

## **LGA Boards' improvement activity**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion.

### **Summary**

This is a progress report on improvement activity undertaken by other LGA Boards.

### **Recommendation**

That the Improvement and Innovation Board note the report.

### **Action**

Officers to respond as necessary to any comments.

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## **LGA Boards' improvement activity**

### **Background**

1. Members have agreed that it is important for this Board to retain a strategic or “overarching” perspective on the improvement activity currently undertaken across LGA Boards. This helps ensure consistency with the key principles underpinning the approach to sector-led improvement and helps avoid any potential duplication.
2. To achieve this:
  - 2.1. officers coordinate the flow of business through the Boards so that the Improvement and Innovation Board can be invited to express strategic views about any significant improvement issues put before other Boards.
  - 2.2. during the year the Improvement and Innovation Board receives suitably timed progress reports on the major improvement programmes.
  - 2.3. as far as possible, the Improvement and Innovation Board meets towards the end of each cycle of meetings so it can consider any significant issues put before other Boards and then report back to Boards at their next meeting.
3. A progress report drawing together a summary of significant improvement activity led by other LGA Boards since this was last reported is set out in **Appendix A.**

### **Implications for Wales**

4. There are no implications for Wales.

### **Financial Implications**

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

### **Next steps**

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

## **Appendix A**

1. This progress report summarises significant improvement activity led by other LGA Boards since this was reported to the Board in January 2018:

### **City Regions, and People and Places Boards**

2. The LGA's work on devolution is led by the City Regions, and People and Places Boards.
3. Under their direction, the LGA has sought to support councils with their devolution ambitions, with activity primarily focusing on: making the case for devolution, helping to convert agreed deals to implemented programmes, supporting nascent combined authorities (CAs), and capturing and sharing best practice. Recent activity has included:
  - 3.1 providing generic and bespoke support to CAs and CA mayors, including:
    - 3.1.1 delivering a Mayoral Forum event attended by five of the CA mayors and senior civil servants to discuss how priorities and challenges shared by CAs can be progressed with Whitehall. Future Mayoral Forum events are currently being planned.
    - 3.1.2 providing tailored capacity support to seven CAs: the West of England, Greater Manchester, the West Midlands, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Liverpool City Region, Sheffield City Region and the Tees Valley.
    - 3.1.3 arranging the next CA chief executives' network due to take place in March as well as the next meetings of the thematic groups for senior CA officers covering: housing and planning, employment and skills, and finance.
    - 3.1.4 progressing discussions with a number of CAs on the roll-out of the LGA's self-evaluation diagnostic tool.
    - 3.1.5 funding the Centre for Public Scrutiny to deliver an event on combined authority scrutiny which was well attended by participants from established and aspirant CAs.
    - 3.1.6 facilitating the sharing of best practice among CAs through established networks of CA officers, peer-to-peer exchanges between CAs and research commissioned on behalf of CAs.

- 3.2 working with Universities UK and the Higher Education Funding Council for England to:
  - 3.2.1 support the delivery of the second phase of the Leading Places programme across 15 areas.
  - 3.2.2 deliver a major event on 28 March in partnership with the Higher Education Funding Council for England, Universities UK and the NHS Confederation. The event will be attended by around 200 delegates and will mark the conclusion of Leading Places Phase 2 and the end of the first phase of the Local Growth Academy.
  - 3.2.3 plan the next stages for collaboration with national higher education partners.
- 3.3 continuing to develop and deliver our bespoke support offer to areas in the process of developing their devolution arrangements, including: leadership support, overview and scrutiny support, policy development, communications and other technical support. This has included continuing engagement with the North of Tyne authorities following the announcement of the North of Tyne devolution deal in the Autumn Budget.

## **Community Wellbeing Board**

### **Suicide prevention**

4. The LGA and the Association of Directors of Public Health met Jackie Doyle Price MP, the Mental Health and Inequalities Minister, on 8 February to discuss a sector-led improvement approach to further developing local suicide prevention plans. According to the latest Public Health England Audit, every area will have a plan in place by the end of May. The meeting was positive and we await further feedback from civil servants.

