



Executive Advisory Board

Agenda

Thursday, 25 January 2024
2.15 pm

Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith
Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

There will be a meeting of the Executive Advisory Board at **2.15 pm on Thursday, 25 January 2024** Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

LGA Hybrid Meetings

All of our meetings are available to join in person at [18 Smith Square](#) or remotely via videoconference as part of our hybrid approach. We will ask you to confirm in advance if you will be joining each meeting in person or remotely so we can plan accordingly, if you wish to attend the meeting in person, please also remember to confirm whether you have any dietary/accessibility requirements. 18 Smith Square is a Covid-19 secure venue and measures are in place to keep you safe when you attend a meeting or visit the building in person.

[Please see guidance for Members and Visitors to 18 Smith Square here](#)

Catering and Refreshments:

If the meeting is scheduled to take place at lunchtime, a sandwich lunch will be available.

Political Group meetings and pre-meetings for Lead Members:

Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

Apologies:

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

Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: labgp@lga.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk

Attendance:

Your attendance, whether it be in person or virtual, will be noted by the clerk at the meeting.

LGA Contact:

Alexander Saul
02076 643273 / alexander.saul@local.gov.uk

Carers' Allowance

As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme, a Carer's Allowance of National Living Wage and/or 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.

Executive Advisory Board – Membership 2023/24

[Click here for accessible information on membership](#)

Labour (13)	
Cllr Shaun Davies (Chair)	Telford and Wrekin Council
Cllr Nesil Caliskan (Vice-Chair)	Enfield Council
Cllr Bev Craig (Deputy Chair)	Manchester City Council
Cllr Michael Payne (Deputy Chair)	Gedling Borough Council
Cllr Georgia Gould (Deputy Chair)	Camden Council
Cllr Tudor Evans OBE (Acting Deputy Chair)	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Louise Gittins (Board Chair)	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr Satvir Kaur (Board Chair)	Southampton City Council
Cllr Darren Rodwell (Board Chair)	Barking and Dagenham London Borough Council
Cllr Peter Marland (Board Chair)	Milton Keynes Council
Cllr Robert Stewart (Regional Representative)	WLGA
Cllr Graeme Miller (Regional Representative)	North East of England
Cllr David Baines (Regional Representative)	North West Regional Leaders' Board
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	SIGOMA

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (13)	
Cllr Kevin Bentley (Senior Vice-Chair)	Essex County Council
Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE (Deputy Chairman)	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr David Fothergill (Deputy Chairman)	Somerset Council
Cllr Morris Bright MBE (Deputy Chairman)	Hertsmere Borough Council
Cllr Abi Brown OBE (Deputy Chair)	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Cllr Martin Tett (Board Chair)	Buckinghamshire Council
Cllr Matthew Hicks (Regional Representative)	East of England LGA
Cllr Jason Smithers (Regional Representative)	East Midlands Councils
Cllr Alan White (Regional Representative)	West Midlands
Cllr John Hart (Regional Representative)	South West Councils
Cllr Nick Adams-King (Regional Representative)	South East Councils
Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen	District Councils Network
Cllr Tim Oliver	County Councils Network

Liberal Democrat (4)	
Cllr Joe Harris (Vice-Chair)	Cotswold District Council
Cllr Bridget Smith (Deputy Chair)	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr Heather Kidd MBE (Board Chair)	Shropshire Council
Cllr Liz Green (Board Chair)	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
Independent (4)	
Cllr Marianne Overton MBE (Vice-Chair)	North Kesteven District Council
Cllr Caroline Jackson (Deputy Chair)	Lancaster City Council
Cllr Andrew Cooper (Balancing Member)	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Cllr Tony Saffell (Balancing Member)	North West Leicestershire District Council

Agenda

Executive Advisory Board

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Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, 7 March 2024, 2.15 pm, Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Minutes of last Executive Advisory Board meeting

Executive Advisory Board

Thursday, 7 December 2023

Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A**

Item	Decisions and actions
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1	Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest
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Apologies were received from Cllr Marianne Overton, Cllr John Hart, Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen, Cllr Matthew Hicks, Cllr Satvir Kaur, Cllr David Baines and Cllr Michael Payne.

Cllr Sue Baxter attended as a substitute for Cllr Marianne Overton.

2	Minutes of the previous meeting
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The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

3	LGA Lobbying Headlines
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Acting Chief Executive, Sarah Pickup to introduce the LGA Lobbying Headlines report. In particular she explained that as a follow up from the Autumn Statement the LGA had sent out a temperature check to all Councils and the answers to this had been used in recent media activity. This work had also been picked up by the LUHC Select Committee and the LGA had written to the Chair regarding issues arising for Councils. This had proven impactful and effective work which key members were all participating in. Further to this Sarah explained one of the next work strands is a push on the living wage initially through use of social media.

Sally Burlington, Director of Policy (People) & Deputy Chief Executive, shared details of the LGA work on Asylum and the long-standing request for the Home Office to take a more joined up approach with Local Government.

Sally emphasised that there had recently been more political engagement with Ministers meeting with the LGA Chair and other members to discuss these issues. This had led to some positive changes such as reassurance from the Home Office that no one would be made homeless over the Christmas week as a result of being made to leave their accommodation when their asylum agreement ends. Some Afghan families were still in hotels and more arrivals were expected so there was still a great deal of work still to be done. Sally explained that in the New Year asylum regional plans will come to an end and future arrangements of asylum dispersal needs to be explored.

