

LGA Group Corporate Environmental Policy

Summary

This paper sets out the background and details of the LGA Group Corporate Environment Policy.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note this paper.

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Background

1. The establishment of an environmental policy for the LGA Group reflects an improved focus on organisational environmental impact. Two considerations make this particularly relevant. Firstly, reputation and being seen to 'practice what we preach', particularly in light of growing awareness by the public and councils about the necessity of action on climate change. Secondly, the environmental policy will enable the Group to mitigate its environmental impact, which makes good business sense, most obviously in the potential cost savings that it is likely to represent, in the short, medium and long terms.
2. The environmental policy draws on a number of environmental evaluations that have been carried out on both Layden House and Local Government House most recently by Carbon Trust. The content of the policy is based around the areas of greatest environmental impact. These concern carbon emissions from our energy use in both buildings and through business travel, and office waste including those items that can be recycled. In addition to this the LGA Group can have an impact through purchasing decisions and its outward facing work.

Basis of the policy

3. Based on the advice we have taken the policy represents a proportionate response especially in light of other pressures on budgets and time. The commitments in the policy are targeted at the greatest environmental impact and have been given, where appropriate, some stretching targets.
4. On CO₂ this includes a target for reducing emissions associated with our buildings and business travel by 6% by the end of 2010/11 and by 16% by the end of 2014/15. These targets are in line with the UK interim carbon budget up to 2020 (although based on a baseline year of 2007/8).
5. The policy commits us to continually reduce our waste and increase recycling to 50% of total waste by 2010/11 – this is a target that is stretching but achievable, particularly in light of the many organisations (CLG, Defra and a number of councils) that already well exceed this proportion. In addition the policy puts forward paper use reduction targets that will apply collectively to office printing by staff and of publications which are equally reachable in line with best practice.
6. Through agreeing a green purchasing and procurement policy the LGA Group can ensure that purchasing decisions both minimise environmental impact and encourage our suppliers to reduce their environmental impacts.

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7. In acknowledging the key role of the LGA Group in supporting and promoting improvement within the local government sector the policy includes a commitment to champion environmental sustainability through outward facing work programmes, services and associated messages.
8. The policy states the intention to work with Liberata to achieve the targets and actions. This is important as a significant amount of action to reduce our environmental impact will require action and in some cases modest upfront investment by Liberata.
9. The policy also makes clear that the engagement of other partners and stakeholders is important – this applies to contractors, associates and those organisations we are engaged through our work with. In addition the policy indicates the necessity for engaging and supporting our workforce to incorporate their environmental responsibilities from this policy into their day-to-day lives. This can be achieved through raising awareness of the issues and allowing staff the opportunity to input into the design and implementation of work to reduce our environmental impact. To make this possible it will be necessary to offer awareness training and development opportunities to staff.
10. Finally, for transparency purposes it will be necessary to regularly evaluate the performance of the Group against targets and compile a report annually that is made available both internally and to the public.

Achieving the targets

11. In addition to the policy a comprehensive action plan has been produced that explains how each of the actions can be achieved and who, between Liberata and the LGA Group, is responsible.
12. Where commitments concern action by Liberata the work will be overseen by the Contract Management Board. Work concerning raising the awareness of staff will be led by the staff-led Green Team in concert with LGA Group Internal Communications. In the longer term the Group will need to identify the staff capacity to carry out the role of coordinating action, monitoring, and completing annual reporting on environmental performance.
13. The policy has been signed off by Local Government Partnership Board in June and subsequently circulated to Environment Board office holders.

Next steps

14. An awareness raising campaign will be launched in October which will feature a staff Knowledge Bite lunchtime session on 20 October at Layden House. There will also be substantial advice and guidance information provided over the following six months through the Portal and other communication channels. This will cover the following subjects:
 - energy saving
 - travel

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- waste and recycling
- paper and publications
- green purchasing and procurement
- mainstreaming of environmental sustainability into outward facing work

LGA Group Environmental Policy

1. The LGA group is made up of six organisations – the Local Government Association (LGA), Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), Local Government Employers (LGE), Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS), Public Private Partnerships Programme (4ps) and the Leadership Centre for Local Government. Our shared ambition is to make an outstanding contribution to the success of local government.
2. As a group we are determined to continually reduce the direct and indirect environmental impacts associated with our activities and operations. This policy has the support of the LGA Group's political leadership and senior management and sets out our commitment to addressing these impacts.
3. The LGA Group will:
 - comply with all applicable legislation, regulation and with other relevant requirements relating to our environmental impacts
 - reduce carbon emissions by 6 per cent by the end of 2010/11 and 16 per cent by 2014/15 in line with the interim UK carbon budget (using a 2007/8 baseline) by:
 - increasing energy efficiency of LGA Group buildings and office operations
 - reducing the emissions produced from business travel
 - continually reduce waste and increase our recycling rate to exceed 50 per cent by the end of 2010/11
 - reduce paper use (office and publications) by 10 per cent by the end of 2010/11 and 20 per cent by 2014/15
 - influence our suppliers to reduce their environmental impacts by ensuring that procurement of goods and services adheres to our green purchasing and procurement policy.
4. As part of our offer to councils the LGA Group will champion and mainstream consideration of environmental sustainability throughout our outward facing work programmes and services with councils and other stakeholders.
5. The LGA Group will achieve the above actions with Liberata, our outsourced services provider, and by continually engaging other partners and stakeholders. We will encourage and support our workforce to incorporate these environmental responsibilities into their day-to-day actions. This will be achieved by raising awareness and by offering training, development and involvement in the design and implementation of work to reduce our environmental impact.

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6. This policy and the associated action plan will be regularly monitored and where necessary revised in response to changing circumstances. On an ongoing basis we will monitor achievements against the targets set and will report environmental performance (publicly) on an annual basis.

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