

Introduction and overview of the LGA's Children and Young People Board

Purpose of report

To provide Board members with an overview of the Children and Young People team's work for the next year and ways of working.

Summary

This report provides an overview of the Board's work programme and how it links to the LGA's Rewiring Public Services campaign. The LGA Business Plan is set for the financial year and the business planning cycle for 2014/15 is likely to begin towards the end of this year.

The Rewiring Children's Services document is at **Appendix 1**.

The report also sets out what to expect as a member of the Board and a list of meeting dates for 2013/2014 in **Appendix 2**.

Recommendation

That members note the focus of the Board's work for the rest of the financial year.

Action

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

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Background

1. The LGA's business planning cycle is based on the financial year, so the current Business Plan covers the rest of the financial year to the end of March 2014. The new business planning cycle, for the year April 2014 – March 2015, is likely to commence towards the end of this year and the Board will have opportunities to contribute to this process.

Rewiring Public Services

2. Since early 2013 the LGA has been listening to councils' key concerns for the future through a series of regional road show events to involve and engage as many people from the sector as possible. What we have heard is that councils are keen to stress the validity of the local democratic process and its implications for local leadership and service delivery; funded through sustainable income levels which should flow through into relevant local action. There are concerns ranging from the 'English question' to how and where funding should be directed and spent to increase growth. The campaign, launched at the LGA conference 2013, will provide the platform for the key areas of economic growth, financial sustainability, adult social care and health and children's services.
3. The campaign calls for a radical rewiring of the public sector, based around giving local areas greater control of public money. This will allow local areas to make decisions on how that money is spent and design services that work for their communities and reduce demand for higher cost national services. The 'rewiring public services' campaign includes specific propositions for children's services to give councils the flexibility they need to redesign services around individual and family needs, promote effective early intervention and rebuild the role of families and communities in supporting each other. See **Appendix 1** for further information.

Further detail on the 2013/14 work plan

4. **Funding for local government:** A sector-led project on children's services costs for the 2015 spending review, jointly with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS); work to prepare a response to the proposed national funding formula for schools; a survey on the council contribution to capital costs, and support for councils in implementing high needs place funding arrangements for 2014/15.
5. **Economic Growth, jobs and prosperity:** Demonstrating that councils are best placed to identify and support young people not in education, training or employment and supporting councils in their responsibilities relating to the raising of the age of participation in education and training. We are working to influence the shape of Government's 16 - 24 reform agenda, including Study Programmes, Traineeships,

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Apprenticeships (and the new duties for 19-24s with Special Educational Needs in the Children and Families Bill), led by the needs of employers and young people.

6. **Public Service Reform - Children's social care:** influencing proposals for wide ranging reform, in particular for residential children's homes and adoption. We are lobbying for changes to the adoption provisions of the Children and Families Bill, supporting sector improvement, developing proposals on more flexible models of care and extended family support and sharing innovation and learning on developing family and community resilience. We are working to coordinate policy, lobbying and sector improvement to ensure that councils are supported to be effective in tackling child sexual exploitation.
7. **Public Service Reform - Education:** promoting a strong role for councils in education for children and young people from early years through to post-16 education. We are reviewing the impact of the new Ofsted inspection framework for councils' school improvement services and undertaking a project on the use of scrutiny in holding schools and Academies to account. We are also working to ensure that reforms to councils' statutory duties in the Children and Families Bill for children and young people with Special Educational Needs allow councils to retain the flexibility to respond to the needs of individual children and young people and local circumstances.
8. **Public Service Reform - Children's health:** demonstrating local government's commitment to new responsibilities for delivering and commissioning public health services for children and young people aged 5-19 (and those aged 0 – 5 from 2015) by tackling health inequalities and the wider social determinants of health through joining up council led services (jointly delivered with the Community Wellbeing Board).
9. **Sector-led improvement and innovation:** Since the withdrawal of funding for the work of the Children's Improvement Board, the priorities for a sector-led programme link to the products already offered by the LGA in a way that is integrated with other national, peer based tools. This includes direct support to councils through the lead member peers and principal advisers, working to help them access appropriate support, in particular where they are facing significant underperformance challenges. Our support will take account of the increasing financial pressure being faced by councils. The work programme includes: the continuation of the three Leadership Academies, free of charge to participants, confirmed for 2013-14; peer challenge programmes and diagnostic tools in order to foster robust approaches to self-assessment; active support for regional networks of lead members; and continued partnership work with ADCS and SOLACE to support sector-led improvement and to discuss joint approaches to the improvement of children's services.

Financial Implications

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