

## Great People for Growing Places - consultation on workforce priorities

### Purpose of report

For information.

### Summary

This paper provides a brief update on the development of a refreshed workforce strategy. The project now takes the form of an online consultation, and we will publish a statement of vision and priorities based on the consultation outcomes by September 2018. The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) see useful links to the MoU process. In addition to this, we have established links to parallel consultations on health and care workforce strategies.

### Recommendation

That the Members of the Resources Board note the report.

### Action

Members are asked to encourage their contacts to take part in the consultation.

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## **Great People for Growing Places - consultation on workforce priorities**

### **Background**

1. In April last year, the workforce team began some work on a refreshed local government workforce strategy. It was noted that the strategy had not been updated for ten years, and given the challenges facing local government such as austerity measures, service integration, along with Brexit dominating the political agenda, it is evident that a new assessment of priorities would be beneficial.
2. The initial intention was to produce an outline draft and consult with key partners such as SOLACE and the PPMA before publishing a final document in a standard way. The revised strategy would inform and underpin the workforce offer set out in the MoU with MHCLG.
3. The draft vision for the workforce set out in our consultation draft is that it should be:
  - 3.1. **Productive** - affordable, efficient, motivated and technologically literate and flexible;
  - 3.2. **joined up** – properly integrated across all the different organizations' providing services, especially in health and social care;
  - 3.3. **involved in co-designing and co-creating services** –so that the ideas and experience of the people most involved in services day to day can be fully utilized;
  - 3.4. **truly valued and respected** – supported throughout the stages of life and career and able to enjoy good quality benefits as well as fair pay; and
  - 3.5. **diverse** – reflecting the communities we serve and making use of all the talent.
4. To achieve that vision we suggest that the sector needs to focus on:
  - 4.1. **great leadership** - visionary, ambitious and effective senior leadership, leadership in partnership context and the development of leadership skills at all levels;
  - 4.2. **organisational change and development** that is focused on people, their wellbeing and resilience;
  - 4.3. **skills development** that is truly innovative and focused on combining organisational and individual needs;

- 4.4. improved **recruitment and retention** outcomes based on proper planning and use of best practice techniques; and
- 4.5. **pay and reward** systems that attracts and retains talent, motivating and helping people throughout their careers.

### **Issues**

5. As discussions progressed it became clear that various key constituencies had different views on exactly what our priorities should be. For example, in conversation with the LGA's CEX Sounding Board, there was a great stress on productivity but divergent views on the key approaches to adopt with the workforce. Additionally, the individuals involved in discussions had distinct takes on the specific areas of detail that we should provide support on - from job design and job evaluation to more effective use of apprenticeships.
6. Of course, in a broad national support programme, it is inevitable that we need to have something to say on a wide range of topics but the aim of the revised strategy is to help us focus on some priorities. This is important in terms of working with the staffing and budget we expect to have in place. The decision was therefore taken that we should engage in much wider consultation across the sector using the work generated so far as a discussion document.
7. We have now prepared an online consultation hub with our "take" on the issues and priorities set out in summary chunks, alongside an overall draft vision for the future workforce. Readers are invited to answer a series of questions on the draft vision and to identify what they think the key priorities are. The consultation is under the banner "*Great People for Growing Places*" to help unify campaigns.
8. The responses to the consultation will help us prepare a brief statement of intent which will outline a consensus vision for the workforce, and set out the priorities which the sector as a whole wants us to focus on. The statement will be published as soon as coherently possible, but by September at the latest.
9. The development of this approach has been reported to the Resources Board throughout the process and has also been noted for the Improvement and Innovation Board.
10. The intentions in the consultation were tested at a roundtable on 20 February which included SOLACE and PPMA representation as well as MHCLG, trade unions, Skills for Care and others. The roundtable endorsed the approach and resulted in considerable discussion on the appropriate language to use in the vision statement. One important issue that emerged is the need to have a coordinated campaign to show people how interesting and attractive it is to work in the sector.
11. Coincidentally, though perhaps unsurprisingly, both NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care, along with Skills for Care, have adopted a similar consultative

approach to the development of a revised Health and Care workforce strategy and a related Adult Social Care strategy. We have taken the opportunity to improve links to the organisations responsible for the health and care strategies which is critical given that actual care roles and the responsibilities of local government were not emphasised in the consultation documents. The workforce team will be represented in the governance structures for the strategies and there are links to the health/care consultations on our consultation hub.

### **Implications for Wales**

12. There are no unusual implications for Wales in this work. The intentions behind the consultation have been discussed with the WLGA in the same context as discussions with the English Regions and the Northern Irish LGA. Welsh councils are free to take part in the consultation.

12.1. Although national pay negotiations are a non-devolved issue, the WLGA does of course have its own programme covering workforce development issues in Wales.

### **Financial Implications**

13. It is assumed that any projects that develop from the strategy will be staffed and funded from grant funding agreed under the Memorandum of Understanding with MHCLG.