In the discussion that followed, Members made the following points:

- Regarding Councils' concerns about individuals being homeless after they are moved from asylum accommodation, Cllr Kevin Bentley reassured Members that following negotiations Government has confirmed they will now have a few days before having to leave their asylum accommodation.
- A view was expressed that Asylum seekers could be given the right to work, which could have an impact on labour shortages. In response the Chair explained that the LGA does not have an agreed line on that matter.
- Views were also expressed that we could explore what more can be done to ensure warm housing, in particular in the private rented sector. The Net Zero Local Forum was highlighted as a body we could raise this through.

Decision

The Executive Advisory Board noted the report.

4 King's Speech 2023

Colm Howard-Lloyd, Head of Public Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement, introduced the paper on the November 2023 King's Speech, seeking approval on which Bills the LGA should prioritise for the purpose of its lobbying, based on the business plan and advocacy priorities. Colm explained that this was the first King's speech in 72 years and included 21 pieces of legislation. 8 new bills were highlighted as of particular interest to the LGA.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were made:

- Cllr David Fothergill, Chairman of the Community Wellbeing Board, raised that at the last meeting of the Community Wellbeing Board, members had raised concerns that vaping cafes had opened in some parts of the country. Officers had agreed to explore the legislation in place regarding those cafes.
- In response to a query on issues regarding taxis on the Pedicabs Bill Colm advised Members that this issue was a national one as opposed to only impacting London and that the Government were already exploring amendments.
- A view was expressed that a number of Boards would need to be mindful of the impact of the Automated Vehicles Bill.
- The Chair emphasised that those issues which are cross-Board will be explored properly and that there had been great examples of cross-Board work at the LGA already this year.

Decision

That the Executive Advisory Board discussed and agreed the recommended prioritisation of the LGA's legislative lobbying for the next parliamentary session.

5 2023 Autumn Statement

Cllr Pete Marland, Chair of the Economy & Resources Board, introduced the report providing a summary of the work by the LGA leading up to the Chancellor's Autumn

Statement on 22 November. It also sets out the main outcomes from the Statement that are relevant to local government. He emphasised that unfortunately when the Autumn Statement was announced Councils were not mentioned in the announcement at all and only five times in the documentation, of which two of those mentions were in reference to devolution. The Government had said they would raise Local Housing Allowance rates in Great Britain to the 30th percentile of local market rents in April 2024. Despite this rise, the intention was that it would then be frozen again. The Economy & Resources Board had discussed lobbying on this to see it uplifted in future years. Cllr Marland explained that the position of the Housing Support Fund was unclear and that the LGA would like to see it continue.

In the conversation that followed, the following points were made:

- Views were expressed that the LGA had done good work in getting the impact of the Autumn Statement front and centre as well as making the pressures on Councils very clear to the public and media.
- Members asked if there is more we can do to emphasise the importance of non-statutory services which suffer significantly due to financial pressures on Councils.
- Members raised concerns that temporary accommodation for the homeless remains an issue across the county.
- Cllr Pete Marland emphasised that work now continues into next year building towards the spring budget.
- The Chair explained that he had never seen the local government sector so pressured on finances. Further to this he raised the LGA must do all it can as a cross party organisation to ensure the Treasury understands the severe impact of these pressures.
- The Chair emphasised that as it stands even well led and well managed Councils will face severe financial situations in the very near future.
- The Chair and members expressed their thanks to the Economy & Resources Board and LGA staff for all their work on the Autumn Statement.

Decision

The Executive Advisory Board:

- Noted the outcomes of the Autumn Statement; and
- Considered and endorsed the future LGA activity in the run up to the 2024/25 local government finance settlement and the 2024 Spring Budget.

6 Any Other Business

Tom Chapman, Senior Adviser to the Chair, asked Members to encourage their Councils to complete the surveys on workforce capacity and agency staffing which had previously been sent to them. This would enable the LGA to analyse the data and respond fully to the DLUHC Key Performance Indicator on this.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Shaun Davies	Telford and Wrekin Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Nesil Caliskan	Enfield Council
	Cllr Joe Harris	Cotswold District Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Plymouth City Council
	Cllr Abi Brown	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
	Cllr Bridget Smith	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Caroline Jackson	Lancaster City Council
Members	Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West and Chester Council
	Cllr Peter Marland	Milton Keynes Council
	Cllr Kevin Bentley	Essex County Council
	Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr David Fothergill	Somerset Council
	Cllr Morris Bright MBE	Hertsmere Borough Council
	Cllr Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire Council
	Cllr Heather Kidd MBE	Shropshire Council
	Cllr Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
	Cllr Andrew Cooper	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
	Cllr Tony Saffell	North West Leicestershire District Council
Apologies	Cllr Bev Craig	Manchester City Council
	Cllr Michael Payne	Gedling Borough Council
	Cllr Georgia Gould	Camden Council
	Cllr Satvir Kaur	Southampton City Council
	Cllr Darren Rodwell	Barking and Dagenham London Borough Council
	Cllr Marianne Overton MBE	North Kesteven District Council
	Cllr Matthew Hicks	East of England LGA
	Cllr John Hart	South West Councils
	Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen	District Councils Network
LGA Officers	Sarah Pickup	Acting Chief Executive
	Sally Burlington	Director of Policy (People) & Deputy Chief Executive
	Claire Holloway	Head of Corporate Services
	David Pealing	Member Services Manager
	Colm Howard-Lloyd	Head of Public Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement
	Alexander Saul	Assistant Member Services Manager

LGA Lobbying Headlines

Critical issues

Financial and service pressures - It was hugely disappointing that the Autumn Statement and 2024/25 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement did not provide the funding needed to protect services.

