

15 June 2017

Chief Executive's Report – June 2017

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

The LGA business plan for 2017/18 centres on seven external priorities:

- Britain's exit from the EU
- Funding for local government
- Inclusive growth, jobs and housing
- Children, education and schools
- Promoting health and wellbeing
- Devolution
- Sector-led improvement

Part 1 of the six-weekly Chief Executive's report sets out the LGA's main achievements against those priorities. Part two focusses on our internal priority – a single voice for local government - including membership and our media outreach activities.

Recommendation

That the LGA Leadership Board notes the Chief Executive's report for June 2017.

Action

As directed by members.

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Chief Executive's Report – June 2017

Achievements against our seven external priorities

Priority 1 – Exit from the EU

- 1.1. **Regional seminars** – we organised regional seminars jointly with DCLG to debate opportunities and challenges to local areas. Sessions took place in Newcastle, Cornwall, London and Chelmsford with three more planned for June and July in Staffordshire, Bristol & SW and West Lancashire.
- 1.2. **White Paper on the Great Repeal Bill** – the Government published 'Legislating for the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU' White Paper in March. Our briefing response highlighted the lack of commitment to devolved powers, the LGA's five priorities for Brexit negotiations and the Paper's possible effects for local government.
- 1.3. **Brexit Conferences** - in March we held a conference considering the challenges and developments for regulatory services to manage in the coming years including Brexit, major changes to food regulations, supporting the industrial strategy and opportunities from devolution.

Priority 2 – Funding for Local Government

- 2.1. **Business Rates Retention Consultation** –we submitted a [response](#) to the Government's [consultation](#) on proposals for the design of the reformed business rates system. The Local Government Finance Bill did not complete its passage before the dissolution of Parliament. The new Government will decide whether or not to reintroduce the Bill.
- 2.2. **Business Rates Retention Regional Events** – we held six [regional events](#) jointly with DCLG during March and April to update local authorities on the consultation and reform proposals. Around 270 elected members and officers attended the events and provided feedback on the plans.
- 2.3. **Business Rates Reliefs: Spring Budget 2017** – we submitted a [response](#) to the Government's [consultation](#) on business rates reliefs for ratepayers facing increases due to the 2017 revaluation. DCLG has now confirmed funding allocations for the main £300 million discretionary relief scheme.
- 2.4. **Personal Injury Discount Rate Consultation** – we submitted a [response](#) to the Government's [consultation](#) on setting the discount rate for personal injury damages claims. Our response called on the Government to commit funding to support the additional costs of higher insurance premiums and higher pay-outs, resulting from the recent rate change, as it has for the NHS.
- 2.5. **CIPFA Treasury Management Consultations** – we submitted a [response](#) to CIPFA's review of the [Prudential Code for Capital Finance](#) and the [Treasury Management Code of Practice](#). The consultations sought initial views on whether changes to the documents are needed.
- 2.6. **General Election 2017** – we monitored election manifestos for proposals relevant to local government finance and public finances more widely. Provided an update to councils on implications for previously announced, but unconfirmed, funding for 2017/18, following the election announcement.

Priority 3 – Inclusive Growth, Jobs and Housing

- 3.1. **Industrial Strategy** – we submitted a [response](#) to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper welcoming the recognition of the importance of place and highlighting the importance of local leaders being able to access appropriate levers of growth and match the economic performance of their global competitors.
- 3.2. **Bus Services Act** – the Act passed through parliament last month, giving mayoral combined authorities the ability to franchise bus services, allowing all authorities to franchise with Secretary of State approval and giving councils access to new partnership powers. We supported the bill and will work to ensure regulations are implemented in a way that allows authorities to access the new powers.
- 3.3. **Air Quality Consultation** – we are currently drafting a response to DEFRA’s consultation on its new strategy to reduce Nitrogen Dioxide levels and bring the UK into compliance with legal limits for clean air. We will seek guidance and assurance that any compulsory actions contained will be fully funded.
- 3.4. **Housing white paper** – we responded to DCLG consultation on changes to planning policy and legislation in relation to planning for housing. We raised local government’s ambitions for the future of housing and our concerns about increasing accountability for housing delivery on local planning authorities whilst limiting their tools to affect change.
- 3.5. **Build to rent** – we responded to DCLG consultation on new planning measures to support an increase in Build to Rent housing schemes. We called on government to ensure that the Build to Rent market aligns with local housing priorities.
- 3.6. **Neighbourhood Planning Act** – received Royal Assent. We secured guarantees from the Government that planning departments would be able to charge application fees in some cases.
- 3.7. **Digital Economy Act** – received Royal Assent. The Government strengthened its broadband Universal Service Order (USO) and we will continue to push for the USO to be further strengthened.
- 3.8. **Homelessness Reduction Act** – received Royal Assent. We secured a commitment from Government to fully fund the new duties in the Act, leading to £61 million in additional funding for councils, and will work to ensure the legislation is deliverable for councils.
- 3.9. **Work and Pensions Committee inquiry into the benefit cap** – we submitted written evidence to the inquiry into the benefit cap, outlining how the consequences of households being unable to absorb the reduction in benefit income are primarily felt at a local level.
- 3.10. **The Public Accounts Committee** – published its report [Housing: State of the Nation](#). LGA Chairman, Lord Porter, gave evidence to this inquiry, and the report includes recommendations for the next Government on borrowing for housing.

