

**Draft****“Taking the Lead”: Detecting and preventing potential failure**

This paper is part of the sector’s overall approach to sector improvement as described in “Taking the Lead”. The paper sets out our proposed arrangements for detecting where councils may be at risk of poor performance – and in extremis - service or organisational failure, in order that the LGA and the sector can offer improvement support and Government intervention is avoided.

The proposals build on the LGA’s existing arrangements but have been developed and strengthened through discussions with the sector, with the independent Advisory Board on Self Regulation and Improvement and with Lead Members of the LGA Improvement Board.

**1. Introduction:**

Following the LGA’s successful campaign to reduce the burden of inspection and assessment councils faced the LGA developed and agreed with the sector a new approach to sector self regulation and improvement. At the heart of this new approach is Councils being more locally accountable to their citizens. The approach is set out in “Taking the Lead”. It is based on the principles that:

- a) councils are responsible for their own performance;
- b) stronger accountability to local people drives further improvement;
- c) councils have collective responsibility for performance in the sector as a whole;
- d) and that the role of the LG Group is to support councils by providing necessary tools, such as peer challenge.

Taking the Lead also sets out a comprehensive offer from the LGA to help councils take advantage of this new approach.

This “seven point” offer is an integral part of the way in which the LGA supports the sector to tackle the challenges it faces and to pursue continuous improvement. It sits alongside and is a key part of the whole package of improvement support that includes:

- Leadership programmes: supporting current and future leaders, ensuring councillors and officers have the right skills and support to help build vibrant and successful communities.
- Our Productivity programme: supporting councils in generating further improvements in productivity to get the very best value for money and outcomes for local communities.
- Our Innovation work: helping councils develop and implement radical innovations that meet the challenges of tomorrow.
- Our “on line” offer including the Knowledge Hub, an online professional network that enables those in local government to connect with their peers, share knowledge and learning, and work together to improve services and engage with citizens who use those services.

How we work with the sector (and others – including Government Departments and the Inspectorates) to identify the risk of poor performance or failure and then offer preventative improvement support is a small but important part of our overall improvement offer.

During the development of “Taking the Lead” councils recognised that service or organisational failure not only impacts on the lives of local people but also has a detrimental impact on the reputation of the sector as a whole – and that, together, we have to find a way of managing this risk.

There were also clear expectations from Government that the scaling back of inspection requires the sector to step up and ensure we are providing some light touch self-assurance. But at the same time this needs to be balanced against the very strong message from councils that they do not want the LGA to become some form of sector-owned inspectorate – and neither does the LGA.

“Taking the Lead” said

*“The LG Group Improvement Programme Board, working with the other programme boards at the LG Group, will maintain an overview of the performance of the sector. We will ensure that this role does not create extra burdens for you [councils].*

*We will need to work with you [councils] to find a light touch way to gather the wealth of information and intelligence that already exists in the sector – in political networks, through sub-national groupings and professional associations – so we are able to share good practice more effectively, to spot potential trends and to identify where things might be beginning to go wrong. We will use that intelligence as a basis for talking with individual councils about possible improvement needs and offering appropriate support. Our ‘Regional Associates’, (now called Principal Advisers) ...will coordinate this activity for the LG Group.*

Of course councils’ are not unconstrained in what they can do and neither are they completely unregulated. Council continue to operate within a complex regime of statutory duties and constraints, financial requirements, data reporting and remaining audit and inspection – notably from Ofsted.

Acknowledging this “Taking the Lead” said

*The LG Group will meet with the remaining regulators and government to receive information about the performance of the sector from their perspective. These meetings will provide the opportunity for local government to reassure central government that sector-led support is a much more effective way of addressing performance failures”.*

Subsequently the independent Advisory Board on sector self regulation and improvement, the LGA Improvement Board and the Performance Support Panel have all stressed the importance they attach to the LGA strengthening arrangements to manage the risk of poor performance or failure.

Since publication of “Taking the Lead” specific sector led regimes have been developed in children’s and adult services – with financial support from Government. They include the key building blocks of the generic “Taking the Lead” approach but each has its own

architecture – including national level governance arrangements; an ambition to devolve support to sub-national levels and brokerage functions to facilitate support to those councils in need of it.

As we make the transition from a top-down performance framework towards a sector-led approach mainstreamed in key service areas and involving a number of new partners it will be important that the LGA is clear about how it proposes in practice to detect those councils that may be at risk of poor performance – whilst at the same time avoiding the development of a bureaucratic regime.

