

Improvement and Innovation Board

Agenda

Tuesday 15 January 2013
11.00am

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

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

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Improvement and Innovation Board

15 January 2013

The **Improvement and Innovation Board** will be held on **Tuesday 15 January 2013** at **11.00am**, in Smith Square 3&4 (Ground Floor), Local Government House, LONDON, SW1P 3HZ.

A sandwich lunch will be available after the meeting at 1.00pm.

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: Group Office: 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 and Innovation Board - Membership 2012/2013

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (8)	
Peter Fleming [Chair]	Sevenoaks DC
Rod Bluh	Swindon BC
Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire Council
Teresa O'Neill	Bexley LB
Tony Jackson	East Herts Council
Glen Miller	Bradford City
Chris Hayward	Three Rivers DC
David Mackintosh	Northampton BC
Substitutes:	
Peter Jackson	Northumberland Council
Barry Wood	Cherwell DC
Alan Melton	Fenland District Council
Alistair Auty	Wokingham Borough Council
Labour (6)	
Ruth Cadbury [Deputy Chair]	Hounslow LB
Tony McDermott MBE	Halton BC
Tim Cheetham	Barnsley MBC
Helen Holland	Bristol City
Vacancy	tbc
Rory Palmer	Leicester City
Substitutes:	
Theo Blackwell	Camden LB
Liberal Democrat (3)	
Jill Shortland OBE [Vice Chair]	Somerset CC
Edward Lord OBE JP	City of London Corporation
Sir David Williams CBE	Richmond upon Thames LB
Substitute:	
Theresa Higgins	Essex County Council
Independent (1)	
Jeremy Webb [Deputy Chair]	East Lindsey DC
Substitute	
Angela Lawrence	Vale of White Horse DC
Observers	
Philip Selwood, Energy Savings Trust	Private Sector
Richard Priestman, Lombard	Financial/Productivity Expertise

LGA Improvement & Innovation Board Attendance 2012-2013

Councillors	17.09.12	2.11.12				
Conservative Group						
Peter Fleming	Yes	No				
Rod Bluh	Yes	No				
Michael White	No	No				
Richard Stay	Yes	Yes				
William Nunn	Yes	No				
Teresa O'Neill	Yes	Yes				
Tony Jackson	Yes	Yes				
Glen Miller	Yes	Yes				
Labour Group						
Ruth Cadbury	Yes	Yes				
Tony McDermott MBE	Yes	Yes				
Tim Cheetham	Yes	Yes				
Helen Holland	Yes	Yes				
Judith Blake	No	No				
Rory Palmer	Yes	Yes				
Lib Dem Group						
Jill Shortland OBE	Yes	Yes				
Edward Lord OBE JP	Yes	No				
Sir David Williams CBE	Yes	Yes				
Independent						
Jeremy Webb	Yes	Yes				
Substitutes						
David Mackintosh	Yes					
Chris Hayward		Yes				
Barry Wood		Yes				

Improvement and Innovation Board

15 January 2013

11.00am

Smith Square 3&4, Ground Floor, Local Government House

Item	Page
1. Declaration of Interest	
Opportunity for Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests.	
INNOVATION	
2. Local Councils' Innovation Framework	3
Presentations will be made by Joan Munro on the 'Local Councils' Innovation Framework' and Cllr Denise Le Gal, Cabinet Member, Surrey County Council on their 'Achieving systematic innovation framework'.	
TRANSPARENCY	
3. Local Government Knowledge Navigator	17
Professor Tim Allen, one of three recently appointed Knowledge Navigators, will provide a presentation on the role of the Navigators and seek the views of the Board on the key issues facing local government.	
4. Update on LG Inform	23
IMPROVEMENT	
5. African Peer Review Project	29
Cllr Dave Wilcox, Chairman of the European and International Board, will provide a verbal update on progress of the African Peer Review Project.	
6. Draft Local Audit Bill	35
PRODUCTIVITY	
7. Productivity Programme Update	51
8. Supporting digital and service transformation in local government	61
9. Notes of the last meeting	71
10. Date of next meeting - Tuesday 19 March 2013, Local Government House	

Local Councils' Innovation Framework

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report updates the Board on the development of a 'Local Councils' Innovation Framework' and work taking place in two councils, Surrey CC and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, who have either adapted the framework or used similar approaches.

Presentations will be made by Joan Munro on the 'Local Councils' Innovation Framework' and Cllr Denise Le Gal, Cabinet Member, Surrey County Council on their 'Achieving systematic innovation framework'.

Recommendation

Members are invited to comment on the updates and to discuss points arising from the presentations to be made by Joan Munro and Cllr Denise Le Gal, together with thoughts on sharing further sector-led developments on innovation.

