

Improvement Programme Board

Agenda

Thursday 8 September 2011
11.00am

The Westminster Suite (8th floor)
Local Government House
Smith Square
LONDON
SW1P 3HZ

To: Members of the Improvement Programme Board
cc: Named officers for briefing purposes

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Please don't forget to sign out at reception and return your badge when you depart.

LG Group Improvement Programme Board
8 September 2011

There will be a meeting of the **Improvement Programme Board** at **11.00am on Thursday 8 September 2011 in the Westminster Suite (8th floor), Local Government House, LONDON, SW1P 3HZ.**

Attendance Sheet

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

Apologies

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting, so that a substitute can be arranged and catering numbers adjusted, if necessary.

Labour: Aicha Less: 020 7664 3263 email: aicha.less@local.gov.uk
Conservative: Angela Page: 020 7664 3264 email: angela.page@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat: Evelyn Mark: 020 7664 3235 email: evelyn.mark@local.gov.uk
Independent: Group Office: 020 7664 3224 email: independent.group@local.gov.uk

Location

A map showing the location of Local Government House is printed on the back cover.

LGA Contact

Paul Johnston (Tel: 020 7664 3031, email: paul.johnston@local.gov.uk)

Carers' Allowance: As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme a Carer's Allowance of up to £5.93 per hour is available to cover the cost of dependants (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

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http://www.parkplaza.com/hotels/gbriver?s_cid=se.bmm2175

<http://www.novotel.com/gb/hotel-1785-novotel-london-waterloo/index/shtml>

Agenda

Improvement Programme Board

8 September 2011

11.00am – 1.00pm

Local Government House

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Date of next meeting: 11.00am, 8 November 2011

Local Government Group Improvement Programme Board Membership, Terms of Reference and Appointments 2011 – 12

Purpose of report

For decision.

Summary

This report sets out the membership and terms of reference for the Improvement Programme Board for the 2011 / 12 meeting cycle and invites the Board to appoint representatives.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

1. formally note the membership and terms of reference for the LG Group Improvement Programme Board (attached as **Appendix A** and **B** respectively);
2. and to:
 - 2.1 appoint a representative to the Urban Commission Steering Committee;
 - 2.2 appoint a representative to the Rural Commission;
 - 2.3 appoint to the role of social inclusion and equalities representative.

Action

As agreed by the Board.

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Local Government Group Improvement Programme Board Membership, Terms of Reference and Appointments 2011 – 12

Membership and Terms of Reference

1. Members are invited to formally note the membership and to confirm the Board's Lead Members for 2011 -12 (as detailed in **Appendix A**). Members are also invited to agree the Board's revised terms of reference for this year (attached as **Appendix B**). The revisions, marked within the Appendix, are made to reflect the LG Group Executive's leadership of the work on localism and that funding for current Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships has ceased.

Outside bodies appointments

2. The Local Government Group currently benefits from a wide network of member representatives on outside bodies across a wide range of the LG Group member structures. These appointments are reviewed on an annual basis across the Group to ensure that the aims and activities of those outside bodies remain pertinent to the LG Group.
3. Members are asked to consider and agree one nomination each from this Board to the following bodies:
 - 3.1 Urban Commission Steering Committee
 - 3.2 Rural Commission
4. The Board's nominations for the year 2010 / 11 were Cllr Tim Cheetham (Labour) for the Urban Commission Steering Committee and Cllr Peter Goldsworthy (Conservative) for rural activities.
5. In addition, the Board has historically appointed to the position of social inclusion and equalities representative. Cllr Edward Lord (Liberal Democrat) took this position for 2010 / 11. The Board are asked to agree a nomination to this position for the forthcoming year.

Financial Implications

6. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Reasonable travel and subsistence costs will be paid by the LG Group for expenses incurred by a member appointee, whilst carrying out a representative role on behalf of the LG Group.

Improvement Programme Board - Membership 2011/2012

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (6)	
Peter Fleming [Chair]	Sevenoaks DC
Rod Bluh	Swindon BC
Michael White	Havering LB
Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire Council
William Nunn	Breckland Council
Teresa O'Neill	Bexley LB
Substitutes:	
Tony Jackson	East Herts Council
Jonathan Owen	East Riding of Yorkshire
Peter Britcliffe	Hyndburn DC
Labour (5)	
Ruth Cadbury [Deputy Chair]	Hounslow LB
Tony McDermott MBE	Halton BC
Tim Cheetham	Barnsley MBC
Helen Holland	Bristol City
Judith Blake	Leeds City
Substitutes:	
Theo Blackwell	Camden LB
Russell Roberts	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC
Liberal Democrat (2)	
Jill Shortland OBE [Vice Chair]	Somerset CC
Edward Lord OBE JP	City of London Corporation
Substitute:	
Sir David Williams CBE	Richmond upon Thames LB
Independent (1)	
Jeremy Webb [Deputy Chair]	East Lindsey DC

LG Group Improvement Programme Board Terms of Reference

The purpose of the Improvement Programme Board is to provide strategic oversight of all the LG Group's policy and improvement activity in relation to councils improving their performance and productivity ~~and in relation to localism~~ – in line with the LG Group priorities.

In doing so it will work closely with the LG Group Programme Boards on the performance of the sector in their subject areas and the arrangements they are putting in place to provide improvement support. The Board will provide strategic direction to the sector's own improvement architecture. ~~(e.g. Regional Improvement and Efficiency partnerships and the RIEP Member Forum) and receive progress reports from them.~~

Programme Boards should seek to involve councillors in supporting the delivery of these priorities (through task groups, Rural and Urban Commissions, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), regional networks and other means of wider engagement); essentially operating as the centre of a network connecting to all councils and drawing on the expertise of key advisors from the sector.

The Improvement Programme Board will be responsible for:

1. Developing a thorough understanding of council priorities and performance across the width of councils' responsibilities, using strong networks and robust information.
2. Helping to shape the LG Group Business Plan by ensuring the priorities of the sector are fed into the process.
3. Overseeing a programme of work to deliver the strategic priorities set by the LG Group Executive, covering lobbying/campaigns, research/policy, good practice, improvement support and events – as specified in the business plan, taking into account linkages with other policy boards where appropriate.
4. Representational and lobbying activities on behalf of the LG Group and responsibility for the promulgation of activity through public statements in its areas of responsibility.
5. Building and maintaining effective relationships with key stakeholders.

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The Improvement Programme Board may:

- Appoint members to relevant outside bodies in accordance with guidance in the Political Conventions.
- Appoint member champions where appropriate (who must be a current member of the Board) on key issues, with responsibility for liaising with portfolio holders on key issues that require rapid response/contact with councils.

Business Plan Priorities for 2011/12

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report provides Members with a summary of the LG Group's overall business plan that is relevant to the work of the Improvement Programme Board. It takes stock of the current work programme and highlights other key areas that Members' views are sought on and, finally, seeks Members' views on how the Board should operate over the coming year.

Recommendation

That Members provide direction on the issues raised in the report.

Action

That officers revise the proposals in the light of members' comments.

Contact officer:

Dennis Skinner

Position:

Head of Leadership and Productivity

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Business Plan Priorities for 2011/12

Background

1. The LG Group Business Plan agreed by the Executive earlier in the year and reported to previous meetings of the Improvement Board sets out the LG Group's strategy and priorities.
2. The overarching priorities for the Group have been agreed as:
 - 2.1 representing and advocating for local government and making the case for greater devolution; and
 - 2.2 helping councils tackle their challenges and take advantage of new opportunities to deliver better value for money services.
3. More specifically, the Business Plan then goes on to identify a number of key areas that fall under the responsibility of the Improvement Programme Board. These can be summarised as follows:
 - 3.1 Supporting and leading the sector in self-regulation through 'Taking the Lead' offers.
 - 3.2 Delivery of the Local Productivity programme.
 - 3.3 Ensuring the sector is supported to provide effective leadership to councils and local communities.
 - 3.4 Helping Councils to be innovative in order to transform services for the benefit of their users / residents.

Progress to date and implications for future work programme

4. A number of the reports on the agenda deal specifically with progress against a number of the priorities of the Board.
5. The Board's **Taking the Lead** campaign has been a key success for the Board. Inspection has been significantly scaled back and the Group has already made available a number of new offers to the sector as part of the new sector led approach. These include the free peer challenge offer, LG Inform

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and free peer support for councils undergoing a change in political control. A report later on the agenda provides a further update.

6. There are still areas where inspection activity has not been scaled back, particularly in the area of childrens' services and we are seeking to demonstrate to government that the work we are party to under the Children's Improvement Board can be used in due course to make the case for greater reliance on sector led support in the future. The work of the **Children's Improvement Board** is also subject to a more detailed report later on the agenda.
7. A key issue now for the Group will be to ensure that we are in a position to support councils that may be facing particular challenges in a timely and responsive manner. It is suggested for the November meeting of the Board that a paper is prepared which sets out what we know about the performance of the sector overall and the arrangements in place to spot potential poor performance and provide support. Under the new Group structure it is for the appropriate Programme Board to maintain an oversight of the performance of the sector for their areas of responsibility. So for example, the Community Wellbeing Programme Board will need to have an overview of the performance of adult social care. The Improvement Programme Board will however need to work closely with the other Boards in order to maintain a wider overview.
8. The **Local Productivity programme** is a key offer from the Group to councils. The initial phase which consisted of 9 separate workstreams was consolidated down to three big win areas. The restructure of the Group put in place, for the first time, a dedicated team to lead the Productivity programme. The team have spent the first 2 to 3 months ensuring that a number of commitments that were in place have been delivered but also looking again at how the Group can best support councils save money and improve their productivity.
9. Whilst the productivity programme has made a positive start it is perhaps also fair to say that at times it has not felt to be as coherent as it should have been, nor the outcomes that we are hoping to achieve with and for councils as clearly articulated as they should have been. A paper later on this agenda starts the process of providing such clarity.
10. Until the restructure of the Group, **leadership support for councils** and councillors was delivered by two separate teams one within LGID and the other being the Leadership Centre. Whilst both teams did work collaboratively together and ensured there was no duplication of effort, it is also true that bringing the teams together has provided opportunities to create greater value and look at all the Group's leadership programmes in the round. The new team have been concentrating on ensuring that the Group's flagship programmes continue to provide quality learning and development

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opportunities. It is proposed that a report is presented to the November meeting about the work of the team. In the meantime a few highlights.

