

## Chief Executive's Report – January 2019

### Purpose

For discussion and direction.

### Summary

The LGA business plan for 2018/19 centres on seven external priorities:

- Funding for local government;
- Adult social care and health;
- Children, education and schools;
- Housing;
- Inclusive growth, jobs and devolution;
- Britain's exit from the EU; and
- Supporting councils.

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 January 2019.

### Action

As directed by members.

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## Chief Executive's Report – January 2019

### Achievements against our external priorities

#### Priority 1 – Funding for local government

- 1.1 **Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement:** The Government announced the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2019/20 on 13 December 2018. We have been successful in securing some additional funding for social care services specifically – £240 million in 2018/19 and £650 million in 2019/20, as well additional money for the New Homes Bonus. Additional funding has also been found to cancel negative Revenue Support Grant and to increase the Rural Services Delivery Grant, and £180 million will be returned to the sector. We have responded and our Chairman, Lord Porter, was interviewed across the media. He highlighted the need for a proper funding review and noted that if we value our local services as a country, we must be prepared to pay for them. Lord Porter also spoke in parliament on the settlement, reiterating that it is not the inefficiencies in local government that are driving additional costs, it is the extra demands being made on local services.
- 1.2 We briefed MPs, Peers, Council Leaders, Chief Executives and Chief Financial Officers on the day of the 2019/20 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. Our lines on the funding pressures facing councils in 2019/20 were highlighted by MPs in the debate which followed the statement in the House of Commons. We also attended a meeting with Rishu Sunak MP, Minister for Local Government, and reaffirmed our concerns around funding pressures facing councils.
- 1.3 The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is covered by a separate item on the agenda of Leadership Board.
- 1.4 **Business Rates Retention and the Fair Funding Review:** the Government has announced consultations on Business Rates Retention and the Fair Funding Review. In conjunction with MHCLG, we are running a series of free regional events in January and February for councils to hear about the proposals on Business Rates Retention and the Fair Funding Review and to feed in their views.
- 1.5 Business Rates Retention and the Fair Funding Review are covered by separate items on the agenda of Leadership Board.
- 1.6 **LGA Local Government Finance Conference 2019:** we held our annual finance conference on 8 January 2019. It was fully sold out and featured speakers from across the political spectrum including the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, and the Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Andrew Gwynne MP, as well as leading officials and technical experts.
- 1.7 **2019 Spending Review:** we are continuing our preparatory work for the 2019 Spending Review. With the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government we are organising a series of roundtables at officer level as an opportunity for key representatives across the sector to discuss a number of cross-cutting and service-specific themes relating to the Spending Review directly with relevant Government department officials. The first roundtable covered Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Dedicated Schools Grant. The second will cover welfare reform in early February. Further roundtables are planned for the coming months.
- 1.8 **Public Spending:** we submitted evidence to the Public Accounts Committee inquiry into driving value in public spending. Our evidence contained information on councils' financial planning, as well as our calls for a long-term funding settlement at the Spending Review.
- 1.9 **NAO local authority governance report:** the National Audit Office's new report reflects on local arrangements for transparent and effective decision-making. Despite an anticipated overall government

funding gap of £8 billion by 2025, local government has strong systems of governance compared with much of the public sector and once again there are good messages here for councils, with the great majority of external auditors saying they believe strong arrangements are in place. Media attention has focused on the NAO's view that MHCLG should look again at its monitoring and supervision of councils but it will clearly be important that this doesn't interfere with local democratic accountability. The findings of the report confirm much of what we have been arguing, that councils take the need to provide sound and transparent decision-making extremely seriously, while making difficult decisions about managing finances and looking for new sources of income. We will continue to work with the Government, NAO, CIPFA and other stakeholders to help provide support councils to manage the funding challenges they continue to face.

