

Update on International work

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report summarises progress being made on the international work.

At the Board meeting, LGA officers will provide a more detailed presentation on recent work and set out some of the options for future work in this area.

Recommendation

Members are asked to comment and make any recommendations for officers to action.

Action

LGA officers to take forward Member recommendations.

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Update on International work

Background

1. The LGA's international work is delivered based on a number of key principles:
 - 1.1 All our work is based on demand from sister LGAs or councils in developing countries.
 - 1.2 The funding of projects is resourced from external sources.
 - 1.3 Delivery is based on practitioner-to-practitioner support.
2. There is increasing demand from abroad upon the UK local government sector. It should be noted that as councils in the developing world tend to prefer support from current practitioners rather than costly consultants. It is more effective, more sustainable, less expensive and provides for long-term relationships which make a difference. With a limited resource base to meet this demand, the LGA looks to sources of external funding to help develop projects.
3. In the past we have worked extensively with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) as well as a range of agencies that support capacity building and development work at the local level. This paper sets out the context of our current position, as well as planned future activities.

Past sources of support

4. In recent years, the LGA and councils' primary source of funding for international work was through funding from CLGF's Good Practise Scheme for capacity. This was a Department for International Development (DFID) supported programme which came to an end in October 2011. In the past, it funded work to support the exchange of best practice and capacity building between Commonwealth local government.
5. CLGF is now in discussion with the DFID regarding ongoing funding to support Commonwealth local government. This could include opportunities for UK local government to contribute. The LGA has been liaising with CLGF regarding progress on these discussions and ensuring LGA support to the bidding process is available when necessary.
6. Whilst CLGF is no longer the single source of support for UK councils work, it is a very important body and it is important that we help secure future funding for the organisation.

Current activities

7. This section sets out some of the current work being undertaken by the LGA, based on demand from developing nations and external funding.

African Peer Review Project

8. The LGA has been commissioned by United Cities & Local Governments Africa (UCLGA), through a programme funding by Luxembourg, to pilot peer review in five African countries to help enhance the capacity of local government across the continent. Our model of self-regulation and peer challenge was seen as a good transferable model of development. UCLGA hope to use the pilots to roll out a programme of review across local government.
9. The first of these five pilot reviews has now been completed in the municipality of Otjiwarongo in Namibia. Two UK peers supported the project (Councillor Martin Curtis from Cambridgeshire County Council and Allen Graham, Chief Executive of Rushcliffe Borough Council). Their role was to support and shadow the Vice Chairman of the Burundian LGA and the Chief Executive of Dakar City in Senegal as part of a transfer of expertise.
10. Feedback from officers and members in Otjiwarongo, the Secretary General of UCLGA and the returning UK peers has been very positive and this has been a solid start to the delivery phase of the programme.
11. The LGA's Programmes and Peer Support Teams will also be capturing feedback and lessons learned from all peers involved in each of the five reviews in order to maximise the learning opportunities that such a unique project provides.
12. More details of the future reviews and recent learning will be given in the presentation.

Kosovo

13. The LGA has been a contributor to Coffey International's lead consortium to deliver the decentralisation of Social Care services in Kosovo. DFID has now allocated additional funds for the project and LGA has been asked to provide more support to be delivered by the end of September 2012.

Future work

14. Members will be aware that the LGA was recently successful in winning preferred DFID supplier status in a consortium with the consultancy, HTSPE. Early

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indications on upcoming bidding rounds include requests for local government support for project work in Ghana, Rwanda and Pakistan on sub-national governance, which the consortia partners are exploring.

15. The LGA has also been shortlisted for a local government reform project in Kenya, together with HTSPE.
16. The growing profile of our work (especially through the Africa Peer Review project) may also lead to further demands upon councils and the LGA. Based on this anticipated demand, the pan-African LGA (UCLGA) is liaising closely with potential funders and it is envisaged that UCLGA will showcase the peer review project at their conference in December 2012, which will be attended by public and private sectors donors and other key partners.