

Appendix A

LGA Boards' Improvement Activity Summary Report

1. This progress report draws together a summary of significant improvement activity led by other LGA Board's since this was last reported in May:

City Regions Board and People and Places Board

2. The LGA's work on devolution is led by the City Regions and People and Places Boards. Under their direction, the LGA has sought to support councils with their devolution ambitions with activity focusing primarily on: negotiating deals, moving from a deal to implementation, sharing knowledge and best practice.
3. Recent activity has included:
 - 3.1. On 21 June the LGA hosted 'Devolution – a new type of leadership', an event which considered new and emerging forms of local leadership within the context of devolution to councils
 - 3.2. On 17 October the LGA hosted 'Shaping devolution: the role of communities and citizens', an event that explored the benefits of enabling citizens to influence local decision-making and service design in the context of devolution.
4. A suite of publications and online tools related to devolution have been launched including:
 - 4.1. A keynote discussion paper – 'What next for devolution?' which seeks to provoke a wide-ranging debate about the future direction and scope of devolution
 - 4.2. A 'plain English' guide to combined authorities (CAs), developed in partnership with Shared Intelligence, that combines an overview of the relevant legislative provisions, with practical suggestions and advice on setting up a CA
 - 4.3. Professor Robin Hambleton's report on Executive Models of Governance, which examines international models of sub-national governance and highlights lessons for those establishing devolved governance structures in England
 - 4.4. 'Don't Be left in the Dark'- an accessible guide that provides answers to some of the key questions about devolution and what it means for councils, their residents and communities
 - 4.5. a brochure - 'Devolution: our support offer', which formalises the LGA's devolution support offer, including brokering a tailored package of interventions with the Centre for Public Scrutiny and Local Partnerships and producing material setting out the resource available to councils
 - 4.6. A range of practical online tools developed by New Economics Foundations to help councils with civic and democratic engagement in devolution.
5. The LGA has also continued to develop and deliver a bespoke offer of support for a number of areas across the country. This has included working directly with Tees Valley CA, Greater Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, West Midlands CA, and Cornwall. A meeting with the Chief Executive of Liverpool City Region was also held on 12 September and discussions are currently underway to firm up the LGA's support offer to cities and established CAs. Identified support needs have included: implementation of deals, leadership development, governance, and constitution development, completion of assurance frameworks as well as communications and civic and democratic engagement.

6. The first meeting of the LGA CAs chief executives' network took place on 26 September, chaired by Martin Reeves, Chief Executive of the West Midlands CA. The network provides an invaluable opportunity for chief executives and chief officers to share learning and experiences, have space to discuss practical challenges and focus collectively on some of the key areas of policy development emerging within CAs and devolution deal areas (the network will continue to meet bi-monthly).
7. The LGA, as one of the funders, continued to support and influence the work of the RSA inclusive growth commission, which published its interim report on 22 September (the final report of the commission is due to be published in March 2017).
8. We are also working with Universities UK and the Higher Education Funding Council for England to develop a pilot project in six areas - Leading places – that looks to strengthen and develop place-based, collaborative leadership between the local government and higher education sectors.
9. In the Autumn Statement submission, the LGA has urged government to send a clear message that it will continue to support the existing deal-based approach, being more transparent and flexible regarding its test for devolved governance arrangements and formally seek to shift its ambitions away from identifying and agreeing a series of licensed exceptions to national policy towards an approach that supports broad place based outcomes.
10. The LGA has also written to the Secretary of State, inviting him to meet with the Lead Members of the People and Places Board and to attend a Board meeting, to set out his vision for devolution to non-metropolitan areas and discuss a way forward on governance.