Our recently updated funding gap analysis shows the cost to councils of delivering their services at current levels will exceed their core funding by £2.4 billion in 2023/24 and £1.6 billion in 2024/25. The analysis excludes the resources needed to address existing underfunding in areas such as the adult social care provider market, children's social care, SEND and homelessness, nor does it include funding to improve or expand council services. In the run up to the final Local Government Finance Settlement, we continue to push the Government for sufficient, sustainable, multi-year settlements for local government and to provide clarity on the future of the New Homes Bonus and local government finance reforms.

Workforce capacity – According to our latest Workforce Survey, more than 9 in 10 councils are experiencing difficulties with senior leadership and front-line service delivery roles. We are calling for medium-term financial settlements and sufficient funding to enable effective workforce planning, recruitment and retention in addition to compliance with government's future National Living Wage policy (which so far is unknown). We launched a new local government recruitment campaign which is being piloted by local authorities in the North East of England. The campaign is part of the LGA's Sector Support Offer and funded by UK Government. We continue to work with councils to ensure they maximise the benefits of the Apprenticeship Levy while seeking reforms from government to allow additional flexibility in the levy to enable councils to use it more effectively.

Asylum and resettlement – Concerns about how current programmes are being managed remain acute. We are raising councils' concerns around housing and homelessness, cohesion and safeguarding as a result of recent policy and process changes by the Home Office, including hotel maximisation, large site use, and much shorter notice of Home Office support ending as part of the streamlined asylum process. These are exacerbated by pressures resulting from Afghan hotel closure, Ukrainian homelessness presentations and high numbers of arrivals, including of lone children. We continue to stress that the Government should take account of the cumulative impact of all these pressures in existing regional plans for asylum dispersal and are arguing for more effective engagement at political level, and clarity about how the Illegal Migration Act is to be implemented.

Private rented sector reform – The Renters (Reform) Bill - which aims to improve the system for private renters and landlords in England - has completed its Committee Stage and a date for Report Stage is awaited. While there is much in the Bill for the LGA to support, including abolishing unfair Section 21 "no fault" evictions; ending the system of assured shorthold tenancies; creating a new register of PRS landlords and establishing an Ombudsman for the PRS to help tenants and landlords to resolve disputes, further measures are required to fully realise our shared ambition for a fairer, more secure, and higher quality private rented sector. The Bill places significant new regulatory and

enforcement responsibilities on councils and for the reforms to be effective, it will be vital that councils are properly resourced.

Housebuilding – With housing and homelessness pressures ongoing, we continue to make the case for councils to be able to resume their historic role as major builders of affordable homes through implementation of [a six-point plan](#) for social housing. Our plan includes rolling out five-year local housing deals to all areas of the country that want them by 2025 – combining funding from multiple national housing programmes into a single pot; government support to set up a new national council housebuilding delivery taskforce; continued access to preferential borrowing rates through the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB); further reform to Right to Buy; reviewing and increasing where needed the grant levels per home through the Affordable Homes Programme, and a minimum 10-year rent deal for councils landlords, to enable councils to invest.

Homelessness – We have commissioned research that will support our lobbying to uprate the Local Housing Allowance rate that determines the subsidy for claims in respect of people living in temporary accommodation - this currently remains capped at 90 per cent of the January 2011 rates. This work will also support our lobbying for LHA rates to continue at the 30th percentile of market rents from 2025-26. We continue to seek an explicit, national-level focus on homelessness prevention work (with an associated long-term, multi-year funding regime) that addresses the drivers and levers of homelessness, enables councils to avoid residents reaching crisis, and reduces demand for temporary accommodation and emergency homelessness responses.

Oflog – We are continuing to offer to collaborate with Oflog and their work capturing and sharing good practice, building on the current work and expertise of the sector.

Oflog have recently added new metrics to their dashboard, all of which are already on our award-winning benchmarking platform, LG Inform. We are aware that Oflog are looking to pilot their approach to having “early warning conversations” and peer reviews with councils, and we have shared with them some of our own experiences of running corporate peer challenges and webinars. We will work with Oflog to try and ensure that their work is complementary to rather than duplicating the LGA’s programmes in this area, including the work of our regional teams and member peers and our corporate peer challenge programme. We are hoping that we can agree a joint narrative which describes the respective roles of both our organisations. We have now submitted [evidence setting out our concerns](#) and wider views to the LUHC select committee inquiry into Oflog.

Children’s social care – Challenges around placements for children in care, particularly those with the most complex needs, remain critical, with the continued use of unregulated placements for some children due to a lack of regulated provision. Costs are escalating rapidly amid difficulties in finding placements able or willing to provide appropriate support. The Government plans to establish two “Regional Care Cooperative” pathfinders involving around 20 councils to trial new approaches to commissioning provision, along with investment for some councils in fostering recruitment and retention work. However, the sector has significant concerns that these will not deliver change at the scale and pace required.

