Rough Sleeping strategy
- make the case for adaptations to welfare reform and for the powers and funding that councils need to meet local needs
- with the LGA Asylum, Refugee and Migration Task Group and Chief Executives' and Home Office group on asylum dispersal, inform the development, delivery and funding of support for asylum seekers and refugees and share good practice.

### **Councils lead the way in shaping communities where people feel safe – we will:**

- lead the debate on the role of councils in building safer and resilient communities and explore how they can contribute to a multi-agency approach to preventing and tackling serious violence
- represent councils' interests in the UK's developing modern slavery policies
- support councils to reduce serious violence, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation and anti-social behaviour
- contribute to the independent review of Prevent and the new counter-extremism strategy, ensuring that councils are supported to build community cohesion, promote integration, tackle extremism and deliver the Prevent duty.

### **Councils support strong communities through risk-based business-friendly regulatory services – we will:**

- press for powers and resources where councils take on additional legal liabilities such as building regulations post-Grenfell and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' (Defra) proposed new air quality requirements
- support councils to demonstrate the value of regulatory services and lobby for sustainable funding
- lobby government to bring forward taxi licensing legislation as soon as possible
- press for greater flexibility in the licensing system, including the localisation of licensing fees.



**Councils continue to play a leading role in the design and delivery of blue light services that help protect local communities – we will:**

- lobby for sustainable funding for fire and rescue authorities and support them to become more inclusive and representative of their communities
- respond to the Phase 1 Report of the Grenfell Inquiry for fire and rescue authorities ensuring that any new burdens and responsibilities are identified and appropriately funded
- strengthen fire and rescue authorities' ability to take forward the fire reform agenda and the findings of the first tranche of inspections from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), exploring any national recommendations
- support police and crime panels and share best practice.

**Councils are key partners in delivering the government's national economic strategy – we will:**

- support city regions and non-metropolitan areas to deliver effective local economic strategies
- advocate for a voice for councils in the development of a new English land management policy, and for communities to be involved in deciding how their local natural assets are managed
- support local innovation to deliver a better digital infrastructure and continue to press for a regulatory framework that will deliver the best deal for customers
- continue to press for strong local government representation on Local Enterprise Partnerships and improved oversight and scrutiny of them
- support councils to maximise the impact of their cultural, sporting and heritage assets to drive growth in their local visitor economy.

**Councils match education, training and skills with business needs – we will:**

- continue to press for powers, funding and lead responsibility for councils to integrate and commission back to work, skills, apprenticeships and welfare support under the LGA's Work Local model.
- campaign for people of all ages to be supported to participate in quality skills development and training, including independent careers advice and a passport for lifelong learning.
- promote good employment practice that helps apprentices, interns and people not in education, employment or training (NEETS) into work, including a series of national events for young apprentices.



# Strong local democracy

A refocus on local democratic leadership and a shift in power to local communities leads to greater diversity of elected representatives, high standards of conduct and strong, flexible local governance.

## **Councils as leaders of good conduct in public and political discourse and debate – we will:**

- clearly articulate the standards expected for anyone engaging in public and political discourse and debate and what is needed to achieve those standards, underlining that intimidation and abuse of those in public office is unacceptable
- review the member model code of conduct and support our member councils in addressing intimidation and abuse of those in public office
- promote and support councils in developing the diversity of their candidates and elected members
- support councils to explore ways of engaging with their local community and voluntary sector in local service delivery, enhancing places and local decision making.

## **Elected members and officers are empowered to tackle incidents of public intimidation – we will:**

- explore the practicalities and support the adoption of an informal 'duty of care' for councillors
- seek to better understand the scale and impact of the intimidation and abuse our membership is experiencing and promote a new offence for intimidation against a person in public office
- engage with police forces and associated agencies to ensure the impact and seriousness of the public intimidation of local councillors and employees is understood and acted upon.



## **Brexit and constitutional reform – we will:**

- interact with Whitehall on all Brexit negotiations, clearly articulating councils' needs and concerns and taking advantage of the opportunity to entrench local government within our new constitutional settlement
- continue to support councils to prepare and deliver a successful transition for EU Exit, ensuring that there is a robust evidence base setting out the risks and opportunities across the country
- press for quick and decisive responses and for all government communications to councils to be focused, clear, and direct
- ensure that repatriated laws and regulations are not centralised in Whitehall, working on a revised legal framework for those services currently based on EU laws such as air pollution, energy, waste and procurement and redefining regional aid and state-aid rules.

## **Continued devolution of powers and funding to local areas drive strong and responsive local democracy and greater engagement with communities – we will:**

- refresh the case to demonstrate to government how devolution leads to more inclusive and sustainable growth, better public services and improved outcomes for residents
- work with government, business and others to give communities in England and Wales greater responsibility to make decisions on the issues of importance to them.

13 CLIMATE ACTION



# Sustainability and climate action

Councils take the lead in driving urgent actions in their local areas to combat the negative impacts of climate change and to deliver zero net carbon by 2030.

