

Improvement Board

Agenda

Tuesday 17 July 2012
11.00am

Smith Square, Rooms 3 & 4 (Ground Floor)
Local Government House
Smith Square
LONDON
SW1P 3HZ

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

www.local.gov.uk

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Improvement Board

17 July 2012

The **Improvement Board** meeting will be held on **Tuesday 17 July 2012** at **11.00am**, in Smith Square Rooms 3 & 4 (Ground Floor), Local Government House, LONDON, SW1P 3HZ.

A sandwich lunch will be provided afterwards at 1.00pm.

The LGID Company Board and LG Information House Company Board will following at 2.00pm.

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: Luke Taylor: 020 7664 3264 email: luke.taylor@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat: Evelyn Mark: 020 7664 3235 email: libdem@local.gov.uk
Independent: Group Office: 020 7664 3224 email: independent.group@local.gov.uk

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.

Location

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

Contact

Frances Marshall (Tel: 020 7664 3220, email: frances.marshall@local.gov.uk)

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Improvement Board

Date: 8.05.12

Improvement 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
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
Substitute	
John Taylor	Northumberland Council

Observers	
Philip Selwood, Chief Executive, Energy Savings Trust	Private Sector
Professor Dominic Shellard, Vice- Chancellor and Chief Executive, De Montfort University	Academic Institutions
Richard Priestman, Managing Director, Corporate Business, Lombard	Financial/Productivity Expertise

LGA Improvement Board Attendance 2011-2012

Councillors	8.09.11	8.11.11	17.01.12	20.03.12	15.05.12	
Conservative Group						
Peter Fleming	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Rod Bluh	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Michael White	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Richard Stay	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
William Nunn	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	
Teresa O'Neill	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	
Labour Group						
Ruth Cadbury	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Tony McDermott MBE	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Tim Cheetham	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Helen Holland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
Judith Blake	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Lib Dem Group						
Jill Shortland OBE	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Edward Lord OBE JP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Independent						
Jeremy Webb	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Substitutes						
Tony Jackson	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes (observer)	
Theo Blackwell	Yes					
Sir David Williams CBE		Yes				
Peter Britcliffe		Yes		Yes		
Jonathan Owen		Yes				
Apu Bagchi		Yes				

Improvement Board

17 July 2012

11.00am

Local Government House

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Colin Hilton, Director for Children's Services Self-Improvement Board, will be attending to speak to the item.	
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Councillor Penny Shelton from the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames will speak about the Council’s experience of being part of the Adult Social Care Efficiency Programme.	
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Board End of Year Review - 2011/12

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

All Boards have been asked to take an end of year report to one of its meetings looking at the priorities set out in the LGA's 2011/12 business plan, detailing delivery and impact. The section of the table relating to the Improvement Board is attached at **Appendix A** for information.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

Action

No further action is required.

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2011-12 Business Plan	What we delivered	Impact	RAG
Sector led Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LGA's seven point support offer on sector led improvement developed and delivered Sector led improvement being mainstreamed in key services areas – specifically children's and adults An agreed approach developed to managing risk and support provided to a range of councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial evaluation demonstrates high level of awareness Take up of support tools gathering momentum and initial feedback very positive DCLG has confidence in our approaches and has not sought to intervene in a council 	A
LG Inform – support for benchmarking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch of LG Inform in June 2011 as prototype benchmarking tool for the sector Enhancements released in October 2011 Commissioned new version of LG Inform for launch in autumn 2012 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive feedback that LG Inform has the potential to be a useful tool (100 individual pieces of constructive feedback received; and now 32 councils actively participating in shaping it) 1,400 registered users across 85 per cent of councils 	G
Data and transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guide published for councils on publishing contracts and tenders Impact assessment conducted for DEFRA on the effects of implementing INSPIRE (a European directive about location data) within authorities Lobbying and representing local government interest in transparency and local open data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified cost of implementing INSPIRE in authorities, which is acting as the basis for negotiations with DEFRA on how this might be minimised Local government view fed into data policy. The requirement for authorities to publish data listed in the code of practice was not made statutory. 	G
A comprehensive programme of peer challenges and peer support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered Corporate Peer Challenges to 20 councils 97 peer challenges delivered in total in 2011-12 (including corporate, adults, safeguarding children and planning). Worked in partnership with CFOA to develop a new offer for Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) piloted successfully in 3 services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from councils very good Cardiff Business School commissioned to undertake external evaluation – emergent findings positive. Safeguarding children peer review shown to have high impact and drive strong outcomes 	G
Leadership support programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leeds Castle Cohort 8 successfully delivered 17 participants (8 leaders and 9 chief executives) Next Generation Cohort 6 successfully delivered with 55 participants across the three party groups Leadership Academy 9 main programmes delivered 106 senior councillors; 14 focused programmes 	<p>The programmes of leadership support is increasing the leadership capacity of local government by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing cadres of existing and future leaders at both the local and national level and maintaining these through alumni events Developing the personal leadership capacity of senior 	G

2011-12 Business Plan	What we delivered	Impact	RAG
	<p>delivered in collaboration with programme teams, 436 senior councillors participating; a two-day programme on Shared Services has been designed and piloted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of Control 34 projects were run to support councils where there was likely to be a change of control following local elections. • Councillor Development 21 Cllr development workbooks revised and redesigned; joint conference with NALC on Localism; 221 councils committed to the Member Development Charter and of these 128 have gained Charter status; Ashridge virtual learning portal (VLRC) and the Political Skills framework revised. • New Councillor Induction 8 regional events delivered to inform new councillors of key issues and promote role of the LGA - 400+ new councillors attended; Councillor Guide 2011: 5,365 copies sent out to 365 councils • Be a Councillor the new marketing campaign was launched as part of the LGA annual parliamentary conference in February. Since the launch 20,000+ people have seen “Be a Councillor” material • NGDP Development programme for 82 trainees in Cohort 12; recruited 47 trainees to Cohort 13 and redesigned and tendered for their development programme; received 2,000 applications for Cohort 14; over 80 past NGDP trainees participated in the 2012 NGDP Alumni event; “A Brighter Future” report published on 9 February shows that the (NGDP) used by councils has the potential to drive up standards in town halls; • Managerial Leadership 40 managers participated in a workshop on the Leadership of Place pilots; leadership programmes for managers refreshed 	<p>councillors and their understanding of key issues so that they can better lead their organisations and communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting councils to provide better quality councillor development at the local, sub-regional and regional levels by providing and promoting a range of materials and initiatives • Ensuring all new councillors have some basic information about local government, their roles, the major issues and how the LGA supports them • Promoting the role of the councillor to encourage a wider range of people to consider standing • Recruiting and developing a pool of high quality graduates to provide a pool for the future managerial leadership of local government • Increased interest from in NGDP councils with 38 councils currently offering 65 places for Cohort 14. 	<p>RAG</p>

2011-12 Business Plan	What we delivered	Impact	RAG
<p>Productivity programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Social Care Efficiency Programme involving 42 councils is now underway • Buying into Communities Report – guidance on managing EU procurement rules produced jointly with LP • Capital Asset Programme Wave 2 involving 15 councils rolled out • 8 Category Management Pilots involving over 70 councils launched • Crossing Borders report into shared chief executives produced • Developed a draft Local Government Procurement Pledge • Supported Local Government Delivery Council • National Advisory Group for Local Government Procurement established • Productivity Experts programme launched • Productivity Master classes delivered • New interactive and web based Shared Services Map produced • Support provided to councils applying for Weekly Waste Collection Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New, more efficient and customer focused, care pathways for adult social care likely to realise £50m+; Additional £300k secured from DH Myth busting of EU regulations to ensure British industry benefits from councils' £62bn spend • Realising long term reductions in building running costs, floor space & CO2 levels and increases in capital receipts and local economic growth • Lessons for councils wishing to share chief executives • Making it easier for small companies and the community sector to do business with councils and access their £62bn spend • Promoted good procurement practice and examine new initiatives to ensure councils get the best when buying • Supporting 6 councils with expertise from contract re-negotiation to LEAN systems thinking • Showing graphically how 220 Councils saved £165m through 160 shared service arrangements • Supported over 120 councils to be bid for CLG's waste collection funds. Additional £240k secured 	<p>G</p>
<p>Innovation in the Sector is Identified and Supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Councils (CC) (in partnership with NESTA) – 137 councils applied • CC camps, conferences, events for sector • Significant (2 year commitment) on site innovation support and funding for up to 17 councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant innovation ideas robustly developing in 5 -7 localities • 17 short-listed councils have significantly improved their innovation ideas and skill sets • LGA seen by all 17 councils and beyond to have significantly invested in councils' innovation potential with NESTA 	<p>A</p>

Children's Improvement Board (CIB) – update on sector-led improvement

Purpose of report

To update members of the Improvement Board on the work of the Children's Improvement Board (CIB). A similar update report was presented to the LGA Executive on 12 July 2012.

Summary

This report updates the Improvement Board on sector-led improvement in children's services being taken forward through the Children's Improvement Board.

Recommendation

That members of the Improvement Board consider the progress of sector-led improvement in children's services and any issues arising.

Action

That members encourage the active promotion of the work of CIB within political networks as part of the approach to set out in "Sector-led improvement in local government" (June 2012 – see below).

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Children's Improvement Board (CIB) – update on sector-led improvement

Background

1. Following consideration by the Improvement Board at its meeting in March 2012 and in the light of subsequent comments from members, the LGA has published “Sector-led improvement in local government” providing an overarching framework for sector led improvement across council services¹. This narrative, describes a coordinated approach and offer of support, including support in children’s and adults services. It is aimed at council leaders, portfolio holders, chief executive and directors and provided the background to a number of sessions at the LGA Annual Conference.
2. Sector-led improvement in children’s services is being taken forwarded through the Children’s Improvement Board (CIB) - a partnership between the LGA, the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), supported by the Department for Education (DfE). The work of the Board draws extensively upon in kind contributions from the sector, particularly in terms of time and expertise. It is also supported by a DfE grant of £8.85 million in this financial year.
3. The Improvement Board last received a report on sector-led improvement in children’s services on 8 September 2011. Since then, funding has been agreed by DfE for 2012-13, signalling support for this sector-led approach from Ministers. Significant progress has been made in building ownership of sector-led improvement in councils amongst members and officers with direct responsibilities for children’s services but much remains to be done in embedding this more corporately as part of local government’s approach to sector-led improvement. This report gives a summary of progress and key learning from what has been, effectively, the first nine months of CIB operation.
4. A significant part of sector-led improvement for children’s services is delivered regionally, supported by funding devolved by CIB within a national framework. Each region has its own way of working and delivering sector-led improvement but each has a nominated “regional lead” councillor, director of children’s services and chief executive. Each region has also been allocated a sum of money for programme management and delivery.