Action

Officers to take on board the decisions agreed by the Board.

Contact officers:

Mike Short

Teresa Payne

Position:

Senior Adviser

Adviser

Phone no:

07799 038432

07879 640823

E-mail:

mike.short@local.gov.uk teresa.payne@local.gov.uk

Local Councils' Innovation Framework

Background

1. Following a series of interviews with Chief Executives in 18 authorities and other research, Joan Munro and colleagues at City University, London have developed a framework to review whether an organisation can do more to foster innovative working across the organisation. There are 8 self-assessment questions that chief executives, and other senior managers, can use to review whether there is more they might do (or stop doing), to encourage innovative working. The completion of which leads to a summary of priorities for action, ideally 5 or less.
2. For further details see http://creativity.city.ac.uk/accelerating_local_govt_innov.html and **Appendix A** for the content.
3. Joan Munro will present on the research findings, including:
 - 3.1 the most important areas for councils to pay attention to if they are to encourage more innovation (i.e. where the gaps/issues appear to be in many councils, even those that are ahead in encouraging innovation); and
 - 3.2 the role of members in supporting innovation.

Surrey Council's 'Achieving systematic innovation' framework

4. Surrey County Council has recognised that over the coming years they will need to continue to strengthen capacity and capability to innovate in order to continue improving outcomes and value for money for Surrey's residents.
5. The council has defined innovation as "ideas into action to improve lives in Surrey". This simple and broad definition allows for the fact that innovations come in many forms: they can be small or large scale; incremental or radical; they can relate to a specific service, a process or a whole system; they can be entirely new or borrowed and applied in a new setting; but whatever they are, they must improve the lives of residents.
6. Councillor Denise Le Gal will firstly outline how Surrey County Council developed their 'Achieving systematic innovation framework' based on 7 principles (set out in **Appendix B**). Secondly, why there has been member support for this approach. Finally, how the framework, the 7th principle of which is for a LGA peer challenge which is due to take place between 27 Feb and 1 March 2013, could further inform the LGA's sector-led improvement offer on innovation.
7. Surrey's peer challenge will consider the core questions (set out below) in a context of an organisation that wants to become innovative. The core questions are:

- 7.1 Understanding of local context and priority setting.
- 7.2 Financial planning and viability.
- 7.3 Political and managerial leadership.
- 7.4 Governance and decision-making.
- 7.5 Organisational capacity.

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's 'Innovation Framework'

- 8. Following the LGA Improvement Bulletin in May, which provided information about the 'Local Councils' Innovation Framework', Sandwell responded to the open invitation to try the framework and contribute to the research.
- 9. Noting that the research presented questions and items for consideration together with quotes from chief executives about what are key factors in innovation, they considered this interesting and worthy of further investigation. However, in order for it to be useful in identifying how far Sandwell is in terms of being innovative, and ways that they could look to further develop innovative approaches; they believed that there was potential to shape this into a customised structure - a Sandwell Innovation Framework.
- 10. Their approach was to rank the bullets within each heading of the framework into the appropriate category of a bronze/silver/gold structure. They then applied their own experience and perceptions to form additional standards and questions and made some minor wording changes in line with their preferred terminology.
- 11. The resultant matrix (attached at **Appendix C**) will help to evaluate their activities and highlight their innovative practice: the framework provides 'agreed criteria' for different aspects of innovation - without which, full and proper recognition might not be given to the full range of their innovative practice. It will help them also to identify what more could perhaps be done to achieve higher levels of innovation.

Conclusion

- 12. This is an exciting and interesting development that offers many lessons for how the LGA can continue to assist the local government sector in how best to innovate as part of our improvement support offers. The Local Councils' Innovation Framework could be adapted for use by other councils with a view to requesting Peer Challenges related to innovation. More detail is available on Knowledge Hub <https://knowledgehub.local.gov.uk/group/creativecouncils/activity>

Appendix A – Local Councils’ Innovation Framework

It sets 8 questions and seeks responses to each under the following headings;

What are your strengths?	How could you build on them?	What key issues do you need to address?	How could you address these?	Which actions here (if any) are top priorities?
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I. Are citizens’ and service users’ priorities and aspirations central to your approach to innovation?

For example, could you do more to:

- Understand your citizens’ and service users’ diverse and changing aspirations, needs and priorities more deeply? (Are operational managers ‘walking in service users’ shoes’, and engaging ‘leading edge’ service users in innovations?)
- Develop innovations with citizens and service users, helping to change local expectations and behaviours?
- Unlock and develop more capacity for innovation within local communities?