Priority 4 – Children, education and schools

- 4.1. **Children and Social Work Act** – received Royal Assent. We were pleased that the Government amended the legislation to include our call for sex and relationships education (SRE) to be made compulsory in all secondary schools.
- 4.2. **The Soulbury Committee** – has produced [a revised terms and conditions of service report](#) for Educational Improvement Professionals, Educational Psychologists and Young People’s/Community Service Managers.
- 4.3. **Local Government Services** – the NJC has issued [an update](#) on the review of term time working.

Priority 5 – Promoting Health and Wellbeing

- 5.1. **ADASS Annual Spring Forum** - Chief Executive, Mark Lloyd, delivered a plenary address on sustainability in adult social care, a funding settlement to secure the future of the service and the need to stop transform services to tackle the causes of demand on hospitals.
- 5.2. **Dementia 2020 Conference at the Royal Society of Medicine** - Sarah Pickup, LGA Deputy Chief Executive, spoke on 'Dementia friendly communities and the role of councils'. The conference was chaired by Angela Rippon CBE and the LGA guide to dementia friendly communities was also distributed.
- 5.3. **APPG on Primary Care and Public Health** – we submitted written evidence to the APPG highlighting the LGA's report on self-care and outlining the importance of adequately investing in preventative services and public health.
- 5.4. **Environmental Audit Committee inquiry into disposal packaging** – we submitted evidence to the Committee, highlighting councils' efforts to encourage recycling and reduce landfill, and the challenges councils face from the design of some disposal packaging.
- 5.5. **The Public Accounts Committee** – published a report on integrating health and social care. Our Deputy Chief Executive, Sarah Pickup, gave evidence to this inquiry.
- 5.6. **The Health Committee** – published a report on Brexit and Health and Social Care. We gave written evidence to this inquiry.
- 5.7. **The Women and Equalities Committee** – published its report Building for Equality on access and inclusion in the built environment. This includes recommendations on planning following the LGA's evidence to the inquiry.

Priority 6 – Devolution

- 6.1. **Combined Authorities (CAs)** – we continued to support the work of combined authorities and identified areas where more is required, including West of England CA. Held individual telephone calls with each of the of the mayoral CA CEXs to discuss support needs. Facilitated a CA CEX network telephone conference to discuss devolution of the adult skills budget and continued to update the online DevoHub.
- 6.2. **Support to elected mayors** – new CA mayors, and their officers were contacted in the days following the mayoral elections to outline the mayoral support offer and initial programme of events including an inaugural mayoral forum (hosted jointly with CLGF) between CA mayors and some of the international peers to discuss Commonwealth international trade and investment.
- 6.3. **Local Growth Academy** – is a collaborative leadership programme for higher education, local government and the health sector that the LGA has worked with HEFCE, UUK, NHS Confederation and others to develop. HEFCE are currently delivering the first stage of the programme to regional groups across the country.