### **Armed Forces Covenant**

5. The LGA continues to discuss local monitoring of the Armed Forces Covenant with the Ministry of Defence. The LGA worked with Forces in Mind Trust to update 'Our Community - Our Covenant' in summer 2017, which suggests a core infrastructure for councils to adopt when seeking to implement the Covenant locally, good practice case studies and a self-assessment toolkit. We are keen to build upon this positive and collaborative approach and will be updating Community Wellbeing Lead Members on 28 March.

### **Care and Health Improvement Programme (CHIP)**

6. [CHIP](#) is the sector-led improvement programme for adult social care and health delivered jointly with the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care (ADASS). It is funded mainly by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) with

contributions from the NHS for some digital activity and Transforming Care. DHSC has agreed to continue that funding until March 2020 based on a set of priorities around risk and resilience, effective care and health systems, and our contribution to the Transforming Care Programme.

7. Insight and activity for quarter 4, January to March 2018, includes the following:
  - 7.1 National partners remain focused on current hospital to home transfer data (delayed transfer of care (DTOC)). The latest transfer figures are positive and clearly show that councils have done all they can to prioritise reductions through a challenging winter period. However, this success has often required a diversion of local resources from local priorities addressing commissioning, market fragility and initiatives to avoid hospital admissions and keep people well and independent at home. Addressing councils' concerns about the quality of the data, CHIP has led on the creation of weekly data sharing arrangements to support national and winter discussions. We also set up a task and finish group co-chaired with NHS England to implement recommendations from the transfers of care counting workshop series, which we ran with national partners throughout 2017/18 to improve the consistency of data collection and reporting.
  - 7.2 At every opportunity, we continue to stress to national partners that delays to transfers of care are symptomatic of system pressures and share our growing evidence base. We have now been commissioned by the Delayed Discharge Programme Board to lead an evaluation of support on hospital to home transfers to local care and health systems by all national partners. This will conclude in spring and look at whether system behaviours and relationships have improved as a result of both universal and/or bespoke support, and to inform decisions about investment in support during 2018/19 and beyond.
  - 7.3 In the meantime, to support the management of transfers of care, mindful of learning we can share and use to inform the further development of the offer:
    - 7.3.1 We published a [new web resource giving examples of work being undertaken across the country](#). It references a range of initiatives where there is already evidence of impact, points to examples of emerging practice that are starting to make a difference, and includes links to published guidance, and further information.
    - 7.3.2 As lead national partner, we are working with the supplier to fully scope an enhanced support offer to work with the most challenged systems. Funding has been secured to extend this work as part of our 2018/19 programme.
  - 7.4 Given the messages around transfers of care, we continue to engage with councils to better understand the complexities of commissioning and markets, share emerging practice and potential solutions and identify how we can provide a practical and meaningful support offer into 2018/19. This is being facilitated in part by a series of market shaping events with Think Local Act.

- 7.5 Personal (TLAP) – [‘constructive conversations’](#). These are workshops for local care and health leaders and providers to understand and appreciate different perspectives, promote ways forward and develop stronger and more effective partnerships. These events have been heavily oversubscribed with over 100 delegates attending both dates so far and will continue into 2018/19. Not surprisingly, the main messages emerging surround market fragility and funding but also some consensus between providers and commissioners on the need for early dialogue on commissioning plans and market position statements, procurement processes and contract management.
- 7.6 Also for 2018/19, our framework for integrated commissioning for better outcomes will be presented at the [ADASS Spring Conference](#) in April. Feedback indicates potential usage across sustainability and transformation plan footprints as well as supporting CHIP integration and leadership support offers.
- 7.7 Following the recent publication of the latest [LGA efficiency project report](#) we have commissioned a scoping exercise to inform the focus of the work for 2018/19. This will involve scoping for the development of an evidence base of how councils are developing more sustainable approaches and informing support on a geographical as well as a thematic basis to develop new practice in services that are struggling.
- 7.8 One continuing and significant risk for councils concerns potential government sanctions on those councils that do not achieve the targets around reducing transfer of care delays set as a requirement of Better Care Fund (BCF) plans submitted last November. Despite continuing pressure for a response and ongoing representation of concerns about agreements to spend the integrated BCF, the overall process and local tensions arising, there is no decision on this or BCF graduation.
- 7.9 Locally, our tailored [BCF work](#) through the peer-led Better Care Advisers/Multidisciplinary Consultants Support Programme is ongoing. This has included conclusion of support around escalation/assurance with all local systems achieving a complaint plan. A further seven areas received support on integration and BCF delivery. Common themes include supporting scheme evaluations/performance management approaches and planning for and implementing activity to improve DTOC performance.
- 7.10 Testing of a new integration support offer is underway including piloting of a workshop module on developing the care model, developing an offer around ‘sizing the prize and challenge’ to identify and agreeing the benefits of and next steps for integration locally and identifying ‘what good looks like’ when commissioning for integration.