11. The annual gathering of the **Leeds Castle** alumni was well attended with leaders and chief executives spanning all 7 cohorts. In response to feedback we received from the consultation process, the proposed programme structure for Cohort 8 has been adjusted accordingly. For example the cost to participants has been reduced, as well as time spent away from authorities, but we will be maintaining the high calibre of expertise available on the programme including the international element that previous cohorts have found so valuable.
12. Bookings for our various **Leadership Academy** programmes have now reached 266 registrations for our various programmes from over 121 authorities, including three from authorities that have not sent councillors on our programmes in the past. The Leadership Academy has also just been successfully re-accredited as a development programme with the Institute of Leadership & Management.
13. The **Next Generation** programmes and our **Be A Councillor** campaign are also continuing. We are in the process of merging Local Government Leadership's 21st Century Councillor offer and the LGID Local Leadership offer into a single LG Group councillor development programme. A new initiative which councils were keen that we provided is induction for new Councillors. We are therefore working closely with the regional LGA and intending to deliver a series of 11 one-day events on a regional basis in November and December 2011 for new councillors. Finally, the team is responsible for the **National Graduate Development Programme**. Recruitment for cohort 13 has now finished. We have 47 National Management Trainees starting in October with a national induction event booked for 20-21 October 2011. This Cohort will be the first to benefit from a new learning and development offer we are creating that will be more focused on their practical, creative and leadership skills.
14. The Board also has led the work of the Group on Innovation. A report on the **Creative Councils** programme which is being carried out jointly with NESTA was provided at the last meeting. It is intended to bring a further update report to the November meeting.
15. On the horizon, the Board will need to ensure that it is well positioned to support future improvement needs of councils. The Localism Bill nearing its final parliamentary stages has implications for councils and councillors and we will need to ensure that our support reflects those future needs. We are already taking steps to deal with this. For example, we are strengthening a number of our leadership programmes to cover these new areas. The

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Regional Induction events referred to earlier will have a major focus on the localism agenda.

16. One issue that is unlikely to change in the medium term is councils' focus on saving money, eliminating waste and seeking to provide truly innovative solutions to the way that services are provided in the future. Therefore the Productivity programme and the Board's work on innovation is crucial.

Members' views on other areas or issues which they feel should be considered as part of the future work programme and fed into the Group's future business planning process would be most welcome. **Appendix 1** summarises the programme plan for the Board based on the current Business Plan and it is intended that progress against this plan will be reported to the Board twice a year.

Ways of Working for the Board

17. The start of the new cycle of meetings is always a good time to discuss how the Board would like to operate over the year. In the last year, the Board has taken the opportunity to meet outside London on a couple of occasions and an awayday was held as well as the Board having responsibility for the Group's Improvement and Innovation conference which took place in March 2011.
18. Similarly, the Board has from time to time allocated specific members of the Board to champion issues.
19. Member's views on these issues would be helpful.

Conclusion and next steps

20. The report provides the Board with a summary of the work underway to deliver the Group's Business plan priorities that the Improvement Programme Board have responsibility for. It seeks the Board's views on future priorities and also views on ways the Board should operate over the coming year.

Financial Implications

21. The costs of meeting the programmes set out in this report are contained within the LG Group's overall budget.

Programme Plan

Improvement Programme						
Business Plan Outcome: Supporting and leading the sector in self-regulation through Taking the Lead offer, delivery of the Local Productivity programme to enable sharing and learning on doing things differently across the sector and through the delivery of a range of innovative leadership programmes to provide effective leadership to councils and local communities.						
Project outcome Indicator - (benefit to sector)	Project	Project outputs (Could relate to policy, lobbying and/or improvement)	Timescales	Oct 2011 review red Amber green)	March 2011 review Red amber green	Comments on progress
Councils are more locally accountable and the LG Group are supporting councils to improve through the Taking the Lead offer.	Peer Support – Corporate Peer Challenge	Peer challenge support to sector	All local authorities offered a free peer challenge over a 3 year period			
	Peer Support – Peer Challenges	Peer challenge support to sector	Ongoing			
	LG Inform – Benchmarking tool	Launch of LG Inform as benchmarking tool for sector.	Prototype launched in June 2011; development ongoing			

APPENDIX 1

<p>Councils are more productive and the Group's Local Productivity programme helps Council achieve savings and brings councils together to share innovation and learn from each other.</p>	<p>Change of Control peer support</p> <p>Leadership of the performance of sector and individual councils</p> <p>Knowledge Hub</p>	<p>Councils undergoing a change in political control offered 5 free days of member peer support</p> <p>Relations management across sector, building and maintaining networks. Relations with remaining inspectorates. Scoping and co-ordination of bespoke support for councils at risk/ performing poorly</p> <p>Launch of Knowledge Hub as a free service for the sector</p>	<p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Sept 2011</p>			
<p>Councils are more productive and the Group's Local Productivity programme helps Council achieve savings and brings councils together to share innovation and learn from each other.</p>	<p>Three areas of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children, Adults & Families - Future Ways of Working - Procurement Capital & Assets 	<p>Engaging members, sharing knowledge and good practice.</p> <p>Two Future summits</p> <p>Roll out of second wave of Capital Assets programme</p>	<p>By July 2011</p> <p>from Sept 2011</p>			

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			<p>Launch of Big Wins Procurement Strategy with NIEP</p> <p>Series of Productivity workshops to be held in the regions.</p> <p>At least 8 main Programmes</p>	<p>by November 2011</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>The sector is supported to provide effective leadership to both councils and local communities</p>	<p>Leadership Academy</p> <p>National Graduate Development Programme</p> <p>Leeds Castle</p> <p>Next Generation</p> <p>Councillor Development</p>	<p>Recruitment Cohort 13 - Sept. 2011</p> <p>Cohort 14 – Sept 2012</p> <p>One prog. by March 2012</p> <p>One programme for each Party Group - March 2012</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Recruitment and leadership development of high-class graduates</p> <p>Develop Leadership for the sector (Cllrs and CX's)</p> <p>Develop the future leaders of the local government sector</p> <p>Support a range of initiatives to develop</p>		

APPENDIX 1

		councillors as community leaders					
Be A Councillor	To evaluate the Be a Councillor campaign with a view to running the next campaign focused on the county elections in 2013	By March 2012					
Managerial Leadership	Support a range of initiatives to improve the leadership capacity of local government managers.	Ongoing					
Innovation in the sector is identified and supported	Creative Councils programme (part NESTA-funded)	April 2011					
	Up to 20 Councils chosen and supported	October 2011					
	Shortlist reduced to 5 councils who receive additional support.	January 2012					

Public Services by Design

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report provides information about the Design Council's "Public Services by Design" programme, which uses design-led approaches to support public sector improvement. Ellie Runcie, Director - Design Innovation Services and Networks and Pauline Shakespeare, Programme Manager, Public Services by Design from the Design Council will attend the Board to provide further information about the programme. This will enable the Board to explore the synergy between the Design Council's work and the LGG's work on productivity and improvement.

Recommendation

That Members explore the synergy between the Design Council's "Public Services by Design" Programme and the LGG's work on productivity and improvement.

Action

To be determined in the light of the presentation and Members' discussion.

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Public Services by Design

Background

1. The twin pressures of resource constraints and increasing user expectations call for innovative responses. The LG Group's Productivity Programme and the Creative Councils work with NESTA aim to help councils respond - but other organisations also support innovation in the public sector.
2. The Design Council has developed a new programme "Public Services by Design", tailored to the needs of public sector managers. The programme was informed by the 2008 Innovation Nation White Paper and is funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Design Council itself and a small contribution from programme participants.
3. "Public Services by Design" supports improvement by using design-led approaches, developed by the Design Council, to help public sector managers facing complex service provision issues to develop new ways of approaching their work. At the heart of these approaches is using the perspective of the people who use and provide public services – citizens and communities. Further details are available here <http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-work/support/public-services-by-design/>
4. The programme has completed its pilot year, supporting ten clients (seven subsidised by BIS) to find innovative solutions to particular local service challenges, across a range of services. The total programme of BIS sponsored clients (Nos 1-7, below) over the year was £119k, or an average cost of £28.5k per pilot.