Priority 7 – Sector-led Improvement

- 7.1. **Sport England strategy** – we met with Sport England to determine our improvement support package for councils in 2017/18 and make the case for increased investment to local authorities, especially in relation to the Local Delivery Pilots, which will invest at least £130 million into ten localities over the next few years.
- 7.2. **Arts Council England grants** – we met with Arts Council England to discuss the continued funding for the leadership programme for local authorities, including the Leadership Essentials events for cabinet/portfolio holders with responsibility for cultural services as well as peer challenges and other bespoke support for local authorities.
- 7.3. **Chief Executives Disciplinary Investigations** – the JNC has established [a list of Independent](#)

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- [Investigators](#) to assist councils in dealing with matters of disciplinary measures against Chief Executives.
- 7.4. **Chief Executives 360 tool** – the Workforce Team has developed a 360 tool for CEXs which links into the appraisal process to support personal development and provides feedback to elected members/CEXs to assess the impact of a CEX. For more information contact [Martin Denny](#).
- 7.5. **National database for taxi/PHV license refusals and revocations** – we have commissioned the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) to begin work on the development of a national database of taxi/PHV licence refusals and revocations and will allow councils to check the database when they receive a new application.
- 7.6. **Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA)** - after lobbying the government to amend the Local Audit and Accountability Bill in 2013, the LGA established PSAA. Over 98% of eligible bodies have opted in to the scheme and the procurement process is now almost complete. The successful firms will be announced in late June/early July with a consultation on the individual appointments to follow. The new contracts will become operational from April 2018.
- 7.7. **CLG Committee inquiry into overview and scrutiny in local government** – we submitted written evidence to the inquiry, highlighting the good practice which fully-funded overview and scrutiny functions can bring about in our member councils.
- 7.8. **National graduate development programme (ngdp)** – has had a record year for attracting talent to local government. We currently have 170 candidates vying for 150 places on the programme spread across 60 different councils. Successful candidates will start their placements this autumn.
- 7.9. **DCLG Improvement Grant** – has been formally agreed for 2017/18. After consultation with councils, peer support and peer challenge, political leadership development and support, helping councils save money and pay and workforce support will remain, with expanded provision in areas including housing, officer leadership and development, community cohesion, cyber-security and apprenticeships.
- 7.10. **DH Improvement Grant** – for 2017/18 has also been confirmed. Delivered in partnership with ADASS and a range of health bodies, work will focus on; resilience in adult social care, effective care and health systems and transforming care.
- 7.11. **Change of control support** – following the local elections we are in discussion with a number of councils about our change of control support which is available to all councils that change political control, including up to five days free support per council from experienced member peers and free support for members in oppositions likely to form administrations.
- 7.12. **Councillors' guide 2017/18** – has been [launched](#). This online resource is a quick reference guide to provide new councillors with the essential information they need to know as they begin their roles.

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Internal Priority – A single voice for local government

LGA Membership

1. Following Manchester City Council's decision to withdraw its notice, 11 councils currently remain on notice to leave LGA membership on 31 March 2018:-
 - West Sussex County Council
 - Hart District Council
 - East Staffordshire Borough Council
 - London Borough of Richmond
 - Hartlepool Borough Council
 - Surrey County Council
 - Leicestershire County Council
 - Essex County Council
 - Lincolnshire County Council
 - Southend Borough Council
 - Broads Authority National Park

2. A further four councils remain out of membership – the London Boroughs of Bromley, Wandsworth and Barnet, as well as Gosport Borough Council.

Membership visits by the Strategic Management Team:

Chief Executive's Membership Visits: 6 April – 7 June 2017	
20 April	West Midlands District Councils Chief Executives
20 April	Combined Authority Chief Executives Network Meeting
27 April	Bristol South, Gloucestershire, Bath & North East Somerset
8 to 10 May	ADASS Spring Seminar
11 May	Chief Executives' Conference Call with CQC
16 May	South London Partnership Meeting
18 May	Kent County Council
19 May	Birmingham City Council
23 May	Bassetlaw District Council
Forward plan: 8 June – 19 July 2017	
8 June	Association of County Council Chief Executives Meeting
14 June	Hertfordshire Chief Executives Meeting
14 June	Combined Authority Mayoral Event
16 June	East of England Chief Executives Forum
22 June	Yorkshire and Humber Chief Executives Meeting
28 June	Chief Executives Sound Board Lunch
Deputy Chief Executive's Membership Visits: 6 April – 7 June 2017	
21 April	Key Cities Chief Executives Meeting
8 to 10 May	ADASS Spring Seminar
11 May	Chief Executives' Conference Call with CQC
19 May	Association of Local Authority Treasurers Meeting
1 June	LGA West Midlands ADCS National Workshops
Director of Communication's Membership Visits: 6 April – 7 June 2017	
7 June	Stevenage
Forward Plan: 7 June – 19 July 2017	
13 June	London Borough of Hackney
16 June	Thanet District Council
Head of Improvement: 6 April – 7 June 2017	
24 April	London Councils
22 May	Metropolitan Borough of Rotherham
22 May	Metropolitan Borough of Doncaster