## **Priority 2 – Adult social care and health**

- 2.1 **NHS Long Term Plan:** the Government published its long-awaited [NHS Long Term Plan](#) and we will be publishing a briefing on this shortly. We [welcomed](#) a number of positive initiatives in the NHS Long Term plan, which reflected our calls for increased support and access to mental health services for mothers and partners and plans to better integrate maternity services. We also noted, however, that Government missed the opportunity to launch its adult social care green paper and proposals for the sustainable funding of these services. The ambition of the Long Term Plan can only be realised if adult social care and public health services in councils are properly funded. The Plan also recommended a review of the commissioning of public health services, including sexual health services, health visitors and school nurses. We do not believe that now is the time for further structural changes as local government is making a positive impact on the nation's public health and we will be making this point in our submission.
- 2.2 **Independent Review of the Mental Health Act 1983:** the final [report](#) of the Independent Review of the Mental Health Act 1983 has been published. Our [response](#) highlighted that it was positive that the review team has listened to the views of local government and recognised the role of community mental health services in preventing people from reaching crisis point. We are also urging Ministers to follow through with much-needed investment in mental health services. We will provide a full response to the review in the future.
- 2.3 **Supporting Carers:** we have launched a new publication, '[Supporting Carers: Guidance and Case Studies](#)', to assist councils to further improve the support carers receive, as well as to highlight the great work that is already being done by councils to support carers locally in a range of different ways, such as respite breaks, discount cards and tailored information and advice. The publication shines a light on how councils support the ten per cent of the population who are adult and young carers including the 1.4 million people who provide over 50 hours of care a week.
- 2.4 **National Minimum Wage:** we published an updated [briefing](#) in response to new Government guidance on National Minimum Wage payments for sleep-in shifts in social care.
- 2.5 **HIV:** Public Health England published a new report showing that the UK is one of the first countries to meet the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets. These aim to diagnose 90 per cent of all HIV positive people, provide antiretroviral therapy (ART) for 90 per cent of those diagnosed and achieve viral suppression for 90 per cent of those treated, by 2020. We [highlighted](#) that councils can do more, if Government were to reverse the £600 million in cuts to public health grants, which fund these vital services.
- 2.6 **Housing and Care for Older People:** LGA Community Wellbeing Board Chair, Cllr Ian Hudspeth, briefed the APPG on Housing and Care for Older People on our social care green paper. There was discussion about the role of housing and consensus that housing and care should be better integrated, locally and nationally.
- 2.7 **Public Health Grants:** we briefed Vice-Presidents following the publication of the Public Health Grants to Local Authorities 2019/2020. The briefing highlighted the constraints facing councils in

improving the public health outcomes of communities.

- 2.8 **Social care funding:** our Deputy Chief Executive, Sarah Pickup, gave evidence on social care funding to the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee. She highlighted reduced spending in social care within the wider contexts of cuts to local government. She also outlined the need for a new funding solution for adult and children's services including the taxation options outlined in our own green paper.
- 2.9 **Asylum support and accommodation:** we have been pressing hard for much stronger local government engagement in new dispersal arrangements announced on 8 January. As part of new governance arrangements confirmed by the Immigration Minister, the Home Office committed to greater oversight of and the sharing of the contracts in a joint meeting with Chief Executives hosted by the LGA in December. This Group, to be co-chaired by the LGA and the Home Office, agreed to focus on better engagement and oversight; access to funding and data; and a reduction in pressures, with discussions at a political level to continue via the member-led Asylum, Migration and Refugee Task Group. Both will meet again in the Spring.

### **Priority 3 – Children, education and schools**

- 3.1 **Early intervention:** at a meeting with Rishu Sunak MP, Minister for Local Government, we emphasised the importance of councils' work on prevention and early intervention. We also restated the successes of councils' family-centric work including the Troubled Families Initiative. Additionally, Sally Burlington, Head of Policy (People), attended the Rt Hon Andrea Leadsom MP's First 1001 days Review Roundtable to highlight the importance of local authorities in ensuring children have the best start in life and the opportunities to outcomes with right investment.
- 3.2 We have published two reports around early intervention. The first, 'A Better Start: supporting child development in the early years', set out the measures being taken by local authorities to bring together health, social care and early education services to create a holistic approach to meeting the needs of young children and families. The second, 'Fit for and During Pregnancy: A key role for local government', demonstrates the importance of local authorities in delivering maternity and neonatal care through health visitors, family workers, midwives, social care and children's centres staff.
- 3.3 **Mental health:** a new report from the Commons Public Accounts Committee says that poor NHS provision is failing children and young people with mental health needs. We welcomed the report's recognition that early intervention and prevention services for children provided by councils are vital but under significant financial strain. We are calling on the Government to ensure that all of the £1.7 billion that has been promised for children's mental health is spent on children's mental health support, and to make sure the upcoming Spending Review addresses the long-term challenges.
- 3.4 **Child protection:** we are working with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners to deliver two child sexual abuse and exploitation forums in London on 4 and 11 March 2019. These events are aimed at Leaders and Chief Executives, Police and Crime Commissioners and members of Clinical Commissioning Groups who all play a key role in protecting children. Attendees will hear from those who have been successful at working across different parts of the public sector to identify and tackle child sexual abuse and exploitation.
- 3.5 **Children's services funding:** we submitted evidence to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee on funding and provision of children's services. The submission highlighted current constraints on children's services funding particularly, for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We also briefed MPs ahead of a debate on children's social care in England. Our briefing emphasised the funding challenges facing services.
- 3.6 **School funding:** a report from the Educational Policy Institute showed that almost one-in-three local authority maintained secondary schools were in deficit in 2017/18 and the average deficit was

£483,569. We have argued that it was further evidence of the funding pressures schools and councils were under, including support for children with special needs. Our recently published research forecast shows a £472 million shortfall in 2018/19.