**In summary this paper proposes that:**

- the key indicators of service or organisational failure are likely to be around a fairly small number of high level factors
- Principal Advisers will be the focal point for gathering intelligence about performance in “their” areas, reporting to LGA members through the Performance Support Panel and working closely with the National and Regional Member Peers and the Political Group Offices at the LGA.
- The profile of Principal Advisers needs to be highlighted and (where necessary) stronger linkages established with others who may have intelligence to share
- Principal Advisers would be supported by national analysis of formal published data provided by LG Inform, and the Research and Information Team in the Leadership and Productivity Division
- Principal Advisers will work closely with any sub-national arrangements that might be supporting sector improvement in their area, such as the RIEPs, Regional LGA’s or Regional Employers’ organisations.
- Government departments and the remaining inspectorates will work closely with the LGA to share intelligence so that the sector is able to respond in more timely manner with a view to ensuring that there is no need for government intervention.

## 2. Proposed Approach

### 2.1 Design principles

When developing our approach we have been guided by the following principles:

- **improvement focussed** – the arrangements are designed to help us identify, at the earliest opportunity, councils that may be at risk of poor performance or service/organisational failure so that improvement support can be offered and potential failure avoided – they are not about making judgements.
- **build on existing arrangements** that the LGA already has in place
- **adopt a focussed and proportionate approach** – experience demonstrates that the causes of serious organisational failure are usually found in a small number of high level factors. We will avoid developing a bureaucratic approach that places burdens on councils themselves
- **evidence based** – utilising a balance of soft intelligence reinforced by hard published data to develop a rounded understanding of the issues
- **gather intelligence from others** - recognising that intelligence gained from previous inspection/assessment regimes will no longer be available we should endeavour to improve our understanding by gathering intelligence from others, including remaining Inspectorates and Government Departments
- **work in collaboration with other parts of the sector** – in particular with any sub-national arrangements supporting improvement in their area
- **be clear** – we are in a process of transition from an old top down performance framework to a new sector owned approach which is introducing a number of new players e.g. Children’s Improvement Board. In this context it is important that we are clear about our ambition and what we are doing in practice to manage risk
- **be realistic - recognising the limitations** - the previous costly Government inspired performance regime with its complex web of targets, Government Office monitoring, centrally directed field forces, external independent inspection and data reporting could not prevent “failure” and neither should it be expected that a slimmed down sector owned approach will be able to either.

### 2.2 Signs of potential “failure”

Experience demonstrates that the causes of serious organisational or service failure are usually small in number but at the same time relatively high profile.

Following his review of councils subject to Corporate Governance inspections over the last eight years Rob Vincent, Chief Executive, Doncaster MBC concluded

*“Two symptoms of governance issues have been evident in most of the histories*

- *Discord and breakdown of trust between the Leader/Mayor and Cabinet and the Chief Executive and management team*
- *Political instability and no management of transitions”*

This has been reinforced by the Independent Advisory Board. In its report to the LGA Improvement Board on 19 July it concluded that

*“.....it is important to recognise some of the indicators which may give rise to performance failures which include:*

- *a lack of trust and confidence in relationships between leading members and senior staff*
- *adoption of high risk change strategies*
- *disengagement from the wider community of local government*
- *significant financial difficulties and/or inability to gain agreement for an appropriate financial strategy.*

This suggests two things: that in terms of strengthening arrangements to prevent failure we should mainly focus on a relatively small number of high level factors and secondly that the nature of the intelligence required to understand whether there are problems in these areas is more likely to be soft intelligence deriving from informal sources rather than statistical and trend analysis from data returns, etc.

### **2.3 Signs of potential “poor performance”**

As well as understanding where councils may be at risk of some form of “failure” we also want to be in a position to be able to offer support to councils whose performance appears to be “poor” – either generally or in a particular service area.

It is not the LGA’s role to determine what constitutes “poor” performance. It is for councils working with local communities, tax payers and electors to develop and agree locally the priorities for the area and the consequential services and standards expected.

Neither is it for the LGA to judge whether standards are being met – that too is a matter for locally elected councillors and the communities they represent.

However the LGA can play a valuable role

- helping councils – and eventually local people – to compare their performance with other councils through tools such as LG Inform
- utilising comparative information to question councils about their performance and offer improvement support.

There is a wide range of statistical data in the public domain that can be monitored and utilised for this purpose (See 2.5 below).

### **2.4 The role of Principal Advisers**

The LGA has strengthened its relationship management and support capacity through the appointment of 5 Principal Advisers. Each adviser is responsible for one or more regions and is supported by at least one Senior Adviser.