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Media and Public Affairs

6. The LGA was **mentioned 26 times** in Parliament in April-May. We submitted responses to **6 inquiries**, including the Home Affairs Committee inquiry into child migrants, Public Accounts Committee inquiry into business rates and Communities and Local Government Committee inquiry into housing for older people.
7. We also worked on **5 Bills**, seeking to influence them before they were given Royal Assent becoming Acts of Parliament, including;
 - 7.1. The Neighbourhood Planning Bill,
 - 7.2. The Digital Economy Bill,
 - 7.3. The Homelessness Reduction Bill,
 - 7.4. The Bus Services Bill, and
 - 7.5. The Children and Social Work Bill.
8. We will be producing a report on our work in the last parliamentary session, including our work lobbying on legislation and influencing parliamentary committees.
9. **General election:** Our Chairman and Group Leaders wrote to the Party Leaders setting out local government's priorities for the party manifestos. We also published a briefing outlining our policy priorities for the next government.

Media Source	Issue
Britain's exit from the EU/Devolution	
ITV Online	The LGA's response to a report by the House of Lords Committee on Charities. The report said charities are expected to lose £200 million in EU funding when Britain leaves the Union. The LGA urged charities to engage with devolution of powers to councils as it will give them "considerable" opportunities.
Funding for local government	
Cllr Forbes on BBC Radio 4's File on Four	Senior Vice Chair Cllr Nick Forbes was interviewed about how local government is having to find new ways to raise money and pay for services.
Observer, Guardian, Guardian Online, BBC Daily Politics	The LGA's warning that councils will have to continue reductions to essential services, in order to plug shortfalls in adult social care and the funding gap facing councils by 2020
Times, BBC Online	The LGA's press release calling for councils to be given "full flexibility" in how they use the £2 billion in new social care funding
Cllr Seccombe on BBC Radio 4's Today and BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC	Chairman Cllr Izzi Seccombe was interviewed about the LGA's response to a Panorama investigation into

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Online, Guardian Online, i paper online, Mirror Online, Sun Online, BBC Victoria Derbyshire Show (mention)	home care contracts being handed back to councils.
Mail, Mirror	The LGA's statement in response to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee report into funding for adult social care.
Guardian, Times, Sun, Telegraph, Mirror, Mail, Express, Metro, i paper online	The LGA's response to a survey about how nine in 10 councils in England are expected to increase their council tax rates from April.
Sky News Online, LBC Online	The Public Accounts Committee's report on the Better Care Fund, which referenced the LGA's contribution as a witness to the inquiry.
Cllr Tett on Sky News Sunrise	EEHT Chairman Cllr Martin Tett about the LGA's response to a National Audit Office report into the Government's roads investment strategy.
Mail	The LGA's response to the Budget announcement of £300 million for councils to provide discretionary business rates relief.
Inclusive growth, jobs and housing	
Lord Porter on BBC Online	Chairman Lord Porter featured with the LGA's response to the Homelessness Reduction Bill passing its final parliamentary hurdle.
Cllr Fleming on BBC Radio 4 Today and BBC Breakfast, Good Morning Britain news bulletins, Times, BBC Online (twice)	Deputy Chairman Cllr Peter Fleming was interviewed live with the LGA's response to the Asphalt Industry Alliance's annual ALARM survey, highlighting the state of the nation's roads.
Express, BBC Online	The LGA's previous research which found that only 20 per cent of 25-year-olds are homeowners today, compared to 46 per cent in 1996.
Times, Sunday Times	The LGA's release calling on government to close a legal loophole which allows landlords to convert properties into multiple tiny "units" which are marketed as self-contained flats.
Guardian	The LGA's release about how councils are being forced to spend £2 million a day to house homeless families in temporary accommodation.
Lord Porter on BBC Radio 4's You and Yours	Lord Porter was interviewed about the LGA's response to the Home Builders Federation's report into planning approvals.
Sun Online, Mail Online and Mirror	The LGA's response to the launch of a public consultation by the Committees of Advertising Practice