II. Is the political vision and priorities clear?

For example:

- Is the vision ambitious and inspiring, but attainable, in the unfolding strategic context?
- Are politicians clear about the most important areas for innovation in the medium and long-term?
- Are politicians prepared for experimentation, considered risk taking and necessary failures in these areas?

III. Are leaders and managers effectively driving innovation?

For example:

- Is the top team of politicians and managers focusing enough time and effort on innovation?
- Are they setting a sufficient, but sustainable, pace?
- Are leaders and managers bold, forward-looking and united?
- Are they convincing communicators? (Do they listen and respond to feedback, including from critics and mavericks?)
- Is decision-making appropriately devolved?
- Do leaders and managers fully understand and operate innovation processes and techniques?
- Do they persist until innovations work?

IV. Do you have a strategic approach to innovation?

For example, do you have;

- Clear plans and accountability for innovations?
- Sufficient resources and time devoted to innovations?
- Effective innovation project leaders?
- Major innovation processes protected from organisational norms and pressures?

- Relevant innovation processes operating in each service?
- Policies that support intelligent, well-managed, appropriate risk taking?
- The flexibility to seize new opportunities, and to adapt when experiments fail?
- The expertise to fully exploit the latest new technologies (for use by employees, citizens and service users)?

V. Does your organisational culture promote innovation?

For example, is innovation promoted through:

- Leaders' and managers' everyday behaviours, practices and stories?
- Values, norms and working practices?
- Safeguarding time for reflection and creative thinking?
- Involving people with challenging and diverse views?
- Encouraging fresh approaches and healthy debates, challenging and testing accepted assumptions?
- Pro-actively looking elsewhere for fresh ideas (e.g. from other sectors and internationally)?
- Celebrating innovations?
- A no-blame approach, when well-planned experiments fail?

VI. Are cross-boundary approaches generating significant innovations?

For example, are you successfully delivering innovations through:

- Cross-council working?
- Positive partnerships with external organisations?
- Your commissioning, procurement and contract management arrangements?

VII. Are your employees motivated and skilled for innovation?

For example, do you:

- Have enough employees, in the right positions, with:
 - A commitment to achieve the council's vision and priorities?
 - Fresh perspectives and ideas?
 - The determination and drive to make innovations happen?
- Encourage all employees to come up with and develop better ways of doing things?
- Involve frontline employees in innovation processes?
- Recognise and reward employees for innovating?
- Respond to employees' concerns about innovations?
- Deal with job losses or role changes fairly?

VIII. Do you have effective, disciplined delivery mechanisms for innovations?

For example, do you have:

- Effective ways of tracking and delivering innovations (such as programme and project management)?
- Sufficient innovation process experts to support delivery of major innovations?
- Significant innovations being achieved in all services?
- A systematic approach to evaluating and learning from both successful and unsuccessful innovations?

Appendix B – Surrey County Council’s ‘Achieving Systematic Innovation Framework’ – 7 principles

Leadership

- I. **All efforts to innovate will focus on achieving the core purpose and objectives in the corporate strategy.** A clearly articulated and shared sense of purpose is proven to be crucial to successful innovation by organisations. It means people can be freed up to be creative and try new things while still all pulling in the same direction. The council’s [One County One Team Corporate Strategy 2012-17](#) affirms its enduring purpose; “to ensure good quality public services for the residents of Surrey so they remain healthy, safe and confident about the future”. All innovation efforts must be focussed on this.
- II. **A cross-council “innovation portfolio” will be developed.** A strategic overview of simultaneous changes and projects is required to help plan and manage activity and resources. A portfolio approach will enable opportunities and risks to be understood and balanced across the spectrum of the council’s work. This will be used to ensure there is a healthy mix of both small and large scale innovations and that there is capacity to deliver key priorities. Building on the PVR programme the “bottom line” target for the portfolio will be to generate increased levels of value for residents. This will be jointly led by the Leader and Chief Executive working with other colleagues.

Culture and behaviours

- III. **To create the right climate for innovation the council’s values and People Strategy will continue to be embedded.** Innovative organisations have healthy cultures, where relationships and behaviours are mature, supportive, and encourage learning from both successes and failures. They are outward facing, work fluidly across teams and services, have strong relationships with their customers and partners, and can adapt quickly to changes to the context they work within.

Skills and tools

- IV. **The council’s training and development programme will be further developed with a strong focus on innovation capability.** This will mean focussing the next phase of training and development for officers and Members on the different phases of the innovation process. It will include a focus on areas such as commercial skills, developing business cases, research and design methods, collaboration and systems leadership, and evaluation.
- V. **Tools, methods and IT infrastructure will be further developed to support innovation.** Over the last four years teams from across the council have developed and refined a huge range of tools and techniques to help solve problems and make improvements. These have started to be pulled together in an online Improvement Toolkit which features, for example, Rapid Improvement Events and creative thinking techniques. There is no single way to approach innovation and the Toolkit, along with case study examples of from staff, will be further developed, building on the full variety of experiences and learning from across the organisation.