¹ <http://www.local.gov.uk/sector-led-improvement>

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Priorities for 2012-13

5. The CIB's priorities for 2012-13 are: reducing the number of councils in intervention; establishing an effective system of peer challenge and support (in the context of sector led improvement in children's services "peer challenge" refers to Director to Director challenge, for which a number of different models are being developed by councils working together in regions); better engagement of stakeholders and supporting councils in managing the impact of policies. Support for councils in managing the impact of policies is grouped in four areas:
 - 6.1. The Munro Review, social work reform and early help.
 - 6.2. Adoption, children in care and the Family Justice Review.
 - 6.3. Early and foundation years, commissioning sufficiency and quality and narrowing the gap in achievement for children up to five.
 - 6.4. And three more discrete issues – data profiles, innovation and commissioning for youth services and integrated workforce (legacy of the Children's Workforce Development Council).

6. These national priorities will be delivered through a mix of national and regional activity. All regions have been asked to prioritise peer challenge between councils and the identification and support of councils who might be in difficulty. Regions support the national policy programmes but are also planning work which goes beyond the issues identified nationally. Examples of regional work planned for this year which extends the scope of policy support include child poverty, the relationship between councils and schools, links with health, and the SEN Green Paper and child sexual exploitation. Support for councils in managing the impact of policy changes fits within the universal "improvement programmes" in the strategic model below.

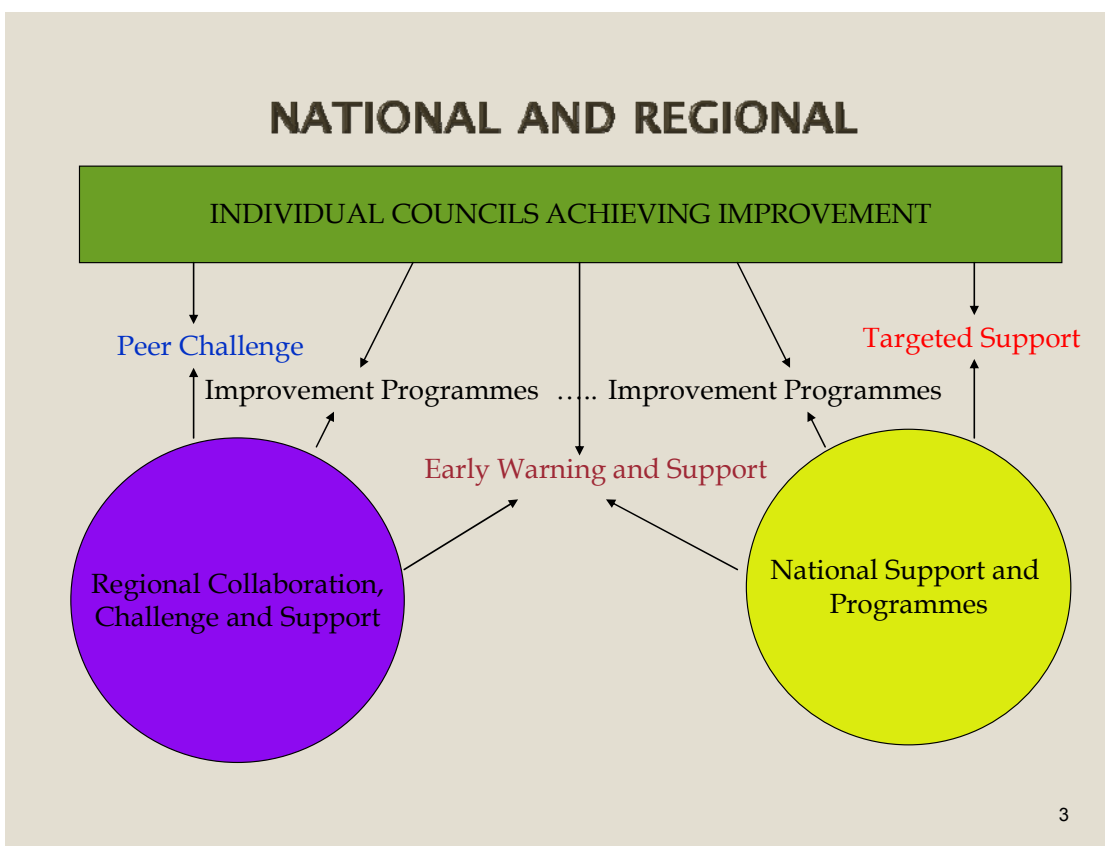
The strategic model

7. The following diagram shows how both national and regional programmes support improvement in councils. Regions are expected to develop their capacity to identify those councils who might be at risk ("early warning") and therefore in need of "early support" from their peers. Where councils are subject to DfE improvement notices, their "targeted support" is resourced nationally and the CIB team is in direct contact with these councils. All regions have a systematic approach to peer challenge in place and every council will have received a peer challenge from others by the end of 2012.

8. In order to ensure that the work supported by CIB builds on and forms part of the wider drive for sector-led improvement, CIB works closely with the Leadership and Productivity Programme at the LGA. In terms of support for

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individual councils, the LGA’s Principal Advisors are responsible for “managing the risk of underperformance” in any one council using the intelligence and support that is provided through the regional structures and through the CIB. The CIB’s “Children’s Improvement Advisers” who provide the direct, targeted support to councils, carry out this work in partnership with the LGA’s Principal Advisers. By working together the CIB and LGA teams can make sure that the support offer to councils is coherent and that both corporate and children’s services improvement needs are addressed appropriately.



Overview at the end of the first quarter of 2012-13

9. The first quarter has seen the CIB consolidate previous work and mark out a clearer strategic direction. Considerable time has been spent in strengthening key stakeholder relationships, particularly through direct dialogue with the regional leads and this work is being extended to member networks in the next six months. The end of the quarter has seen an increased level of delivery and examples of early impact, reflected through the activities now underway at both regional and national level. This includes examples of effective preventative work to avoid safeguarding failure and support in managing policy impact around early years, youth and adoption.

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10. Nevertheless the incidence of inspection failure remains unacceptably high. This means that significant resources from CIB are needed to support the small minority of councils in intervention and away from contributing to the work of early support and universal improvement. The CIB is in dialogue with Ofsted about the relationship between their developing inspection programme and sector-led improvement but the sector needs to accept that the best defence is stronger self-assessment with the rigour of external referencing and peer challenge.
11. CIB has also taken the view that it should offer support to any councils who fell below the performance thresholds on timeliness for adoption set by the Government - despite concern about the Government's overall approach. CIB has offered direct support to any councils that have been identified by DfE as causing particular concern. CIB has also commissioned, jointly with DfE, a diagnostic assessment which is being used in some cases to provide further information about an individual council's performance on adoption and to allow the council to tell the story behind the data.

Key learning from the first quarter of this year

12. The most efficient and effective basis of improvement in children's services is through a realistic system of self assessment and a commitment to change policy and practice in implementing its recommendations for improvement. Current evidence from early warning and inspection indicates that external referencing and challenge is fundamental to understanding what "good" or "adequate" looks like in practice and in giving a perspective on the pace and momentum required to effect improvement. Intelligent use of comparative data, professional development opportunities and processes of peer challenge and safeguarding peer review are important tools for providing this.
13. Individual councils remain pivotal to sector-led improvement. The best peer support and challenge can still be misplaced, rendered ineffective or in contrast can become truly transformational depending on the readiness of the internal organisation and its partners to change. A whole sector approach relating to the wider corporate agenda (bringing different strands of sector-led support together) is essential in tackling each of the key elements of leadership, workforce and systems and in creating a climate with central government that enables the necessary cultural shift to co-operative learning and improvement endeavour.
14. Regional structures and more importantly, relationships, are at different stages of development and require both opportunities for sharing ideas between them and continued capacity for programme support. CIB Children's Improvement Advisers must provide both challenge and support around the critical area of

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early warning and support. As the system matures there may be scope for a differentiated approach based on a reward grant for effective prevention.

15. There is a considerable amount of planned activity involving strategic leaders and service heads in children's services from a range of sources. Even the judicious use of meetings needs to be done with a fuller awareness of these other demands and as much early notice as possible. Consistent feedback is that learning and development needs to be interactive, applied to current challenges and that theory is best understood in an applied context with meaningful exemplification and through observed practice. There needs to be a rigorous approach to support activity determined by the criteria that it leads to changed policy or practice which, in turn, promotes, facilitates or leads directly to improved outcomes for children.
16. The window for demonstrating the effectiveness of the strategic model and addressing the sustainability of the CIB approach is until the end of Q3 2013-14 (December 2013). By that time a comprehensive and rigorous evaluation needs to have been completed looking at the impact from October 2011 until October 2013 and recommending a sustainable future approach. Anticipation of this and the learning from the current year will need to be reflected in decisions on how to deploy a reduced resource grant from April 2013.

Financial implications

17. Funding for the programme is provided by DfE. The programme is being hosted by the LGA which claims part of this funding as payment for services provided by the organisation. In addition to this, the LGA provides staff time to contribute to the CIB's work, in support of the LGA's business plan priority to deliver an effective approach to sector-based support in children's services.

Future arrangements for Audit

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report advises members about the publication of the draft Local Audit Bill and arrangements for further consultation on the proposals.

Recommendation

The Board is asked to note the publication of the draft Bill, offer any initial comments on the issues raised in paragraphs 10.1 and 10.2 and authorise the lead members to approve the LGA's response in the light of comments from member authorities.

Action

Develop draft response in the light of existing policy, sector views and members' comments and submit to lead members for approval.

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Future arrangements for Audit

Background

1. The Government has published a draft Bill on the future of local public audit:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/draftlocalauditbill>.
2. The draft Bill has been published for consultation and pre-legislative scrutiny.
3. This draft legislation provides the means to implement the plans announced in August 2010 by the Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to disband the Audit Commission and refocus audit on helping the public to hold councils and local public bodies to account for spending decisions.
4. In summary the draft Bill provides for:
 - 4.1 The repeal of legislation setting up the Audit Commission (the Audit Commission Act 1998) and provision to transfer assets, liabilities and continuing functions to other bodies.
 - 4.2 A requirement on local public bodies to appoint an external and independent auditor on the advice of an independent auditor panel.
 - 4.3 The creation of a new regulatory framework for local public audit, whereby the Financial Reporting Council and professional accountancy bodies would regulate the provision of local public audit services.
 - 4.4 The transfer of responsibility for setting the high level Code of Audit Practice to the National Audit Office (NAO).
 - 4.5 Powers for the NAO to undertake studies of thematic value for money issues relating to local government, (including, it appears, an opportunity for the NAO to undertake studies for the purposes of identifying improvements that may be made by all English local authorities) and to access information needed to do so.
 - 4.6 Powers for the Secretary of State to be able to direct a person or persons to undertake an inspection into the effectiveness of a council's corporate governance arrangements – replacing the current ability to direct the Audit Commission.
5. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has also published, alongside the Bill, proposals for a more proportionate regime for the audit arrangements for smaller local public bodies including giving smaller bodies the option of having the procurement and appointment of their audit services carried out by a sector-led body, following a proposal from the National

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Association of Local Councils and Society of Local Council Clerks to establish such a body.