**Councils have the powers and resources they need to lead the way in combatting the effects of climate change – we will:**

- lobby for a joint taskforce with relevant Whitehall departments including Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to consider the most appropriate actions, funding, coordination and collaboration
- press government for the funding and policy changes needed to deliver zero net carbon by 2030
- work with government to address the need for greater energy efficiency in the built environment and how this can be achieved through planning practice and changes to Building Regulations
- work with government, as it implements the Waste and Resources Strategy to identify ways to reduce waste and levels of unrecyclable waste and the investment priorities for waste disposal and processing of recyclates.

**Councils lead the way in researching and developing alternative transport options – we will:**

- establish the resources and regulatory changes needed to support a move to electric vehicles, including provision of charging points on new housing developments and electrification of council and council-contracted vehicle fleets
- work on the implications of hydrogen fuel cell technology for the mix of local transport and infrastructure provision
- identify the incentives and investment required to support a shift towards public transport and walking and cycling, as part of the solution to reducing carbon emissions.

**Councils work with partners and stakeholders to implement short, medium and long term strategies to reduce carbon emissions in their areas – we will:**

- develop guidance and share best practice, including identifying the top 10 actions councils can take to address carbon emissions in their areas, recognising that one-size does not fit all
- drawing on international experience, develop an evidence base and framework to understand the main carbon sources and the impact of councils' activity
- identify the opportunities of a shift to a low carbon economy as a basis for immediate and effective action
- ensure that the LGA as the membership body for local authorities is modelling best practice in the way it conducts its own business.

# Supporting councils

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We support councils continuously to improve and innovate through a programme of practical peer based support underpinned by strong local leadership, through our support for collective legal actions and through our service delivery partnerships.

Our core offer is funded by MHCLG grant and organised around four themes. The fifth is funded by the Department of Health and Social Care, whilst our children's improvement programme is funded by the Department for Education (DfE).

This year we will develop a new offer linked to climate change and the challenges and opportunities of moving to a zero carbon economy.

We also receive funding from other government departments for specific sector-led improvement activities, including:

**One Public Estate** – funded by Cabinet Office and MHCLG

**Cultural services and sport** – in partnership with Arts Council England and Sport England

**Planning Advisory Services** – funded by MHCLG

**Return to Work programme** – funded by the Government Equalities Office

**Cyber security** – funded by the Cabinet Office.

## **Challenge and support from peers – we will:**

- maintain an overview of councils' performance to drive improvement, manage the risk of significant underperformance and minimise government intervention
- deliver at least 110 peer challenges, including corporate, service specific, financial and place-based
- provide member peer support for 75 per cent of councils under a change of political control, including new e-learning opportunities, mentoring and advice
- support at least 20 councils to improve the way they engage with their communities
- support at least 70 councils and groups of councils each year, especially those with the most severe performance challenges or to resolve issues between political and managerial leadership

- provide free council and public access to transparent performance information through LG Inform and LG Inform VFM, with additional charged access for councils to small area data reports and improvement tools through LG Inform Plus
- support councils to develop scrutiny skills and expertise through the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

### **Strong political and officer leadership – we will:**

- support at least 700 councillors through our suite of leadership programmes
- support at least 60 councillors with the potential to progress in their political careers through our Next Generation programme
- support the leadership development of chief executives, managers and rising talent in councils, in partnership with SOLACE
- help at least 15 councils, political groups and national parties to attract new talent into civic life through our Be a Councillor programme
- recruit up to 110 high calibre graduates to the National Graduate Development Programme, working with councils to secure challenging placements
- help councils to address inequalities, gender pay gap, ethnicity gap and roll out Disability Confident
- maintain national negotiating machinery on pay and workforce issues
- provide specialist advice and support for the Local Government Pension Scheme
- deliver comprehensive practical support to help councils provide apprenticeships and maximise their levy investment
- support 50 councils to transform their workforces and modernise the way they are managed
- support councils to promote wellbeing, diversity and inclusion in the workplace through information, guidance and bespoke support and work with them to address issues around gender pay gap, representation and recruitment challenges
- attract qualified staff in hard-to-recruit areas back to local government through the Return to Work programme, focusing on social workers, town planners and IT staff in 2019/20.

### **Councils as most efficient part of the public sector – we will:**

- provide practical support through the Transformation and Innovation Exchange to help councils deliver better value for money, become more efficient and improve outcomes for communities
- in line with the revised national procurement strategy, deliver a support programme to help councils improve their procurement arrangements
- capture and share intelligence about major suppliers to reduce the risk from suppliers getting into financial difficulty
- support at least 25 councils to realise efficiency savings through our productivity and income generation expert programme, saving at least £25 million over four years

- support councils to develop a more commercial approach to their activities through a series of courses, events and sharing good practice
- provide expert financial support to enable at least 40 councils to address specific issues
- provide a matchmaking service for councils wishing to share services and/or management teams and promote good practice through our web-based interactive shared services map
- equip 18 more councils with the skills and confidence to use design and behavioural insights to improve public services and manage future demand
- in collaboration with CIPFA, help councils to be more proactive in dealing with fraud
- support councils to exploit the opportunities of digital tools and solutions to enable local residents and businesses to access council services online
- with councils, sector representative bodies, MHCLG, Cabinet Office and the National Cyber Security Centre, highlight the importance of cyber security and cyber resilience to protect data and systems
- share best practice of councils who are finding new and effective ways of working to secure outcomes for their communities at significantly less cost, particularly through the Innovation Zone
- with Local Partnerships, support councils to make savings by providing commercial advice and support on matters of legal and contractual complexity.