Catalysts to accelerate progress

- VI. **Introduce an “innovation hub” approach.** The most innovative organisations design specific structures and processes to support and manage different types of innovation. A common feature is the use of innovation and design hubs – small units with flexible resources embedded within the organisation to support colleagues who are testing, developing and implementing new ideas. Work will be completed to establish how this “innovation hub” approach can be applied to support innovation across the whole council.
- VII. **A small team of expert peers will visit the council in February 2013 to test progress and plans on innovation.** Innovative organisations are adept at learning from others and utilising thinking from outside their own organisation boundaries. The findings from the peer challenge in February 2013 will be used to refine the council’s approach to innovation.

Appendix C – Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council’s ‘Innovation Framework’ – 8 self assessment questions

1. Citizen and service user focus – key questions

- Are citizens’ and service users’ priorities and aspirations central to your approach to innovation?
- What would most improve the lives of your local residents and service users, at the same time as saving costs?
- How well do you understand your citizens’ and service users’ diverse and changing aspirations, needs and priorities? (Are operational managers ‘walking in service users’ shoes’, and engaging ‘leading edge’ service users in innovations? Do you have online mechanisms and/or regular events to capture the changing views/needs of citizens and service users?)
- How effectively are you developing innovations with citizens and service users, helping to change local expectations and behaviours?
- How effectively are you unlocking and developing the capacity for innovation within local communities?

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
1	Managers go out of their way to understand service users’ and local residents’ concerns so that they can work out how best to innovate, while saving costs.	Elected members proactively represent the issues and concern of their local communities. Managers involve service users to create innovations that both meet their needs and save costs.	Elected members, managers and employees work with local residents to create innovations that meet their needs and save costs.

2. Vision and clear priorities for innovation – key questions

- Is the political vision, and priorities, clear?
- Is the vision ambitious and inspiring, but attainable, in the unfolding strategic context?
- Are elected members clear about the most important areas for innovation in the medium and long-term?
- Are elected members prepared for experimentation, considered risk taking and necessary failures in these areas?
- Do elected members / senior managers share their ambitions with a wider (external) audience?

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
2	Elected members and senior managers are very clear about where the key innovations need to happen.	Elected members’ and senior managers’ ambitions for innovations are inspiring, but achievable. Organisational structures	Elected members and senior managers share their ambitions via local government journals and local media.

		are flexible to support innovation.	
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3. Elected members and managers drive innovations – key questions

- Are elected members and managers effectively driving innovation and doing all they can to make innovations happen?
- Is the top team of elected members and managers focusing enough time and effort on innovation?
- Are they setting a sufficient, but sustainable, pace? Are leaders and managers bold, forward-looking and united?
- Are they convincing communicators? (Do they listen and respond to feedback, including from critics and mavericks?) Is decision-making appropriately devolved?
- Do leaders and managers fully understand and operate innovation processes and techniques? Do they persist until innovations work?

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
3	Elected members and managers are convincing and inspiring when they explain why innovations are needed.	Elected members and senior managers are determined to achieve innovations. Elected members and senior managers are united in doing all they can to ensure innovations are successful.	Managers persist, despite the difficulties and barriers, until an innovation works.

4. Innovation project support – key questions

- Are senior managers providing the right support for key innovation projects?
- Is there a strategic approach to innovation?
- Are there clear plans and accountability for innovations?
- Is there sufficient resources and time devoted to innovations?
- Are there effective innovation project leaders?
- Are major innovation processes protected from organisational norms and pressures?
- Are relevant innovation processes operating in each service?
- Do you have policies that support intelligent, well-managed, appropriate risk taking?
- Is there the flexibility to seize new opportunities, and to adapt when experiments fail?
- Do you have the expertise to fully exploit the latest new technologies (for use by employees, citizens and service users)?
- Do you apply for Pathfinder funding sources from central government departments?

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
4	<p>People working on key innovation projects have the time, support and money they need to succeed.</p> <p>Risks are identified and managed.</p> <p>Elected members and management acknowledge that errors/failures are part of the innovative process.</p>	<p>The organisation makes the most of the latest new technologies to achieve innovations.</p> <p>Barriers are overcome.</p>	<p>The organisation participates in central government Pathfinder schemes to develop innovative new approaches to service delivery.</p>

5. Working practices promote innovation – key questions

- