

Discussion on the year ahead and the Business Plan

Purpose of report

For discussion.

Summary

This report provides background for the Board's discussion about the year ahead and sets out the priorities in the current LGA business plan that are relevant to the Board's work programme. **Appendix A** provides a brief overview of the policy context of the Board's work. The LGA Business Plan is set for the financial year and the business planning cycle for 2013/14 is likely to begin towards the end of this year.

Recommendation

Members are invited to discuss the focus of the Board's work for the rest of this financial year and to begin to identify likely priorities for 2013/14.

Action

To be taken forward by officers as directed by members of the Board.

Contact officer:

Sally Burlington

Position:

Head of Programmes

Phone no:

020 7664 3099

E-mail:

Sally.Burlington@local.gov.uk

Discussion on the year ahead and the Business Plan

Background

1. The LGA's business planning cycle is based the financial year, so the current Business Plan covers the rest of the financial year to the end of March 2013. The new business planning cycle, for the year April 2013 – March 2014, is likely to commence towards the end of this year. However, the Board cycle begins in September with the appointment of new Boards, so it is timely to have a discussion about the priorities in this year's business plan and start to think ahead to what might be the emerging priorities next year.

The priorities in the current LGA business plan that are relevant to the Board's work programme

2. The high level priorities across the LGA's work programme in the current business plan¹ are:
 - 2.1. **Public Sector Reform** – councils are at the centre, and are seen to be at the centre, of public sector reform and are delivering more effective services for local people;
 - 2.2. **Growth, Jobs and Prosperity** – councils are recognised as central to economic growth;
 - 2.3. **Funding for Local Government** - Reform of the public sector finance system so councils raise more funds locally, have confidence their financing is sustainable and fair, and have greater ability to co-ordinate local public services;
 - 2.4. **Sector-led improvement** – councils are the most improved part of the public sector. Local politicians and senior managers lead the transformation of local places.
3. The more detailed specific objectives relevant to the Board's are of work are as follows:
 - 3.1. **Schools:** Councils are supported in their role in school place provision, fair admissions, driving school improvement and supporting vulnerable pupils (this includes work on Raising the Participation Age and reform to the Special Educational Needs system);
 - 3.2. **Care of Children:** Proposals for reforming children's social care, including on children's homes and adoption, enable councils to more effectively meet the

¹ http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=e753abeb-678b-492c-89f7-08b40b8ea7a8&groupId=10171

Item 1

needs of children and young people in their care (this replaces the original objective in the business plan, which related to an anticipated White Paper on the care system for children which has not materialised);

- 3.3. **Children's Sector-led Improvement:** Sector-led improvement is established in children's services, through support for self-assessment and peer challenge including 36 peer reviews, targeted support to councils and practical approaches to policy implementation (the majority of this work is led by the Children's Improvement Board, which is dealt with under a separate agenda item);
 - 3.4. **Children's health:** Local government demonstrates its commitment to its new public health responsibilities (this is a priority that is jointly delivered with the Community Wellbeing Board and the CYP focus is ensuring that the public health reforms take proper account of issues relating to children's health);
 - 3.5. **Hidden Talents** – demonstrating that councils are best placed to identify and support the one million young people not in education, training or employment (this is a priority jointly delivered with the Economy and Transport Board, with a particular CYP focus on supporting councils in their responsibilities relating to the raising of the age of participation in education and training).
4. **Appendix A** provides a brief overview of the policy context of the Board's work, to help inform the discussion.

Financial Implications

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