6. The Government anticipates total expected savings to the public purse of £650 million over the next five years.
7. The LGA also produced an On the Day briefing for councils. [Read our on-the-day-briefing.](#)
8. Alongside the draft Bill, DCLG has also published a policy overview including a range of further consultation questions. Responses have been invited by 31 August 2012.
9. The proposals in the Draft Bill and issues raised in the consultation reflect many of the issues already rehearsed in the earlier DCLG consultation process, to which the LGA responded and by the Select Committee, to which the LGA gave both written and oral evidence.
10. There are however a couple of issues to draw to members' attention and on which initial comments would be welcomed:
 - 10.1 Powers for the NAO to undertake studies of thematic value for money issues relating to local government also appear to provide an opportunity for the NAO to undertake studies for the purposes of identifying *improvements* that may be made by all English local authorities. We are very concerned to explore this proposed power further in view of the obvious potential to duplicate the sector's own improvement arrangements.
 - 10.2 The draft Bill provides for the Audit Commission's data matching powers to be transferred to the Secretary of State. It is intended the powers would then be delegated to the new operational owner of the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) and a number of options are identified including the National Fraud Authority, Department for Work and Pensions and the Cabinet Office. We are keen that the NFI continues to operate after the Audit Commission is abolished and the initial view – subject to responses from the sector – is that it will be important that the organisation which assumes responsibility for this work has a broad outlook on fraud and is able to operate across the public and private sector.

Timetable and next steps:

31 August: Deadline for responses to the DCLG consultation on the issues raised in the policy narrative.

Autumn: pre-legislative scrutiny.

2013: Bill introduced to Parliament.

2014: Royal Assent subject to parliamentary approval.

2015: The closure of the Audit Commission.

April 2017: This is earliest point at which auditors can be appointed directly by councils.

Financial Implications

11. There are no additional financial implications arising as a result of this report.

Productivity Programme

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

The report updates the Board on the progress being made in the Productivity Programme in the category management pilots, Local Government Procurement Pledge, the Future Councils Programme and the Tell Us Once programme.

The Board will also hear from Councillor Shelton of Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames about their experiences being part of the Adult Social Care Efficiency Programme.

Recommendations

1. To note the work being undertaken as part of the category management pilots.
2. To approve the changes to the Local Government Procurement Pledge made following consultation and for a launch after the summer break.
3. To note the update on the LGA campaign for simpler future EU procurement rules.
4. To confirm additional councils to go forward to the next stage of the Future Council programme.
5. Note the thanks received for the LGA's contribution to the Tell Us Once programme.

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Productivity Programme Update

Background

1. The Board have previously approved the Productivity Programme to develop and operate a range of programmes to improve productivity and efficiency in councils. This report provides an update on selected areas of the programme.

Category Management Pilots

2. Local government spends over £62 billion a year in the private and voluntary sectors. For a typical council procurement is about half of its spend and achieving value for money and support the local economy is of key importance. Price is not always the only driver for local spending decisions; quality and local economic benefit are equally as important. Over recent years, particularly with support from the Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships; local/regional procurement lead groups have developed a number of solutions to these challenges.
3. To support this, the LGA launched a programme to encourage the development of innovative and replicable category management procurement initiatives. From a strong field of applicants the LGA identified eight projects¹ (involving over 70 councils) to receive £20,000 to support their approach. The Board are asked to note these:
 - 3.1. Lead council - Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (now Manchester City Council)/Association of Greater Manchester Authorities - social care category for the development of a framework agreement to support the Greater Manchester Strategy for Supporting Living Services.
 - 3.2. Lead council - North Tyneside MBC (supported by North East Purchasing Organisation - NEPO) - social care category for a national contract for an e-personalisation market place.
 - 3.3. Lead council - Birmingham City Council - waste category for a project to develop a waste partnership with charities in the Birmingham area for the collection and recycling of textile materials.
 - 3.4. Lead council – Northumberland County Council (with the support of NEPO) - highways category for collaborative highways procurement.

¹ http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/productivity/-/journal_content/56/10171/3511584/article-template

- 3.5. Lead council - Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council (managed by iNetwork) - property category for the development of a North West asset management network.
 - 3.6. Lead council - Lincolnshire County Council (led by Procurement Lincolnshire) - corporate services category for collaborative waste fleet and maintenance procurement.
 - 3.7. Lead council – Sheffield City Council - corporate services category for the roll out of contract management training for the sector.
 - 3.8. Lead council - Newcastle City Council (with the support of NEPO) - corporate services category for the procurement of a strategic spend analysis tool.
4. Each of these projects will have a mentor, drawn from members of the National Advisory Group or Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs), who will help to make links to related work and navigate any problems. They will also be able to identify further synergies or potential lessons coming out of the initial work.
 5. The LGA hosted a launch event on 25 May 2012 to facilitate shared learning across these projects; both Cllr Fleming and Cllr Cadbury supported this event. A similar session is planned for the autumn and all projects provide monthly progress updates and are scheduled to produce a case study and showcase their learning next summer.

Local Government Procurement Pledge

6. The Board will recall papers on the Local Government Procurement Pledge at previous meetings and the fact that the draft pledge has been out to consultation until mid June 2012. The deadline has now passed for comments and we have received a large number of responses from across a very broad range of councils and organisations. Almost all of the responses have been entirely supportive of our approach to engage with local SMEs and to foster a broad and diverse range of suppliers.
7. Feedback from a number of councils regarding Pre-Qualification Questionnaires (PQQ) noted that these are both helpful to potential suppliers including SMEs and the voluntary sector (as it enables them to better highlight how they can meet the requirements) and councils as it helps better identify those tenderers best suited to deliver). However, they also recognise the need for these to be applied proportionately and appropriately to minimise the burden for all involved. To this end a number of councils are now implementing a Tell Once approach – this

enables potential suppliers to register their details annually once on local, regional and national portals for councils to then use as appropriate.

8. A revised version of the pledge is shown at **Appendix A.**
9. The Board is asked to support the changes made to the Pledge following consultation and agree to the Pledge being launched after the summer break. Our intention is to use the Pledge to drive improvements to procurement as well as help improve engagement and collaboration with suppliers. Therefore we are convening a roundtable event inviting representatives from the voluntary sector, business community including CBI and Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) this autumn to discuss how to take this forward.

Update on reform of EU procurement rules

10. In December 2011 the EU published its proposals for new procurement rules which are due to come into effect on 30 June 2014. Since then, considerable consultation with councils and engagement with Cabinet Office and the EU institutions has taken place:
11. LGA Brussels office has worked with associations across Europe to develop a joint lobby towards the EU. Most recently in June 2012 the Board Chairman sent a letter to all UK MEPs to secure their support ahead of a crucial vote in the European Parliament this Autumn.
12. On 21 June a meeting took place in Brussels between Cabinet Office officials, LGA and eight other associations of local government. A significant consensus was reached on the need to increase joint central-local lobbying towards the EU on this topic.
13. The following key messages are being promoted to Whitehall and the EU institutions:
 - 13.1. The thresholds above which the rules apply need to be raised.
 - 13.2. New burdens when commissioning social services and legal services are unwelcome.
 - 13.3. The exclusion for shared services in the proposals is too narrow and needs to be widened.
 - 13.4. An exemption is required for employee 'mutuals' to facilitate the Big Society agenda.
 - 13.5. The rules should not be applied when councils seek credit/loan financing.

- 13.6. Proposals for new monitoring bodies at national level to enforce the rules should be rejected.
- 13.7. Burdensome reporting obligations should be rejected.
14. The next steps are to continue engagement with the Cabinet Office as negotiations progress at EU level and to ensure local government demands are reflected in the European Parliament's position due to be agreed Autumn 2012. The LGA will also keep councils informed of progress.
15. The EU is aiming for the new Directive to be agreed by the end of 2012, at which point the LGA will need to begin to work on transposition and implementation issues, including ensuring that councils are aware of the new EU requirements.

Future Councils Programme

16. The LGA sought nominations for the Future Council's programme in early 2012 and received an impressive level of response from all tiers of local government. Nominations were also received through the Local Government Delivery Council and District Councils Network.
17. Lead Member's have approved two councils (Birmingham City Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council) to be part of the Future Councils programme. The programme is designed to work with a small number of councils in a practical way to implement a new, more radical, model of council for their area. Where appropriate we will provide funding to enable this. We will build on the experience gained from past initiatives and will look to support practical, bottom up solutions rather than to revisit the unitary council or local government restructure debate.
18. The Board is asked to confirm that in addition, the following three council initiatives be funded through the LGA Future Council Programme:
- 18.1. Buckinghamshire County Council – Managing demand through behaviour change, early intervention and prevention.
- 18.2. East Riding of Yorkshire and Scarborough Borough Council – the Virtual Commissioning Council.
- 18.3. Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council and Amey's trading joint venture.
19. Full details of all proposals can be found at **Appendix B**.
20. The Productivity Team will start to negotiate the amount of funding, up to £20,000, to be provided to each council and draw up the memorandum of agreement for each. The programme we will monitor the progress of the projects

over the next two years through a New Local Government Network (NLGN) evaluation.

Tell Us Once

21. Tell us Once (TUO) is a service enabling citizens to inform their council and government about a birth or death. They can do so care of their council's² Registrar Service, on the telephone or online on Directgov. This allows the citizen to report the bereavement 'once' and for this information (with their consent) to be shared in order to have a passport or blue badge cancelled, or benefits amended or stopped.
22. Currently TUO allows the citizen to inform a range of other services including, council services, Disability and Carers Service, DVLA, HM Revenue and Customs, Passport Service and Pension Service. Since implementation TUO has helped over 134,000 people report a death and 47,000 to report a birth.
23. Local government co-designed this service with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the work of a number of councils as pathfinders and pilots including Southwark, Tameside, Kent County Council and Districts and Lancashire County Council and Districts, ensured that we designed a service that can be adapted to meet the needs of their local communities.
24. Equally importantly, Local Government worked closely with DWP throughout with a number of local government and council officer representatives helping contribute to various boards. The learning from this collaboration is going to be critical if we are going to meet the challenges of designing a Universal Credit service that works both for the citizen, for those supporting them and for those delivering this service.
25. In recognition of this support the Chairman received a letter from Terry Moran CB Director General at the DWP (see **Appendix C**) thanking the LGA for getting the programme up and running and championing it throughout.

Council Experience of the Productivity Programme

26. The Improvement Board will hear from Councillor Shelton of Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames about their experiences being part of the Adult Social Care Efficiency Programme.

² Currently a TUO service is live in 284 English councils with another 42 signed up to implement this in the coming months

27. As part of its wider Productivity Programme, the LGA launched an Adult Social Care Efficiency programme in January 2012. The programme incorporates 44 projects led by individual and groups of authorities, including one regional and one sub-regional project.
28. The programme's objective is to help councils take forward their efficiency and transformation agendas in adult social care. The programme is working with participating authorities over a two-year period to support them to refine and develop the comprehensive efficiency / change approaches required to deliver the savings councils need to make to meet the challenges of reduced funding, demographic pressures and personalisation. It is intended that the programme will support councils to deliver significant savings over the next two years.
29. In phase 1 of the programme, grants were provided to authorities to fund a diagnostic that helps challenge and refine their existing savings plans and transformation strategies. As part of their phase 1 outputs, authorities are developing implementation plans setting out how they will spend the next 12 - 24 months (phase 2 of the programme) delivering a set of identified savings and changes.
30. Projects the programme covers include: whole systems efficiency approaches; domiciliary care; learning disability services; working with health; preventative services / early intervention; reablement and recovery; telecare; and market management / commissioning.