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Online	(CAP) on different options to strengthen the standards around broadband speed claims.
Observer	The LGA's previous warnings about the financial pressures facing local authorities, in a feature about councils investing in the commercial property market.
Children, education and schools	
Cllr Watts on BBC Radio 5 Live, Sky News Radio, Mirror, Independent Online, Guardian	CYP Chair Cllr Richard Watts was interviewed about the LGA's press release, warning that children with special educational needs and disabilities could miss out on a mainstream education, due to a lack of funding.
Cllr Watts on BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC News, Sky News, Talk Radio, Sky News Radio, Guardian, i paper, Star	CYP Chair Cllr Watts featured with the LGA's press release, warning vital school support services are at risk following cuts to the Education Services Grant.
Cllr Simmonds on BBC Radio 5 Live, 5 Live news bulletins, BBC Radio 4 news bulletins, Mail Online, Guardian Online	Acting Vice Chairman Cllr David Simmonds was interviewed about the LGA's response to the Supreme Court ruling on taking pupils out of school during term time.
Cllr Watts on Sky News Radio, BBC Online, Guardian Online, Independent Online	Children and Young People Board Chair Cllr Richard Watts was interviewed about the LGA's release warning of a potential £2 billion funding gap in children's social care by 2020.
Promoting health and wellbeing	
Cllr Secombe on BBC Radio 5 Live, Sky News Radio, Times, Telegraph, Mail, Mirror, Sun, Express Online, Guardian Online. Cllr Simmonds on BBC Breakfast, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 4 Today, BBC local radio news bulletins.	Cllr Izzi Secombe and Cllr David Simmonds were interviewed about the LGA's press release on how poor health in rural areas is being "masked" by idyllic images of the countryside.
ITV Online, Express Online, Mirror Online	The LGA's response to new figures showing teenage pregnancies have fallen to their lowest level on record.
BBC Online	The LGA's statement in response to BBC analysis that more than 2,500 hospital beds a day are taken up by patients delayed from leaving hospital due to problems in the social care system.
Guardian	The LGA's previous call for calorie information to be on alcoholic cans and bottles, as it is with soft drinks.
Mail Online	The LGA's statement in response to a Health Committee report on suicide prevention.

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ITV Online	The LGA's previous research about how councils have spent £800 million tackling alcohol misuse in adults.
Good Morning Britain, Times, Mirror	The LGA's statement in response to an Independent Age report on varying levels of care home quality across England.
Sector-led improvement	
Cllr Tett on BBC Radio 5 and BBC Radio 2, Sky News bulletins, Telegraph, Times, Express Online (three times), Mirror Online, Sky News Online, ITV Online and LBC Online.	EEHT Board Chairman Cllr Martin Tett was interviewed about the LGA's press release calling for laws allowing London local authorities to ban pavement parking to be rolled out across the country, to help crack down on inconsiderate motorists.
Cllr Fleming on BBC Breakfast, BBC News channel and BBC Radio 5 Live. Sky News, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 4's Today programme, BBC local radio, LBC, TalkSport, Sky News Radio bulletins, BBC Online, Sky News Online, LBC Online, Times, Sun, Mail, Express (twice), Telegraph, i paper.	Deputy Chairman Cllr Peter Fleming was interviewed about the LGA's press release urging chewing gum manufacturers to help more with the growing multi-million pound cost to local communities of removing discarded gum.
FT, FT Online	The LGA's consultation response to new Off-Payroll legislation.
The Times	An opinion piece arguing that bonds issued by the UK Municipal Bonds Agency - owned by 57 local authorities and the LGA - should be less risky to investors and should, theoretically, lower borrowing costs for councils.
Sun Online, Channel 4 News	The LGA's response to the Government's new litter strategy, which could see those who drop litter hit with a fine of up to £150.
BBC Rip Off Britain programme	Safer and Stronger Communities Board Chairman Cllr Simon Blackburn featured about the innovative joint working of council trading standards teams and other services, despite pressures on local authority budgets.
Mail Online	The LGA's earlier release calling on government to make it mandatory for lorries to use commercial sat nav systems.
BBC Online	The LGA's guidelines on taxi licensing