Adult social care – We used our Autumn Statement submission (and accompanying public-facing media and campaigning work) to highlight the continuing pressures on adult social care, despite the investment announced at Autumn Statement 2022. In particular we highlighted directors' concerns about meeting statutory duties on market sustainability and prevention, the scale of the recruitment and retention challenge facing the care workforce, and persistent levels of unmet and under-met need. Our joint press release with ADASS highlighted the pressures facing the sector, including planned in-year overspends.

In our response to the Autumn Statement, we expressed our disappointment at the lack of new investment for adult social care and were clear that the government should not think that the adult social care system is fixed. While we also welcomed the increase in the National Living Wage, we pointed out that care providers will expect to see their increased wage costs reflected in the fees councils pay.

On assurance, the five pilot councils have now completed their CQC assessment and received their assessment reports and indicative ratings. 4 of the 5 received an indicative rating of 'Good', and the other received an indicative rating of 'Requires Improvement'. Full rollout of assurance has started but only three councils at a time are being notified when they will go through assurance, with the first three now notified - we continue to push CQC and DHSC for clarity on when all of the first tranche of 20 councils will be notified.

SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) – We are engaging with the Department for Education at both Ministerial and official levels on the testing of proposals in the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan in the nine Change programme partnership areas. We welcome the proposed national standards, which will clarify the support available, who will be responsible for delivering it, and the focus on early identification of needs and support. The focus on improving levels of mainstream inclusion is also welcome and will be crucial to both improving outcomes for children with SEND and reducing pressures on high needs budgets. However, we remain concerned that the proposals do not fully address the fundamental demand and cost pressures that prevent councils from effectively meeting the needs of all children and young people with special needs. We are calling for councils to be given more powers to lead local SEND systems and to intervene when children are not adequately supported. A programme of sector led support to mirror what is available for children's social care would be helpful.

As a result of our engagement, the department has agreed to set up an elected member sounding board to allow for discussions and feedback on implementing the plan, the first meeting of which took place on the 2 November. Working with CCN, we have also commissioned independent research to ascertain whether the SEND and AP improvement plan proposals will improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND while allowing councils to manage and eliminate their high needs deficits.

Other issues of importance for the sector

Devolution, Economic Growth and Levelling Up – The People and Places and City Regions Boards have appointed Henham Strategy to work with councils on the integration of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) ahead of the end of government funding in April.

Learning from the project workshops will be shared with the sector as soon as possible, and the Boards will continue to stress to Government that councils must be fully funded for any new functions.

Planning – Legislative amendments to increase planning application fees took effect on 6 December 2023. Application fees have increased by 25% across the board, rising to 35% for major schemes.

The Government will be announcing a consultation on a new Permitted Development Right (PDR) for subdividing houses into two flats without changing the façade. It is disappointing that the Government continues to extend national permitted development rights further. We continue to call for PDRs to be urgently revoked as they undermine the plan-led system and local democracy.

Cost of living pressures in communities – Evidence shows that many households continue to face considerable challenges meeting their essential living costs. Councils report that demand for local welfare services remains at record levels. Despite this, the current Household Support Fund (HSF) is due to end on the 31 March. To prevent a cliff-edge in support and increased pressure on other local services, we are calling for the HSF to be extended for a minimum of year.

We welcomed the uprating of Local Housing Allowance in the Autumn Statement. However, to support vulnerable households with the ongoing cost of living challenges, it is our longstanding position that government should provide a fair, accessible and sufficient safety net, that covers the cost of essentials; provides financial stability and enables people to live well, in addition to tackling the wider drivers of socioeconomic disadvantage.

Alongside this, we continue to explore a clear long-term role for councils in supporting low-income households as part of their wider work to improve life chances, tackle inequalities and improve economic prosperity, and call for local welfare funding put on a sustainable long-term footing.

Early education and childcare – Councils are delivering on the implementation of extended access to free early education and childcare. However, the early years sector is facing financial and sustainability challenges, and these changes will cause further pressure. These changes are also building on a complex and difficult to navigate system and will place significant additional pressure onto council teams. We are stressing the need for additional funding for local government to support the market and parents and carers, workforce support and capital funding, as well as highlighting the challenges facing providers financially.

Climate change – The LGA continue to work with DESNZ on the Local Net Zero Forum, which is working jointly on a business case for devolving council retrofit funding, initially through MCA trailblazer agreements. LGA Chair and LINZ Lead Members met with Ministers as part of the second Ministerial Local Net Zero meeting, discussing devolution and funding simplification. The LGA is working on a range of policy reforms, including building standards, retrofit skills, transport, renewable energy, nature, electricity grid.

Public health – We continue to make the case for multi-year settlements and for more long-term certainty around public health funding. We are pushing for an increased focus on

prevention, achieved through an uplift to the public health grant. This will support the Government's wider aims by improving health outcomes, reducing health spending, and putting social care and the NHS on a better footing for the long term.

Smokefree Generation and Teen Vaping – As legislation progresses through Parliament, we continue to support the Government's ambition of creating a smokefree generation. We want tighter controls on the sale and marketing of vapes to children and a complete ban on the sale of disposable vapes. The LGA is concerned about the impact vaping is having on children and young people and the environment impact of discarded vapes.