Financial Implications

31. The business plans for 2012/13 includes resources to develop the Productivity Programme to support councils improve productivity. Capacity to support the programme has also been built into the LGA budgets and business plan.

APPENDIX A

Revised Draft Procurement Pledge for Local Authorities

(New text, ~~deleted text~~)

Background

Council spend in the private and voluntary sectors is worth over £62bn³ each year – councils recognise the need to maximise the opportunities that procurement provides in ensuring value for money, and in helping support their local economy. This is particularly so as councils wrestle with an average 28% reduction in their funding during the current Spending Review period, as well as the wider economic downturn.

The changing landscape of council contracting arrangements includes increasing numbers of shared service arrangements, pooling of resources and working with a range of providers. Reductions in funding mean that councils are seeking better value for the tax payer as services are reconfigured, and there is more co-production with citizens and the voluntary sector.

Any initiative that helps procurement to drive efficiency savings, achieves better outcomes, and makes it easier for councils and local providers to do business by reducing bureaucracy and simplifying processes has the support of ~~the sector~~ Local Government. Therefore the LGA after consultation is launching a Local Government Procurement Pledge to highlight the sector's commitment to greater collaboration with business, SMEs and the voluntary sector, to help drive improvements and efficiencies in how councils procure goods and services.

Local Government Procurement Pledge:

Local government will use all efforts to use procurement to help:

- Deliver value for public money
- Drive local social and economic growth and regeneration
- Provide inclusive services through a diverse supplier base.

To this end we pledge to increase our efforts:

- to promote and implement procurement processes that are less bureaucratic and burdensome,
- to build our skills, capacity and expertise in procurement

³ Of this £62bn, £38.2bn is open to influence

- to engage effectively with users, citizens, community organisations and partners to ensure that the goods and or services being procured meet their needs and where appropriate involve them in the procurement process
- to engage effectively with suppliers through market days, pre-procurement dialogue, and provide transparent feedback, making them aware of trading opportunities and securing their input and expertise
- to use procurement in a socially and environmentally responsible way, promoting fair employment practices, ethical sourcing practices, and environmental sustainability wherever possible
- to engage with the Chambers of Commerce and Federation of Small Business voluntary sector representatives, and other representative trade & industry bodies - as set out in their voluntary sector Compact
- to seek feedback from suppliers and use this learning to further improve procurement processes
- to promote collaborative working where appropriate using the Professional Buying Organisations; Government Procurement Service and others to make best use of existing expertise, resources, and to share best practice

Procurement support from the LGA:

As part of our wider work we will support councils to use procurement more effectively in a number of practical ways, including:

- Identifying and promoting current good practice – building on the work done through the Quick Wins and Big Wins strategies, to help councils use procurement to support local social and economic regeneration and deliver efficiency savings
- Supporting work to develop a national local government procurement strategy to help the sector overall maximise its resources and buying power
- Encouraging councils to review and consider how best to apply processes to ensure these are proportionate and appropriate including the use of Pre-Qualification Questionnaires (PQQs) for contracts below the OJEU threshold and encouraging councils to advertise their contract opportunities on Contracts Finder and regional portals as appropriate.
- Co-ordinating and facilitating a ‘voice’ for the sector through the National Advisory Group for Local Government Procurement
- Encouraging greater collaboration and joint procurement by local authorities – including providing support to 8 category management projects involving 70 local authorities
- Help in navigating EU procurement legislation and regulation through publications such as ‘Buying into Communities’

Support from Government

On behalf of the sector the LGA would like to work with the Cabinet Office and central government to help improve all public procurement.

Public procurement is highly regulated particularly by the European Union and over the years the European procurement rules have become more and more complicated. We need help from government to put the power of procurement back into the hands of our sector.

There are many aspects of the current procurement “culture” that can only be challenged and changed collectively by local government as a sector, including moving away from a risk adverse approach and moving towards a more creative and innovative approach to public sector procurement.

APPENDIX B

LGA Future Council Programme Additional Projects

1. Buckinghamshire County Council – Managing demand through behaviour change, early intervention and prevention.

In recent years, the Council's savings strategy has primarily focused on squeezing the supply side of service delivery. They now need to balance that with a focus on aggressive demand management techniques over the next five years. They are currently developing a demand management strategy, with a specific focus in the initial stages on key demand led budgets such as adult social care, looked after children, SEN and home to school transport. Support from the LGA Future Council programme will enable the council to build on the success of their Foster Care initiative and model the read-across to other areas of work in the council.

The key areas of expertise and skills that the council would like to access as a result of funding from the Future Council programme are:

- technical experts in demand management to challenge and support them in developing and finalising the Council's approach to demand management across the key areas set out above; and
- support to help to swiftly embed behaviour change approaches as business as usual across the Council and relevant partnership working.

2. East Riding of Yorkshire and Scarborough Borough Council – the Virtual Commissioning Council

The programme will focus on a 'virtual customer service centre' to embrace the new technology enabled citizens expect to use on their devices/tools to interact with public services. The internet based virtual customer service centre will provide a platform to enable access to services and ensure delivery is tailored, personalised and targeted to individuals. This work will challenge the delivery of costly universal provision, which has institutionalised many citizens but will support individuals to become more independent and take advantage of choice and personal control. A key focus will be commissioning for people and not the commissioning of individual services historically common place in the public sector to drive down costs.

As part of the Future Council's programme the lead authority would examine the creation of a single view of a customer database, Client Index, as a key building block to other key components in the programme of work. This database will

enable organisations to understand the citizens' relationship with the public sector to support targeted interventions and deliver to reduce costs.

An opportunity exists for the East Riding of Yorkshire Council, as lead authority, and Scarborough Borough Council to work together to explore how this radical, but necessary, shift in service access, commissioning and delivery could be implemented across the two unique authorities and relevant public sector partners. Scarborough Borough Council will act as project assurance.

At this early stage it is expected that the delivery of such an ambitious programme will take significant resource but it will also lead to significant finance gains and a shift in the way council's commission and deliver services. LGA support would act as a key enabler to the programme to develop the technical outline business case for a single customer database (Client Index).

3. Trafford MBC and Amey's trading joint venture

Trafford Council and Amey are keen to establish a trading joint venture company. The JV would seek to make a commercial return from supporting other local authorities and NHS bodies across the UK in delivering their vision for the integration of Health and Social Care. The model would seek to draw on the professional experience of Trafford Council's Communities and Wellbeing Directorate in delivering Adult Social Care as well as the transformation, logistical and commercial expertise of Amey's Built Environment Division.

Rather than focussing on consultancy advice or outsourced delivery this proposal will see Trafford sharing with clients their very successful approach of co producing new developments or changes in their processes with Trafford citizens. They would work with other councils, NHS organisations or integrated organisations to assist them to set up a co production approach, offering them the opportunity to come to Trafford and work alongside them.

They would also offer an opportunity for Trafford citizens to assist us with the contract work, especially in supporting other citizens or service users in the client's area. This approach has been tested in many different services and care pathways, particularly in developing processes to support personal budgets and they are keen to share experience and knowledge with the rest of local government.

Outcomes for the council include:

- Income generation.
- Key staff with improved business acumen.
- New transformational opportunities identified.

- Improved resilience.

The additional support provided by the LGA will be used to provide additional technical advice to assist them in assessing the Council's legal implications, risks, governance requirements and operational and financial impact.

The financial support provided to the above proposals through the LGA Future Council programme will be fully match-funded by the councils involved.

LGA Future Council Programme Previously Agreed Projects

The following projects were agreed for inclusion in the Programme at the Lead Member's Meeting on 13 June 2012

4. Birmingham City Council – Loyalty Reward Scheme Proposal

Birmingham City Council (BCC) plan to implement a loyalty reward scheme across the whole council. This incentivisation scheme will encourage behaviour change, reduce demand on high cost services to release efficiencies and generate income for the council. A trial has been completed in partnership with Nectar to try and change paper recycling and leisure behaviour. The trial concluded there is now a need for specialist support to get from end of trial to full scale implementation of a loyalty reward programme across the council.

The key areas of expertise and skills that the council would like to access as a result of funding from the Future Council programme are:

- Design and implementation of loyalty reward schemes.
- Commercial contract and procurement negotiation within loyalty or marketing.
- Loyalty reward information technology and system infrastructure.

In order to get the best business case, the best loyalty partner and the best delivery infrastructure specialist support is required. The support if offered by the Future Council Programme would ensure that the outcome is optimised and that it can be realised as soon as possible.

5. Rushcliffe Borough Council - Streetwise – Developing a social franchise

Streetwise currently provides a wide range of grounds maintenance, street cleansing and environmental services to the Council and a number of parish councils. It is a successful and highly regarded service by Councillors and residents.

The anticipated outcomes of this project are:

- To transform the service into a successful and sustainable social enterprise with the longer-term potential to replicate the business model via social franchising.
- To reduce the cost to the Council while producing a clean environment and pleased customers.
- To promote social purpose and community involvement.
- To secure and grow employment.

Through the Future Council programme funding Rushcliffe would like to acquire the following additional skills and expertise:

- 1.1 External expertise and experience in developing a social enterprise with an aspiration to move towards social franchising.
- 1.2 Commercial acumen – additional support required to develop the offer, the marketing and the sales.
- 1.3 Expert legal advice to help establish an appropriate legal entity and framework.
- 1.4 Advice and support to secure access to external funding and investment in the social enterprise.

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13 June 2012



I am writing to thank you for the support that the Local Government Association has given to the Tell Us Once Programme which has completed its activities and was formally closed on 17th May. The service is now offered by the vast majority of local councils, and has already helped over 160,000 new parents and bereaved people. Local Authorities are reporting high levels of customer satisfaction as well as substantial savings and a reduction in fraud because of the faster notifications provided by Tell Us Once.

From the early pilots in 2008, the partnership that the Tell Us Once Programme forged with local government - which was often facilitated by the LGA - has been instrumental in the success of the service. It certainly highlights what central and local government can achieve when there is a commitment to work collaboratively to deliver something as worthwhile as Tell Us Once.

The former IDeA has been a great practical support, giving Tell Us Once several groups on its Communities of Practice website, a crucial communication and learning tool during implementation of the service. With longstanding membership on our programme Board, Siobhan Coughlan and others representing the LGA have unwaveringly championed Tell Us Once, even when there were setbacks in the rollout due to the government review of IT spending. It is right to say that Siobhan also provided appropriate challenge when needed and her contribution to the trust developed between the Programme and its partners in local government has been significant.

With the closure of the Programme, the day to day running has been handed over to the Tell Us Once Delivery Partnerships team which will continue to work with councils seeking to offer the service and are now researching how to expand the service based on the principles that served the Programme so well.

