

Other business report

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This section provides reports on other business relevant to the Board.

Recommendation

That the Board note the update.

Action

LGA officers to action as necessary.

Contact officer: Lucy Ellender
Position: Programme Officer
Phone no: 020 7664 3173
E-mail: lucy.ellender@local.gov.uk

Other business report

National Federation for Educational Research (NFER)

1. Reporting activity in the January to March 2012 period has included the publication of reports on *The Economic Benefits Of Early Intervention: Informing Local Practice*, the *Evaluation of the Early Adopter Programme for Sector-led Improvement and Support* and an interim report on the *Evaluation of the National Youth Agency (NYA) Tailored Support Offer to Local Authorities*. In addition, reports submitted for approval and possible publication include *Hidden Talents: A Statistical Overview of the Participation Patterns of Young People*, *The Impact of Safeguarding Peer Reviews* and the *Soulbury Committee Workforce Survey*. Newly commissioned studies include *Experiences of the Fostering and Adoption Processes: Views of Children and Young People*, *Fostering and Adoption Partnerships: A Review of Current Practice*, *Council Approaches to Children's Health and Wellbeing* and *Analysis of Academy Schools by Local Authority*.
2. The Chief Executive and the Head of the LGA Research Programme at NFER welcomed the opportunity to attend the January Children and Young Board meeting and the Head of the LGA Programme attended the Office Holders meeting in February to share some of the previous year's work with them and discuss possible project commissions for the next financial year. Further information has been provided to the LGA and Councillor Lakin on possible study suggestions arising from: suggestions by the Board members at the January meeting; previous studies findings and recommendations; feedback from officers and members participating in earlier studies or who have attended conferences where the findings have been disseminated, and; suggestions picked up through trade press and journals and via the regular LGA e-bulletins.
3. A winter/spring 2012 brochure has been produced that highlights activity during the 2011/12 period including current projects and published reports. There is also a section providing information on research projects completed since 2006. This can be found in **Appendix A to Item 3**.

National Youth Agency (NYA)

4. Following agreement from the Children and Young Board Office Holders the NYA has agreed its work plan for the next financial year. This will include increasing the offer of tailored support to 40 Councils. Each Council will be able to access up to 10 days of consultancy support tailored to their individual needs. NYA will also be piloting a business brokerage programme with two

Item 7

further councils to produce a model of working. Other activities include work into 'troubled families' and specifically the role that youth work plays within that.

5. Working with the Department for Education (DfE) and the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services NYA will be enlarging the audience to the Supporting Services online community to encompass the entire youth sector. The DfE has agreed that it should become the legacy site for Positive for Youth as well as a repository for youth related Children's Workforce Development Council materials.
6. Building on the success of last year's LGA/NYA annual conference a third annual conference for councillors and officers will be held at Local Government House in January 2013. A conference will also be held outside London in September which will provide an opportunity to showcase the LGA/NYA routes to success work.
7. Included in next year's budget will be a small drawdown pot to be used to meet specific requests from LGA throughout the year.
8. The NYA have already completed several of the work programme objectives from 2011-12 including; completing 10 packages of tailored support to councils; working with 4 councils developing and piloting a peer review and development process for young people's services; commissioning support materials with eight of the 10 resources completed and launched in January, and finally publishing, alongside the LGA and DfE, research into innovative ways in which councils are working with the voluntary sector to leverage extra funding from alternative sources.

The LGA consultation response to ending the Annual Children services assessment

9. In response to the LGA previously calling for the ending of the annual rating for children services, the Government are now proposing to repeal this duty. The LGA responded to Ofsted's consultation on ending the Annual Children services assessment re-iterating that we support this repeal to remove top down management and replace it with local government being accountable to their local communities and in charge of their own self-improvement. Our response also detailed that the LGA's approach to self-improvement is more proportionate, increases local transparency and democracy, and frees up resources of both local government and Ofsted to be used for higher priority areas.
10. A copy of our response is available on the Children and Young People section of the LGA website (http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/children-and-young-people/-/journal_content/56/10161/3479104/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE).

Children's Health

11. On 26 January 2012, the Secretary of State for Health, Andrew Lansley, announced a children and young people's health outcomes strategy will be unveiled later this year, with an ambition "to improve outcomes for children and young people's health". To inform the strategy, a Children's and Young People's Forum has been set up to look at four themes (Public Health and Prevention, Acutely Sick Children, Mental Health, Long term Conditions). The forum will be responsible for carrying out a three month engagement process with appropriate stakeholders before reporting their recommendations to Government later in the year.
12. The LGA raised the issue of the lack of local government representation on the children and young people's health outcomes strategy forum with the Department of Health and as a result Councillor David Pugh, Leader of Isle of Wight Council and a member of the Children and Young People Board is now an official member of the forum. Councillor Pugh is the only elected member on the forum which is made up of 52 independent experts from charity groups and the health sector, other local government representatives includes Directors of Children's Services.
13. Our concerns about the strategy's scope include the lack of a clear overall strategy for health improvement. The lack of reference to Prof. Sir Michael Marmot's life course approach which is a key cornerstone of the public health strategy, in addition there does not seem to be any reference to health inequalities. Local government has a key role to play in delivering the public health agenda through health and wellbeing boards and tackling the wider social determinants of health and reducing health inequalities for children and young people through service planning and delivery.
14. The LGA is working with the forum members and the Department of Health to hold an engagement event to ensure local government is fully involved in the development of the children and young people's health outcomes strategy.
15. If you would like further information contact Samantha Ramanah, Adviser, on samantha.ramanah@local.gov.uk.

Special Education Needs and Disability – Next Steps

16. We are still waiting for the Government to announce the next steps for the reform of Special Educational Needs and Disability, following the consultation on the Green paper last year. The announcement has been delayed but it is expected before the Easter recess and the LGA will be doing an 'On the day' briefing on the proposals. Twenty pathfinder projects are underway involving thirty-one local authorities that are testing out the main proposals in the Green

28 March 2012

Item 7

Paper which are the biggest reforms in 30 years to help disabled children and those with special educational needs.