- 3.7 **Ofsted Annual Report:** this annual report highlighted the number of councils judged 'good' or 'outstanding' for their children's social care continues to rise and that two-thirds of those deemed 'inadequate' improved upon re-inspection. These remain challenging times for councils, which are facing a £3 billion funding gap for children's services by 2025. We will continue to make the case for a long-term, sustainable settlement for councils to continue delivering these kinds of results as part of our work to influence the Government's Spending Review.
- 3.8 **Challenges facing young people:** we briefed Peers ahead of a debate on challenges facing young people, highlighting several issues, including access to benefits and financial support, housing, children and adolescent mental health services and employment, training and skills.
- 3.9 **Apprenticeships:** we briefed MPs ahead of a debate on apprenticeships and skills, highlighting the work of our Skills Taskforce and our Work Local campaign.

#### **Priority 4 – Housing**

- 4.1 **Letwin Review:** following the publication of Oliver Letwin's review into house building and land availability, we have produced a briefing summarising the main recommendations of relevance to local government and setting out our initial response to the review. We have long called for greater attention to be paid to delays in the delivery of sites that have been granted planning permission and for councils to have greater powers to act to unblock the delivery of new homes. Oliver Letwin has confirmed his attendance at the May EEHT Board meeting and we will also be inviting an MHCLG representative. We are meeting with MHCLG officials considering the Letwin recommendations in January 2019.
- 4.2 **Permitted development rights (PDR):** we recently surveyed councils on the impact of PDR and used results as part of the draft response to the current MHCLG consultation on extending permitted development rights further. We are also working with Shelter on an open signatory letter outlining our opposition to further permitted development rights including upwards extensions, and the demolition of commercial buildings and rebuild as new homes.
- 4.3 **Housing Revenue Account (HRA):** we have written to all HRA holding councils, and have asked them to complete a short survey in order to help us create a longer-term offer that helps councils have access to the skills and expertise needed to realise their growth and building ambitions. The results of the survey will be analysed and will help us develop the next phase of sector support to enable councils to meet their local housing needs. We have also launched a Building Council Homes Programme to provide some immediate support to councils who want to immediately access skills to increase the delivery of homes via their HRA. The Programme will issue grants to support a minimum of six projects to the value of £50,000 and potentially more depending on the demand.
- 4.4 **Social rents:** we have responded to Government consultations on the future of social rents, following the four year one per cent rent reduction. While there are some welcome proposals for increasing rents by CPI+1 per cent for 2020-25, we raised concerns about the removal of flexibilities for councils to set rents, in particular for those councils that had flexibility to move rents upwards, and the limited certainty provided by a five year proposal. We expect a Government response in March. We have also written to HRA councils to help clarify the impact of the rent reduction on the recovery of rents on 53 Mondays in the year.
- 4.5 **Homes England Strategy 2018/23:** setting out their future housing delivery ambitions, within the next few years Homes England will have invested over £27 billion across their programmes. The strategy

also confirms geographical targeting across five of their funds, where 80 per cent of their funding will be targeted at half of all councils and only 20 per cent for the other half. We have raised concerns with Homes England and the Government regarding national targeting, arguing all councils should be able bid into all programmes. We have also made the case for greater proportions of this funding to be joined up and devolved to places in order best meet local need.

- 4.6 **Tenant Fees Bill:** we supported the Tenants Fees Bill and the intention to ban excessive fees to tenants. Importantly, our lobbying activity secured an amendment to the Bill in the House of Lords to exempt local authority incentive payments to landlords from the ban, which councils used to prevent and relief 17,000 cases of homelessness last year. The Bill will undergo further scrutiny in the House of Lords and House of Commons before receiving Royal Assent. Local authorities will be responsible for enforcing the ban.
- 4.7 **Hackitt Review:** on 18 December 2018, MHCLG confirmed that it will be implementing the recommendations from Dame Judith Hackitt's review of building regulations and fire safety in full, in order to: create a more effective regulatory framework; introduce clearer product standards and guidance; put residents at the heart of the new system; and drive a culture of change in the construction industry. Legislation will be brought forward to implement the recommendations, with various elements to be developed over the next few months. These will be designed and trialled by the Joint Regulators Group, which brings together the LGA, the Health and Safety Executive, Local Authority Building Control, and the National Fire Chiefs Council, before the Government consults on its proposals in the Spring.
- 4.8 **Fire safety:** our Chairman, Lord Porter, spoke at the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Fire Safety, making the point that councils continue to work extremely hard to keep tenants safe, that we welcomed the ban on the use of combustible materials on the external walls of residential blocks, but that more remains to be done to ensure residents are safe. He also discussed in the House of Lords how the country ensures the owners of private high-rise residential buildings remove dangerous cladding from these blocks, making the point that responsibility lies with the owners and that councils have to go through due legal processes to take enforcement action. In response, the Minister Lord Bourne said that local authorities have the power to take enforcement action where landlords do not act.
- 4.9 **Homelessness:** new figures published by MHCLG show the number of households in temporary accommodation on 30 June 2018 was 82,310 – up 5 per cent in a year. We responded highlighting how councils are struggling to cope with rising homelessness and to find suitable accommodation for those in need. Not only is it financially unsustainable for councils to increasingly use temporary accommodation, it is also hugely disruptive to families placed in such arrangements. The Government has since launched a scheme to encourage London Boroughs to work together to provide safe accommodation for families on the edge of homelessness. This is being backed by £38 million of funding from the overall £1.2 billion investment Government has set aside for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping by 2027. This new scheme will provide a joined-up approach that will also give those at risk of homelessness the chance to stay closer to where they currently live.