It is also very encouraging to note that Tell Us Once has recently won the Guardian/Virgin Media 'Innovation Nation' Awards for frontline service delivery, which again is a credit to the public sector.

We all share in the success of this wonderful initiative and once again, thank you for the part you and your organisation played in it.

Yours sincerely
Terry Moran

Terry Moran



Leadership Programme

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report sets out the progress on:

1. The tendering process for the delivery of the Leeds Castle programme.
2. The tendering processes for the delivery of the Next Generation programmes.
3. The recruitment of Cohort 14 of the National Graduate Development Programme (ngdp).

Recommendation

The Board is invited to note the progress made and to comment upon the direction taken.

Action

The Leadership and Localism team will note the comments of the Board and take them into account when planning future activities and the further development of the programmes.

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Leadership Programme

Background

1. The Leadership and Localism team delivers a series of programmes to support the development of existing and future leaders, both political and managerial, within local government. Three of the key programmes are:
 - 1.1 Leeds Castle which seeks to develop exiting council leaders and chief executives to provide better leadership for the local government sector as a whole.
 - 1.2 Next Generation which aims to develop councillors with the potential to become council leaders.
 - 1.3 The National Graduate Development programme (ngdp) which aims to recruit and develop a cadre of high quality graduates to create a pool of future strategic managers for local government.
2. The Board asked for a progress report on specific developments within these three key programmes.
 - 2.1 The recruitment of Cohort 14 of the National Graduate Development Programme (ngdp).
 - 2.2 The tendering process for the delivery of the Leeds Castle programme.
 - 2.3 The tendering processes for the delivery of the Next Generation programmes.

Leeds Castle

3. The Leeds Castle programme for the period 2012/14 has recently been subject to a tendering process. The process followed was in accordance with the LGA procurement guidance and followed the advice of the Procurement Officer. The agreed criteria for assessment were:
 - 3.1 Price: Proposed fees and expenses.

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- 3.2 Experience: that their firm has the necessary experience, quality of staff, project management processes and procedures and ability to meet the project specific requirements in terms of:
 - 3.2.1 Capability
 - 3.2.2 Delivery
 - 3.2.3 Quality of Staffing
 - 3.2.4 Design and content
4. Following the open advertisements 21 bids were received by the closing date. These were assessed by an internal team (Howard Davis, Principal Adviser LG Development; Chas Leslie, Programme Manager and Siobhan Coombs, Adviser Leadership & Localism) using the criteria set out in the tendering documentation. Four proposals were shortlisted:
 - 4.1 De Montfort University & SOLACE Enterprises.
 - 4.2 David Bolger Consulting (the previous providers).
 - 4.3 INLOGOV, University of Birmingham.
 - 4.4 First Ascent.
5. The shortlisted teams were invited to present to a panel consisting of: Pascoe Sawyers (Principal Adviser Leadership & Localism); Cllr Helen Holland; Cllr William Nunn and Kim Ryley (Chief Executive Shropshire Council).
6. As a result of the panel presentations and discussion the decision was taken to invite David Bolger, Consulting and the University of Birmingham, to create a joint team to deliver the programme. This was seen as the best way of ensuring the quality and value of the programme.
7. The two providers are currently developing the final programme design and costings based on contributions from both teams. The 2012/13 programme will be launched at the LGA Conference.
8. Costs are still to be finalised but overall will be broadly similar to those of previous years.

Item 3

Next Generation

9. The Next Generation programme for the period 2012/14 has recently been subject to a tendering process. The tendering process followed was in accordance with the LGA procurement guidance and followed the advice of the Procurement Officer.
10. As the Next Generation programme is delivered in party group cohorts separate providers were sought for each party group and the LGA Group offices were closely involved in designing the process and assessing the submitted proposals. The agreed criteria for assessment were:
 - 10.1 Price: Proposed fees and expenses.
 - 10.2 Experience: that their firm has the necessary experience, quality of staff, project management processes and procedures and ability to meet the project specific requirements in terms of:
 - 10.2.1 Capability
 - 10.2.2 Delivery
 - 10.2.3 Quality of Staffing
 - 10.2.4 Design and content
 - 10.3 Understanding of the relevant party group policies and ways of working.
11. Only one bid was received for each party group, which was disappointing but not unexpected. It was likely due to the requirement for a strong understanding of the relevant party group, alongside knowledge and experience of delivering councillor and/or personal development. So this might reflect the specialist and unique nature of party group based development work. The bids have been assessed and reviewed with the LGA Group offices who are all pleased with the quality of the submissions. The contracts were awarded as follows:
 - 11.1 Conservative: CAD Business
 - 11.2 Liberal Democrat: Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors (ALDC)
 - 11.3 Labour: Political Skills Forum
12. We are now working with the LGA Group offices and the selected providers to develop the programmes. Nominations for the 2012/13 programme were launched at the LGA Conference.
13. Costs are still to be finalised and will be dependent upon the discussions to develop the programme content but overall will be no more than those of previous years.

Item 3

National Graduate Development Programme (ngdp) – Cohort 14 Recruitment

14. Numbers for ngdp fell in 2011 with only 25 councils offering 47 places for Cohort 13, compared to 82 places across 22 councils in the previous year. The number of applications remained consistent: 2,000 – 2,500 for each year.
15. In order to reduce costs a more targeted advertising campaign was conducted in autumn 2011 to promote the scheme to graduates and final year undergraduates. There was also a much stronger promotion of the ngdp to councils.
16. 2,500 applications were received which were assessed against the set criteria and 600 were taken through to the assessment process. This was done in two stages: the first stage was a written exercise with those who passed this (249) being invited back for a group exercise and role play. The outcome from this has been a final shortlist of 130 who will go forward to interviews with the participating councils.
17. We currently have 43 councils intending to participate in Cohort 14 offering a total of 73 places and for the first time the LGA itself is proposing to take a trainee. There are some councils are still discussing getting involved or in discussions to recruit locally but to participate in the development programme. This could bring the total number of trainees to 80.
18. The final interviews have now started and are expected to be completed by the end of July. We expect to be able to offer each candidate at least two interviews in their preferred regions though this is dependent upon the number of councils in the region participating and the number of applicants each is willing to interview.
19. We expect to have Cohort 14 recruited and in post by 25 October 2012 and an Induction event will be held on 25/26 October at Warwick Conference Centre.

Conclusion and next steps

20. All three programmes are progressing to timescale. The Leeds Castle tendering process will be completed once a revised programme and costs have been agreed with the preferred providers. The Next Generation tendering process has been completed. The recruitment for ngdp Cohort 14 is in the final interviews stage.

Financial Implications

21. There are no financial implications. All associated costs can be met within existing 2012/13 budgets.

Resident Satisfaction Questions: LGA Consultation

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report provides an update on the recent consultation carried out by the Research and Information Team on the development of a set of questions and accompanying guidance that the sector can use to collect some broadly comparable data on resident satisfaction.

Recommendations

1. That a final set of questions and guidance is published.
2. That the Board consider whether or not to allow residents panels to be uploaded to LG Inform for comparison at this stage.

Action

The Research and Information Team will take this work forward in light of the Board's views on the issues raised in this paper.

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Item 4

Resident Satisfaction Questions: LGA Consultation

Background

1. When the Place Survey was abolished, with it went any comparable information about resident satisfaction (and other resident perceptions). With the development of LG Inform councils told us that the lack of up to date resident satisfaction information was a key gap. This is on the basis that understanding resident or customer views and being able to make comparisons with other areas is a key element of assessing the effectiveness of an authority, alongside cost and performance information.
2. The LGA commissioned some research from Ipsos MORI to look at whether a set of questions might be developed that councils can use locally in their own residents surveys on a voluntary basis, which would be of a good enough quality for comparisons between them to be made.
3. Ipsos MORI conducted reviews of questions still being used by the sector and of research literature about what works, conducted interviews with leaders and chief executives about their expectations and views of such questions, and tested a series of questions with members of the public.

Consultation

4. Over the course of March and April 2012 we conducted a consultation which sought the views of councils on the proposed set of questions and guidance. There was a very high level of interest, with the consultation generating detailed responses from over 120 councils.
5. Consultees were generally very positive about the need to be able to benchmark resident satisfaction and supportive of the approach suggested. Several specific comments emerged around the question wording and guidance, and a number of changes have been made on the basis of this.

The questions and guidance

6. On the basis of the Ipsos MORI review, the Research and Information Team is recommending a set of questions and associated guidance on how to use them. The aim is **not** to introduce a new sector survey: but simply to recommend a set of questions that can be used on a voluntary basis by local authorities that, if they follow the guidance, will produce results that will be broadly comparable for benchmarking purposes.

17 July 2012

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7. The proposed approach is a flexible one, designed to suit local circumstances and minimise the cost to councils of collecting the data by allowing them to use only those questions that are of interest locally, and fit these questions in with existing survey plans, whilst also helping to maximise the benefit and insight that can be gained from this data by making it broadly comparable.
8. The guidance includes requirements for elements such as:
 - 8.1 the question wording;
 - 8.2 where in the questionnaire the questions are included;
 - 8.3 the order of questions; and
 - 8.4 the method (postal, online, telephone or face to face) that is used to conduct the survey.
9. In order for the data to be comparable across a range of different surveys in different authorities, it will be necessary that the guidance is followed – this may mean that councils will need to compromise on the questions they are asking in relation to how they have done this before. But it will be essential this guidance is followed if we want the data to be of a good enough quality for comparison.
Authorities can, of course, continue what they have been doing; it will simply mean that they won't be able to compare their results with others, via LG Inform.

Key issues

10. We now seek guidance from the Improvement Board on the next steps for this work.
11. We recommend moving ahead with publishing the final set of questions and guidance. Following the guidance will be completely voluntary – it is there to help councils derive more value from data that they collect, rather than impose any extra unwanted burden. Further, there has been a lot of interest from the sector; we are receiving frequent enquiries about the progress of the work.
12. However, there are two key issues that the Board might want to consider, and these are outlined below.

Issue 1 - levels of participation

13. Consultees emphasised that the success and value of benchmarking will depend on how many authorities participate.

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14. However, not all councils will participate and it will take some time to build up a bank of results. If this is not communicated effectively, there is a risk that some councils will incur costs by changing their local survey arrangements, or compromise local trends by changing question wording in order to participate. If many other councils of the type against which they want to compare do not participate, then they will have little or no comparison, and it is possible that initially a council in this situation might not see benefits that outweigh the costs they have incurred. These costs are unlikely to be financial, but rather inconvenience and a loss of trend data.
15. We propose taking the following steps to manage this risk:
 - 15.1 This is a new approach and we will need to be clear with authorities that it will take some time to build up a critical mass of participating authorities.
 - 15.2 We will encourage councils to liaise with other councils that they may want to compare themselves to, to coordinate survey activity and possibly even achieve economies of scale through joint commissioning. We are aware of one regional group that has already started this process.
 - 15.3 We are aware of several existing performance and benchmarking groupings of councils. We will be working with these groups to encourage them to adopt the approach and we will also make public a list of such groups so that those authorities that aren't linked in can find a group that might be of relevance.