Principal Advisers have extensive experience working in local government and the wider local public sector at a senior level. They are used to working with Leaders and Chief Executives and have the skills and experience to weigh and interpret information and intelligence.

In the context of our arrangements for managing risk Principal Advisers will be the focal point for gathering intelligence about performance in “their” areas and identifying

councils facing risks of the sort outlined above. They also develop and implement with councils solutions to nip any problems in the bud and tackle more intense problems.

But this is not all they do. Principal Advisers have a key role in identifying good and innovative practice which is fed back into the LGA to inform the wider improvement offer to the sector. They also work closely with other LGA colleagues, contributing to the LGA's wider policy development and lobbying work and helping to identify councils from their areas who are keen to get more actively involved in this aspect of the LGA's work

And neither do Principal Advisers work in isolation:

- Principal Advisers work closely with the lead national and regional member peers. These member peers will provide a lot of the political intelligence that can help inform where there might be risks of failure and are often the key to helping councils. Similarly they work closely with the Political Group offices at the LGA.
- In addition in many regions the RIEPs or their successor bodies are continuing to support sector improvement. Principal Advisers are working closely with the partnerships to share information and provide support in a collaborative way. These relationships will be particularly crucial in terms of gathering intelligence and responding where appropriate
- And Principal Advisers are supported by national analysis of formal published data provided through LG Inform, the esd toolkit and other appropriate sources from the Research and Information Team in the Leadership and Productivity Division.

## **2.5 A systematic approach**

Whilst every case is different there is a core framework which underpins the way in which Principal Advisers fulfil their responsibilities – exemplified at Annex A **attached**.

### **Stage 1: Analysis of local intelligence**

Principal Advisers gather intelligence about the councils in their area on an on-going basis. They do this by drawing on a number of evidence sources, for example:

- from their own network of contacts and discussions with councils and others in their areas
- web-based monitoring – councils report publicly to their communities across a wide range of issues. They also publish a wealth of information - and this is likely to increase as a result of the transparency agenda.
- e-alerts e.g Google alerts and media monitoring, etc.

Where intelligence appears to indicate a council faces a potential risk of poor performance/failure Advisers will seek verification from a wider range of local intelligence and data.

Broadly speaking this may result either in a satisfactory resolution – or confirmation of the potential issue.

Insert case study
-------------------

## Stage 2: Wider information gathering/analysis

Where a Principal Adviser still has an initial cause for concern then he/she will check this against other information already held, and/or gather further information from a wider range of sources in order to verify and better understand the nature of the issues involved.

In order to obtain a rounded and evidence-based picture Principal Advisers will be informed by a balance of soft intelligence and hard performance data. Experience demonstrates that soft intelligence derived from informal sources provides a good source of evidence of potential failure but it is not sufficient on its own. Hard information derived from published reports and performance data provides supporting evidence and is moreover essential for spotting signs of possible falling/poor performance.

The diminution of published data, for example following the abolition of the National Indicator Set, the reduction in inspection reporting and Government Office/Inspectorate presence at sub national level reinforces the need for Advisers to gather intelligence in other ways. This will involve building strong relationships with others who may hold relevant intelligence and utilizing the published performance data that remains.

**Building relationships:** There are a large number of different organisations that reach into the sector at local level and from whom intelligence can be gained. Advisers are continuing to build and develop relationships, for example:

- Most important is the relationship with each individual council. The approach will work at its best if individual councils who might be experiencing problems inform us so that any necessary support can be provided.
- Regional/sub regional improvement and efficiency partnerships/Regional LGAs. Principal Advisers have established linkages with key people in their region. These arrangements may be influenced by the extent to which the regional LGA and/or regional improvement partnership is playing an active role in understanding the risk of underperformance in its area (e.g. London Councils, East of England, etc);
- With other parts of the sector. As part of the new approach to Children's services improvement the Children's Improvement Board (CIB) has stimulated the appointment of a Lead Member, Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services from each region. These Regional leads will support the CIB by 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 regional component of the new approach to improvement in adult social care is currently being developed following the Autumn series of workshops in the ADASS regions;
- Within the LGA. Information about particular councils arises in a number of ways, for example from
  - LGA political groups/Group Improvement Boards
  - managers involved in Peer Challenges/Peer reviews – as part of the overall methodology

- the direct contact Heads of Programmes and advisers in the Policy and Development Directorate have with councils on a wide range of policy issues

and Principal Advisers themselves also work collectively to share intelligence and have allocated leads for each of the LGA Political groups and key “service” areas.