Service Challenge Title	Client Organisation(s)
1. Housing Options Centre	London Borough of Lewisham
2. Youth Justice Board Glen Parva Development	The Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (YJB)
3. Streamlining the set up of a company	HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) and Companies House
4. Supporting Independent Living – improving health and well-being	North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership and North East Association of Directors of Adult Social Services
5. Smarter Streets	Kirklees Council
6. Working Together to Improve the Health of Children in their Earliest Years	Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Total Place Programme

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7. Thinking Family: "The Early Doors Approach"	Sheffield City Council
8. Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) pilot	Worcestershire County Council Total Place Programme
9. WorkFlow: Innovating Travel in North Bristol	North Bristol Travel to Work Partnership (NBTWP)
10. Let's get physical: What's stopping you?	Suffolk County Council, NHS Suffolk and Healthy Ambitions Suffolk Delivery Partnership

5. Key messages that have been highlighted by the Programme so far are that:

- 5.1 There is a **willingness** within the public sector to engage with the design community to improve public services;
- 5.2 Design tools and techniques, such as: prototyping; observation; customer journey mapping; can be readily adopted by public sector managers, and the process results in **knowledge transfer** and new skills development;
- 5.3 The scale benefits of the Programme arise from engaging with those who already have a specific brief for encouraging the **improvement of services** across a range of stakeholders. For example, organisations that have a specific brief for service improvement, such as Total Place, business.gov and Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships present an opportunity for engagement across agencies which can multiply the potential impact of design approaches; and
- 5.4 There is initial evidence for the potential for substantial **efficiency gains** resulting from Programme participation.

Conclusion and next steps

6. Members will receive a presentation from the Design Council about their "Public Services by Design" programme and are invited to explore the synergies with the work the Board is leading on productivity and improvement.

Financial Implications

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

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Taking the Lead

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report updates the Improvement Programme Board on progress in implementing “Taking the Lead”, invites members to offer guidance on future activity and agree the proposed new approach to peer challenge set out at paragraph 6.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to offer guidance on future activity and agree the proposed new approach to peer challenge set out at paragraph 6.

Action

To pursue next steps in the light of Members’ discussion.

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Tel 020 7664 3017 Email Dennis.skinner@local.gov.uk

Nick Easton, Senior Adviser
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Taking the Lead

Background

1. At the last Board meeting in July, Members received a full six month progress report on implementing “Taking the Lead” since its initial launch and publication. The Board recognised that good progress had been made in developing and delivering the LG Group seven point support offer but that there was still a lot to be done in terms of:
 - 1.1 promoting the 7 point offer and councils take up of the tools (e.g. signing councils up to have a peer challenge);
 - 1.2 finalising the support tools with councils (e.g. some of the accountability tools, LG Inform);
 - 1.3 engraining the approach in other service areas;
 - 1.4 strengthening the way we understand performance in the sector as a whole and individual councils facing performance challenges;
 - 1.5 developing proposals to monitor and evaluate the success of the approach and the individual tools.

Members also asked that the terminology around “self regulation” be re-examined.

2. This report updates the Board on progress in each of the five areas identified above, but with a particular emphasis on the LG Group’s peer challenge offer.

Promoting awareness and take -up

3. We have undertaken a wide range of marketing and communications activity to promote the approach and the LG Group support offer to the sector. We have commissioned some work to assess the effectiveness of our communications activity and this, along with delegate feedback from the July series of road shows will help inform a refreshed communications strategy for the Autumn. This is likely to focus on promoting the benefits of the support tools from the perspective of early users. As part of this process we will review the terminology around “self regulation” and report back to Lead Members.
4. The proposed series of Autumn road shows for Leaders and Chief Executives is being developed in partnership with regional LGAs and Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships to ensure that the focus of the event meets the needs of councils in the area and to maximise attendance. It is also hoped that they will provide an opportunity for the LGA Chairman to strengthen relationships with member authorities.

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Seven point support offer – peer challenge

5. Good progress has been made in developing the tools that underpin the approach and the report to the last meeting reminded the Board what we said we would provide and set out what we have achieved so far.
6. We have invested a lot of effort – working with councils – to refresh our approach to peer challenge so that it is more flexible and better able to meet the varying needs of individual councils. Key elements to note are that:
 - 6.1 The peer challenge will be improvement focussed;
 - 6.2 The scope will be flexible (this is not an assessment against a national benchmark) and agreed with the council(s) concerned through an initial scoping meeting, although there will be a small core component around leadership and corporate capacity;
 - 6.3 Depending on the agreed focus the peer challenge can be delivered for one or a number of councils and can also involve local partners;
 - 6.4 The peer challenge will be undertaken at a time which (subject to resources) best suits the requirements of the council(s);
 - 6.5 Results will be fed back to the council(s) throughout the process and at the close, through a roundtable discussion and feedback letter. We will encourage councils to make the results of the peer challenge, and their response to it, available publicly.

A short promotional publication setting out the benefits of peer challenge and promoting the Group's new flexible offer along the lines outlined above will be published later in September.

7. The first tranche of peer challenges are in the process of being delivered from July into the Autumn. Feedback about the new more flexible approach has been very positive as illustrated by the following quotes:

'the peer challenge was immensely useful' - Ann Ducker, Leader, South Oxfordshire

'I found the process very rewarding and was impressed with the clarity of the team's findings at the end of the week. They really got beneath the skin of the two councils and addressed exactly the right issues in their recommendations.'
– Matthew Barber, Leader, Vale of White Horse

'perhaps the most important endorsement I can give the peer challenge is that it was nothing like CPA or CAA. We didn't feel that we were being inspected, rather that we had critical friends with us who wanted to put forward positive ideas for how we could improve. We achieved as much as we have done'

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through previous inspections but with about ten per cent of the effort.’ – David Buckle, Chief Executive, South Oxon & Vale of White Horse

Taking the Lead – and other service areas

8. It has been one of the Board’s objectives to ensure that the core elements of sector self regulation and improvement, i.e. the importance of robust comparable data; self evaluation; and peer challenge are built into other key service areas. The Board has been kept updated about the good progress being made in both adult social care and children’s services – and because of the importance and scale of the new approach to children’s services improvement there is a separate item on the agenda for this meeting.

Understanding performance

9. At the last meeting Members received a report from Steve Freer, Chair of the independent Advisory Board on self regulation and improvement. Within that report, the Advisory Board said that the task of detecting, highlighting and taking action in respect of poor performance by individual authorities was one of the most challenging issues facing the LG Group. It said it was important that the Group develops a systematic approach to trying to identify the early warning signs of possible major difficulties and offering early support.
10. Members agreed with the need to develop a more systematic approach and we are currently exploring how we can do this by exploiting the opportunities provided by:
 - 10.1 Our strengthened team of Principal and Senior Advisers
 - 10.2 The on-going information LG Inform will provide
 - 10.3 Links to other parts of the sector.

We are also meeting with Government Departments and the Inspectorates to explore how we can exploit the intelligence they hold about performance. Proposals for strengthening this approach will be discussed with Lead Members through the Performance Support Panel.

Monitoring and Evaluation

11. Members have stressed the importance they attach to reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of “Taking the Lead” - both in terms of the take up of the approach and use of the support tools but also in terms of the extent to which this has contributed to improved performance.

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12. Officers are currently exploring evaluation options for discussion with the independent Advisory Board in September and will then be in a position to report to the Improvement Board later in the Autumn.

Other related issues – the future of local public audit

13. In our response to the DCLG consultation on the future of local public audit the LGG called for – amongst other things - greater clarity around the timetable for allowing councils to appoint their own auditors.
14. DCLG has been considering the best route for transferring the Audit Commission's in-house practice to the private sector and decided that this should be by way of outsourcing the work, as opposed to creating an independent company which could be sold. Subsequently it has been considering how long the outsourced contracts should be with options ranging from three to five years from 2012/13. Whilst longer contracts might achieve greater value for money they would also delay the point at which councils would be free to appoint their own auditors (if the contracts were for five years then the first year for which councils will have been able to appoint their own auditors will not be until 2017/18). DCLG recognise councils' interest in this trade off which they will discuss with the sector once they have secured three and five year bids from audit firms.

Financial Implications

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

Children's Services – Sector led improvement

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This paper sets out the arrangements being put in place for a sector led approach to improving children's services. Members are invited to consider the arrangements with a view to:

- Ensuring consistency with the overall "Taking the Lead" approach
- Ensuring appropriate links are being made to manage the risk of underperformance and the provision of improvement support
- Commenting on Ofsted's proposals for inspection.

Recommendations

- Members note the high expectation of compliance with the key elements of this approach in the children's services system because of the nature of the services involved;
- Members stress the importance they attach to developing strong links between those working in the children's improvement system and LGG Principal Advisers so that information about councils facing performance challenges is shared at an early stage;
- Members ask the CYP Board to satisfy itself that Ofsted's proposals on inspection will lead to a reduction in the burden of inspection.

Action

To be agreed in the light of members' discussion.

