

# 234

**Culture, Tourism and Sport Board**  
27 May 2010

**Item 2, Annex B**

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## **Our Offer from Local Government**

### **An Open and Comprehensive Offer from Local Government**

Local government is ready to work with the new coalition government to reduce spending and reform the state. Councils are ready to strike a deal with central government which will see local government take full responsibility for delivering more with less.

### **Our Offer in Summary**

- 1. Specific measures to make efficiency savings and cut waste quickly**
- 2. Radical decentralisation for a more effective and affordable state**
- 3. Comprehensive support to councils to ensure success**

#### **Specific measures to make efficiency savings and cut waste quickly**

- We have identified £4.5bn of savings that can be made quickly by cutting central bureaucracy and quangos alongside unnecessary inspection and regulation.
- We offer to work with the Government to help secure these savings, but also to use local government expertise to identify further savings that could accrue throughout the public sector from greater devolution. A comprehensive central/local agreement could set out how these savings can be delivered.
- Alongside this we offer to lead a national productivity programme to assist local government in finding greater efficiencies, such as through workforce modernisation.

#### **Radical decentralisation for a more effective and affordable state**

- The state urgently needs to be reshaped so more can be delivered with less. The Total Place pilots have shown that much waste and unnecessary bureaucracy comes from multiple public bodies trying to achieve the same goal, leading to inefficiency and duplication without improving the lives of local people.

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- To put this right we need to take strong action now. The Government's commitment to a review of local government finance is a positive step and we commit to work constructively with this. However, our proposals go further and offer a fully-realised means for more fundamental change.
- We propose a radical reshaping of the state through place based area budgets. These will allow Parliament to decide how national tax revenue is spent, while ensuring that local and accountable decisions on what public services are commissioned locally, and from where, can be made. Councils will then report directly to Parliament on spending.
- We believe this reshaped state can be fully implemented over the coming Parliament and offer to work with Government to make the necessary changes, starting swiftly in the places that are most ready.

## **Comprehensive support to councils to ensure success**

- We understand that the promise of a reshaped local state needs to be backed up by a pledge that councils will deliver. The LGA Group will make that pledge and commit to working with councils to this end.
- We propose a new improvement framework with streamlined departmental and inspection structures alongside stringent local self-regulation. This would include peer reviews at least every three years.
- We commit to undertaking self-regulation in the event that a council fails to perform. We accept that in some cases there may be a need for powers to be withdrawn in areas that fail to improve efficiency.