Education – Since the abandonment of the Schools Bill, we are calling for the Department for Education to bring forward alternative legislative arrangements to introduce a register of children being electively home educated, accompanied by sufficient powers for councils to check that home educated children are receiving a suitable provision, where concerns have been raised that this is not the case. The Schools White Paper proposed that greater inclusion could be achieved by statutory regulation of the academy sector by the DfE. This proposal was also included in the Schools Bill. In the Bill's absence, we are calling for DfE to set out how similar outcomes can be achieved without the need for underpinning statutory powers.

Environment – The LGA continue to press the case for crucial further details in the operation of Biodiversity Net Gain, government is due to publish much of this soon as part of a wider nature strategy. We continue to work with officials on these issues. Defra has now published details of the responsible authorities for Local Nature Recovery Strategies and confirmed funding allocations to develop these. However, vital information still needs to be added around the role of local planning authorities, including guidance on how LNRs will regard local plans.

Waste – The LGA continues to engage Government and councils on the detail of the new Extended Producer Responsibility scheme, which transfers the costs (estimated £900m a year for England) for dealing with packaging waste from the state to producers. We are also engaging Government on the detail of the 'simpler recycling' reforms, which while including some significant lobbying wins, present some new concerns. Government has also now published proposals for waste electricals which we are engaging with. We also continue to press the Government on the solution for treating products containing Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Emissions Trading Scheme application to Energy from Waste (we are expecting a consultation soon), waste prevention strategy, fly-tipping, and single-use vapes.

Adults with care and support needs – We remain concerned about the rollout of the 'Right Care, Right Person' (RCRP) National Partnership Agreement on Mental Health and Policing. Implementation should be planned in partnership with councils and other stakeholders and we need a clearer understanding of the impact on social services. The Chairman hosted a roundtable on 15 January which highlighted a range of issues the health service and voluntary sector are experiencing with the roll out by the police of RCRP.

We are asking for an increase in suicide prevention funding alongside the launch of the new Suicide Prevention Strategy.

We are calling for Government to [invest in therapeutic-led reablement](#). We are also calling for a focus on prevention and recovery services to reduce pressures in hospitals ahead of

winter, including steps to support the voluntary sector to provide fast, low-level support. We need more funding for home adaptations so that councils can upgrade existing stock and are pressing for simplification of the Disabled Facilities Grant process.

Supported housing – We need long term, sustainable funding for councils to commission supported housing as well as well working with DLUHC to ensure the upcoming supported housing act is implemented in a way that takes into account council pressures and improves outcomes for residents.

Transport – The Government published its Network North plan in October 2023, following the announcement to cancel Phase 2 of HS2 rail. This includes the creation of Local Integrated Transport Settlement (LITS), a new £4.7 billion fund transport fund, which will have similar longer-term funding security and flexibility as City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS) areas and is for those transport authorities in the North and Midlands that are not in existing CRSTS areas. Whilst this is welcome news, the LGA continues to call for longer-term, multi-year transport funding certainty for all areas.

Digital – We have published the results of a survey of councils about the 2G/3G mobile network switch off. We have used the results of the survey to highlight concerns with the impact on technology and services, and how the switch off will work in more rural areas. We also continue to raise concerns with DSIT around the transfer of all analogue lines (Public Switch Telephone Network or PSTN) to digital internet-based infrastructure by 2025.

Civility in public life – In light of international events and rising community tensions that may impact elected members, we wrote to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Michael Gove MP, in October to ask him to urgently amend the existing legislation so that councillors may choose not to have their full home address on the public register. In response, the Local Government Minister, Simon Hoare MP, highlighted the [2019 letter](#) from the then LG Minister, Rishi Sunak MP, that suggested that monitoring officers should be sympathetic to requests for home addresses to be redacted from the public register of interests. We will continue to lobby for legislative change. The Home Office is also conducting a Protective Security Review and in November, the LGA facilitated a Roundtable with Home Office officials and councillors who have experienced significant abuse, threats and in some cases physical assaults. We are raising significant concerns about councillor safety and funding for physical security measures through this review.

Elections delivery – The Electoral Commission published its full review of the May 2023 elections, including the implementation of Voter ID in September 2023. It finds that some groups struggled to meet the ID requirement, and recommends government improve accessibility and support people who do not have accepted ID. The Commission is working with the electoral sector, including the LGA, to consider bolstering the capacity of electoral services and polling activities. A response to the Commission's report is expected on 30 November. The LGA continues to engage with the Government on implementing provisions in the Elections Act 2022 in the run-up to the 2024 electoral period.

LGA Local Government White Paper

Update report
Sonika Sidhu

January 2024

www.local.gov.uk

White Paper Consultation

- Positioning the sector for the next or returning government (whilst continuing to lobby on current issues)
- Specific work undertaken with political group offices to influence national manifesto processes
- Conversations in every region with Leaders (+160) and CeXs (+120) and partners/think tanks
- What did the sector say?
 - Want to reset the relationship with national government
 - Tell the story about who we are and what we do
 - Convenors of the complex
 - Core services to the most vulnerable people
 - We understand our place and have a democratic mandate
 - Remind them we have delivered in difficult times
 - Offers not just asks

Range of issues flagged up

- Key **service issues** driving the current agenda:
 - Financial stability (immediate and long term)
 - Housing crisis (impact of asylum and immigration, homelessness)
 - Children's social care (SEND transport, complex care)
- Emerging **cross cutting themes** to look at:
 - Financial sustainability (quantum and reform)
 - Meaningful devolution (infrastructure)
 - Accountability, transparency and assurance
 - Statutory duties and role in prevention
 - Placeshaping (partnership working/convening powers)
 - Leadership, trust and hope – parity of esteem

White paper proposition

Our offer a **joint endeavour** to deliver on the most challenging “wicked issues” you will face as the next/returning government. We are convenors of complex solutions.