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Children's Services – Sector led improvement

Background

1. The Improvement Board has been kept informed about developing a sector led approach to improving children's services in the context of the regular reports to the Board on Taking the Lead.
2. Earlier this year, a partnership was formed between LGID, ADCS, SOLACE and the Department for Education, initially called the Children's Commissioning Board but now known as the Children's Improvement Board (CIB). Cllr David Simmonds attends the CIB for the LG Group Children and Young People Programme Board.
3. Ministers have agreed to provide £10.5 million to support the implementation of sector led improvement. It was agreed by the CIB at its meeting on 19 April 2011 that LGID would be the accountable body for the grant from Department for Education on behalf of the CIB. Taking over responsibility for this funding signals an important shift to a sector led approach.
4. The sector led approach to improving children's services includes preventing failure at all points in the improvement cycle where there are identified risks and weaknesses, through a robust system of challenge and improvement support. Key building blocks of the system are consistent with the overall approach to sector led improvement in Taking the Lead, for example:
 - 4.1 The importance attached to robust comparable data
 - 4.2 The emphasis on self assessment
 - 4.3 The value attached to challenge from one's peers.
5. Members should note that there is a high expectation of compliance with the key elements of this approach in the children's services system because of the nature of the services involved. Councils' willingness to comply with a more sector led approach will also help to demonstrate that it is effective and that the inspection burden could then be reduced even further. Support from councils themselves will be crucial to its success and all councils are being invited to commit to supporting the programme by offering officer time to peer challenge.
6. This is a transitional year. Subject to Ministerial approval for funding for 2012-13, the new approach will be in place in all areas from 2012. In the meantime key elements of the approach are being developed and trialled through "early adopters".

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Early adopters

7. In mid May councils were invited to express an interest in being early adopters of the new system and, in particular, three aspects of the model (See **Appendix 1**):

Universal. Testing key elements of the universal system, including self assessment, improvement planning, peer challenge and the use of a core set of national data in the form of local profiles.

Performance Risks. Testing the effectiveness of improvement support where councils have identified their own performance risks or weaknesses

Intervention. Testing the effectiveness of sector-led improvement support in councils subject to Improvement Notices as a result of DfE intervention.

8. Two regions, one cluster and 22 individual LAs came forward to test the new system. The full list is in **Appendix 1a**.
9. The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) has been commissioned to look at the various delivery models. The research will explore this with the early adopter local authorities, and report to the CIB to feed into further developments of sustainable arrangements for sector-led improvement and support by April 2012

Brokerage and improvement support

10. The new system includes a brokerage function to work with a local authority following peer challenge or inspection to agree and commission a support package to assist rapid and sustained improvement. A small interim team of brokers is already working with a number of intervention and “at risk” councils. As the system mobilises, CIB, working through its brokers, will develop a clearer picture of the range of requirements for support products and services. In the meantime LGID, on behalf of CIB, is setting up a framework contract through which it can tender for specific services as and when they are required.
11. Alongside the recruitment of local authority early adopters the CIB have been working to secure a Lead Member, Chief Executive and Director of Children’s Services from each region. Regional leads will support the CIB through providing a link to, and communication with, the sector in their region and will work towards raising the profile of the programme, gathering intelligence to support their understanding of what is happening at a regional level to share with the region and the CIB. The current list of leads in the regions is attached at **Appendix 2**.
12. For the LG Group, Principal Advisers are the key focal point for understanding the performance challenges of councils at a sub national level. It will be

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important that they are aware of performance issues as they arise in children's services, including councils subject to DfE intervention, and therefore that appropriate links are established with the children's sector led improvement system being developed through CIB. This will ensure that wider corporate performance issues are considered and any shortcomings in children's services are not tackled in isolation.

Governance

13. At the last meeting of the LG Group Children and Young People Board, Members raised questions about the overall governance of the programme and member engagement at a national and at a local level.
14. As one of the priorities in the LG Group Business Plan, the Children and Young People Programme Board maintains policy oversight on the sector-led improvement of children's services on behalf of the whole LG Group. Cllr David Simmonds attends the CIB on the Board's behalf. CIB itself provides the strategic direction on how resources should be used and the procurement of services and spend is subject to authorisation by Group officers, with delegated authority, and ultimately by the LGID Company Board.
15. The CIB has commissioned Dr Clive Grace to undertake a full review of governance arrangements and make recommendations for consideration at its meeting on 14 September 2011.

Ofsted consultation on Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services:

16. In July, Ofsted launched a consultation on new arrangements for the inspection of children's services, which will come into effect from May 2012. A number of changes to the current regime are proposed, which take into account the recommendations of the Munro Review related to inspection. It made some powerful points about the limitations and risks of a top-down performance management system and the need for all players in the system to learn from successes and failures.
17. The main elements of the proposed inspection model include:
 - 17.1 unannounced two week on-site inspections of local authority child protection and early intervention services
 - 17.2 focus on the child's journey and experience through assessing and observing the effectiveness of multi-agency working, case tracking and the Local Safeguarding Children Board
 - 17.3 talking directly with children and their families as well as front-line professionals and managers

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- 17.4 four inspection judgements: capacity to improve; the effectiveness of the help provided to children, their families and carers; quality of practice; leadership and management, and an overall effectiveness grade. Ofsted will continue to use the four point judgement scale: outstanding, good, satisfactory and inadequate
 - 17.5 consideration of introducing greater proportionality to universal inspection by varying the period between inspections. Re-inspection could for example be after 18 months for local authorities that are judged inadequate; every three years for those that are satisfactory; every five years for those that are good or outstanding. Inspections will be brought forward if there are sufficient reasons for concerns
 - 17.6 a sample of 20 to 25 local authority services for children in care to have short notice, one-week on-site inspection each year. Inspection will focus on the child's journey and narrowing the outcomes gap between children in care and their peers
 - 17.7 monitoring the progress of local authorities that have been judged to be inadequate for either child protection or children in care services.
18. The consultation on the arrangements for the inspection of local authority children's services runs until 30 September. The new inspection framework will come into force from May 2012.
 19. The LG Group Children and Young People Board will be responding to the consultation on behalf of the Group. Miriam Rosen, the newly appointed Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills in July 2011, will attend the LG Group Children and Young People Programme Board meeting on 6 September to discuss the proposals.
 20. One of the key issues still to be resolved is how the revised inspection arrangements will link to the sector-led improvement work being developed by the Children's Improvement Board. Whilst the consultation makes no proposals on this, it does request views on how inspection can most effectively add value to and draw value from other elements of performance improvement, including local authority self-assessment, supported by sector-based peer review and challenge. In particular, there is a question as to whether the sample inspections for children in care, monitoring inspections or judgements on capacity to improve should be informed by results of peer reviews and to what extent. In addition, moving the focus of inspection to practice may have implications for broader improvement issues on which the sector might wish to take a lead. The CIB is meeting Ofsted on Thursday 8 September to discuss the proposals.
 21. Whilst the move towards unannounced inspections of child protection and early intervention is to be welcomed, it will be important to ensure that new arrangements do truly lead to a reduction in the burden of inspection in practice.

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It is suggested that the Improvement Board ask the Children and Young People Board, when preparing the LG Group response, to satisfy itself that Ofsted's proposals will not lead to an increase in the burden of inspection faced by councils.

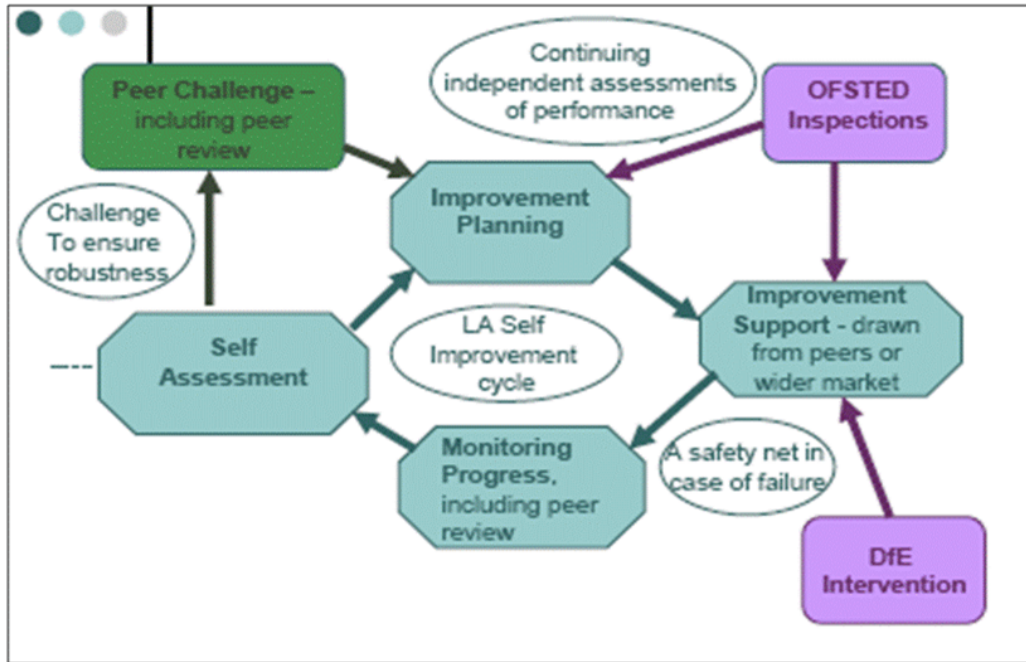
Policy implementation

22. In addition to the general focus of improvement through peer challenge and support the CIB is also committed to supporting the implementation of national policy through sector-led support. The first areas of focus are Children's Centres and Payment by Results (PBR).
23. There has been significant interest from councils in the offer of support with local decision making on provision of sufficient Sure Start Children's Centre services. This has included looking at how the statutory duties placed on local authorities in relation to Sure Start and wider early years provision can best be fulfilled in the context of overall resources available and wider overall priorities.
24. Nine local authorities have been selected as pathfinders for payment by results from over forty applications. The pathfinders will focus on the core purpose of children's centres: to improve child development and school readiness among young children and to reduce inequalities. The scheme will explore the potential to join up with other payment by results schemes being developed across Government.
25. Discussion is also underway on how the planned DfE support offer on Families with Multiple Problems (in the context of Community Budget initiatives) can be fully integrated within the sector support model. Further discussions are taking place on how a number of other policy implementation issues, including productivity work, a youth offer, and the implementation of the Munro recommendations on safeguarding can be delivered through the sector led work. This is likely to drive further requirements for support products and services.