Community Wellbeing Board

11. The Community Wellbeing Board has undertaken a range of activity including:
 - 11.1. Child obesity has moved to the top of the public health agenda in the last 12 months. To support councils, the LGA published three complementary publications:
 - 11.1.1. *Tipping the scales: Case studies on the use of planning powers to limit hot food takeaway*
 - 11.1.2. *Building the foundations - tackling obesity through planning and development*
 - 11.1.3. *Healthy weight, healthy futures: Local government action to tackle childhood obesity.*
 - 11.2. The LGA and the Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) are strongly committed to supporting the involvement of public health in integrating services to help improve their quality and cost effectiveness, to provide a better experience for those who use them, and, ultimately, to improve the health of the population. In July we published a report to support those goals by showing why public health should be involved in integration, and what expertise public health can bring to planning, commissioning and delivering more integrated services.

- 11.3. The evidence that unemployment is bad for people's health is clear, and likewise that good work is an important contributor to health and wellbeing across people's lives. Over the last 12 months we have been working with Public Health England to provide local councillors with a strong business case to address health related worklessness and promote workplace health in their local authority. Our focus has been on employed individuals with health conditions falling out of work and onto out-of-work welfare, and those on welfare with health conditions who are not in employment.
- 11.4. In August we launched a new guide aimed at commissioners covering *Healthier Public Sector Food Procurement*. It is estimated that costs to the NHS of treating the health effects of poor diets are around £6 billion per year. The public sector spends about £2.4 billion per year buying food and catering services – about five per cent of the entire sector.

Care and Health Improvement Programme (CHIP)

12. CHIP is the LGA/DH sector-led improvement programme, funded by DH, specifically for adult social care and health integration. For 2015/16 CHIP's aim was to improve care outcomes for local people by helping local authorities and Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) to:
- 12.1. Embed HWBs as place-based health and care leader
 - 12.2. Use sector-led improvement to help deliver better quality care and health outcomes through local care and health services
 - 12.3. Make care and health sustainable locally.
13. Highlights from April to September 2016 include that:
- 13.1. We launched 'Stepping up to the Place' and the integration self-assessment toolkit developed with NHS Confederation, NHS Clinical Commissioners and ADASS. The self-assessment pilots are underway in eight areas and we ran the first cross sector Leadership Essentials course co-delivered with NHS Clinical Commissioners. Early feedback suggests that the toolkit is already demonstrating its value for systems improvement and as a strategic place-based tool with multiple uses.
 - 13.2. Care and Health Improvement Advisers continued their engagement with the most challenged councils, and system partners, around hospital discharges utilising the High Impact Change Model. Individual support was also provided to a small number of HWBs to achieve the 1.5 per cent BCF inflationary uplift for adult social care where they had been previously unsuccessful and supporting three others out of the escalation process. Councils remain frustrated with the protracted nature of the BCF assurance process.
 - 13.3. The final Care Act stocktake was completed. The stocktake continues to highlight significant concerns and areas where further support is required. 68 per cent of local authorities report being at least successful in embedding the 'spirit' of the Act, but 72 per cent are not confident that there will be sufficient money to fund the Act beyond 2016/17.

- 13.4. We launched our publication *Efficiency opportunities through health and social care integration*. For the report we undertook a detailed diagnostic exercise to explore how people in need of help are managed within the current health and care system, in order to identify both the opportunities for and the challenges inherent in delivering better outcomes at less cost. The report shares findings from five areas that participated in the project and shares practical examples of how councils and local partners can make savings by developing more integrated models of health and care, and critically, the key factors required in the approach to making that change successfully locally. The report has been very well received across both social care and health.