To support this process we have, with DCLG assistance, established an Information Sharing Network involving Government Departments and the remaining regulators. This acts as a mechanism to ensure that arrangements are in place for receiving information about the performance of the sector from their perspective and ensuring appropriate linkages are developed at sub national level where Depts/Inspectorates maintain a sub national presence (e.g DCLG Locality Directors; Dept of Health Deputy Regional Directors). Network meetings also provide the opportunity for local government to reassure central government that sector-led regulation and support is a much more effective way of addressing poor performance.

In this context the LGA will also meet regularly with DCLG. DCLG also has an interest in maintaining a sense of awareness of the performance of the sector as a whole, and, in understanding the risk of failure in an individual council. It does this by using and cross referencing publicly available data, e.g. inspectorate reports (Ofsted, CQC); previous Audit Commission inspection reports; public audit reports; and public data on services and spending collected for other purposes. and utilising the feedback from its own team of Locality Directors.

The LGA will meet regularly with DCLG and each party will share intelligence about performance concerns and to assess the progress of sector support. These meetings will take place shortly in advance of the regular PSP meetings so that members receive the best possible intelligence about those councils which might be facing performance challenges – although we would expect serious concerns to be shared with us in between meetings.

**Utilising published data:** Despite the abolition of the National Indicator set and Data Hub, Government Departments continue to collect and publish a range of information about councils’ performance – as do the Inspectorates and some sector-owned bodies. In some cases (e.g Audit Commission and CIPFA) this involves tools to enable comparative analysis across different councils.

The Government’s ambition is that the transparency agenda will put more performance information in the public domain and that a wider range of people and organisations will utilise the data to challenge performance and drive increased local accountability. The recent DCLG Code of Recommended practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency now says that councils should publish performance information and key indicators on their fiscal and financial position.



Some *examples* of the range of published information about councils performance

- **CouncilMonitor** trawls the Internet 24 hours a day, seven days a week, searching through news, blogs, forums and social media sites. It reads through all of this information and summarises what's being said about UK councils, and can tell whether the sentiment is positive or negative. <http://www.councilmonitor.com/>
- CIPFA has launched a new Local Authority **Budget Profile tool** based on councils' 2011-12 budgeted spend across all services. It provides an analysis across all the main services, allowing councils to benchmark spending against others. And the Audit Commission **Value for Money profiles** - will continue to be updated until September 2012
- **Adults:** the new Adult Social Care outcomes framework provides a set of measures to support a high level view of the outcomes which are being achieved for people who use social care in England. It is supported by a national data set for adult social care. Data is published on the NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care.
- **Children's services:** LAIT is a DfE interactive excel based tool that "...provides easy access to a wide range of data related to children and young people sourced from various departments across government. It acts as a single central evidence base that helps support the Accountability Framework and Transparency Agenda."

Principal Advisers will be assisted to maximise the benefit of this information through LG Inform and the Research and Information Unit in Leadership and Productivity Division.

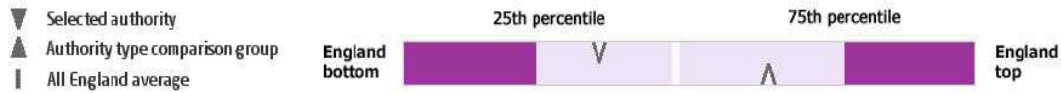
LG Inform provides a single access point for *key* nationally published data about councils' performance and a will sign post more detailed data when published elsewhere.

LG Inform also provides a "Headline report" for every council. The reports capture a core set of 30 (or so) current indicators that are of significance for the sector and enable comparisons to be made with performance in other areas. These reports will be kept up to date as new data is published.

The Research and Information team is also able to create new "Headline reports" with different configurations of data, and in the coming months will be creating "service-specific" reports that focus on each service's performance in more detail.

## Extract “Headline report”

The chart shows how your authority compares to the rest of England for each key metric. The result for your authority is indicated by a downward-pointing triangle, with the result by authority type for each metric shown as an upward-pointing triangle. Both figures are displayed on a bar showing the range of results for all England.