Financial implications

26. The programme office for the grant funded programme is being hosted by the Local Government Group. A scoping exercise is currently underway and a detailed delivery plan is being developed. The budget will include a management fee to cover the overheads to run the programme.

THE SECTOR – LED IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM



Appendix 1a

Early Adopters – Sector led improvement for children’s services

Name of Council
Birmingham
Bracknell Forest, Brighton and Hove, Hertfordshire, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, West Berkshire and Wokingham
Bury
Cornwall
Coventry
East Midlands region (Derby, Derbyshire, Leicester, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottingham, Rutland)
Nottinghamshire
Gateshead
Gloucestershire
Kirklees
Lancashire
London (region)
Tower Hamlets (London)
Oxfordshire
Plymouth
Reading
Slough
Solihull
Staffordshire
St Helen's
Telford and Wrekin
Thurrock
Warrington
Wokingham
Wolverhampton
Wakefield

Appendix 2

Children's Improvement Leads

Region	Lead member	Chief Exec	DCS	Comments
East Midlands	Cllr Roger Begy, Leader, Rutland Cllr Patricia Bradwell, Lincolnshire, supported by Cllr Ivan Ould, Leicestershire.	John Sinnott, Leicestershire	Anthony May, Nottinghamshire	Complete
East of England	Cllr David Brown, Cambridgeshire	Gillian Beasley, Peterborough	Jenny Coles, Hertfordshire	Complete
London	Cllr Steve Reid, Leader, Lambeth	Cheryl Coppell, Havering	Eleanor Schooling, Islington and Frankie Sulke Lewisham	Complete
North East		Barry Rowland, Newcastle	John Collings, Newcastle	
North West	Cllr John Lamb, Trafford (Interim)	Diana Terris, Warrington	Peter Morgan, Sefton	Complete
South East	Cllr Rob Stanton, Wokingham	Steve Beynon, Isle of Wight	Dr Janette Karklins, Bracknell Forest	Complete
South West	Cllr T Coombs, Dorset	Amanda Deekes, South Gloucestershire	Bronwen Lacy, Plymouth	Complete
West Midlands	Cllr Ann Hartley, Shropshire	Mark Rogers, Solihull	Sally Rees, Staffordshire	Complete
Yorkshire and Humberside	Cllr Jonathan Owen, Dep Leader, E. Riding	Tony Hunter, NE Lincolnshire	Elaine McHale, Wakefield	Complete

(02.08.2011)

Fraud in Local Government

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

Fraud is prevalent across both the public and private sectors. The National Fraud Authority (NFA) estimates a total of £38.4 billion was lost to fraud in 2010. They estimate local government accounts for around 5.5 per cent of this. Whilst the most recent fraud survey of local government indicated that councils detected 119,000 frauds in 2009/10, an increase on previous years.

The NFA plans to publish a Local Government Fraud Strategy in December 2011 and will give a presentation on the proposed Strategy to this Board.

This paper presents background information on fraud in local government.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to:

1. Receive the presentation from the NFA on the Local Government Fraud Strategy and provide comment and direction.
2. Consider endorsing the NFA's a *Local Government Fraud Strategy – Fighting Fraud Locally* at the November meeting.

Action

Officers to progress with NFA as appropriate.

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Fraud in Local Government

Background

1. Fraud occurs across the public and private sectors; no sector and very few organisations are spared. Local government is no exception.
2. The National Fraud Authority (NFA) is an executive agency of the Home Office and came into being as a result of the Government's 2006 Fraud Review. The review concluded that fraud was a significantly under-reported crime and that greater co-operation was essential to achieve a real impact. The NFA works with stakeholders from across government, law enforcement, industry and voluntary /charity sectors to focus and coordinate the fight against fraud in the UK. The NFA published the *National Fraud Strategy*¹ in 2009.
3. The NFA estimates that £38.4 billion² was lost to fraud in 2010. Fraud against the public sector is estimated to account for 55 per cent of all fraud loss – around £21.2 billion. It is estimated that central government lost £17.6 billion (46.6 per cent) to fraud with tax fraud being the highest individual public sector fraud loss with at £15 billion (40 per cent). Local government is estimated to lose £2.1 billion (5.5 per cent).

Tackling fraud in local government

4. The NFA undertakes research and produces an annual estimate of fraud by sector and type. The estimated £2.1 billion lost to fraud by local government represents 1.25 per cent of the £168 billion annual spend.³
5. Councils have done much over the last few years to combat fraud and many are managing the risks well by:
 - 5.1 developing a zero-tolerance approach towards fraud;
 - 5.2 improving governance arrangements, including establishing audit committees;
 - 5.3 adopting good practice in managing the risk of fraud;
 - 5.4 creating a strong counter-fraud culture and implementing counter-fraud policies and procedures; and
 - 5.5 training and supporting specialist staff to prevent and detect fraud.

¹ National Fraud Authority, National Fraud Strategy – A new approach to combating fraud, 2009
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/agencies-public-bodies/nfa/national-fraud-strategy>

² National Fraud Authority, Annual Fraud Indicator, January 2011

³ Communities and Local Government, Local Government Financial Statistics, May 2011

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6. The NFA plans to launch a *Local Government Fraud Strategy – Fighting Fraud Locally* in December 2011. The Chief Executives of Hackney & Ealing have been working with the NFA on the development of the strategy. The strategy will be based on the principles of:

Acknowledge – understand and acknowledge the fraud risks

Prevent – prevent and detect more fraud

Enforce – take strong enforcement and sanctioning action.

It develops these principles across five themes:

Culture – taking a zero tolerance

Collaboration – working better together

Consistency – standardising fraud practices

Accountability – taking responsibility for fraud

Transparency – being honest about fraud

7. The draft strategy will be available at the end of September. It is proposed to follow the launch of the strategy with the dissemination of good practice documents and tool kits in 2012. The NFA is seeking LG Group endorsement of the strategy.
8. The NFA will give a presentation on the strategy at this meeting.

Financial Implications

9. There are no financial implications for endorsing the NFA's strategy. However, the Board may wish to consider what other actions the Group should take to tackle fraud and promote counter fraud work; these may have financial implications.

Local Productivity Programme

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report updates Members of the Improvement Programme Board on the progress made on the Local Productivity Programme and asks members to set the direction and focus of the Programme for the coming year.

Final detailed proposals and time scales will be presented to this Board in November.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

1. Agree to examining and redefining the shape and direction of the Local Productivity Programme;
2. Provide comment and guidance on how the each of the three 'big win' areas should be developed;
3. Consider the other potential productivity areas the Programme could explore and provide direction as to whether they should be pursued.

Action

Officers to progress as appropriate.

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Local Productivity Programme

Background

1. The *Open Public Services White Paper*¹ maps out a potentially more fragmented future for local government with councils being tasked with holding together disparate, largely autonomous organisations – mutuals, social enterprises, free schools and community groups – alongside the leisure trusts, academies, further education colleges, and housing Arms Length Management Organisations and Registered Providers that already populate the crowded public sector.
2. The White Paper brings greater clarity to the government's aspirations to make services more customer-centric and delivered at a lower cost. It categorises public services as:
 - 2.1 individual services such as social care, housing support, healthcare where people use the service on an individual basis and funding is personalised;
 - 2.2 neighbourhood services provided locally and on a collective basis such as waste, leisure facilities and community safety; and
 - 2.3 commissioned services: these are local, and national, services which need to be provided above the level of individual communities such as welfare to work, emergency healthcare, taxation etc.
3. It also sets out new policies on how these may be implemented, including:
 - 3.1 'open commissioning' in a number of services where commissioners will be consulted on and be challenged by potential providers on the future shape of the service and transparently link payment to results;
 - 3.2 decentralisation of commissioning to local government in a range of services such as environment, public transport and services for families with multiple problems with a proposed right for councils to "*do things differently*".
 - 3.3 a stronger role for neighbourhood councils to take greater control of local services within formal schemes of delegation; and the
 - 3.4 further development of community budgets.
4. Any productivity offer from the Group needs to help councils deliver the outcomes they are seeking to achieve and in particular help councils save money. It will also need to have regard to the policy context as envisaged in the White Paper. Therefore, it is likely that a solely public sector offer will provide neither the innovation nor the incentive to drive the productivity agenda.

¹ Cabinet Office, Open Public Services White Paper, 12 July 2012
<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/open-public-services-white-paper>

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Taking the Local Productivity Programme forward

5. The Chairman set the goal for the Programme by stating, in his inaugural speech, that the *'Productivity Programme had made a positive start [and that] it now needs more urgency and political energy, with real milestones agreed for what we, collectively, should achieve over the next five years.'*
6. The Local Productivity Programme was established in summer 2010, shortly before the 2010 Spending Review. In light of the White Paper the timing is now right to review its shape and focus. The original aims of the Programme were to:
 - 6.1 support councils to improve productivity;
 - 6.2 bring councils together to share innovation and learn from each other; and
 - 6.3 engage central government and partner organisations in a debate about longer term and more radical options to improve productivity.
7. The Programme's definition of productivity is helping councils to achieve *'better with less'*. This reflects the customer-centric approach adopted by the Group and the reduced resources available to councils. Increasing productivity could be also about saving money; improving the outcomes councils achieve with the available resources; or both.
8. Subject to the Board's discussion and direction, detailed plans and time scales will be presented at the November Board.