Issue 2 - residents panels

16. Currently the guidance does not permit authorities to benchmark data collected via residents panels. A residents panel is a group of residents that volunteer or agree to be surveyed by the authority on a recurring basis - either regularly or ad hoc. Many authorities use these panels as they are cheaper than running random sample surveys by telephone, post or face to face.
17. Several authorities stated that they will not be able to move away from their residents panels as they would not be able to afford this. They did however argue for LG Inform to include a separate category whereby those conducting panel surveys could benchmark their results to other panel survey results.
18. The argument against this, and the reason we originally recommended excluding panels, is that there is strong evidence to suggest a considerable response bias among panel members, which makes these results incomparable to general population data and to other panels. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, because they are often not randomly selected, they are not statistically representative. This means that it would be difficult to distinguish whether any

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differences in results are real or related to respondent selection. Second, the act of volunteering to become a panel member marks a panellist out as different to someone who has not volunteered to do so, so the overall results cannot be considered representative.

19. That is not to say that panels can't be useful - many local authorities use them to gauge reactions to prospective local budgets or particular policy issues, and they can form a useful consultative tool. There is certainly a place for resident panels in the basket of research and consultation tools available to local authorities, but their limitations should be understood. One of these limitations is that they are not appropriate for benchmarking.
20. Nonetheless, these authorities are still keen to have some context by seeing the results of other panels. We need to find a balance between maintaining the integrity of LG Inform, the quality and genuine insight offered by the data versus giving councils what they want.
21. One compromise would be to specify a set of quality criteria that a panel would have to meet in order to be included. These criteria might address the way participants are recruited, the number of active participants, and the frequency with which they are then contacted. However, from what we know about the range of ways in which panels are currently operated, the probability is that many councils would still not meet these criteria and not be able to participate. Further, it may be counter productive to let authorities compare when the likelihood is that the differences in results will be influenced by panel selection and management rather than any genuine differences in residents' views.
22. **Our recommendation is not to allow residents panels to be uploaded to LG Inform for comparison at this stage. However, the views of the Improvement Board would be appreciated on this issue.**

Next steps

23. If the Board agrees, we would publish the final questions and guidance by early September 2012 so that authorities can start using them, with a view to inputting their results into LG Inform in the autumn (when our ability to collect local data will come on stream).
24. Alongside this, we would publish a consultation response document, which summarises and addresses the key issues raised by consultees and explains the changes that have been made to the guidance as a result of the consultation.

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London Councils

25. Part of the research that supports this work was funded by London Councils, as the set includes some questions on perceptions of crime and cohesion that they identified would be of particular interest to their members – and other metropolitan authorities agreed would also be useful to them. The final question set and guidance will therefore be jointly badged by the LGA and London Councils, subject to agreement from their Self Improvement Board.

Creative Councils

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report updates the Board on progress with the Creative Councils innovation programme.

The Creative Councils selection panel met on 16 May to select the proposals to receive further support from the programme. This report provides details.

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the update.

Action

Officers to reflect Members' suggestions in the design and delivery of future support to councils, communications and lobbying activity derived from the Creative Councils programme.

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Mike Short

Teresa Payne

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Senior Adviser

Adviser

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Creative Councils

Background

1. The Creative Councils programme is a joint programme between NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts) and the LGA. As reported at previous meetings of the Improvement Board, the ambition is to work with a small group of creative, pioneering councils and their partners throughout England and Wales in developing, implementing and spreading transformational new approaches to meeting some of the biggest medium and long-term challenges facing communities and local services.

Programme Progress to date

2. In April 2012 15 Creative Councils (Brighton, Bristol, Cambridgeshire, Cornwall, Derbyshire, Essex, Havering, Islington, Monmouthshire, Reading, Rotherham, Stoke, Wigan, Westminster and York) submitted their final action plan. Both Leicester and Rossendale decided not to proceed with their application and did not submit an action plan. The Selection Panel met on 16 May and made the decision to offer the following 6 Creative Councils further financial support of up to £150,000 under Phase 2 up to March 2013:

a) Cornwall: which is implementing 'Shaped by Us', a technology platform and open innovation approach which makes it easier for local communities to put forward creative ideas to solve the county's biggest challenges, a number of which will be co-produced with the council.

b) Derbyshire: which is developing 'Uni-fi' a bespoke package of support aimed at developing aspiration amongst young people in care. This will include a guaranteed entitlement to financial support on leaving care to be spent on the pursuit of self-selected goals, which might include further education or training.

c) Monmouthshire: which, through the practical 'Your County Your Way' programme, is implementing a cultural transformation within the council to listen and respond more creatively to the needs of its communities. Central to this approach is an internal training programme, the Intrapreneurship School, which seeks to introduce council employees to the concept of innovation and what it means for service delivery.

d) Rotherham: which is developing 'Rotherham Ready', a council-backed social enterprise that works with the teachers of students aged 4-19 to engage them and their schools in the development of an enterprise-based curriculum, ensuring young people have skills relevant for the future.

e) Stoke: which is developing its goal to become an energy sufficient 'Great Working City', pushing the boundaries of energy regulation and localism by moving towards local ownership of energy supply and reimagining the role of the council as a strategic broker of resources.

f) Wigan: which is creating a new economic model for social care to meet their service and financial challenges, by harnessing underutilised and untapped resources within the local community through volunteering and the development of micro-enterprises.

3. There was also a workshop at the LGA Annual Conference on 26 June – Creative Councils: The Discipline of Innovation. Geoff Mulgan, NESTA and Cllr Fleming, Chair of Improvement Board made contributions alongside representatives of Cornwall and Derbyshire. In addition the 6 were invited to the third Creative Councils Camp on 11/12 July to explain how, when, where and how their further financial and non-financial support will be provided.

Planned activities

4. Cornwall and Monmouthshire are being invited to attend Improvement Board on 17 September. In addition invites are to be offered to Derbyshire to attend Children and Young People Board, to Rotherham for Economy and Transport Board, to Stoke for Environment and Housing Board and to Wigan for Community and Well-Being Board. Further opportunities for dissemination by all 17 Creative Councils are also being sought within other appropriate theme networks/events across the country. In particular opportunities will be sought to match them to LGA campaigns, as for example Rotherham and the 'Hidden Talents' campaign. The Creative Councils group on Knowledge hub is providing a platform to engage the wider sector and to match opportunities for wider dissemination within 'thematic clusters of councils' as a contribution to the implementation of the LGA Business Plan - *"councils share and develop new, innovative ways of reforming public services through a 25 per cent increase in the use of the LGA's Knowledge Hub."*
5. As a further part of the implementation of the LGA Business Plan - *"at least 15 councils each year are able to explore new ideas, test out new ways of working and share the lessons through a range of innovative pathfinder programmes including the Creative Councils programme"* - discussions are in progress with the Creative Councils, in particular those not being taken forward under Phase 3, as to how they can be supported to further develop their ideas working alongside other interested councils. For example by examining linkages with those Councils who have had a Peer Challenge in order to determine how best the LGA can support innovative approaches in their 'action planning' alongside the specific knowledge, skills or competencies that can be drawn from all 17 Creative Councils and develop mutually beneficial solutions from innovation

processes/practices such as, for example, the 'Local Councils Innovation Framework'.

Conclusion

6. This is an exciting and interesting programme that offers many lessons for the local government sector in how best to innovate in meeting the requirements of Public Services Reform agenda.

Financial Implications

7. NESTA is providing £2 million and LGA £1 million as their respective contributions to the Creative Councils programme.

Appointments to Outside Bodies – 2012/13

Purpose of report

For approval.

Summary

This report details the Local Government Association's (LGA) appointment process for outside bodies and sets out a refreshed list of bodies and LGA structures to which the Improvement Board is asked to appoint to for the 2012/13 meeting cycle.

Recommendations

1. The Board is asked to agree the list of bodies/LGA structures set out in **Appendix B** to which the Improvement Board will appoint to for the 2012/13 meeting cycle.
2. Members interested in representing the Board on any of the bodies/LGA structures listed in Appendix B are asked to put their names forward for consideration.

Action

Appointments will be submitted to the September Improvement Board for approval and to the October Executive for endorsement.

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Appointments to Outside Bodies – 2012/13

Background

1. The Local Government Association (LGA) currently benefits from a wide network of member representatives on outside bodies across a wide range of the LGA member structures.
2. In July 2009, the LGA Executive agreed a procedure for appointments to outside bodies to govern and monitor this network. The procedure, attached at **Appendix A**, sets out that all appointments to outside bodies are reviewed on an annual basis across the organisation to ensure that the aims and activities of those outside bodies remain pertinent to the LGA.

Review and Appointment Process

3. The first stage of this process was undertaken in May 2012. All outside bodies to which the LGA made appointments to in 2011/12 were asked to complete a questionnaire to inform the review process. Likewise, the LGA's representative(s) on each body for 2011/12 were asked to provide their views about future LGA representation on the organisation in question.
4. Using the feedback received from the outside bodies and LGA representatives, individual Boards are required to review their appointments to external organisations to take account of bodies that have been abolished, new organisations that have been created and the LGA's priorities as set out in the 2012/13 Business Plan.
5. For the July meeting cycle, all Boards are required to agree a refreshed list of outside bodies/LGA structures that they will appoint to for the 2012/13 meeting cycle. Appointments to these bodies/LGA structures will then be formally approved by each Board in September and submitted to the October meeting of the Executive for endorsement.

Improvement Board Arrangements

6. The Improvement Board lead members have reviewed the outside bodies/LGA structures to which the Improvement Board appointed members to for 2011/12 and no changes were recommended. **Appendix B** lists these bodies/LGA structures which the Board are asked to agree to appoint to for the 2012/13 meeting cycle.

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7. For completeness, **Appendix C** includes, for information only, a list of:
- 7.1 Members' priority areas; in October 2011, members were asked to identify at least two areas that they would be interested in being involved with. All Board members will be given the opportunity to review these preferences once the new Board membership for 2012/13 has been confirmed.
 - 7.2 Other bodies that Board members sit on owing to their Improvement Board responsibilities, but which are not formal Board appointments. Members are invited to highlight any omissions from this list.
8. Members interested in being the Board's representative on any of the named bodies/structures set out in Appendix B are asked to put their name forward at the meeting or subsequently in writing to the Board's Member Services Officer.
9. The Improvement Board lead members will consider the nominations received and appointments will be made in line with the LGA Political Conventions which state that:

"Every effort will be made to ensure that all groups recognised by the Association are fairly represented on outside bodies both numerically and in terms of the range/type of appointments made. Each Board or Panel responsible for making appointments should agree the means by which this is achieved ... Appointments to individual outside bodies should reflect political balance where possible, subject to the constraints set by the number of appointments to individual bodies."

Next Steps

- 10. Following the receipt of nominations and selection process set out in paragraph 9, the September Improvement Board will be asked to formally appoint the nominated members to the refreshed list of outside bodies for the duration of the 2012/13 meeting cycle.
- 11. Once approved by the Board, this list of Improvement Board appointments will be submitted to the October Executive as the body responsible for overseeing all LGA appointments to outside bodies.