- We can make a realistic **offer** on:
 - Economic growth (housing, climate change, skills, transport)
 - Delivering better life opportunities (focus on prevention)
 - Place shaping to improve public services (we are the leaders of place)
- The **change** needed is:
 - Stability: Financial, workforce
 - Empowerment: Place based approach
 - Investment in the future: Prevention and integration
- We have to **offer** more: Assurance, Citizen empowerment, Public sector reform

Our Top 5 Asks

1. Significant and sustained increase in funding to cover essential services
2. Multiyear and timely settlements
3. Clear constitutional settlement to establish a partnership between local government and central government
4. Power to convene national public services in place
5. Prevention transformation fund

Delivery time scale

Month	White Paper Timetable		LGA Core Business	Board Led Projects
	May election	Autumn election		
January	Draft content		New LGA chief executive Parliamentary reception LGA Finance Conf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International standards of local self-governance Climate action collaboration models Five-year housing deals
February	Challenge sessions			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating growth and prosperity Tackling economic inactivity
March	Member sign off Ready to launch by end of month WP board projects starting to report back		Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financially sustainable SEND Health and devo(NHS Confed) Local Gvt Finance Reform Community safety & policing Fire services governance Assurance framework
April	Purdah			
May	Potential GE	Broader lobbying on white paper		
June	First 100 days		End of board cycle	
July	Draft legislative programme to influence		LGA conference July	
August	King's Speech			
September	Potential fiscal event (SR, mini budget, AS)	Purdah	Party conferences	
Autumn		Potential GE	NCASC	

General election lobbying plan

Pre-election

- Budget submission
- White paper launch document
- Series of board led research projects published
- Members to lead on briefing senior figures within national parties
- Invite senior figure in next/returning government to receive our WP on the steps of Smith Square

Purdah

- Work on products for post-election delivery
- Consider coalition government options

Post election

- Deliver First 100 Days campaign
- Service specific briefings for new ministers
- Launch King's speech influencing campaign
- Spending review submission

Next steps & Recommendations

Next Steps

- Incorporate feedback from Executive Advisory Board
- Draft content for WP product
- Deliver a series of WP challenge sessions in February
- Develop WP communications plan
- Bring WP product and communications plan to March Executive Advisory Board for clearance

Recommendation

- Members endorse the outlined approach subject to any changes they have requested

2024/25 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement

Purpose of Report

For information.

Is this report confidential? No

Summary

This report provides a summary of the work by the LGA on the Provisional 2024/25 Local Government Finance Settlement

LGA Plan Theme: A sustainable financial future

Recommendation(s)

Recommendation

That Members of the Executive Advisory Board note this update.

Action

Officers will proceed with the delivery of the LGA's work on local government finance.

Contact details

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2024/25 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement

Background

1. This report provides a summary of the work by the LGA on the Provisional 2024/25 Local Government Finance Settlement.

Summary of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement

2. On 18 December the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities delivered the [Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25](#) via a [written ministerial statement](#). The published figures set out details for all local authorities across England, including fire and rescue authorities. We issued an [on the day briefing](#), highlighting key information from the settlement.
3. There will be a potential increase of 6.5 per cent in Core Spending Power available to local authorities in 2024/25. This includes:
 - 3.1. An increase in Revenue Support Grant of 6.7 per cent in line with the September 2023 Consumer Prices Index (CPI). Assumed income from retained business rates and the compensation for under-indexing the business rates multiplier, together, rise by 6.7 per cent. The small business rates multiplier is frozen at the 2023/24 level.
 - 3.2. A £1 billion increase in grant funding for social care.
 - 3.3. New Homes Bonus (NHB) provisionally worth £291 million for 2024/25. As in 2023/24, there are no NHB legacy payments in respect of previous years.
 - 3.4. A reduction in the un-ringfenced Services Grant from £464 million in 2022/23 to £77 million in 2023/24.
 - 3.5. A Funding Guarantee worth £196 million which will give all authorities an increase of 3 per cent in Core Spending Power before any decisions about council tax levels for 2024/25. This will go to 210 authorities, of which 160 are shire districts.
 - 3.6. Continuation of the Rural Services Delivery Grant at its 2023/24 level of £95 million.
4. Core Spending Power also includes the assumption that all councils will raise council tax by the maximum permitted by council tax referendum principles:
 - 4.1. a core increase of 3 per cent for all councils, with a 3 per cent or £5 increase (whichever is higher) for shire districts;
 - 4.2. an additional 2 per cent adult social care precept for authorities with social care responsibilities.

- 4.3. a 3 per cent increase for fire and rescue authorities.
 - 4.4. a £13 increase for Police and Crime Commissioners.
 - 4.5. a £24.26 increase for the non-police element of the Greater London Authority.
 - 4.6. Bespoke council tax referendum principles for Thurrock, Slough and Woking Borough Councils.
 - 4.7. No referendum principles for Combined Authorities or town and parish councils.
5. The Government will be consolidating the Home Office's Fire and Pensions Grant, worth £115 million, into the Revenue Support Grant. This grant will maintain its existing distribution.