### **Strong communities with excellent public services – we will:**

- through practical bespoke support, help councils deal with the housing, planning and homelessness challenges through the Housing Advisers programme and other sector-wide projects
- support councils to strengthen their licensing and regulatory functions, including issues arising from the Hackitt review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety
- offer a mixture of generic and bespoke support for combined authorities, elected mayors and those areas in the process of developing their devolution arrangements
- support councils on the local growth agenda, including the development of Local Industrial Strategies
- support councils to counter extremism and contribute to a multi-agency approach to preventing and tackling serious violence
- strengthen fire and rescue authorities' ability to take forward the fire reform agenda by strengthening their strategic leadership
- with MHCLG, ensure the national Troubled Families Programme is effectively implementing service transformation across Early Help Services
- support councils to prepare and deliver a successful transition for EU exit
- support councils to embed strengthened approaches to civil resilience and mutual aid through working with MHCLG team to develop training, guidance and other materials for councils.



### **Improving health and care service – we will:**

- co-produce with ADASS the sector led improvement programme for care and health
- support social care and health integration and the transforming care programme for people with learning disabilities and/or autism
- support councils to use technology to improve joint working between councils and health partners to enable people to live independently
- help councils develop innovative, efficient and sustainable approaches in care and health services
- work with partners to support councils to develop and improve local services and offer a programme of leadership development
- develop and deliver a support offer to help councils and their partners embed the Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) approach
- support councils and their partners to identify and manage sustainability and delivery risks
- work with partners to develop a new suicide prevention sector-led improvement offer
- work with partners and DfE to deliver a sector-led approach to improving children's services.

### **Improving children's services – we will:**

- provide nationally accredited and quality assured courses for practitioners and associates engaging in peer review, challenge or diagnostic activity
- run Leadership Essentials courses for members with lead responsibility for children's services
- publish a series of 'must know' packs for councils, including on corporate parenting
- develop and/or broker a flexible offer of diagnostic or peer review tools either bespoke to individual authorities, as part of a regional offer or commissioned by the DfE for authorities in intervention
- offer mentoring support for councilors with lead responsibility for children's services.

### **Combatting climate change – we will:**

- consult with councils to determine the support they need to inform a new offer
- incorporate climate change issues into core leadership programmes for councillors and officers
- develop a package of communications support including how to engage with local activist groups
- support long term action-planning and setting strategic objectives, for example through the deployment of 'climate experts'.

## Collective legal actions

### Leading collective action – we will:

- support groups of councils to mount collective legal actions or fight actions against them where we believe that they have a strong case, commissioning expert legal advice and sources of funding where appropriate
- prepare New Burdens submissions on behalf of the sector where new legislation or regulations result in additional duties or costs to councils.

## Our service delivery partnerships

### Local Partnerships

Local Partnerships is a joint venture between the LGA and HM Treasury, formed in 2009 to help the public sector deliver local services and infrastructure. It offers support to local authorities in the following areas:

- developing and reviewing strategic business cases and business plans
- service transformation and change
- modelling and legal frameworks for alternative service delivery models
- options appraisal and assurance of chosen approaches or options
- forming effective partnerships (inter-agency brokerage)
- sourcing and commissioning, contract negotiation and management
- economic development and planning
- delivering infrastructure.

### GeoPlace

GeoPlace is a joint venture between the LGA and Ordnance Survey, formed in 2010 in response to a government call to bring together existing creators and suppliers of addressing data to one central place and to build a single, definitive address database. It works in close collaboration with local authorities to:

- cleanse and validate the address and streets data produced by councils
- create and maintain national registers of address and streets data (called gazeteers)
- provide support and training to councils ensure that they are able to produce high quality, and timely data in the most cost effective way.



## **Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA)**

PSAA is an independent company limited by guarantee incorporated by the LGA in August 2014. The Secretary of State for MHCLG has specified PSAA as an appointing person under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. PSAA appoints an auditor to relevant local government bodies that opt into its national scheme and sets a scale of fees for the work which auditors undertake.

## **Local Government Mutual Limited and Local Government Mutual Management Services Limited**

The Mutual is a shared ownership company between the LGA and a number of local authorities. Membership is only open to councils in membership of the LGA. The Mutual provides:

- indemnity to local authorities in England and Wales as a cost-effective alternative to the traditional insurance market, including cover for all classes of business
- risk management services to its member local authorities.

LGMMSL is a joint venture between the LGA and Regis Mutual Management that provides services to the Local Government Mutual.

## **United Kingdom Municipal Bonds Agency (UKMBA)**

The LGA, along with a number of councils, is a major shareholder in the UKMBA. We support and provide client side services to the Agency as the newly appointed service provider works with councils to aggregate borrowing requirements and issue bonds.



# Our business

We are committed to providing the best and most cost effective services to councils and councillors across England and Wales. We are politically led, committed to equalities and diversity and we aim to operate in an environmentally and financially sustainable way.