## **Priority 5 – Inclusive growth, jobs and devolution**

- 5.1 **Clean Air Strategy:** the Government has published its final clean air strategy. It includes plans to reduce emissions from non-road traffic sources. We have been actively engaged in lobbying the development of the strategy and whilst we have welcomed the ambition and scope of the document we have made clear that any additional work on air quality will need further funding. New powers also need to be sufficiently flexible to reflect local circumstances. Councils also need local powers to further tackle air pollution, particularly with regard to moving traffic offences, government support on planning and transport matters, and robust national action to help the country transition to low-emission vehicles and power generation. The Government is planning a further shake up of environmental

powers in the next parliamentary session and we will ensure that any new responsibilities for councils are practical and backed by the resources needed.

- 5.2 **Major Road Network:** just before Christmas the Government published the results of its Major Road Network consultation. This new network of strategically important local authority roads will get funding for improvements from the new hypothecated roads fund. The roads fund is funded directly from vehicle excise duty income. The LGA has supported the creation of the network and the Government agreed with the points we made in response to the consultation. They will be more flexible on the amount on the size of schemes eligible for funding, funding for public transport interventions and the role of Highway England.
- 5.3 **Future High Streets Fund:** the Government has published a [call for proposals](#) as part of its £675 million Future High Streets Fund, which forms a central part of its plan to provide support to councils to help revitalise their town centres. The document sets out how the Fund will operate, with expressions of interest from councils requested by 22 March 2019. We [highlighted](#) how we will be working with Government to ensure councils have full flexibility over how funding is spent to ensure solutions are tailored to the unique circumstances of each area.
- 5.4 **Resources and Waste Strategy:** the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, announced the [Resources and Waste Strategy](#). The strategy is designed to overhaul England's waste system and proposes a legal obligation that will mean those creating the waste pay for its collection. There are also proposals on local recycling services which, among other proposals, could have significant consequences for councils. We published a [briefing note](#) on the Strategy for councils. The Government will be seeking views on a variety of their proposals in the coming year and we will be responding where appropriate.
- 5.5 **Future transport:** we hosted a future transport conference entitled 'Clean, connected and in control' on 17 January 2019. It is the latest event in our work preparing authorities for the major changes in transport technology. We hosted speakers from innovative local authorities and companies at the cutting edge of developing connected and autonomous vehicles. We intend to follow up the event with a publication making the case for electric charging infrastructure.
- 5.6 **Creating Better Towns:** we delivered two focused masterclasses over December 2018 and January 2019 on helping councils to deliver better town centres. With the help of expert speakers, topics covered ranged from developing evidence base, gathering data, role of digital, urban planning and public realm, and community leadership and engagement.
- 5.7 **Recycling:** we briefed Peers on the case for improved recycling and the threat to the environment from plastics. Our briefing highlighted the improvements made by councils to waste and recycling services over recent years, and our calls for businesses and manufacturers to pay the full cost of recycling or disposing of their packaging.
- 5.8 **Devolution:** we briefed Peers ahead of a debate on decentralisation and devolution. We called for devolution beyond cities and metropolitan areas.
- 5.9 **Local bus market:** we briefed Karen Lee MP on recent trends in the local bus market, ahead of Transport Questions. Our briefing highlighted the reduction in the number of bus journeys taken in recent years and the pressures facing rural bus routes.

## **Priority 6 – Britain's exit from the EU**

- 6.1 The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government continue their preparations for various scenarios, and we are also continuing to work with councils to offer support as they make their own provisions. We are pressing for the recently announced Brexit funding for local government to be provided to councils before April 2019, so it can be used most effectively to support local preparations in the coming months.