APPENDIX A

Procedure for LGA appointments to outside bodies

1. List of Outside Bodies

- 1.1 It is the responsibility of the Boards to review the need for representation on outside bodies as part of their annual appointments process. Boards should:
 - 1.1.1 Ensure that the list of outside bodies reflects LGA priorities, both by ending appointments where these are not felt to be of value and by actively seeking representation on new organisations;
 - 1.1.2 Evaluate both the value of the LGA's relationship with the organisation and the level of LGA influence on that body; and
 - 1.1.3 Have consideration of when it is necessary to appoint a member representative and when an officer appointment would be more appropriate.
- 1.2 The Boards will submit a report to LGA Executive setting out their current list of outside bodies every year in October.

2. Political Proportionality

- 2.1 As stated in the LGA Political Conventions:

Every effort will be made to ensure that all groups recognised by the Association are fairly represented on outside bodies both numerically and in terms of the range/type of appointments made. Each Board or Panel responsible for making appointments should agree the means by which this is achieved ... Appointments to individual outside bodies should reflect political balance where possible, subject to the constraints set by the number of appointments to individual bodies.

- 2.2 While the Boards are responsible for ensuring appointments are made in accordance with the LGA's political proportionality, the political group offices have oversight of this process through:
 - 2.2.1 Considering individual appointments in the context of all appointments to outside bodies across the organisation.
 - 2.2.2 Maintaining lists of members of Boards and other councillors willing to serve on outside bodies, together with details of their particular skills and experience.

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- 2.2.3 Discussing nominations to outside bodies with their members at the political group meetings preceding September Board meetings.
- 2.2.4 Being kept informed of any additional appointments that arise during the course of the board cycle.
- 2.2.5 e) Finding a representative if a Board is unable to secure an appointment.

3. Appointments

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of each Board to review their current list of Outside Body appointments. In July, each Board must approve an updated list of Outside Bodies for appointment for the forthcoming meeting cycle.
- 3.2 Appointments will be agreed by each Board at their September meeting and will be time limited – set according to the outside body's governance arrangements.
- 3.3 The Member Services PSO will then write to each organisation notifying them of the appointment.
- 3.4 Certain appointments are made centrally and appointments are also made by LGE to negotiating bodies and by the European and International Unit. While the process for making these appointments will be different, this information will be recorded on the central database and the same requirements for review and for support to members apply.

4. Recording information about appointments

- 4.1 A database of existing outside body appointments will be maintained centrally by the member support team, to include:
 - 4.1.1 Councillor details, including political party;
 - 4.1.2 Term of Office;
 - 4.1.3 A key contact at the organisation;
 - 4.1.4 Any allowances or expenses paid by the outside body; and
 - 4.1.5 Named LGA link officer.
- 4.2 The Member Services team will add details of the appointment to the notes on the appointed councillor's CRM entry and on the organisation's CRM entry.

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- 4.3 The list of Outside Bodies, broken down by Board, will be published on the LGA website and details will also be added to each member's web profile. The Member Services team has responsibility for ensuring this is kept up to date.
- 4.4 This list will also include any 'member champions' – board members appointed to hold a particular portfolio area of responsibility within the LGA, for example the European and International Champions on each Board.

5. LGA support for members appointed to Outside Bodies

- 5.1 Members appointed to outside bodies must receive support from LGA officers in order to maximise their contributions to outside bodies, including being kept informed of key LGA lobbying messages. Support will therefore be provided in line with the following Scrutiny Panel recommendations, agreed by the LGA in 2003:
 - 5.1.1 For each Board making appointments to outside bodies, there should be a designated LGA member of staff to oversee the appointment process for that executive, including the provision of introductory briefing for new appointees.
 - 5.1.2 A named member of staff should be appointed as the liaison person for each outside body.
 - 5.1.3 Each Board should consider the need for induction support for appointees in relation to particular outside bodies.
 - 5.1.4 Where deputies or substitute representatives are appointed, they should also be made aware of arrangements for support and report back.
 - 5.1.5 Details of any financial support from either the LGA or the outside body should be provided for all appointees.
- 5.2 Member Services PSO will oversee the appointment process and in most cases will be the liaison officer for outside bodies linked to their Boards; however, in certain cases it may be more appropriate for a Policy Adviser to act as the liaison.
- 5.3 Member Services PSOs will ensure that appointees receive a letter setting out the details of the appointment, term of office, future meeting dates, arrangements for expenses and the contact details of both the organisation's named contact and the LGA's link officer.

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- 5.4 New appointees will receive an initial briefing on the work of the outside body and relevant LGA lobbying messages from the link officer and will also be kept informed of any arising policy issues and of other LGA contact with the organisation.

6. Mechanisms for feedback

- 6.1 All appointees should be encouraged to provide updates to the link officer following meetings and when important issues arise.
- 6.2 All appointees, including non-board members, should be encouraged to feed into board 'other business' reports every 2 months. Appointees who are not board members may also wish to attend a board meeting to report back.
- 6.3 Towards the end of each year, all appointees will be contacted by the Member Services PSO and invited to feed back their views of the appointment, in preparation for the Boards' annual review of appointments. This should cover how many meetings they have attended, how useful they feel their role has been, whether they wish to continue and whether they have any additional support needs.
- 6.4 The named contact at the outside body should also be contacted annually to confirm details of attendance, provide an update on any changes and details of forthcoming meeting dates.

APPENDIX B

Improvement Board Outside Bodies/LGA Structure to be appointed to for 2012/13

Organisation	Background	Representative	Allowances / Expenses	Previous Member appointment for 2011/12
Urban Commission Steering Committee	The Urban Commission provides a forum LGA for member authorities whose areas are wholly or partly urban. The Urban Commission will act in a way that complements the principals of the LGA as a whole.	1 place	No expenses or allowance paid	Cllr Tony McDermott (Labour)
Rural Commission	Provides the forum within the Association for member authorities with an interest in rural affairs.	1 place	No expenses or allowance paid.	Cllr William Nunn (Conservative)
LGA Member Champion - Social inclusion and equalities	Advocate and key speaker for social inclusion and equalities issues.	1 place	No expenses or allowance paid.	Cllr Edward Lord JP (Lib Dem)

APPENDIX C

TABLE A - Board Member 'priority area' roles

Priority Area	Councillor
Productivity	Ruth Cadbury (Lead)
	Tim Cheetham
	Tony McDermott
Transparency	Tim Cheetham (Lead)
Improvement	Jill Shortland/Jeremy Webb (Lead)
	Teresa O'Neill
	Judith Blake
Innovation	Peter Fleming (Lead)
	Rod Bluh
	William Nunn
	Tony McDermott
	Helen Holland
Leadership	Richard Stay (Lead)
	Rod Bluh
	William Nunn
	Helen Holland

TABLE B – Board Member Involvement in Other Bodies (not formal Board appointments)

Priority Area	Organisation/Role	Councillor
Improvement	LGA/Audit Commission Liaison meeting	Cllr Peter Fleming (as Chairman of Improvement Board)
	LGA / National Audit Office Liaison Meeting	Cllr Peter Fleming (as Chairman of Improvement Board)
Transparency	Local Public Data Panel	Cllr Tim Cheetham
Innovation	Creative Councils Steering Group	Cllr Peter Fleming
	Creative Councils Selection Panel	
Leadership	Leadership Centre Board	Cllr Richard Stay

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title:	Improvement Board
Date:	Tuesday, 15 May 2012, 11.00 am – 12.40 pm
Venue:	Local Government House

Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council / Representing
Chairman	Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks DC
Vice Chairman	Jill Shortland OBE	Somerset CC
Deputy-Chairman	Ruth Cadbury	Hounslow LB
Deputy-Chairman	Jeremy Webb	East Lindsey DC
Members	Rod Bluh	Swindon BC
	Michael White	Havering LB
	Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Teresa O'Neill	Bexley LB
	William Nunn	Breckland Council
	Tony McDermott MBE	Halton BC
	Tim Cheetham	Barnsley MBC
	Judith Blake	Leeds City
	Edward Lord OBE JP	City of London Corporation
Substitutes	Tony Jackson (observer)	East Herts Council
Apologies	Helen Holland	Bristol City
	David Parson CBE	Environment and Housing Board
	Sean Brennan	Sutton Borough Council
Observers/Other attendees	Paul Bettison	LGA Conservative National Lead Peer
	Philip Sellwood	Energy Savings Trust
	Richard Priestman	Lombard
	Niall Bolger	Sutton Borough Council
	Nalin Seneviratne	Sheffield City Council
LGA Officers	Michael Coughlin, Dennis Skinner, Andy Bates, Brian Reynolds, Kamal Panchal and Gesche Schmid	

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
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Welcome and Introductions

The Chairman welcomed Members, observers, guest speakers and officers to the meeting and informed the Board of those apologies that had been received.

With reference to the recent local elections, the Chairman indicated that Russell Roberts, a long standing Labour substitute member of the Board and full WLGA member of LGID Company Board, had lost his seat. On behalf of the Board, the Chairman had written to Mr Roberts to thank him for his valued contribution over the years.

1 Peer Challenge: Feedback and Evaluation

The Chairman welcomed Niall Bolger, the Chief Executive of Sutton Borough Council, to the meeting and invited him to share with the Board, Sutton's experience of their recent peer challenge. In doing so, Niall Bolger outlined the Council's motivations for undertaking the challenge and their desired outcomes. He contrasted and compared the Council's expectations prior to the review, with their experience of the challenge process and learning outcomes. With reference to the high quality of the peer review team, he emphasised that Sutton's overall experience had been extremely positive with the review process being thorough, well managed and producing useful recommendations. In early May, a report setting out the key findings of Sutton's peer challenge had been made publically available.

Andy Bates (Principal Adviser Peer Support) briefly outlined the report and invited Members to comment on the evaluation of the first phase of the peer challenge programme and the next steps outlined in paragraph 20. In doing so, he drew attention to feedback from participating authorities as well as more broadly within the sector and highlighted the emerging findings of the evaluation being carried out by Cardiff Business School.

A detailed discussion followed, in which Members made a number of comments which were responded to by officers, relating to issues including:

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- Members thanked Niall Bolger for his informative and constructive presentation and wished Sutton well in their taking forward the findings of their peer challenge.
- There was a consensus that the positive feedback from the sector and the initial findings of the Cardiff Business School evaluation provided a positive endorsement of the peer challenge programme. Members welcomed the ongoing review and feedback mechanisms as well as the next steps outlined in paragraph 20.
- With reference to the significant achievements in the first year of the programme, a Member emphasised the importance that sufficient resources be available to continue and build on this success.
- A detailed discussion took place regarding the recommendation that ‘there be a stronger expectation that peer challenge reports be in the public domain’. Members emphasised the vital importance of transparency throughout the peer challenge process; however there was a strong consensus that it was for individual local authorities to determine the mode in which they wished to disseminate this information to the wider public.
- Support for local authorities, both before and after the challenge process, were highlighted as vital elements of the overall peer challenge process and an area with potential scope for enhancement.