## **The national membership body for local government – we will:**

- maintain membership levels amongst local authorities in England and Wales by continuing to offer membership benefits that meet the sector's changing needs and expectations
- launch a new online membership booklet, setting out the benefits of membership directly with councils and councillors
- offer a range of flexible options for councils to participate actively in our work including through video conferencing and streaming of events and meetings
- seek to attract organisations with an interest in local government into our associate scheme.

## **A politically-led organisation – we will:**

- reflect the overall ambitions of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the motion passed by the 2019 General Assembly, in the way that we work and ensure that our own organisation reflects best practice
- review our member governance arrangements to ensure that they continue to reflect and respond to current priorities and the expectations of our membership
- offer political support to individual councillors and council administrations through our political group offices
- ensure that combined authorities, authorities with devolution deals and elected mayors are appropriately represented on our governance arrangements.

## **Using communications to persuade and influence and support councils – we will:**

- deliver first class communications that are highly valued and respected by local government and our stakeholders, to influence the issues that matter to councils, their residents and their communities

- through our communications improvement work, support councils and help to raise the standard of public sector communications.

### **Financially sustainable – we will:**

- continue to develop existing and new income generation opportunities in order to diversify our sources of funding and ensure the long term financial sustainability of the organisation
- complete the refurbishment of Layden House (now the Stills) in Farringdon to increase its capital value and maximise our income from commercial letting of the Stills and 18 Smith Square
- invest responsibly and seek to ensure that our contractors, joint ventures and pension funds have in place investment policies that further our objectives
- continue to progress the transfer of pensions from Camden to Merseyside scheme.

### **Efficient business management – we will:**

- continue to streamline our company structures to deliver a solid and tax-efficient base from which to run our business, including incorporation of the Association
- through our partnership arrangement with Brent Council, continue to develop our ICT to support improved efficiency and flexibility
- ensure that the suite of policies and procedures that underpin our business are comprehensive, clearly understood, updated regularly and reflect best practice.

### **Supportive people management – we will:**

- continue to roll out the leadership development programme for our current and aspiring managers as part of our wider commitment to develop our employees and ensure that data from the 2019 evaluation is used to enhance the programme for 2020
- implement the comprehensive new employee health and wellbeing strategy
- prepare and deliver the 2020 staff survey
- embed equality, diversity and inclusion into our core values, our policies and our practices.

### **Committed to a sustainable future – we will**

- review our policies and practices to ensure that they reflect the ambitions of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and contribute to combatting the adverse effects of climate change
- encourage sustainable travel practices through our expenses policy, our flexible working practices and our continued participation in national sustainable travel initiatives including the Cycle to Work scheme
- minimise the environmental impact of our two central London buildings and the way that we use and manage those buildings, including ensuring that our facilities management and catering contractors have environmentally sustainable policies and practices.

# Minimising the impacts of climate change

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The LGA is committed to minimising the environmental impacts of its activities, reducing pollution and CO2 emissions and contributing to a healthy future for all. These are some of the ways that we deliver on that commitment.

## **Flexible working**

Our flexible working policy allows staff to work from home up to two days per week, subject to the needs of the business. This means less journeys to work and a better work-life balance for our staff and their families. It has also enabled us to reduce by a third the amount of office space that we occupy.

Our ICT is designed to support flexible working, enabling staff to log into their LGA accounts from home on the days when they are not in the office or from trains when they are on the move.

## **Travel**

Our expenses policy encourages staff to use public transport wherever practicable to help reduce the impact of the LGA's business travel arrangements on the environment. The Members' Scheme of Allowance stresses that wherever possible, councillors are expected to travel by public transport when on LGA business.

## **Meetings**

All meeting rooms at 18 Smith Square have access to telephone and/or video conferencing facilities. This enables members and staff to join meeting remotely, reducing the need for lengthy journeys to Westminster.

## 18 Smith Square

Secure cycle facilities and showers are provided in the basement of 18 Smith Square for those who prefer to cycle or run to work.

All lights in the building are energy efficient LEDs, with motion sensors that ensure they are switched off when not needed. Windows on the south and west of the building which are not part of the conservation area are double glazed to reduce energy loss. Recycling bins are provided on every floor.

## Procurement

The LGA has a robust procurement policy and process, which underpins the importance of all our contractors being able to demonstrate a commitment to sustainability and combatting climate change. Our procurement documentation states