6.2 We continue to engage with MHCLG through the EU Exit Local Government Delivery Board, with the next meeting scheduled to take place on 24 January. MHCLG have also taken steps to engage directly with a group of council chief executives, spread across nine regions, to act as a liaison point as preparations and planning progress. We are offering support to those involved.

6.3 A detailed update of all of our work in preparation for Brexit is covered by another item on the agenda of Leadership Board.

### **Priority 7 – Supporting Councils**

7.1 **Universal Credit:** Amber Rudd MP announced that the Government was postponing the 'managed migration' of three million existing benefits claimants on to Universal Credit. Instead, the Government will await the outcome of a pilot scheme of 10,000 with the aim of addressing issues raised by MPs over the operation of UC. On 11 January 2019 it was announced that those with children born before the system began in 2017 would remain exempt from the two-child cap, that the Government would ensure that the main carer in a household would be the primary recipient of UC, and there would be a new online system for private landlords to get rents paid directly to them. With councils, we are working with the Department of Work and Pensions to inform the approach to 'managed migration' and the pilot scheme.

7.2 **Police Staff Council:** the National Employers have reached an agreement with the Trade Union Side on an increase of 2% on all pay points and Standby Allowance from 1 September 2018. The agreement includes the removal of the bottom pay point (pay point six) on the national pay spine and further discussions on a without prejudice basis on annual leave entitlement and apprenticeships.

7.3 **Improving Councils:** in The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP's speech for the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, he made reference to a 'continuous improvement tool' for the sector. This tool is the package of support which we developing. We have been working (and will continue to work) with councils including Improvement and Innovation Board members, to co-produce the content, develop and pilot the tool. Our ambition is to create something which both helps authorities to reflect on their improvement journey, but also to direct them to resources, guidance and training which can help them with that.

7.4 **Commercialisation:** we continue to deliver a range of support and events to help councils to develop their commercial activities. We have delivered the southern cohort of the commercial skills training for officers in partnership with the Institute of Directors (IOD). The next cohort in Leeds is sold out with the highest number of paying delegates for an LGA commercial skills training cohort to date. Our next southern cohort is starting in Winchester in February 2019.

7.5 **Behavioural Insights:** all projects from Phase 2 of the programme are now complete with reports published on our webpage. A key success was Kent County Council, Kent Police and Victim Support's project which has resulted in a 2.3 per cent increase in victims of domestic violence taking up support offers from Victim Support. There are a number of examples of early success from Phase 3, and the 2018/19 funding round (Phase 4) was hugely oversubscribed with eight councils selected to take part.

7.6 **Design in the Public Sector:** we received a higher amount of applications than ever before for this year's programme which is focussed on assisting councils in addressing their public health challenges. 14 projects have been selected to be supported this year.

7.7 **The Productivity Experts Programme:** we have published a series of case studies from an LGA run programme to help save councils money and generate an income. There are a variety of topics including effective contract management, a fees and charges review and bridging a skills gap in digital work.

7.8 **Local Government Challenge 2019:** this year's Local Government Challenge is celebrating its tenth anniversary. Contestants for this year's challenge have now been confirmed and the first challenge is taking place at Cherwell District Council on 30 and 31 January 2019.

**7.9 National Graduate Development Programme (ngdp):** candidate applications for Cohort 21 closed on 3 January 2019. Councils have until 31 March 2019 to register for the ngdp and we have published a [new guide for councils](#).

**7.10 Be a Councillor:** in December 2018 we appointed Disability Rights UK as an administrator for the new [EnAble Fund](#). The EnAble Fund has been offered from the Government Equalities Office, and has been set up for people with disabilities to gain additional support to stand for election to councils and other local authorities.

**7.11 Political Leadership:** 2018 ended with 658 delegates participating in our Political Leadership programmes, which have received excellent feedback. We have a range of remaining [programmes](#) which will continue to run into 2019.

**7.12 Innovation Zone:** following agreement from the Improvement and Innovation Board, this year's overall theme for the [Innovation Zone](#) will be 'Take the Plunge', encouraging organisations to present brave, innovative ideas that have paid off.

**7.13 Sport and Physical Activity Conference:** on 5 December 2018, we hosted the Sports and Physical Activity Conference in Bevin Hall at 18 Smith Square. The conference saw a range of speakers, such as Baroness Tanni-Grey Thompson, Gold-Medal Winning Paralympian, providing examples of best practise across the sector and stories of the transformational power of sports.

**7.14 Leadership Essentials:** on 11-12 December 2018, we held one of our culture Leadership Essentials (LE), delivered with Arts Council England (ACE), for councillors. A sports LE course aimed at officers is taking place on the 16-18 January 2019.

**7.15 Library and Cultural Peer Challenges:** a second round of applications for the [Library and Cultural Peer Challenges](#) we offer in partnership with Arts Council England are open until the 31 January 2019. Six library and three cultural peer challenges are available.