Decisions

That the Board:

- noted** the report; and*
- approved** the proposed actions to further strengthen and improve the peer challenge.*

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Actions

Officers to continue to develop the programme in line with the progress made and taking into account Members' above comments.

Dennis Skinner /
Andy Bates

Circulate the Independent Advisory Board membership.

Frances Marshall

2. Impact Assessment of INSPIRE

Gesche Schmid (Programme Manager Transparency) summarised the report, which set out the draft findings of the impact assessment of the European INSPIRE directive on local authorities and the proposed next steps. Councillor Cheetham (lead member for Transparency) provided further detail on the directive's impact on local authorities, whilst Kamal Panchal (Senior Advisor), attending on behalf of the Environment and Housing Board, gave some examples of the how the directive relates to planning, highways and environmental protection.

In the discussion that followed, Members made a number of comments and questions, which were responded to by officers, relating to issues including:

- Serious concerns were expressed regarding the fact that few local authorities currently have the technical capabilities to meet the INSPIRE requirements and the significant costs to local authorities of meeting these standards.
- A Member expressed the view that the significant financial implications for councils of implementing this directive underlined the need to undertake a holistic impact assessment of the costs incurred by councils as a result of government regulations relating to data publication. It was suggested that the results of the INSPIRE impact assessment be used as a lobbying platform for this wider issue.
- A number of different views were expressed regarding the advantages and disadvantages to local authorities of implementing the INSPIRE directive. Members asked for

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further clarity on the implications of the directive for local authorities. Specifically that a report be brought to a future Board meeting that set out: the advantages and disadvantages of complying with the directive, the involvement of the Environment and Housing Board in the work around the directive and the role of GeoPlace.

Decisions

That the Board:

- i. ***noted*** the report and work conducted to date;
- ii. ***asked*** that their comments be taken on board regarding plans for future direction; and
- iii. ***asked*** for a report on the impact of INSPIRE to be brought to a future Board meeting.

Action

Officers to take into account Members' comments and to bring a report on the impact of INSPIRE to a future meeting.

Gesche Schmid /
Juliet Whitworth

3. Productivity Programme Update

Brian Reynolds (Productivity) briefly outlined the report, which updated Members on the progress made in delivering the Productivity Programme. In particular, he drew attention to the development of a local government procurement pledge and pilot schemes for waste management and common financial assessment.

Nalin Seneviratne, the Director of Property Services at Sheffield City Council (SCC) spoke about the Council's positive experience of being part of the Productivity Programme's Capital Assets Programme. He summarised the steps SCC had taken to set up a public sector property forum as well as the initial difficulties the Council had experienced and the manner in which these were overcome. With reference to the significant prospective financial savings, Nalin Seneviratne emphasised the value of the support the Council received from the LGA and Local Partnerships as well

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as the benefits of the national platform this provided.

In the ensuing discussion, Members made a number of comments and questions, which were responded to by Brian Reynolds and Nalin Seneviratne, relating to issues including:

- Members commended SCC for their pioneering work and thanked Nalin Seneviratne for his informative update.
- Members welcomed the local government procurement pledge and made number of comments to be considered as part of the consultation process. These included reference to the sector's value driven agenda and collective procurement for common goods.
- In discussing the common financial assessment work, a Member queried the involvement of the Community and Wellbeing Board and offered member support in discussions with Ministers from the Department for Work and Pensions.
- With reference to the range of work streams within the Productivity Programme and the number of opportunities for councils to get involved, it was suggested that a list of the programmes and the local authorities taking part in them be publicised in FIRST magazine.

Decisions

That the Board:

- i. ***noted*** progress made in taking forward the programme; and
- ii. ***supported*** the common financial assessment pilot;
- iii. ***asked*** that their comments be taken into consideration in the development of the programme.

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Action

Officers to take continue to develop the programme in line with the progress made and taking into account Members' comments. Brian Reynolds

Officers to report back to Cllr Shortland on the involvement of the Community and Wellbeing Board in the work on the common financial assessment pilot scheme. Brian Reynolds

4. Leadership and Localism Progress Report: May 2012

Dennis Skinner (Head of Leadership and Productivity) briefly outlined the report which updated Members on progress made in developing and delivering the Leadership and Localism programme of work. Councillor Stay (lead for member for Leadership) summarised the changes made to the programme and indicated that an update would be brought to a future Board on developments relating to leadership programmes for the wider public sector.

In the following discussion, Members raised several issues which were responded to by officers, including:

- Members welcomed the improvements made to the new Leadership Programme and thanked officers for the hard work that had gone into the new programme. However they highlighted the need to integrate the programme further within the wider work of the LGA.

Decisions

That the Board:

- noted** the report and progress made; and*
- asked** that their comments be taken into consideration in the development of the programme.*

17 July 2012

Item 7

Action

Officers to continue to develop the programme in line with the progress made and taking into account Members' comments.

Pascoe Sawyers

5. Creative Councils Update

The Chairman briefly outlined the report which updated Members on progress with the Creative Councils innovation programme and tabled a summary of the finalists' action plans. Dennis Skinner noted that the successful Councils would be chosen by the Selection Panel on 16 May; however there was flexibility as to the design and delivery of future support to the successful councils, as well as to the number of councils selected.

- Members discussed the potential implications of the recent local election results on the Creative Councils' proposals.

Decision

*That the Board **noted** the report.*

6. Notes of the last meeting and actions arising

The Improvement Board **agreed** the note of the last meeting.

7. AOB

Business Plan

The Chairman indicated that copies of the 2012/13 LGA Business Plan, which had been agreed by Executive in March, had been circulated to all Board Members. He outlined the key priorities to which the Board makes a major contribution and listed several of the Board's successes to date in these areas.

Improvement Board Officers

Members requested that a list of role and responsibilities of staff that contribute to the work of the Improvement Board be circulated to Board members.

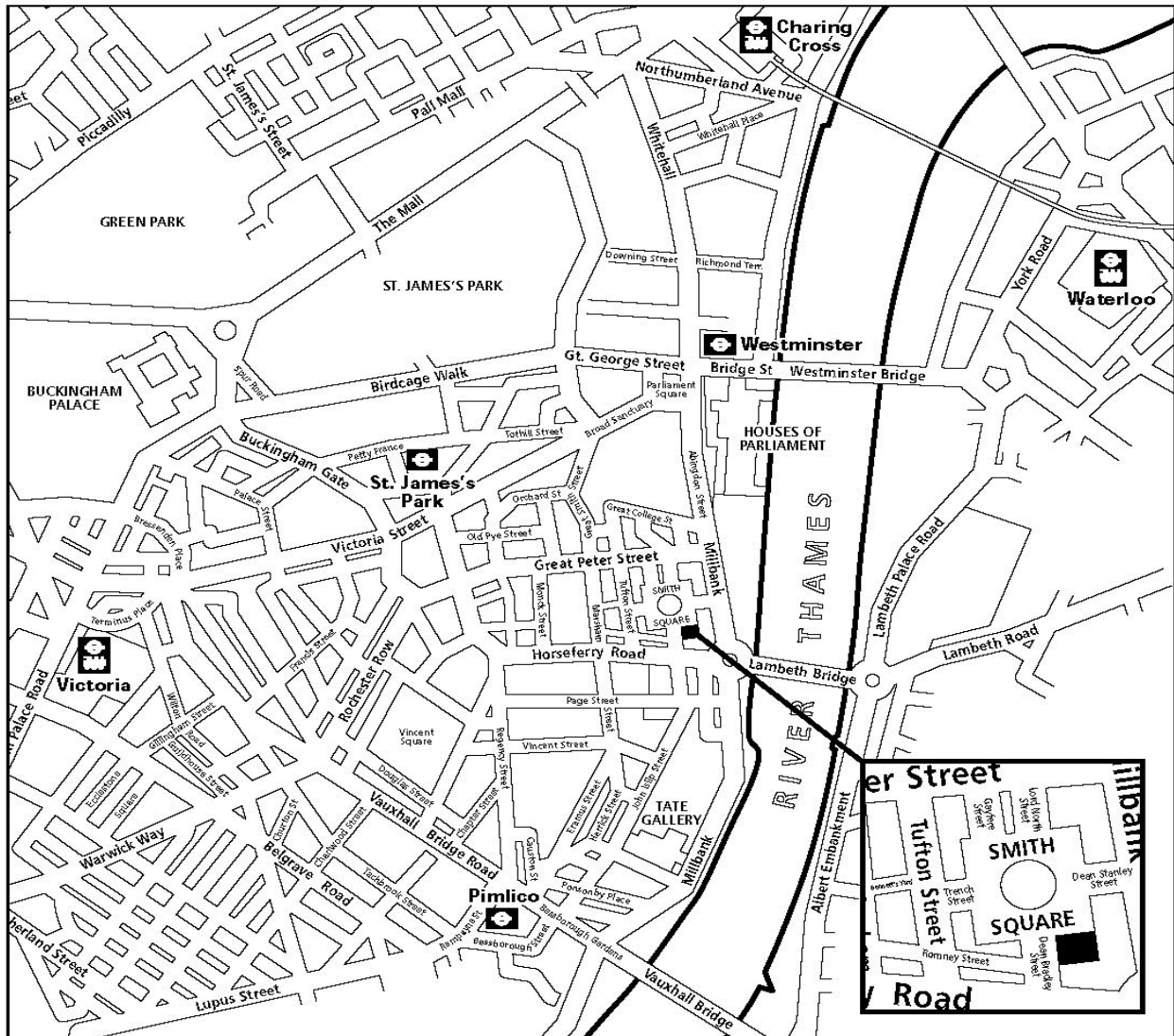
Frances Marshall

Action Monitor Schedule

Title:	Improvement Board
Date:	15 May 2012
Venue:	Local Government House

Item	Action	Progress
1	Peer Challenge: Feedback and Evaluation	
	Circulate the Independent Advisory Board membership.	Membership circulated to members on 18 May 2012.
2.	Impact Assessment of INSPIRE	
	Officers to take into account Members' comments and to bring a report on the impact of INSPIRE to a future meeting.	Work is ongoing with DEFRA to reach a solution to implementing INSPIRE in local authorities. An update will be brought to the Board once a solution has been reached.
3.	Productivity Programme Update	
	Officers to report back to Cllr Shortland on the involvement of the Community and Wellbeing Board in the work on the common financial assessment pilot scheme.	Response sent to Cllr Shortland.
4.	Improvement Board Officers	
	Members requested that a list of role and responsibilities of staff that contribute to the work of the Improvement Board be circulated to Board members.	Organisational structure circulated to members on 18 May 2012.

LGA Location Map



Local Government Association

Local Government House
 Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ
 Tel: 020 7664 3131
 Fax: 020 7664 3030
 Email: info@lga.gov.uk
 Website: www.lga.gov.uk

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

Cycle racks are available at Local Government House. Please telephone the LGA on 020 7664 3131.

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

Car Parks

Abingdon Street Car Park
 Great College Street
Horseferry Road Car Park
 Horseferry Road/Arneway Street