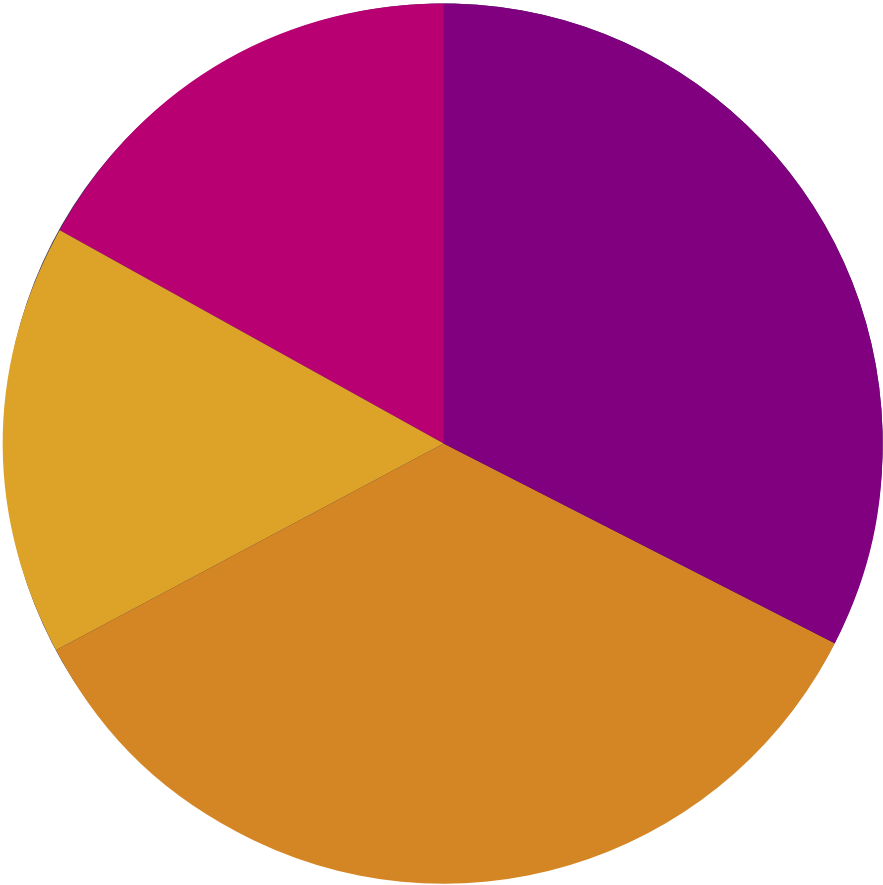
“In adhering to our commitments, the contractor should have systems in place to account for and minimise environmental impacts in all areas of contract delivery”.

# Our budget 2019/20

## Funding sources and forecast expenditure (Budget) (£'000)

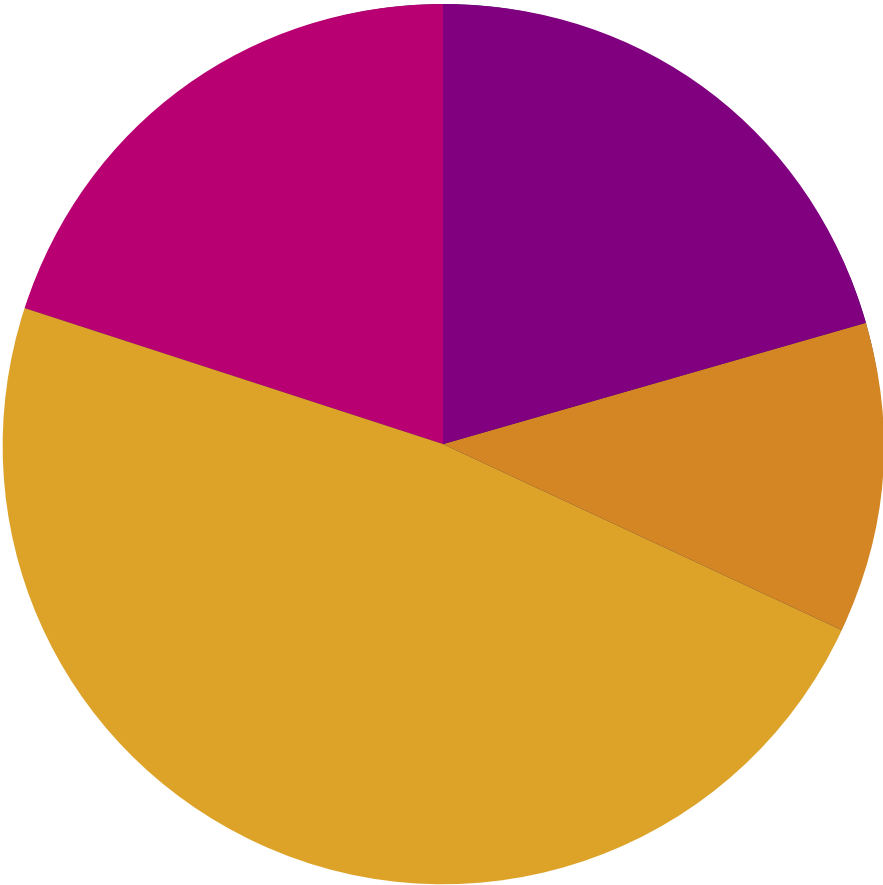
### Income LG Group 2019/20

- CLG, £19,200 (32.5%)
- Other grants and contracts, £20,581 (34.8%)
- Other income, £9,409 (15.9%)
- Subscriptions, £9,940 (16.8%)