The Board's view on the continued appropriateness of these aims and this definition of productivity is requested.

9. Our work was initially structured around nine workstreams. Presentationally, these nine workstreams have now been consolidated to the three 'big win' areas of:
 - 9.1 Procurement, Capital and Assets;
 - 9.2 Children, Adults and Families; and
 - 9.3 Future Ways of Working.

This approach helps in the communication of messages with councils and government, although much of the work of the original workstreams continues.

Procurement and Capital Assets

Background

10. This aspect of the Programme builds on the work of the procurement and capital assets workstreams. Andrew Smith, the Chief Executive of Hampshire and Councillor Paul Bettison have continued to play key roles in much of this work. It also includes the Capital & Assets Programme (CAP) which the sector established with the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and is now entering its second wave of pathfinder councils.

Progress so far

11. Extensive discussions have taken place with councils, the RIEPs and their legacy organisations and key procurement organisations over the summer to map and understand the procurement activities, either at individual councils or in partnership, across the country.
12. We have developed the Productivity and Efficiency Exchange to be a leading community of practice. Running a range of events the community engages with almost 2,600 professionals involved in productivity. This facilitated community ran a recent *Getting More for Less* online efficiency conference that attracted 1,050 participants and we estimate saved £170,000 in conference attendance costs.

Taking this 'big win' forward

Procurement

13. Procurement is not only about the purchase of goods, works and services at the most advantageous rates. It can also be an effective tool to sustain local businesses, develop the local economy and to pursue other policies. As such a single national procurement organisation purchasing all goods, works and services for local government is likely to be neither desirable nor effective. However, we will look at the case for procurement of key goods and services at the local, sub-national or national level. Where there is a sound business case for doing this we will encourage, support and develop the appropriate mechanisms to achieve good procurement and the economies of scale collaborative procurement can bring.
14. We propose to achieve this by working with key partners including Local Partnerships and the RIEP legacy to establish a procurement officer national advisory group. The advisory group will:
 - 14.1 promote and share good procurement practice;

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- 14.2 provide expertise in specialist areas, such as category management; framework agreements, and EU procurement regulations;
 - 14.3 develop a single voice for LG procurement in discussions with central government; and
 - 14.4 advise on the areas where a collaborative procurement approach will have most effect.
15. The group will also act as the focus for the development and implementation of the draft *'Procurement Strategy for Local Government'*² ensuring that the 15 'wins' identified in the strategy are taken up by local authorities. In doing this we will ensure that elected members are suitably skilled and equipped to direct purchasing decisions in their locality through the provision of a range of training, briefing and tools.

The Board's view on this approach is sought, with particular reference to establishing the national advisory group and procurement hubs at either the local, sub-national or national level as the business case suggests.

Capital Asset Pathfinders – Second Wave

16. In 2010 the Group supported the CAP programme working with 11 authorities³ across the country to test the hypothesis that better use of public land and property could be made if councils worked across all public agencies in their area to integrate services and rationalise use. These councils, and their districts, represented 14 per cent of councils and 16 per cent of the population.
17. Six councils were able to map out a 10 year strategy and quantify potential savings:

Council	Percentage reduction in footprint	Reduction in operating costs (NPV over 10 yrs)	Capital receipts	Percentage reduction in CO2
1	20%	£217m	£19m	20-30%
2	29%	£1.1m (by 2014)	£2.9m	40%
3	10% of buildings	£6.5m (by 2015)	£220m	80%
4	-	£270m	-	50%
5	20%	£47m	£10m	34%
6	25%	£280m	£125m	25%

² National Improvement & Efficiency Partnership for the Environment, Draft Big Wins Strategy, 2011 Developed by Andrew Smith (Chief Executive of Hampshire CC) and Chairman of the NEIP <http://www.niepbuiltenvironment.org.uk/documents/DraftBigWinsDocument-1.doc>

³ Cambridgeshire, Durham, Hackney, Hampshire, Hull, Leeds City Region, Leicester/shire, Solihull, Swindon, Wigan, Worcestershire

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18. The very substantial savings in running costs, up to 20 per cent in some cases, caught the attention of both the sector and DCLG Ministers, and agreement was reached to invite a second wave of authorities to continue the learning.
19. The Group invited councils to submit a proposal to be a Wave 2 pathfinder and a total of 21 local authorities submitted an application to join the programme. Applications were assessed against four main criteria:
 - extent of, and ability to map public sector assets;
 - use of customer insight evidence to inform asset retention/disposal;
 - extent of governance structures to manage a complex partnership over a lengthy period; and
 - existence of proposals to rationalise land & property.
20. Fourteen/fifteen* councils⁴ were selected, covering a further 19 per cent of English LAs representing 16 per cent of the population.
21. Baroness Hanham, who had led the original CAP programme, will be meeting with the Wave 2 Pathfinders in October, and monitoring their progress until March 2012. They will be expected to produce at least one business case by December 2011 and a 10 year delivery plan by March 2012. Success will be judged against three criteria:
 - reduction in running costs of c20 per cent
 - reduction in operating footprint of at least c20 per cent
 - reduction in Carbon footprint of at least 20 per cent.

The Board's continued support for Wave 2 CAP is sought.

Children, Adults and Families

Background

22. In 2009/10 councils spent £14 billion on adult services and £6.5 billion on children's services (excluding education). This equates to 16.8 per cent of all spend. Costs are expected to increase by 4 per cent per annum due to demographic and cost pressures.
23. Increasingly other bodies and organisations are involved in delivering these services, particularly adult services. The NHS and Departments for Education

⁴ Bournemouth, Devon, East Sussex, Harrow, Islington, Kent, Newcastle Upon Tyne, Northumberland, Sheffield, Shropshire, Somerset, Surrey, Warwickshire (inc. Coventry), West Sussex, Wiltshire.

*Derby Council may be invited to be part of Wave 2.

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and Health also play a significant role in the direction and provision of these services. The White Paper envisages a greater plurality of service providers and it is only by working closely with other agencies and the private sector that we can manage costs and service improvement.

Progress so far

24. The Programme has engaged with a number of key stakeholders, including ADASS, RIEP adult social care leads, Group policy leads and independent experts in the private sector and DCLG, to discuss how it can best support the sector to improve productivity in children's and adults services.
25. We have also been liaising with individual authorities and external consultancies to find out more about innovative projects taking place in this area. For example in West Sussex, where the Group has part funded work that aims to design an alternative operating model for adult social care that improves delivery and significantly reduces the costs.

Taking this 'big win' forward

Children, young people and families

26. Children's Services are subject to the attentions of a range of governmental, regulatory and partner organisations working to improve and oversee outcomes. This is a high profile area with variable performance and often unpredictable spend. Our focus in this area will be to help councils understand spend and challenge them to improve. Our approach will be delivered in two broad areas:
27. Firstly, to share information and embed good practice. We will seek to achieve this by:
 - 27.1 developing an on-line resource of information and guidance on productivity in this area. The resource aims not to duplicate existing sources but to bring it together more coherently, signpost the support available from key partners and give an overview of the support available to the sector;
 - 27.2 refreshing and developing further good practice case studies across all key areas of service for children and young people;
 - 27.3 initiating, contributing and informing discussions on productivity in relevant communities of practice by triangulating information, guidance and good practice examples; and
 - 27.4 supporting the national networks aiming to bring about productivity gains in children and young people's services by using existing networks to share information, support sector initiatives, prevent duplication and maximise opportunities.

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28. Secondly, we will research and share 'tried & tested' practice in the intervention areas where we expect to achieve the greatest productivity improvement such as SEN, fostering/adoption, schools, youth and safeguarding. These include:
- 28.1 reducing demand for services – preventative work;
 - 28.2 diverting people away from social care – working alongside other providers in the voluntary and community sector;
 - 28.3 partnership working – particularly exploring closer working with Health;
 - 28.4 better management – developing leadership capacity and capability;
 - 28.5 driving down costs – lean processes and practices; and
 - 28.6 raising monies.
29. Improving the transition from children's to adult services is a critical area of focus for the Programme. It is recognised that the user's transition from children to adult services is too often difficult and unsatisfactory. There is also concern that the high cost of some children's packages and placements is inherited by adult services. The programme will examine the models of transition from children's to adult services in order to identify those which offer the best user experience and the best value for money.

The Board's view on this two step approach and the interventions highlighted in paragraph 28, is requested.

Adults

30. Councils need to find further productivity savings in adult social care. The 2010 spending review recognised the continuing demographic pressures faced by councils, but based the funding settlement on councils delivering ambitious efficiency programmes in order to protect access to services and deliver new approaches to improve services.
31. A recent Audit Commission report⁵ suggested that productivity in adult social care - measured by comparing the amount of spend with total activity - fell between 2005/06 and 2009/10. Although the report recognised this fall, this measure did not take into account changes in the quality of services. Costs in learning disability increased while activity remained stable; for older people, activity levels fell while costs remained broadly stable.
32. The report identified nine ways that authorities could make savings, from traditional efficiency measures such as back office savings to more transformational approaches such as personalisation. However, it found that only a fifth of councils were addressing the majority of approaches. It concluded that over the next two years, councils could develop strategies for

⁵ Audit Commission, Improving Value for Money in Adult Social Care, June 2011

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transformational change and also make cash-releasing savings by looking to provide the same, or similar, services at lower cost.