- 7.11 We have also reached conclusion of delivery of the vanguard dissemination programme including a one-day conference on developing accountable care, briefings on workforce and improving outcomes for service users.
- 7.12 On a practical level, we ran two [facilitated integration tool workshops](#) with the NHS Confederation to help areas assess their readiness for the integration of care and health services (making nine events to 10 areas across the year). We delivered a second pilot of a potential finance module.
- 7.13 Our support to Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) continues with a further eight bespoke projects delivered – 22 in total for 2017/18. This year's programme of development and networking events culminated in the annual [HWB Chair and Vice Chair Summit](#) on 14 March. Co-branded and co-chaired with NHS Clinical Commissioners, it targeted political and clinical leaders in health and care and attracted over 60 delegates.
- 7.14 Progress continues with development and delivery of our new range of prevention offers, the level of interest from councils reflecting their local priorities in this area. We continue to work with 15 Prevention at Scale sites to finalise support plans (11 completed to date). We also delivered eight [Prevention Matters workshops](#) making a total of 22. Scoping for Health in all Policies workshops is also underway with engagement with the Association of Directors of Public Health. Full details of this new programme are available from the prospectus '[Public Health, Prevention and Early intervention Sector-Led Improvement Prospectus](#)'.
- 7.15 A further system health and care peer challenge was delivered making a total of four for the year.
- 7.16 We have embedded our digital and information work across the programme as we try to better engage with senior officers to persuade them of the considerable benefits of new technology to social care and efficiencies. To support this aim and build on the success of last year's event, we are delivering a [national strategic summit with NHS Clinical Commissioners on delivering health and care in a digital age](#) on 27 March.

### **Children and Young People's Board**

8. The LGA has been approached by the Department for Education to discuss the design of an early years peer review model, and these conversations are on-going.

### **Culture, Tourism and Sport (CTS) Board**

9. We piloted a Leadership Essentials Sport event aimed at officers, in partnership with Sport England. This explores the feasibility of using the existing councillor model to

train senior officers who had sport added to their portfolio and needed an accelerated induction, as well as aspiring future leaders. Feedback was generally positive and Sport England are considering a rollout of the programme.

### **Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport (EEHT) Board**

#### **Housing Advisers Programme (HAP)**

10. HAP is designed to support local authorities to deliver projects that helps meet the housing needs of their local area. The programme covers the broad areas of housing supply, planning and homelessness. The 40 projects that make up the programme are expected to be completed by April 2018, with almost all projects being near to completion. A further six expansion grants have been awarded to local authorities to develop their projects. The grants include projects such as develop a business plan for a development vehicle to build more homes to developing a specification for a service to support individuals into long term private rented sector accommodation. Further work is being done on the evaluation and communications of the HAP as well as the development of lesson sharing events.

#### **Potholes and road investment**

11. The LGA hosted a daylong conference on developments on road investment and maintenance. The conference focused on all levels of the issue with presentations and discussion of high level reforms proposed through the Government's Major Road Network and the emergence of Mayoral combined authorities and their impact. There was also sessions on the importance of collaboration across different local authorities and how new technologies are helping councils deliver more for less. Case studies on effective collaboration were shared with all delegates drawing out the key principles behind how authorities can work together. Presentations from the event can be accessed [here](#).

#### **Town Centres**

12. Work on developing our town centre toolkit and good practice guidance is continuing. The new resources will be launched at a national LGA town centre conference on 14 May at 18 Smith Square. Speakers include Jake Berry MP, Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government, and we will also feature case studies from North East Lincolnshire and Bassetlaw councils as well as input from parking, retail

**Good practice** - North East Lincolnshire Council is adopting a public/private collaborative approach to regenerating their town centre, which featured in the Government's Industrial Strategy. Bassetlaw District Council has reviewed its approach to tackling the future prospects of its town centre, ensuring that it is more strategic and less focused on tackling individual issues.



and town centre experts.