	Metric	Local value	Type avg	Eng avg	Eng bottom	England range	Eng top
A safe place to live	Temporary accommodation (1)	0.1	0.3	1.7	0.0		33.6
	Burglary in a dwelling (2)	3.76	5.96	3.91	0.00		11.46
	Violence with injury (3)	6.52	6.75	6.19	0.48		21.54
	Alcohol related hospital admissions (4)	575	599	445	33		826
	Road traffic accidents (KSI) (5)	106	126	76	0		789
	People satisfied with their local area as a place to live (6)	NA	74.7	81.2	56.0		94.2
Opportunity for all	Employment rate (7)	66.6	66.3	71.9	46.2		87.0
	Out of work benefits (8)	17.4	15.8	10.7	2.0		22.2

### Stage 3: Discussions with the Council

The primary purpose of these arrangements is to ensure that – as far as it is possible – the LGA understands which councils are facing performance challenges and is able to offer support at an early stage in order to address potential poor performance or service/organisational failure.

Where the information and intelligence gathered appears to indicate a potential concern the Principal Adviser will talk directly with the authority involved. How he/she approaches the council and the level of contact will depend on the circumstances and relationships in each case but would normally be at Chief Executive level. The Principal Adviser will also liaise closely with the appropriate LGA lead/regional member peer and where appropriate other regional improvement players such as any ongoing Regional Improvement and Efficiency partnerships or the Regional LGA.

These discussions may lead to a number of potential conclusions, for example:

- There is a satisfactory explanation. In this situation no further immediate action would be required other than to consider if anything needs to be done to correct the *appearance* of a potential concern.
- The council agrees that it faces a performance challenge – but it is aware of it and has appropriate steps in place to deal with the issue. In this situation the Principal Adviser would make arrangements to keep the issue “under review” and if appropriate would flag the issue to the relevant LGA political group office and to the Performance Support Panel so that members were aware.
- The council agrees that it has a potential performance challenge – and a conversation between the Principal Adviser and the Chief Executive helps to

identify some solutions to high level casual factors before they impact on performance. This could be by putting them in contact with good practice at another council or facilitating a one off top team session or putting in some mentoring.

- The council agrees that it faces a performance challenge and that a bigger degree of support is needed. In this situation the Principal Adviser would work with the council (and any sub national sector owned improvement organisations) to develop and deliver an appropriate package of support. The appropriate LGA political group office may need to be involved and the situation (including the nature of the performance challenge and appropriate support being provided) would be reported to the Performance Support Panel so that members are aware.
- The council does not accept that it faces a performance challenge. This situation will require very careful handling and further discussions will be necessary in order to understand why there is a difference of view and whether it justifiable (for example performance standards have fallen comparative to past performance or other similar types of authority because local politicians have decided it is no longer a priority and/or there is no local demand for a better service). Alternatively it may be that members or officers simply refuse to accept the problem. Principal Advisers may need to work with the appropriate LGA political group office, member peers and senior officers in order to determine the most effective way of pursuing discussions with the council concerned.

Insert examples
-----------------

#### **Stage 4: Performance Support Panel – monitoring the provision of support**

Responsibility for performance in a sector led model rests with local government politicians on the LGA Improvement Programme Board. The Performance Support Panel (PSP) exercises this responsibility on behalf of the Board. It does this by

- Maintaining an overview of performance
- Gathering information and intelligence, in order to
  - Share good practice
  - Spot trends
  - Identify where support may be required
- Reviewing roles of Principal Advisers and Peers
- Working with inspectorates, government and others

PSP comprises the four lead members of the Improvement Programme Board and the Chairs of the Children and Young People's Board and Community Wellbeing Board. It is supported by the Principal Advisers and the Heads of the LGA Political Group offices.

At each meeting PSP will receive a report drawing together those councils where there are potential concerns – along with details of any support package being provided and progress being made.

As the independent Advisory Board recognised in its report to the LGA Improvement Board in July '11

*“In order to identify the small number of authorities – perhaps three or four – facing acute difficulties at any point in time, it will be necessary to keep a much larger number – perhaps twenty or thirty – on the LG Group’s radar screen and to recognise that presence on the radar is not in itself an indication of failure”.*

It is politicians’ role to hold officers to account for the effectiveness of the support being provided – but also to activate political action if and when the blockage to improvement is seen to be political.

We will review the lessons from our engagement with the authorities so that this can inform our on-going support.

### **Stage five: Government Intervention**

Despite the arrangements described above it remains possible that

- a council does not recognise that it has a serious problem and refuses to engage with the sector’s national or sub national improvement architecture
- even where a council does engage, there is little prospect of significant improvement in the short term.

In these circumstances – and where the evidence relates to potentially serious service or corporate failure – then the LGA has always acknowledged that the Government retains the right to intervene.