**7.16 UK Municipal Bonds Agency (UKMBA):** the LGA, together with 56 councils, is a shareholder of the UKMBA and is actively supporting it with the aim to issue the first bond in the current year at a lower rate than that offered by the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb). We have a strong indication from the lending market that the best possible rate for councils can be achieved if the total borrowing amount can be increased to £200-250m. 12 councils have expressed interest in borrowing through the first issue and the total amount of intended borrowing is now estimated at £140m, with a number of councils yet to confirm their requirement. We are keen for more councils to come forward to borrow through the UKMBA so that we can reach the benchmark-sized bond for issue.

**7.17 Local Government Mutual:** we have been working with councils to develop a cost effective alternative to conventional insurance. As part of this work the Local Government Mutual has been established with the LGA and 14 councils registered as founding members. The Mutual has appointed LGM Management Services Ltd (LGMMSL) to provide management services to the Mutual. Plans are in place to allow the Mutual to open for business and provide cover in 2019. A number of LGA member authorities are now going through the process of obtaining a priced offer of cover from the mutual, without commitment, to consider whether it is a cost effective option for them. The offer to undertake this process is open to all LGA members.

## **Internal Priority – A single voice for local government**

### **LGA Membership**

8. The total number of councils on notice to leave the LGA on 31 March 2019 is five. These are;
  - 8.1 East Staffordshire Borough Council
  - 8.2 London Borough of Richmond
  - 8.3 Leicestershire County Council
  - 8.4 Lincolnshire County Council
  - 8.5 Southend Borough Council
  
9. The Broads Authority National Park are also on notice to leave the LGA on 31 March 2019 and Exmoor National Park have given notice for 31 March 2020.
  
10. Four councils remain out of membership – the London Boroughs of Bromley, Wandsworth and Barnet and Gosport Borough Council.
  
11. As a result of local government reorganisation, we have been informed by a further fifteen authorities that they wish to give notice to leave LGA membership on 31 March 2019 as these councils will cease to exist. These are;
  - 11.1 Poole Borough Council
  - 11.2 Bournemouth Borough Council
  - 11.3 Christchurch Borough Council
  - 11.4 North Dorset District Council
  - 11.5 West Dorset District Council
  - 11.6 Weymouth & Portland Borough Council
  - 11.7 Purbeck District Council
  - 11.8 East Dorset District Council
  - 11.9 Dorset County Council
  - 11.10 Forest Heath District Council
  - 11.11 St Edmundsbury Borough Council
  - 11.12 Suffolk Coastal District Council
  - 11.13 Waveney District Council
  - 11.14 West Somerset District Council
  - 11.15 Taunton Deane Borough Council
  
12. We have been informed that their successor authorities intend to take up LGA membership on 1 April 2019.

### **New LGA Company**

13. Further to the meeting of the Board of Directors of the LGA company on 7 March 2018, and the Special Resolution passed by the first General Meeting of the company on the same day, the Articles of Association were lodged with Companies House, directors' details submitted and the accounting date changed to 31 March. The new LGA came into effect on 1 April 2018.

14. All member authorities have now completed their applications to be admitted as a member authority to the new LGA.
15. Following the resolution of the General Assembly that the unincorporated LGA be dissolved at such point as the Leadership Board shall determine, we have written to all member authorities to seek the agreement of at least two-thirds of our membership, to the dissolution, as required by the constitution of the unincorporated LGA. Approval has now been received from the required minimum of two-thirds of councils in full LGA membership.

### **Membership engagement by the Strategic Management Team**

<b>Chief Executive</b>	
10 December	Chief Executive, North Yorkshire County Council
13 December	District Council Network Chief Executive's Conference
<i>Forward Plan</i>	
30 January	Cheshire West and Chester Council
1 February	South West Chief Executives Meeting
4-5 February	Leading Edge event, Milton Keynes
7-8 February	District Council Network Annual Conference, Warwick
8 February	Labour Leaders Summit, Warwick
12 February	Chief Executive and Leader, Sunderland City Council
14 February	Berkshire Chief Executives Meeting
25 February	Chief Executive, Hertfordshire County Council
28 February	North West Chief Executive's Meeting
<b>Deputy Chief Executive</b>	
7 December	MJ Future Forum event, Manchester
11 January	London Borough of Ealing