Other Funding

- 6. Indicative allocations, amounting to £3.575 billion, for the Public Health Grant in 2024/25 were published in March 2023. No further detail was provided within the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement.
- 7. The Department for Education confirmed in October that [High needs funding is increasing by £440 million, or 4.3 per cent, in 2024/25](#). The Department also confirmed that funding through the [mainstream schools national funding formula \(NFF\)](#) is increasing an average 2 per cent per pupil in 2024/25.

Other areas covered by the settlement and Local Government Finance Policy Statement

- 8. A number of announcements on other areas were included in the settlement and/or the [local government finance policy statement for the year 2024 to 2025](#) published on 5 December. The Government:
 - 8.1. Confirmed that the statutory override for the Dedicated Schools Grant will continue up to the 31 March 2026.
 - 8.2. Reaffirmed that, in their view, now is not the time for fundamental reform, for instance implementing the Review of Relative Needs and Resources or a reset of accumulated business rates growth.
 - 8.3. Continues to encourage local authorities to consider, where possible, the use of their reserves to maintain services in the face of pressures.
 - 8.4. Extended the flexibility to use capital receipts, to fund the revenue costs of reducing costs and improving efficiency, to March 2030 and also committed

to engage with the sector to explore additional capital flexibility options to enable invest-to-save and transformation initiatives.

- 8.5. Stated that the Exceptional Financial Support framework is available to provide support where a council has a specific and evidenced concern about its ability to set or maintain a balanced budget and where councils need additional support. As part of that process, the Government said it would consider representations from councils, including on council tax provision.
- 8.6. Announced it will be issuing a data collection exercise, to run alongside the consultation period on the settlement, to determine which local authorities' current or proposed operations for 2024/25 fall within the definition of the 'four day working week'. The Government said it is considering which financial levers could be used in future settlements to disincentivise local authorities from operating a 'four day working week and want to seek the views of the sector about how this could be affected and what impact it would have'.

Activity on the day of the settlement and our response

9. On the day the provisional settlement was announced, we issued a [press release](#) and an [on the day briefing](#), highlighting key information from the settlement. We [responded](#) to the settlement consultation by the 15 January deadline. The response was cleared by the LGA Chairman, Group Leaders and Resources Board Lead Members.
10. Among the points in our [response](#) were:
- 10.1. The evidence of the financial strain on councils has been growing. The settlement does not provide enough funding to meet the severe cost and demand pressures which have left councils of all political colours and types warning of the serious challenges they face to set balanced budgets next year. Councils in England continue to face a funding gap of £4 billion across this year and next. The 2024/25 provisional settlement does not change the funding gap facing councils.
- 10.2. It is therefore unthinkable that Government has not provided desperately needed new funding for local services in 2024/25. Although councils are working hard to reduce costs where possible, this means the local services our communities rely on every day are now exposed to further cuts.
- 10.3. Shire district councils - which provide vital services like planning and waste and recycling collection - will see a lower core spending power increase on average next year compared to other councils. This is something the Government should address in the final settlement. This is especially so

given the dramatic increase in homelessness costs, which also fall upon shire district councils.

- 10.4. Government forecasts for Core Spending Power are based on the assumption that councils will raise their council tax by the maximum permitted without a referendum. This leaves councils facing the tough choice about whether to increase council tax bills to bring in desperately-needed funding at a time when they are acutely aware of the significant burden that could place on some households in a year of economic uncertainty and increased costs.
- 10.5. More than nine in 10 councils are experiencing staff recruitment and retention difficulties across a diverse range of skills, professions and occupations. It is councils who know what works best for their community, workforce and in their wider labour market conditions. They should be free to pilot innovative solutions to address local challenges and deliver crucial services to their residents without being penalised financially. Local voters should be the ones making a judgement on whether local council leaders have made good choices and delivered value for local taxpayers.
11. On the 12 January a cross party delegation of LGA members and other sector stakeholder bodies met with Minister Simon Hoare. The Minister set out an analysis of the issues facing the sector that was largely in line with the LGA's views. His assessment was broadly welcomed and recognised by attendees who reinforced existing LGA lines on cost pressures relating to social care, SEND and homelessness in particular. The Minister encouraged all councils to respond to the consultation on the provisional settlement to inform the final settlement. The Minister committed to use the feedback from attendees in his ongoing discussions across Whitehall.

Further activity

12. In the [report](#) to the last meeting of Executive Advisory Board on the Autumn Budget, we updated members on the campaigning activity in the run up to the Chancellor's Autumn fiscal event. Following the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 22 November 2023, Cllr Shaun Davies made clear in his [interview to the BBC](#) and in our [media response](#) that the lack of sufficient investment for councils in the statement was disappointing. We warned that council residents now face further cuts to services as well as the prospect of council tax rises next year.
13. We sent out a rapid [temperature check](#) the day after the Statement to all council leaders and chief executives to help us strengthen our campaigning activities ahead of the Local Government Finance Settlement. The results showed that one in five council leaders and chief executives in England think it is very or fairly likely their Chief Finance Officer they will receive a Section 114 notice this year or

next. Half of respondents are not confident they will have enough funding to fulfil their legal duties next year (2024/25). This includes the delivery of statutory services.