Stage one: Corporate Governance Inspection (CGI).

Where serious concerns exist the Secretary of State has power under Section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999 to ask the Audit Commission to carry out a corporate governance inspection (CGI). The Commission’s methodology setting out how it conducts a CGI is available on its web site.

The findings of a CGI inform recommendations for improvement in an organisation’s corporate governance arrangements and this will provide an opportunity for the authority to engage with sector-led support.

Where the Commission is not confident of improvement within 12 months the Commission may consider making a recommendation to the Secretary of State to issue a direction under Section 15.

Stage two: intervention

Under section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999 the Secretary of State has powers to intervene – directing councils to take specific actions and ultimately directing another body to take over specific functions of the council.

Serious corporate failure is very rare in public bodies. We expect:

- any concerns that Government have to be raised with the individual local authority and the LGA, so that sector-led support can be provided where necessary and
- sufficient time is allowed to enable councils to demonstrate improvement before Government contemplates further action.

We believe that this approach is much more preferable than the Secretary of State directing a body to carry out an inspection of an authority.

Where Government does intervene we will work with Government to try and ensure that any intervention is proportionate and improvement focussed.

Other government departments such as DfE have similar powers to intervene where there is serious performance failure.

### 3. Political oversight

Responsibility for performance in a sector led model rests with local government politicians on the **LG Group Improvement Programme Board**. The Performance Support Panel (PSP) exercises this responsibility on the Board's behalf

The Improvement Board and PSP look at performance issues across the sector as a whole. This enables interconnections between services to be spotted. PSP provides particular oversight of support to councils that may be at risk of poor performance – and in extremis - service or organisational failure.

More detailed examination of issues and trends in particular “service” areas falls to the appropriate LGA Programme Board and any associated architecture.

The **LGA Programme Boards** have oversight of the performance of the sector in their specific remit. They will receive an annual report on performance and improvement challenges in their remit to enable them to consider the implications for and make recommendations about future LGA support arrangements. Significant concerns about the performance of individual councils will be fed through to PSP – in which case a member of the Board would be invited to attend PSP for that discussion. In view of the significance of the Children's and Adults services the chairs of the Children and Young People's Board and Community Wellbeing Board have been invited to attend PSP on a regular basis in order to ensure appropriate political linkages.

In addition, in children's services the **Children's Improvement Board (CIB)** is developing and implementing a new sector-led system of improvement support and challenge for children's services. The system is based on a universal process and cycle of continuous improvement based on self assessment and peer challenge, with a particular focus on early identification and sustainable mitigation of weak performance. Resources for the Board's work are currently drawn from grant funding from DfE, resources in kind provided by individual LAs, the LGA support offer for councils' new role in education and wider children's services (funded through top slice), individuals' time from the member organisations, and support purchased by individual LAs. CIB recognises that if the system is to be robust and command confidence, its capacity to identify potential performance decline and give effective support to those councils most at risk is an important, albeit highly sensitive, aspect of the sector-led approach. The

CIB will want to test out the ways in which the system can develop the necessary bite and rigour.

A brokerage service has been developed by CIB to work with local authorities with high levels of need and those authorities that are in intervention. The brokers will maintain close contact with the Principal Advisors. The CIB is also devolving resources to regional level to support this work.

In addition, in adult social care the multi-agency **Promoting Excellence in Councils' Adult Social Care Board** has agreed the key elements of an approach to sector led improvement in adult social care with two tranches of DH funding support designed to

- Support the seven councils rated “adequate” in the previous inspection regime by CQC;
- Provide programme support for sector led improvement – including working with ADASS regions, councils issuing annual self-assessments called ‘local accounts’, developing robust data and peer challenge – which is consistent with sector’s wider approach to improvement.

The Board will review the performance of the sector, the progress of improvement in the “adequate” councils and develop ways of assessing and formally recognising their progress and will work with other stakeholders such as ADASS, DH and CQC to identify the threshold when escalated action may be needed within the seven councils and across the sector. The Board reports to the LGA Community Well-being Board and in-between meetings, to its Chairman Cllr David Rogers OBE.

#### **4. Review**

The independent Advisory Board on sector self regulation and improvement provides independent oversight of sector self regulation (drawing representatives from the professional societies and elsewhere) and provides advice to the LGA Improvement Board.

It has examined and advised the LGA on these arrangements for spotting where councils may be at risk of poor performance – and in extremis - service or organisational failure and it will continue to monitor and review the effectiveness of the arrangements.

Managing risk – towards a systematic approach