Children and Young People Board

14. The LGA submitted a joint response with Solace to Ofsted's consultation on the future of social care inspection, welcoming the move away from the overly burdensome Single Inspection Framework and moving towards a more proportionate inspection regime. We also welcome the Inspectorate's efforts to better co-ordinate the support provided to councils judged to be *inadequate* with that provided by the Department for Education (DfE) and the LGA to ensure an effective use of resources, but stressed the need for the Government to invest more in children's sector led-improvement, beyond the existing Partners in Practice programme. Our full response can be found [here](#). Ofsted will be publishing a second consultation on the detail of a new inspection framework shortly.
15. In October, the Children's Improvement Board met, and discussions focussed on the linked issues of the sector's response to the National Audit Office 'children in need of help or protection' report and DfE financial support for sector-led improvement, in the context of Partners in Practice and the Innovation Programme.
16. The final Isos Partnership action research report, commissioned by the LGA, was published in late June, setting out detailed evidence and case studies about how local areas have brought about and sustained improvement, as well as recommendations about how the national system can support local children's services to improve. Alongside this report, Isos has developed a short summary that draws out the important practical implications for lead members and senior leaders involved in leading improvement in local children's services departments. The full report is available [here](#) and the summary [here](#).
17. To help disseminate the content of the report, Isos is facilitating four free regional workshops during the autumn. To date, two have been held in London and Taunton, with two more yet to take place in Manchester and Birmingham. Feedback and learning from these events will be circulated in due course.
18. Isos has also been commissioned to undertake additional work into one of the themes that emerged in the action research - the impact that different structural models have had on the delivery of children's services in different council areas. Given the Government's announcement to see one third of children's services departments move out of council control by 2020, it is timely to look at the impact that different structural models have had on both the delivery of and driving improvement in children's services.
19. The LGA held an alumni event for Lead Members who had previously attended the Children's Leadership Essentials course in July, where delegates had an opportunity to

discuss how they had put the skills learnt on the main course into action and also hear about political and legislative changes that have impacted on the delivery of children's services.

20. The first of this year's three Children's Leadership Essentials courses took place in September, where twenty councillors discussed a number of topics, including: a council's improvement journey, the impact of an Ofsted inspection, the changing council role in education and the challenge of achieving financial efficiency in children's services. Further courses are taking place in November and January.

Culture, Tourism and Sport Board

21. We have been successful in receiving further grant funding from Sport England and Arts Council England to deliver culture and sport improvement activity for 2016-17. This will include three Leadership Essentials Sport programmes, two Leadership Essentials Culture programmes, four culture peer challenges and the development of an online culture good practice toolkit.
22. To date, we have delivered one Leadership Essentials Sport programme in July and further programmes are planned between November 2016 and March 2017. The culture peer challenges will take place between December 2016 and February 2017 and the online toolkit will be launched in January 2017.
23. We continue to provide practical support to councils on improving their library service through the joint LGA/Department for Culture, Media and Sport Leadership for Libraries Taskforce. We carried out online consultations with councils and held a roundtable for councillors, which contributed to the LGA's response to the Library Taskforce's consultation to develop a 'Libraries Ambition and Action Plan' document.

Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board

24. This board has a very wide brief. Within the last year the focus has been largely on housing because of the legislative programme. However the Board has been able to sponsor a range of improvement activity across the full range of its brief.
25. Unlocking growth. The British Property Federation and the LGA undertook joint visits of Southampton City Council and Milton Keynes to explore how the public and private sector can work together to unlock growth. The purpose of this work was to revisit previous joint work from 2012 and to reflect on changes to the policy landscape and councils' resources. A publication is to follow and further joint visits are planned.
26. Housing. Part of the grant from government is for housing improvement work. Over the course of this year we have undertaken a housing commission. Early recommendations were published in the summer; these were aimed at government and councils. Building on the commission, a housing improvement programme is being developed. We are working with partners to deliver support to councils. Our improvement work will focus on:
- 26.1. Housing growth through proactive planning – there are opportunities for councils to proactively seek to enable housing growth working with partners, through new communities, resourcing, capacity and risk for planning teams a barrier. Work is underway to capture the learning from those councils leading the innovation,

including events, a good practice report and recommendations for the sector looking to pursue innovations.

- 26.2. Housing growth through council owned vehicles – a lot of councils are looking at new vehicles to build homes. This is a good opportunity to support further building but there is a focus on the vehicles themselves, so work is underway to support councils to consider the 'journey' towards building homes, which may or may not benefit from having a company, and to look at innovations for those areas that have not found in financially viable, for instance by working together
- 26.3. Homelessness - sourcing of temporary accommodation (TA) is becoming increasingly challenging to the extent of impacting on outcomes for households and the financial sustainability of council homelessness services longer-term in some areas. Work is underway to capture innovative approaches to affordably sourcing TA, and for disseminating that learning and recommendations across the country, in particular to councils for which this is an issue rapidly becoming more pertinent.
27. Flooding. We continue to work to ensure that councils are able to respond to flooding events effectively. Our work has focused on highlighting the continued work of councils and councillors working with partners to protect people and property and helping councils deal with their immediate challenges. We circulated LGA guidance on communicating with residents during extreme weather and ran regional workshops on managing severe weather outbreaks and other emergencies. We also worked with DCLG to put together a protocol on how LGA mutual aid arrangements can be actioned following future emergencies.