14. Other news media activity has included:

- 14.1. Publishing a [press release](#) on 6 December on our survey showing 1 in 5 council leaders and chief executives think it is fairly or very likely their council will face a Section 114 notice this year or next.
- 14.2. This press release and survey findings have been reported widely both on the day and in the following weeks, including by the Financial Times, Times, Telegraph, Mail, Mirror, Express, [New Statesman](#), Guardian, [BBC Online](#) and the Evening Standard.
- 14.3. LGA Chair, Cllr Shaun Davies has been interviewed about the findings on LBC News, ITV News and [Talk TV](#). Cllr Pete Marland, Chair of the LGA's Economy and Resources Board, also discussed the financial challenges facing councils on [Talk TV](#) while the survey findings have been reported on the BBC Radio 4 Today Programme, BBC Radio 4 PM, BBC Radio 2, Channel 5, and across regional radio news bulletins.
- 14.4. Our [statement](#) in response to the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was reported by the Independent, Financial Times, Evening Standard, Telegraph, Times, Mail, [Sky News](#) and inews.
- 14.5. Cllr Davies discussed the settlement on [Channel 4 News](#) and ITV News at Ten while Cllr Marland was interviewed by [Times Radio](#).

15. Parliamentary and departmental lobbying has included:

- 15.1. Sending the LGA's on-the-day briefing to relevant Ministers and the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee.
- 15.2. Briefing LGA Vice Presidents (MPs and Peers) on the LGA's on-the-day briefing and reiterating the financial problems facing local government.
- 15.3. Briefing all MPs not already covered by our contacts with Ministers and Committees.
- 15.4. Promoting relevant lines from the on-the-day briefing at the LGA Labour Group Vice Presidents dinner and the LGA Parliamentary Reception.
- 15.5. Promoting relevant lines from the on-the-day briefing in the Chair's meetings with the Shadow Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Wes Streeting MP, and Shadow Minister for Primary Care and Public Health, Preet Kaur Gill MP, as well as at a public health roundtable with the latter.

- 15.6. Submitted written evidence to the Public Accounts Committee inquiry on reforming adult social care, which included the LGA's lines on the disappointment and concern that the 2024/25 Local Government Finance Settlement provides no new investment for adult social care.
16. Social media and digital marketing activity has included:
- 16.1. A [video from Cllr Pete Marland](#) on Twitter and LinkedIn highlighting the financial challenges facing councils following the Autumn Statement according to our survey (23k+ video views).
 - 16.2. Animations across social channels leveraging key statistics from our survey, including [half of local government leaders](#) aren't confident they will have enough funding to fulfil their legal duties next year (19.5k+ impressions).
 - 16.3. Other social media posts focusing on a range of topics, including [housing and homelessness](#), [public health grants](#), and adult and [children's social care](#) (16k impressions).
 - 16.4. Linking the National Children and Adult Services Conference (NCASC) to the settlement during the NCASC period, including a [thread on children's social care placements](#) (78k impressions, 3k engagements, 5.8k video views). This was our most engaged post on the LGA's Twitter in 2023.
 - 16.5. Promoted our [on-the-day briefing across social](#) media (11k+ impressions). Visits to the [web page](#) were up 46% compared to the previous year's on-the-day briefing.
17. The LGA held a sold-out local government finance conference on 9 January where a range of speakers from Government, the Opposition and local government discussed the 2024/25 settlement and the longer-term outlook for local government in the current economic climate.
18. The settlement remains provisional until the Government has concluded the consultation on the proposals. The final settlement is expected to be published in late January or early February and will be debated and voted on in the House Commons as per usual practice. The LGA will provide a briefing for the parliamentary debate on the settlement.

Spring Budget 2023

19. On 27 December 2023 the Government announced that the Chancellor's Spring Budget will take place on 6 March 2024. The deadline for submissions, in the advance of the Spring Budget, is 24 January. At the time of the writing the LGA is drafting a submission to the Chancellor which will focus on the financial challenges facing local government. It will also set out how, with the right funding and freedoms and flexibilities, local government can help Central Government

achieve its policy ambitions such as on housing, net zero, skills and economic growth, and also prevent costs from falling on other public sector bodies such as the NHS. Due to the deadline for submissions, the Chairman and Group Leaders will sign off the response. A link to the submission will be sent to Executive Advisory Board members when the submission has been published.

20. The LGA will campaign on key asks in the Spring Budget submission in the run up to the Chancellor's Budget in March.

Implications for Wales

21. Information on funding to Welsh local authorities was published in the [provisional Welsh local government finance settlement](#). We are in regular contact with the Welsh LGA, and the other local government bodies in the devolved nations, to exchange intelligence, ideas and consider joint work.

Financial Implications

22. The work described in this paper is part of the LGA's core programme of work and is funded from core LGA 2023/24 budgets.

Equalities implications

23. The draft Policy Impact Statement that was published alongside the Provisional Settlement states that as local authorities decide on how their resources are allocated it is not possible to say for certain how changes in funding will affect specific groups of persons sharing a protected characteristic.

Next steps

24. Members of the Executive Advisory Board are asked to note this update.
25. Officers will proceed with the delivery of the LGA's work following the Local Government Finance Settlement, and in advance of the Spring Budget.