### **Media**

<b>Funding for local government</b>
Chairman Lord Porter was interviewed on ITV News and Channel 4 News in response to the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. (BBC News at One, BBC News Channel, BBC Radio 4's Today programme, BBC Radio 4's Six O'clock News, FT, Times, Independent, i paper, Mail, Express, Express Online – twice, Sun)
Lord Porter's comment piece setting out asks ahead of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was published in the Times' Red Box bulletin.
Cllr Richard Watts was interviewed by BBC Radio 4's Today programme about the delay to the announcement of the Local Government Finance Settlement (Huffington Post, BBC News at 6 and 10)
Shadow Communities Secretary Andrew Gwynne MP referenced our warning that councils face a funding gap of more than £3 billion next year, in a Huffington Post opinion piece which says the Government is set to agree a further 36 per cent cut to council funding in 2019/20.
Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport Chair, Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson, featured in the Times and Express with our lines on how a fall in core government funding and rising demand for homelessness support, children's services and adult social care has forced

councils to divert funding from other vital services, including for libraries.
Cllr Martin Tett issued our response on the £6.7 billion maintenance backlog for council-owned bridges in England (The Mail, Mail Online, Metro, Express and ITV Online)
Our estimates that councils face an almost £8 billion funding black hole by 2025, following a report by independent think tank Demos, which found that there are now almost 8 million people who act as carers for a loved one (Mirror)
Cllr Anntoinette Bramble featured on LBC, Talk Radio and Sky News Radio about our press release calling for an emergency injection of funding for supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), which faces a £1.6 billion funding gap by 2020/1. (Observer)
BBC Online and i paper online featured our response to new figures showing the number of lollipop men and women funded by councils in Great Britain has fallen by almost a quarter in five years and how many councils have been forced to review this discretionary service, due to significant pressures on their budgets and increasing demand for statutory services.
<b>Adult social care and health</b>
Our President, Lord Kerslake, was interviewed on the BBC News channel about the NHS Long Term Plan and highlighted the pressures facing adult social care, and the delay to the publication of the Government's promised green paper (Mail Online, Metro Online, Huffington Post)
Community Wellbeing Board Chairman, Cllr Ian Hudspeth featured in the i paper with our calls for long-term sustainability for adult social care.
Our statement in response to a joint report by the King's Fund and the University of York, which warns that staff shortages are putting pressure on home care, was reported in the Express.
Our response to NHS funding for so-called 'drunk tanks' this Christmas was reported in the Guardian.
Cllr Peter Fleming was interviewed on LBC and Sky News Radio about our press release warning Christmas shoppers to avoid buying fake and potentially dangerous toys. (Sky News)
Our previous warning that the squeeze on funding, rising demand and increased costs is hitting adult social care was reported on Express Online in response to data showing emergency hospital admissions from care homes have nearly doubled over the past eight years.
Cllr Peter Fleming was interviewed on Talk Radio and LBC about our press release warning New Year's Eve drinkers to avoid cheap and dangerous fake alcohol that can cause permanent blindness and even death (Sky News Radio, Sunday Telegraph, Sunday Times, Independent, i paper online, Sun, Mail Online, Express Online, Metro Online, Sky News Online, Huffington Post)
Cllr Ian Hudspeth responded to new government figures showing a total of 32,115 adults died last year before they could get the social care they needed (Sunday Times, Sunday Express)
<b>Children, education and schools</b>
Our press release revealing that nine in ten councils overspent on children's services last year was reported exclusively in the Guardian. LGA Vice-President, Clive Betts MP, also quoted our figures from our press release at Prime Minister's Questions which was broadcast live on Sky News, BBC News channel, BBC Radio 5 Live, and BBC Politics Live.
Private firms are making big money out of children's social services which are overspending by £800 million a year due to rising demand and reduced funding from central government, referencing our previous forecast that by 2020 there will be a £2

