

Environment and Housing Programme Board: Programme Plan 2011/12

Purpose of report

This report informs Environment and Housing Programme Board Members of the Board Programme Plan priorities developed in line with the LG Group's Business Plan 2011/12 and identifies the Programme Plan outcomes for approval by the Board. It also details the work streams underpinning each outcome for further information.

Summary

The report updates members on the LG Group priorities and the aligned programme plan developed for the Environment and Housing Board. **Appendix A** sets out the work streams LG Group officers have underway which underpin the delivery of the programme plan for 2011/12.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. approve the Programme Plan outcomes, and
2. agree the work streams underpinning each outcome.

Action

Officers to incorporate Members' views on the Programme Plan into the final plan.

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**Environment and Housing Programme Board: Programme Plan
2011/12**

Background

1. During 2010 the LG Group asked councils for their views on our future direction through a variety of media and consultation. The messages from the sector in response were very consistent and are summarised in the Group's Business Plan as two top priorities:
 - 1.1 Representing and advocating for local government and making the case for greater devolution; and
 - 1.2 Helping councils tackle their challenges and take advantage of new opportunities to deliver better value for money services.
2. Our core work will therefore be delivered through programmes which bring together our policy work and our improvement support to councils. The Environment and Housing Programme Plan priorities were developed with Board members as follows:
 - 2.1 Achieving greater devolution for local government:
 - 2.1.1 Reformed planning system – Localism Bill, new National Planning Policy Framework, financial incentives.
 - 2.1.2 Provision, allocation and regulation of social housing including vulnerable people.
 - 2.1.3 Green Deal, Energy Company Obligations and Feed in Tariffs.
 - 2.1.4 Waste Review.
 - 2.2 Helping councils tackle their challenges:
 - 2.2.1 Improvement and self-regulation for energy and climate change.
 - 2.2.2 Support to enable councils to seize opportunities and manage the risks arising from the changes to planning, working through the Planning Advisory Service (grant-funded).
 - 2.2.3 Support and advice to ensure that councils are effective in flood risk management.
3. In developing a Programme Plan for the Board these priorities have been articulated into four outcomes, (that is, in terms of their benefit to the sector), as listed below and a range of work streams are underway to deliver these outcomes as outlined in **Appendix A**.

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4. Outcomes:

- 4.1 Campaigning for greater local decision making in planning and housing through the Localism Bill, the National Planning Policy Framework and elsewhere.
- 4.2 Ensuring a strategic role with adequate resources for councils to act on local energy security, carbon reduction and the low carbon economy.
- 4.3 Councils are supported in and better prepared for climate adaptation, including their new roles in flood risk management.
- 4.4 Powers and flexibility for councils to make local decisions on waste.

The issues

5. The Group continue to lobby and respond to consultation exercises in relation to both the Localism Bill and National Planning Policy Framework.
6. There is a Memorandum of Understanding with Department for Energy and Climate Change in relation to energy efficiency.
7. The Environment Agency have offered additional resources through a secondment to LG Group to support our work on adaptation (noted in Board papers).
8. The Waste Review concluded before the summer recess and the findings are still being worked through by and with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Conclusion and next steps

9. The draft programme plan is attached at Appendix A and Members are asked for their views on the outcomes and projects detailed.

Financial Implications

10. The programme plan will be delivered within existing budget and resource constraints.