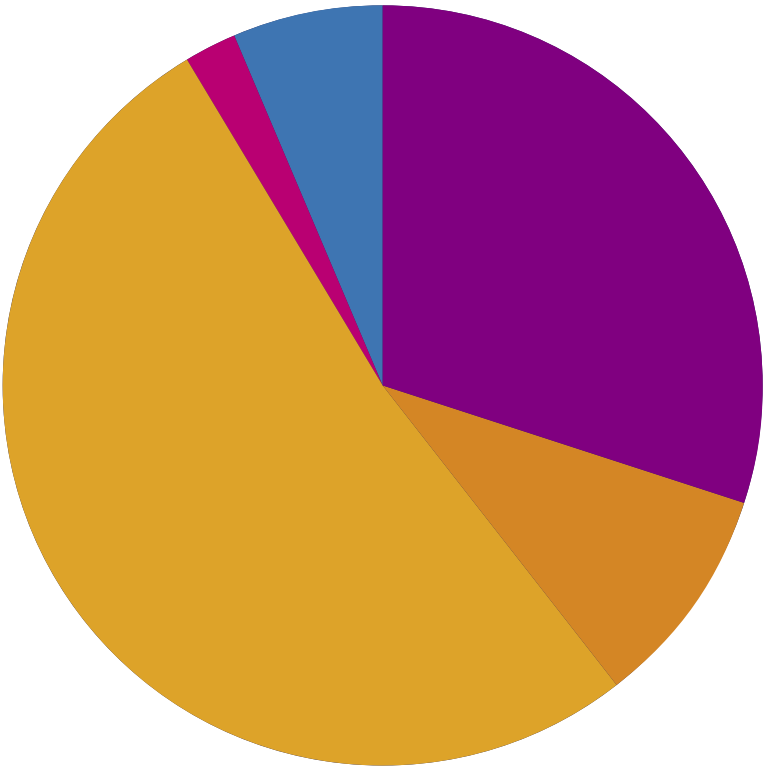
### Other income LG Group 2019/20

- Dividends, royalties and interest, £1,935 (20.6%)
- Rental Income and external room hire, £1,077 (11.4%)
- Services, consultancy and other subscriptions, £4,521 (48.0%)
- Conferences, events and sponsors, £1,876 (19.9%)



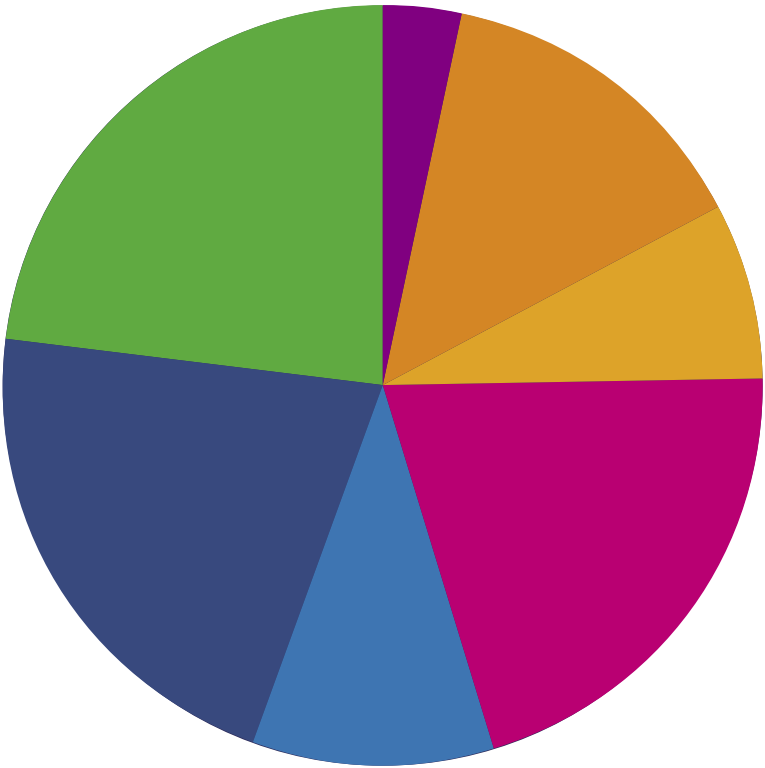
Grant and contract income LG Group 2019/20

- Adult social care, health and wellbeing, £11,964 (30.1%)
- Children, education and schools £3,828 (9.6%)
- Supporting councils, £20,613 (51.8%)
- Other grants, £873 (2.2%)
- Housing and sustainable communities, £2,503 (6.3%)



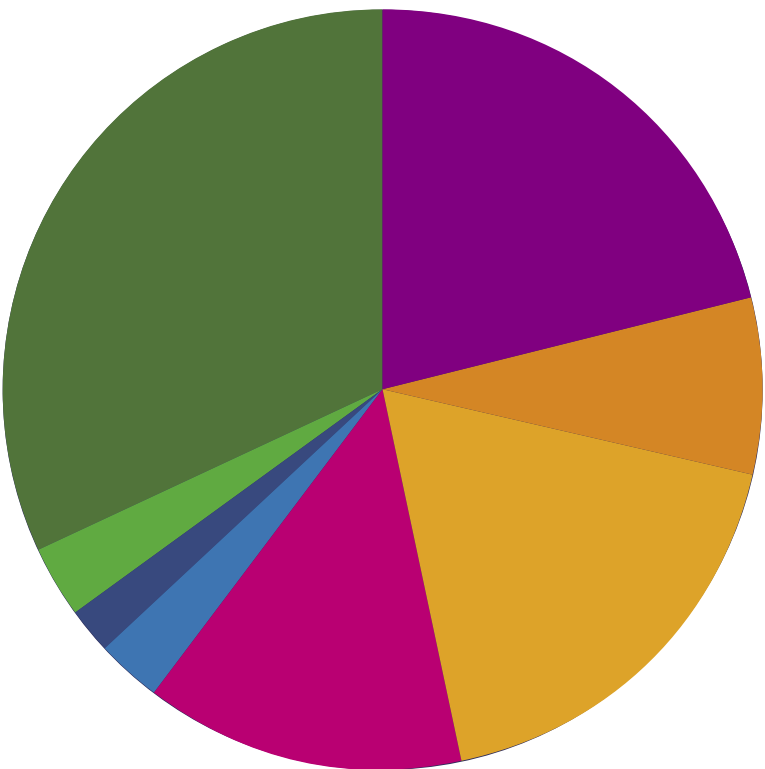
Expenditure LG Group by business plan theme 2019/20

- Funding for local government, £2,328 (3.6%)
- Adult social care, health and wellbeing, £8,912 (13.9%)
- Children, education and schools, £4,673 (7.3%)
- Places to live and work, £13,243 (20.6%)
- Strong local democracy, £6,556 (10.2%)
- Supporting councils, £13,864 (21.6%)
- The way we work, £14,648 (22.8%)



Expenditure LG Group by service group 2019/20

- Business support, £12,308 (19.2%)
- Communications, £4,331 (6.7%)
- Governance and project support, £10,510 (16.4%)
- Finance and policy, £7,977 (12.4%)
- Member service, £1,616 (2.5%)
- Political groups, £1,093 (1.7%)
- Property costs, £1,875 (2.9%)
- Leadership and productivity, £18,405 (28.7%)



# Our governance

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From April 2019, the LGA's responsibilities, assets and liabilities transferred from the previous unincorporated Association to a new company, whose Board of Directors – the Leadership Board – is elected annually by the General Assembly. The General Assembly comprises representatives of every council in full membership of the LGA, or in corporate membership through the Welsh LGA. Further information on the company and the way it operates can be found in our Articles of Association and our Governance Framework.

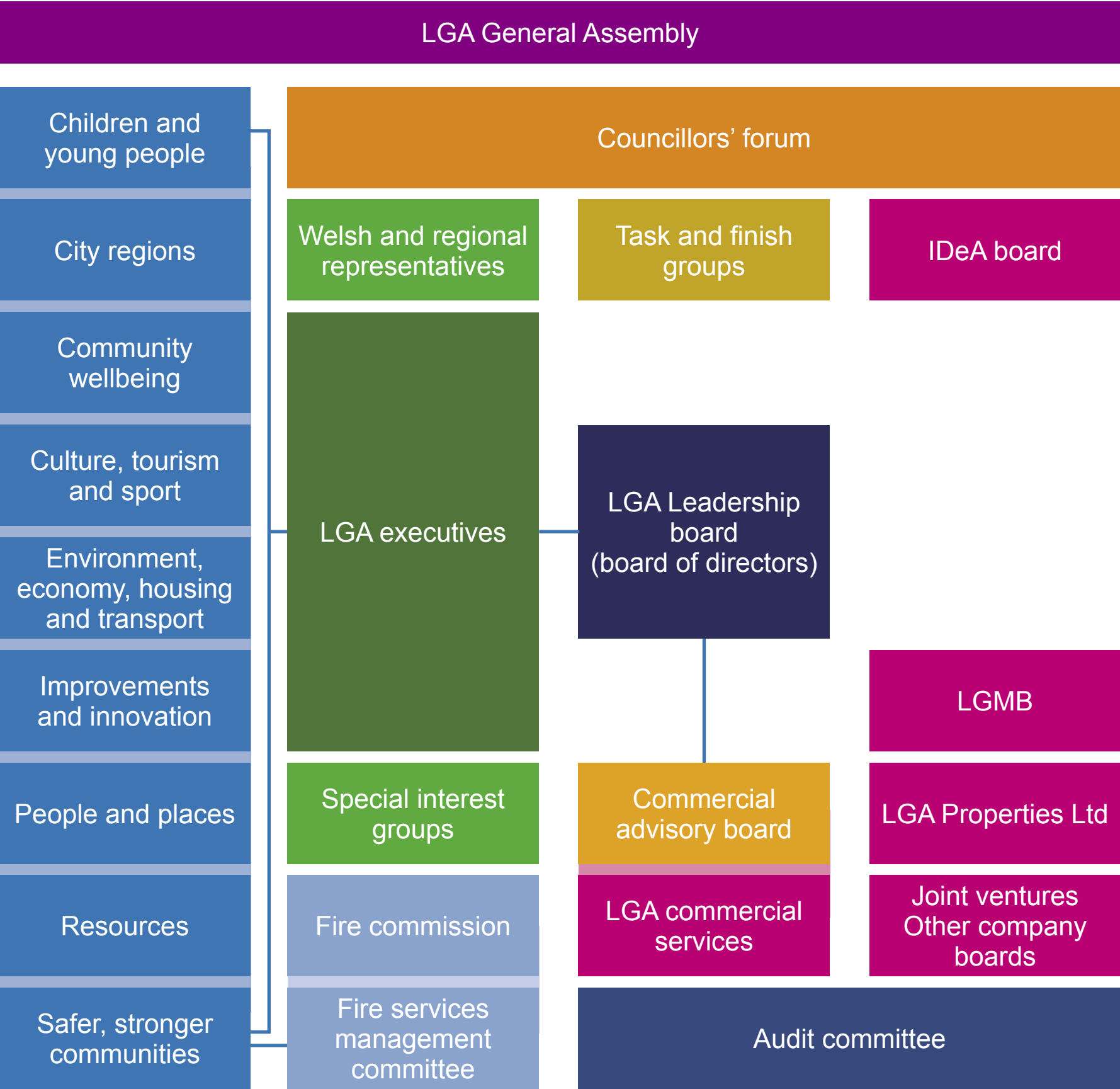
The Leadership Board is supported by nine policy boards who together are responsible for developing our policies and campaigns, and for overseeing our extensive programme of sector-led improvement services, across every area of local government activity. The Leadership Board and the chairs of the policy boards meet every six weeks as the Executive and are joined by representatives from Wales and the eight English regions and from three of our special interest groups – the County Councils' Network, District Councils' Network and Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities.

The Fire Commission and Fire Services Management Board look after the interests of fire and rescue authorities, whilst the two property boards – LGA (Properties) Ltd and LGMB – are responsible for 18 Smith Square, our Westminster HQ and Layden House, now the Stills, our investment property in Farringdon.

The Commercial Advisory Board is responsible for overseeing the LGA's income-generating activities to make us financially sustainable now and in the future.



# Governance arrangements



# Our major contracts

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## Catering – Bartlett Mitchell

**Bartlett Mitchell (BM) provide all catering services at 18 Smith Square.**

BM have been named Sustainable Caterer of the Year for three years in succession. Their policy is to source ingredients locally, regionally and seasonally from farmers who produce food to high environmental standards, reducing the impact of climate change and helping to protect the landscape and our farming heritage. BM use high-welfare meat, poultry, eggs, cheese, and dairy produce and sustainable seafood.

Overseas produce is sourced from ethical suppliers, including coffee from the Soppexcca co-op in Nicaragua which supports women farmers in the region. BM use the 'Free Wheeling' initiative to reduce the number of deliveries to their kitchens.

## Total facilities management – Bouygues

Bouygues environmental policy recognises that the company's activities and services have the potential to impact on the environment. The policy sets out Bouygues' commitment to minimising the environmental impact of its operations in every way it can and is supported by 'live' environmental improvement plans at all levels.

The company is triple certificated to ISO9001, ISO14001 and OHSAS18001 and the environmental management standard ISO 14001 is fully integrated into its everyday activities.

Bouygues' Facilities Management business was the first in the UK to achieve Energy Management Standard ISO50001. They are currently focusing on reducing carbon impact, minimising waste, diverting waste from landfill and reducing energy.

## Pensions – Merseyside Pension Fund and Camden Pension Fund

The LGA's main pension provider, Merseyside Pension Fund, has a policy of responsible investment. The policy has three components: exercise of voting rights; engagement with companies on environmental, social and governance issues & collaboration with like-minded investors. The Fund is active in the work of the Local Authority Pension Fund Forum whose work covers a range of corporate governance and corporate social responsibility issues, and the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change.

Some employees belong to the Camden Pension Fund, who like all pensions funds, are bound by the law relating to Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) policy. The Fund believes that 'robust' engagement with companies is a better approach than placing restrictions on particular types of investment. It also believes that companies conforming to high ethical and social standards will produce shareholder returns that are at least comparable to those produced by other companies.

## Online learning – Learning Nexus

Learning Nexus provides a range of online learning modules for the LGA. The company has formally acknowledged the climate change emergency and pledged to reduce its carbon footprint to zero by the end of 2030. Its first step is to audit its carbon footprint and to identify the areas in which it can make individual changes that have a wider impact. Once that is complete, it will get to work on making those changes.



**Local Government Association**

18 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3HZ

Telephone 020 7664 3000

Fax 020 7664 3030

Email [info@local.gov.uk](mailto:info@local.gov.uk)

[www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

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# LGA location map

## Local Government Association

18 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3HZ

Tel: 020 7664 3131

Fax: 020 7664 3030

Email: [info@local.gov.uk](mailto:info@local.gov.uk)

Website: [www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

## Public transport

18 Smith Square 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.

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

## 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](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)

## Cycling facilities

The nearest Barclays cycle hire racks are in Smith Square. Cycle racks are also available at 18 Smith Square. Please telephone the LGA on 020 7664 3131.

## Central London Congestion Charging Zone

18 Smith Square is located within the congestion charging zone.

For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at [www.cclondon.com](http://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](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/parking)