### **Safer and Stronger Communities Board**

#### Fire leadership essentials

13. We ran the ninth fire leadership essentials course in Warwick in February, to support councillors' understanding of their responsibilities. The course was attended by eight councillors from a range of fire authorities.

#### Diversity in the fire service

14. We published a series of recruitment case studies at the fire conference in March, promoting best practice around the recruitment of a more diverse firefighter workforce.

#### Modern Slavery workshops

15. We have run five regional modern slavery workshops since the start of 2018, reaching 300 attendees from approximately 100 councils.

#### Prevent leadership essentials

16. We ran our third Prevent leadership essentials course in Warwick in March to support councillors' understanding of national and local terrorism threats, radicalisation, effective safeguarding and community engagement. The course was attended by 18 councillors from a range of local authorities.

#### Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism

17. Following the launch of the local authority led Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism (SIGCE) last year, the SIGCE held its first seminar for councils in February. The SIGCE's programme of work to share learning and experience, and promote good practice on countering extremism will continue to develop over the next two years, with the outcomes disseminated through its dedicated online Knowledge Hub.

### **Resources Board**

#### Finance

18. This quarter saw the final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2018/19 debated and approved by Parliament. Our briefing for Parliamentarians for this debate, which was based on our response to the provisional settlement, was extensively quoted by Parliamentarians.
19. We are continuing our work on business rates retention in conjunction with MHCLG. Cllr David Simmonds gave evidence to the Ministry of Housing,

Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) Select Committee on Business Rates Retention and the Fair Funding Review. We held six regional MHCLG and LGA events in the North East, North West, Midlands, East of England, South West and London and the South East from 19 February to 20 March 2018 on the latest consultation on the Fair Funding Review. The LGA submitted its own response to the consultation which was cleared by Resources Board lead members, Leadership Board and Executive.

20. The LGA's member level Business Rates Retention and the Fair Funding Review Task and Finish Group met in March to discuss a range of issues including updating the data in the 2013/14 funding formula, and we have appointed consultants to undertake some modelling work on needs formulae and taking council tax into account as part of our Fair Funding Review work programme.

21. Officers continued to attend regular meetings of the county council, district council, municipal and unitary authorities' treasurers' societies to provide them with updates on various local government finance developments to aid with financial planning and share knowledge.

#### Workforce

##### **Disability and Flexibility**

22. Over seven million people (nearly 20 per cent) of the working age population in the UK are disabled or have a long term health condition. Whilst many organisations are good at supporting their current employees with health issues, very few are trying to attract and retain this group. The LGA is therefore supporting councils to become Disability Confident employers who actively seek out and hire skilled disabled people.

**Good practice** - the LGA is also supporting the London Borough of Hackney's work to support managers to create more flexible roles for people with disabilities, in turn helping to positively change attitudes, behaviours and cultures, not just within the organisation but amongst networks, supply chains, and communities.

### **Standards for Employers of social workers**

23. The LGA hosts the Standards for Employers of Social Workers, which were last refreshed in 2012. Councils use the Standards to review and improve working practices and provide support for social workers across the public, voluntary and independent sectors. The Department for Health and Social Care and other stakeholders are in agreement that the Standards should be refreshed to take into account the recent changes in social work practice and will be reviewing the Standards to ensure that they are updated and fit for practice.

**Good practice - employment issues** - another successful employment law conference attracted 60 paying delegates despite the adverse weather including:

- on-going complex casework
- increased use of our senior manager job evaluation scheme specifically by large councils such as Durham
- working closely with both of the newly announced unitary councils in Dorset, attending local meetings and liaising regularly with officers. Specifically advising on recruitment of senior managers and transfers of other staff.

### **Strategic workforce priorities**

24. As mentioned in our previous update, a consultative report setting out some proposed LGA priorities across the themes of leadership, organisational development, recruitment, skills and rewards has been prepared and will shortly be made available online with a series of questions for councils. This will help shape the workforce work programme for the coming period. A consultative event for key partner organisations has been held which gave useful endorsement for the consultation. A final set of work priorities will be announced later in the year, following the consultation. The workforce team proposes to work in detail with groups of councils on their key issues to develop shared practice.