33. The Programme is working with stakeholders to agree how it can best support councils. We will help councils to broaden their approach to delivering savings in adult social care at the same time as planning longer-term strategies that take into account future developments such as the White Paper envisages. Some councils have already started this process; one council estimates it has made 7.5 per cent efficiency savings in a single year.
34. Our work is likely to include working with a small group of pathfinder councils to implement productivity projects covering the full range of adult services. The aim will be to identify how authorities can deliver cash savings through a range of different measures, and to develop a body of best practice and shared expertise. We are currently working up a programme with officials at the DCLG and DoH, and expect to seek the direction of the Community Wellbeing Board following consultation with key stakeholders.

The Board's view on this approach and the development on an adult social care pathfinder programme is requested.

Future Ways of Working

Background

35. The scale of spending cuts facing local authorities will require new and radical ways of delivering services. However, it is clear that one type of model of service delivery does not fit all councils. New ways of delivering services will need to be determined based upon local issues and circumstances. A key way to increase their productivity will be for councils to adopt a customer centric service redesign using the information that they hold about their customers.

Progress so far

36. Two highly interactive Futures Summits were held in May and July to explore new models of service delivery that will save money and keep local citizens at the heart of services. These summits involved over 80 local government leaders, chief executives, partners, private sector and voluntary sector leaders in building a series of potential 'future models'.
37. The summits suggested that there could be no universal model of service delivery and different models would need to be developed to meet local needs and circumstances. They highlighted that few local authorities are likely to adopt an 'ideal type' model; instead opting for a pragmatic approach, combining

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elements of different models to create local hybrids. Structures and working arrangements were considered to be less important than how the organisation adapted with a focus on different cultures, behaviours and ways of working.

38. The 'Taking the Lead' roadshows held in July, featured workshops highlighting practical examples of shared services and shared management arrangements. These were delivered by the members and officers directly involved in existing of shared services.
39. Productivity Masterclasses have been held with Norwich and the North West RIEP. The aim of the sessions was to introduce officers and members to the outputs from the phase 1 workstreams and to consider local opportunities for innovation and increased productivity.

Taking this 'big win' forward

40. We will further refine and develop the 'Productivity Masterclasses' concept and target these towards members and officers. This will be a key practical offer from the Programme for Principal Advisors to promote to councils. They will be tailored to meet local needs and delivered on a sub-regional approach to groups of 3 or 4 councils to encourage collaboration and sharing. These sessions will be delivered in conjunction with peer councillors and officers.
41. The Group is already working with a number of councils that are exploring new ways of working, for example LB Barnet are developing local authority trading vehicles and West Sussex are remodelling adult social care. We will work with these councils to support their work and capture and share their learning with others. We will focus our work on the decision making around sharing services, the efficiency savings expected and how the new model will improve outcomes for local people.
42. There are compelling examples of shared services delivering savings and improving services. Lichfield and Tamworth District Councils' shared waste collection service is achieving savings of £1 million a year through having one customer service team, one waste collector system, collection rounds based on time/fuel efficiency rather than district boundaries and staff reduction through voluntary redundancy. The existing shared services map, case studies and detailed guidance from phase 1 of the Programme will be updated to provide a comprehensive resource for those wishing to share service delivery.
43. A number of large scale and front-line shared service proposals are beginning to emerge. For example the ten Association of Greater Manchester Authorities councils are planning to share a range of services, including children's and adult services. This is expected to achieve efficiency savings in the region of £170

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million over three years for Manchester City Council and approximately £40 million for each of the other nine councils. We will work alongside these and other councils, to support and share the learning across the sector.

44. Sharing learning and sharing good practice will also be supplemented by providing direct mentoring support to councils wishing to share services. We will develop, and pilot, a Peer Brokering service that matches those councils who have already achieved significant productivity gains in specific service areas, with those who want to achieve a similar step change in their performance. The support from the leading councils is likely to include mentoring and challenge and will enable councils to speed up their transformation programmes by avoiding common mistakes and learning from the successful approaches. We will pilot this approach with six councils who are looking to increase their productivity in selected service areas.
45. The Group already supports member councils on a wide range of workforce related issues. Many shared service and new ways of working proposals have direct impacts on the workforce and working practices. We will ensure those councils embarking on shared services or new ways of working have access to information, good practice and appropriate support. We have submitted a bid to the Skills for Justice Board⁶ to secure funds for a research project that will share the learning from those fast mover councils who are already looking to identify the skills required and recruit for the productive public sector employee of the future. This bid will also provide support to some councils who are struggling with their workforce transformation programmes.
46. Creative Councils is a new programme from NESTA⁷ and the Group designed to stimulate and support innovation in service delivery. Almost 130 councils applied to be part of the programme. NESTA and the Group are supporting a small number of applicant councils to develop and implement radical innovations to improve service delivery. We will be working closely with NESTA to share the learning from this programme. We will also work with some of those councils that were not selected, but that are developing practical solutions to productivity issues, to encourage and share their learning.

The Board's view on this approach and the Peer Brokering Service is requested.

⁶ Skills for Justice is the Sector Skills Council covering employers, employees and volunteers working in the Justice, Community Safety and Legal Services sectors. www.skillsforjustice.com

⁷ National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts
http://www.nesta.org.uk/areas_of_work/public_services_lab/creative_councils

Widening the Local Productivity Programme

47. The productivity agenda has the potential to stretch into a number of other areas and resources are limited. Our approach so far has been to focus on the areas that offer the biggest wins to the widest possible number of councils. However, there are other areas of work that we could potentially consider, either as a new 'big win' area or as part of one of the existing 'big wins'. These include:

47.1 Waste management

Waste management is the fourth largest area of council spend at £7 billion per year. WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme) recently published a report on productivity in waste management. They found that council waste management productivity is generally positive over the period since 2000, although declining by almost 20 per cent since 2006/07 to below 2000 levels.

Officers will report back in November on the scope to enhance the Group's productivity offer in this area.

47.2 Promoting and championing online service delivery

Online public services reduces the cost of delivery by allowing customers to self-serve and enabling partners to share knowledge and information. SOCITM estimates that councils could achieve savings of up to 30 per cent if they improved on-line access and delivery. The Department for Culture Media and Sport's £530 million UK Broadband programme is delivering the Government's strategy to drive forward the provision of superfast broadband, particularly in the rural communities most likely to be on the wrong side of the digital divide.

The government has introduced a Digital Strategy and there could be merit in the Group promoting a similar approach in local government.

47.3 Sickness absence

Overall sickness absence had fallen over the last decade but it remains higher in the public sector than in the private sector. In the final quarter of 2010, 3.1 per cent of public sector employees were absent from work, compared with 2.3 per cent of private sector employees. The average cost of public sector absence is £890 per employee, £290 higher than the median. Reducing sickness absence in the public sector will improve productivity and reduce costs. For example, a borough council reduced sickness rates from 10.6 to 7.2 days per year and saved £446,000 a year.

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The Programme could actively promote approaches to reduce sickness absence and improve productivity.

47.4 Fraud

As reported elsewhere on the agenda, the National Fraud Authority (NFA) estimates that a total of £38.4 billion was lost to fraud in 2010 with some £2.1 billion lost to fraud by local government.

The Programme could actively promote approaches to reduce fraud and increase detection rates, thus making more money available for services.

The Board's view on widening the Programme to encompass these areas within the three 'big win' headings is requested.

Finally, the Productivity team are actively working with other areas of the Group to help embed productivity across other parts of the Group's work. For example, one outcome Community Budgets is seeking to achieve is to reduce costs and therefore we are exploring how we can work more closely on this area.

Financial Implications

48. The business plans for 2011/12 includes resources to develop a programme to support councils improve productivity. This includes providing support to the next stage of the Capital Assets programme. Capacity to support the programme has also been built into the new LG Group structure and accompanying budgets.

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title:	LG Group Improvement Programme Board
Date and time:	Tuesday 19 July 2011, 11.00am
Venue:	Local Government House

Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chairman	David Parsons CBE	Leicestershire CC
Vice chair	Jill Shortland OBE	Somerset CC
Deputy chair	Ruth Cadbury	Hounslow LB
Members	Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks DC
	Peter Goldsworthy	Chorley BC
	Tony McDermott	Halton BC
	Tim Cheetham	Barnsley MBC
	Helen Holland	Bristol City
	Sir David Williams CBE	Richmond upon Thames LB
	Edward Lord OBE JP	City of London Corporation
Substitutes	Apu Bagchi	Bedford BC
In attendance	Cllr Paul Bettison	Bracknell Forest DC
	Philip Selwood	LGID Board Member
	Richard Priestman	LGID Board Member
Apologies	Jeremy Webb (Deputy Chair)	East Lindsey DC
	Robert Gordon	Hertfordshire CC
	Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire
	Dr Andrew Povey	Surrey CC

Officers: Rob Whiteman, Dennis Skinner, Rachel Litherland, Nick Easton, Liz Hobson, Paul Johnston (all LG Group)

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
1	<p>Knowledge Hub</p> <p>The Board received a presentation from Sarah Jennings, LG Group, on the Group’s work in developing the Knowledge Hub tool. The presentation is available to view via http://www.local.gov.uk/agendas1</p> <p>Members said that officers had to ensure that the Knowledge Hub was user-friendly to encourage uptake by Councillors and officers not currently engaged with online networking applications.</p> <p>Members suggested that member development officers should be made aware of Knowledge Hub and that member peers could be well placed to use and test it. It was agreed that it would be helpful for the Board to engage with the development and roll-out of Knowledge Hub through member champions.</p> <p>Decision</p> <p><i>Members noted progress on the Knowledge Hub, and agreed that Cllr Peter Fleming and Cllr Tim Cheetham would serve as Member Champions for the tool.</i></p> <p>Action</p> <p>Officers to liaise with Cllrs Fleming and Cheetham on their champion role.</p>	
2	<p>Taking the Lead – local government self regulation and improvement</p> <p>Members noted the good progress that had been made to develop and deliver the seven point support offer and provided feedback on the road shows that they had attended.</p> <p>Members questioned whether in the current media climate, Government would be less supportive of proposals that involved greater “self regulation”. Members suggested that, within the terminology for Taking the Lead proposals, greater emphasis should be placed on bolstering local accountability.</p> <p>Members asked whether there was sufficient intelligence</p>	

available on Councils' performance to make self regulation workable. Officers said that Principal Advisors in the LG Group and Member Peers were able to secure such intelligence. Where concerns existed, these were reported to the Performance Support Panel.