Safer and Stronger Communities Board

28. On 25-26 October 2016, the LGA ran the Fire Leadership Essentials course for leading members on fire and rescue authorities. The course covered a wide range of activities to support members to develop their leadership styles. Members heard from the Home Office on the fire reform agenda, discussed a number of case studies and undertook exercises around their personal leadership style. The two days were well received by members.
29. We have worked with the Home Office to develop a peer support offer for local authorities to deliver the Prevent counter-terrorism duty and establish a Specialist Interest Group on counter-extremism. We have also commissioned some guidance on providing effective scrutiny of local authorities' Prevent and counter-extremism strategies.
30. We have launched a revised and updated e-learning module on regulatory services.
31. On taxi licensing, we provided tailored support to a council experiencing well-publicised issues with its service, including developing a support plan, identifying additional officer support from outside the authority and providing training to members. In light of ongoing reports of councils experiencing difficulties in this area, we are running a series of taxi licensing conferences around the country in November 2016. We have also updated our councillor handbook on taxi licensing, although the launch of this has been postponed until the new year, to take account of statutory guidance on safeguarding currently being developed by the Department for Transport.

32. We also held a successful event for councils on gambling licensing. The event was focused on providing support to councils exploring how to develop more localised approaches to gambling licensing and ensure effective implementation of new social responsibility requirements binding on gambling operators.

Resources Board

Workforce Improvement and productivity support offer

33. The LGA workforce offer of support helps councils modernise and change their workforce in the drive to deliver more for less. Workforce costs are currently circa 50 per cent of council spending (current pay bill is £52 billion covering 1.2 million employees). The need to increase workforce efficiency and productivity is therefore essential as funding reduces and demands for services and customer expectations increase.

34. The integrated offer includes support around the following key elements:

- 34.1. Reducing management costs
- 34.2. Increasing engagement and performance
- 34.3. Reducing or addressing recruitment difficulties
- 34.4. Creating a more flexible and agile workforce
- 34.5. Modernising pay and reward
- 34.6. Delivering workforce transformation in a context of integrated public services and devolution/CAs.

35. So far this year we have worked with over 80 councils. Highlights from April to September 2016 include:

- 35.1. The launch of Walk Tall; Being a 21st century public servant. This is an e-book, commissioned by the LGA and full of inspiring stories about the work of public sector employees. The book includes information about how to stimulate discussion and action within councils to develop and embed the principles of a 21st century public sector workforce
- 35.2. The Come back to Social Work pilot was launched in September to select and train 30 experienced social workers to return to local government employment. Over 60 councils have registered their interest in employing the successful candidates. The training Programme launched on 7 November, with the Chief Social Workers Isabelle Trowler and Lyn Romeo attending the event
- 35.3. The Timewise councils programme is growing and we have worked with councils across the country (including eight Nottinghamshire councils) to realise the benefits of flexible working and hiring. We have also run two regional workshops in the North West and South East on flexibility within social care and the benefits on recruitment, retention and outcomes for service users
- 35.4. HR reviews. These are light touch, critical friend reviews designed to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the HR function in a council and make recommendations for improvement
- 35.5. Job evaluation action learning - a one-day workshop and ongoing online professional networking forum facilitated by the LGA that supports councils to (re)position their job evaluation systems and processes in a strategic reward and performance management context. It helps councils explore and start to resolve

the tensions between managing the 'controls' of job evaluation and equal pay considerations with the new operating models and ways of working that councils are implementing. An initial pilot day involved 10 councils assisted in developing the training to be rolled out as a national programme.