LG Inform Progress Report:

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Board on the progress made to date, before presenting a demonstration of LG Inform, and inviting comment from the Board on the service and its planned future direction.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update the Improvement Programme Board on the LGA's data service for councils and fire and rescue services/authorities, known as Local Government Inform (LG Inform). The Board is the 'sponsoring body' for this programme of work.

This item in the agenda will take the form of a presentation by Juliet Whitworth and Ian Carbutt, who will update the Board on progress with the LG Inform programme, future plans, and provide a demonstration of the tool.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the LG Inform programme of work and the progress that has been made in delivery of this programme to date, and to comment on or make recommendations about plans for its future direction.

Action

The Research and Information Team and the Digital Communications Team will continue to develop the LG Inform programme in line with feedback from the sector, and any recommendations made by the Board.

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LG Inform Progress Report: January 2012

Background

1. Local Government Inform (LG Inform), the LGA's online data service for councils and fire and rescue services/authorities, was launched as a prototype in July 2011.

2. Since then we have improved the performance and content of the service and application. In November the live system was updated and new online resources made available. For example:

   2.1 additional metrics – over 650 data items are now available, including finance

   2.2 a range of 'How to' guides (www.local.gov.uk/about-lginform) to help new users

   2.3 themed LG Inform reports (such as waste, children's services, planning)

   2.4 improvements including PDF printing

   2.5 faster access to the metrics library and headline reports.

3. We believe that these will enable councils and fire and rescue services/authorities to get more from the prototype, but we have ambitions to give them more. We are currently in the middle of the tender process for 'Prototype Plus'. We are aiming to have this available in the summer of 2012, and it will build upon requirements specified by the sector, for example, "in year data", local metrics and a configurable dashboard.

4. As part of the next phase, we are also hoping to make key elements within LG Inform, such as the standard report for each data item, available to the public. This will help councils meet the code of practice on transparency.

5. We are particularly focussed on making LG Inform sector-led, and we continue to work closely with councils and fire and rescue services. Our learning group of 11 councils and fire and rescue services meets at key points to give us feedback, act as a sounding board and conduct user testing. We are also regularly meeting groups of councils and fire and rescue services in the regions to promote and champion LG inform. To date we have had over 100 written inputs that have been acknowledged and incorporated into the process to develop the specification for the next phase.

6. At this point, we have over 1,000 registered users, from across 300 organisations.