Despite concerns over intelligence sharing and Government direction, Members said that Councils had shown an appetite for greater self regulation and that it was important to make these proposals work.

Decision

Members noted progress on Taking the Lead;

Members asked that the terminology for the proposals be re-examined.

Members agreed the next steps in paragraph 23.

Action

Officers to finalise and promote take up of the support tools, and to re-examine the terminology for the proposals.

3 Sector Self-Regulation Advisory Board

Members received a presentation from Steve Freer, Chairman of the independent Sector Self-Regulation Advisory Board on the remit and current activities of the Board.

In terms of performance, Steve questioned whether it was still appropriate to expect continuous improvement in an age of austerity and asked whether the emphasis should be more about damage limitation. In this context, Steve stressed the importance that the Board attached to the LG Group strengthening arrangements to understand performance.

Members said that this could build on the work already undertaken by other Group structures, such as the Performance Support Panel, and suggested that senior officers and Members within the LG Group liaise with Advisory Board Members on the work already undertaken by the Group.

Members asked how the membership of the Advisory Board had

been established, and to whom it was intended that the Advisory Board would report. Officers said that the Advisory Board had been set up to link views of professional associations into proposals around greater sector self-regulation, to obtain advice from a wider group of stakeholders and to establish the LG Group's leadership role in this area.

Decision

Members received the report, and asked for further liaison between Group officers and Advisory Board Members to ensure arrangements were strengthened.

Action

Officers to liaise with Members of the Advisory Board.

4 Creative Councils Programme

Members welcomed progress to date on the Creative Councils Programme, and thanked LG Group staff, particularly Ruby Dixon, who was leaving the Group and had worked on all the recent Innovation programmes.

Officers from NESTA said that the partnership between NESTA and the Group would allow dissemination of the programme's benefits to member authorities.

Decision

Members noted the Group's forward work programme on Creative Councils and looked forward to receiving further updates at future meetings.

5 Notes of last meeting and actions arising

Members agreed the note of the last meeting as a correct record, and noted the actions arising.

Members paid tribute to Cllr David Parsons CBE for his chairmanship of the Board, and the work he had undertaken on behalf of the Board in that capacity.

Members congratulated Rob Whiteman on his appointment as Chief Executive of the UK Border Agency and expressed their



appreciation for the work he had done for the Board and his leadership of LGID.

Members thanked Liz Hobson for her work as Business Manager for the Improvement Board, and wished her well in her new role within the LG Group.

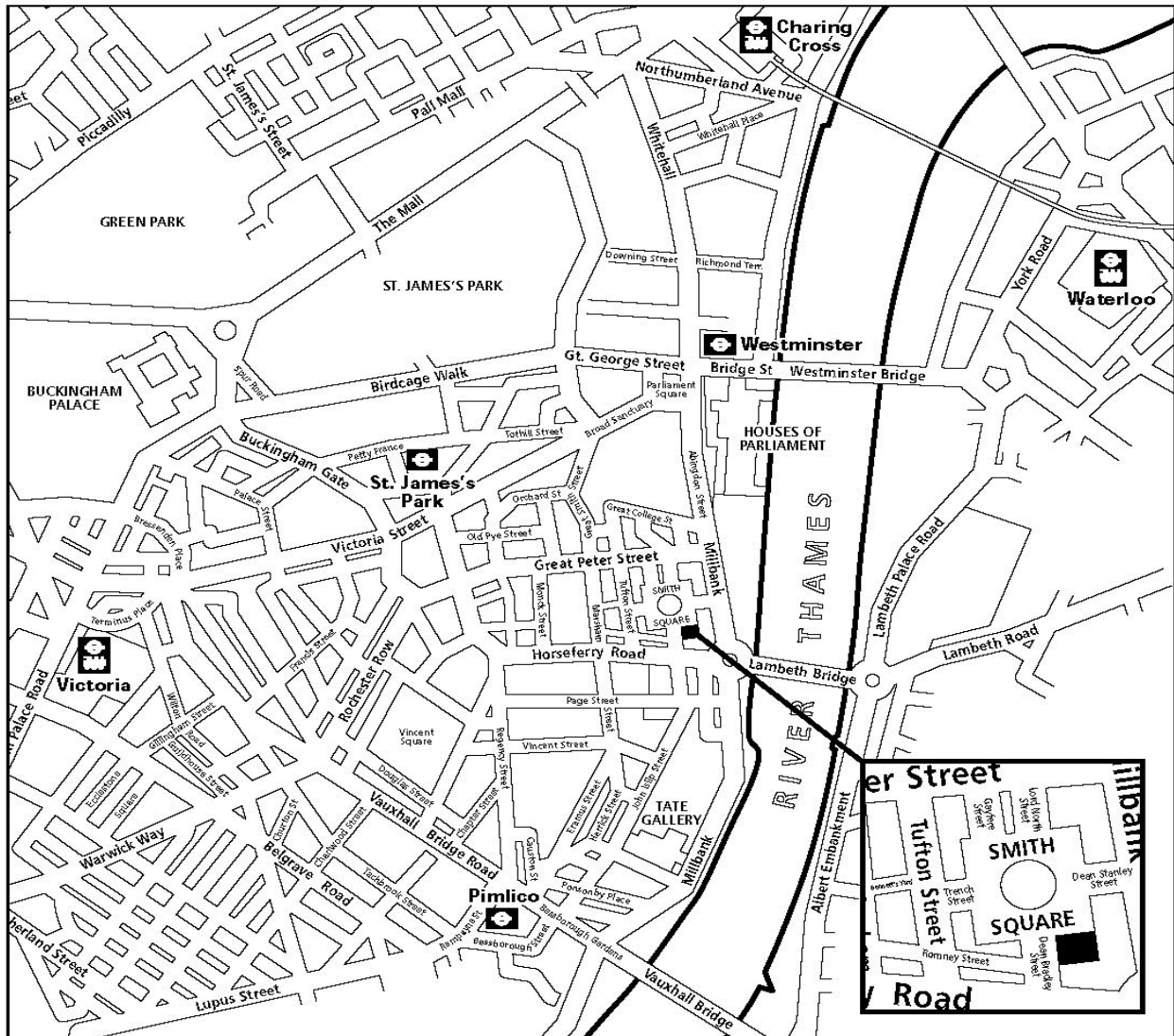
Date of next meeting: Thursday 8 September 2011

Actions arising from last meeting

Title:	LG Group Improvement Programme Board
Date and time:	11.00 am, 19 July 2011
Venue:	Local Government House

Item	Progress
<p>1 Knowledge Hub</p> <p><i>Action</i></p> <p>Officers to liaise with Cllrs Fleming and Cheetham on their champion role.</p>	<p>Officers have taken forward discussions with Kirklees MBC regarding roll-out of their social media member training. Further discussions will take place with Cllrs Fleming and Cheetham shortly.</p>
<p>2 Taking the Lead – local government self regulation and improvement</p> <p><i>Action</i></p> <p>Officers to finalise and promote take up of the support tools and to re-examine the terminology for the proposals.</p>	<p>A progress report on <i>Taking the Lead</i> is on the September Board agenda. A refreshed communications strategy, including terminology, will be discussed shortly with Lead Members of the Board.</p>
<p>3 Sector Self-Regulation Advisory Board</p> <p><i>Action</i></p> <p>Officers to liaise with Members of the Advisory Board.</p>	<p>Proposals for strengthening arrangements to understand performance will be put to Members in due course.</p>

LG Group Location Map



Local Government Group

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Public transport

Local Government House is well served by public transport. The nearest mainline stations are; **Victoria** and **Waterloo**; the local underground stations are **St James's Park** (District and Circle Lines); **Westminster** (District, Circle and Jubilee Lines); and **Pimlico** (Victoria Line), all about 10 minutes walk away. Buses **3** and **87** travel along **Millbank**, and the **507** between Victoria and Waterloo goes close by at the end of **Dean Bradley Street**.

Bus routes - Millbank

87 Wandsworth - Aldwych **N87**
3 Crystal Palace - Brixton - Oxford Circus

Bus routes - Horseferry Road

507 Waterloo - Victoria
C10 Elephant and Castle - Pimlico - Victoria
88 Camden Town - Whitehall - Westminster-
 Pimlico - Clapham Common

Cycling Facilities

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Central London Congestion Charging Zone

Local Government House is located within the congestion charging zone. For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at www.cclondon.com

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