

20 January 2015

## **Sector-led Improvement: Taking Stock**

### **Purpose**

To note the consultation paper “Taking Stock – where next for sector led improvement” has been issued to councils and other interested parties.

### **Summary**

The Board has previously decided to review, with the sector, the current approach to sector-led improvement in the light of the evaluation research findings and potential policy changes in the run up to the next General Election. At its last meeting, the Board commented on a draft consultation paper, which has been revised in the light of comments received from Board members and tested with councils through discussions with Principal Advisors and following a meeting with a group of Chief Executives.

### **Recommendation**

That the Improvement and Innovation Board note the consultation is underway and to encourage councils to respond.

### **Actions**

Officers to promote the consultation with the sector, analyse responses and report back to members on any implications for the current approach to sector-led improvement.

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### **Background**

1. The Board has previously agreed that it would be timely to review the current approach to sector-led improvement, in light of the findings from the evaluation research and in the run up to the next General Election. A refreshed and strengthened narrative about sector-led improvement and the effectiveness of the approach in supporting councils to continue to deliver efficiencies and improved outcomes will also be helpful in reinforcing the LGA's broader lobbying for further devolution, as expressed in our Rewiring and 100 Days campaign work.
2. Members agreed that it would be helpful to prepare a consultation document setting out where we have got to on sector-led improvement, the results of the evaluation, some of the current pressures and asking a range of consultation questions. This was considered at the last meeting in October 2014 and has been revised in the light of members' comments. The draft paper was also discussed with a representative group of Chief Executives designed to test how the paper would be received by the sector and to ensure it provides councils with the opportunity to raise the issues they want to. A copy of the final consultation paper, which has now been issued to the sector, is attached at **Appendix A**.
3. The consultation is being promoted widely with Leaders, Chief Executives, councils, professional bodies and national stakeholders. The timing fits well with our Leadership Board's decision that sector-led improvement should be one of the LGA's campaigns for 2014/15. This has led to greater prominence on the homepage of the LGA website, a revamp of the website content on sector-led improvement and the exploration of podcasts as a way of promoting the benefits of the LGA's support offer to councils.
4. Members are encouraged to promote the paper within their own authority and networks.

### **Next steps**

5. The results of the consultation will be brought back to members, highlighting any particular messages that might require a potential adjustment or change to the current approach. The LGA could then publish a revised statement as a companion piece to the 100 Days work, reinforcing our arguments for further flexibility and devolution.

### **Financial Implications**

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