billion funding gap just to maintain children's services at current levels (Guardian Online)
Cllr Ian Hudspeth featured in a video interview on Express Online about our call for more funding for both child and adult social care, ahead of the Government's expected green paper on the issue.
Our response to the Government's announcement of £350 million for councils to support children with special educational needs and disabilities and how this will only partially address the deficit faced by councils (BBC Breakfast)
Our previous lines about the dangers of childhood obesity, following a Public Health England report which reveals that the country has one of the slowest improving life expectancies in the developed world (Mail Online)
<b>Housing</b>
Chairman Lord Porter responded to the Ministerial updates on Building Safety and Grenfell Tower (Telegraph, Mail Online)
Cllr Martin Tett responded to figures showing a rise in the number of households in temporary accommodation outside of their area is at a 20 year high (Times, Mirror, Guardian Online, i paper online, Metro Online, Observer and Huffington Post)
Our previous research on the housing logjam was reported on i paper online following new figures showing house building has fallen each decade over the last 50 years.
Our response to an £11 million fund to tackle rough sleeping and help councils get homeless people into secure accommodation (Express)
The Home Office's response to the Home Affairs Select Committee's report warning that councils may pull out of a scheme for housing asylum seekers, about how it will continue to work closely with local authorities on asylum dispersal and is committed to comprehensive engagement with the LGA to review the process (Guardian, Independent, Sky News Online, BBC Victoria Derbyshire Show).
Cllr David Simmonds, Chairman of our Asylum, Migration and Refugee Task Group, appeared live on BBC Newsnight to discuss the Home Affairs Select Committee report into asylum seeker accommodation.
Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board Chairman Cllr Martin Tett responded to ONS figures on the number of deaths of homeless people, the first official figures on the issue (Guardian, Express, Mirror and Metro Online)
Our warning that councils face a funding shortfall of nearly £8 billion by 2025 featured in an article on the rise of 24 per cent of homelessness deaths (Independent)
Our research which found that 92 per cent of councils were "moderately or very concerned" about the quality of homes converted under permitted development rules, with 59 per cent worried about safety. (Times)
<b>Inclusive growth, jobs and devolution</b>
Transport spokesman Cllr Martin Tett responded about how councils are willing to discuss any ideas for shared public transport to help rural communities (Telegraph Online)
Our lines that surplus money from parking fines, fees and permits is invested back into local transport and maintaining car parks (Mail)
Cllr Martin Tett responded to the launch of a £675 million government fund set up to help rejuvenate the country's high streets. (Guardian, i paper, Express and Mirror Online)
LGA responded to Northern Powerhouse Minister Jake Berry's comments that councils should fly county flags and encourage people to find out more about their areas history.
Our response to calls for taxis to be used as public transport in rural areas (Mail Online)
<b>Supporting councils</b>
Our response to reports that separate food waste collections are due to be announced in the Government's forthcoming waste strategy (Times)
Cllr Martin Tett was interviewed by BBC Breakfast about recycling Christmas wrapping

paper, cardboard and packaging (Mail, Telegraph, Good Morning Britain)
Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board Chairman Cllr Martin Tett featured in the Mirror and on Express Online with our lines that councils have gritters ready to be deployed instantly to make sure roads are open where possible, ahead of the biggest snowfall since last year which was forecast to affect parts of the UK (Express – twice, Mirror Online, Star, Times)
Chairman of our Community Wellbeing Board, Cllr Ian Hudspeth, was interviewed on BBC Radio 4's You and Yours programme about councils reducing meals on wheels services.
Cllr Martin Tett responded to new figures showing 45.2 per cent of household waste was recycled in 2017 – up just 0.3 percentage points on 2016, and our calls for the prevention of unrecyclable waste entering the environment in the first place (Telegraph, i paper)
Warning by Leethen Bartholomew, Head of the National FGM Centre which is run by the LGA and children's charity Barnardo's that British girls taken overseas could be at risk of female genital mutilation and how teachers and social workers can spot the signs (Mail Online)
Our response to a report by confused.com on councils' parking income and investment in roads ( Telegraph, Sun, Mail, and ITV Online)
Cllr Martin Tett called on the Government to address the £9.3 billion roads repair backlog in response to research by RAC which claims that more than half a million potholes were reported to councils last year. (Mail, Mail Online, Mirror, Sun, BBC Online, ITV Online)
<b>A single voice for local government</b>
Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board Chairman Cllr Martin Tett appeared live on the BBC News channel to take viewers' questions in response to the launch of the Government's Resources and Waste Strategy. Cllr Tett also appeared on ITV News and BBC News at Six and his comments were also broadcast on BBC Radio 2 and across several BBC local radio news bulletins (Express, Metro, Mail Online, BBC Online, ITV Online, Sky News Online and LBC Online)
Transport spokesman Cllr Martin Tett responded about how councils are willing to discuss any ideas for shared public transport to help rural communities (Telegraph Online)
Our previous lines that there is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to waste services and that any changes to the way councils are expected to collect waste would need to be fully funded, in response to reports that food waste is due to be collected separately by councils under the Government's Waste Strategy (BBC Online, Mail on Sunday)
Our lines on the cost of public health funerals for councils (BBC Online, Express and the Mirror)
Our response to a Taxpayers' Alliance report on public sector pay (Express, Mail and Sun)
Cllr David Simmonds was interviewed live on LBC to discuss illegal migration into the UK, following news that three men were found crossing the English Channel in a rubber dingy.
We responded to figures showing drivers were fined £39 million in 2017/18 for illegally driving in bus lanes (Mail, Express Online)
Cllr Peter Fleming was interviewed on LBC about Blue Badge fraud after Press Association figures showed 62 per cent of English councils did not take action against perpetrators in 2017/18 (BBC Breakfast, BBC Radio 4's Today programme, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 5 Live, Talk Radio, Telegraph, Independent, i paper, Mail, Mail Online, Sun, BBC Online, Sky News Online, ITV Online, LBC Online)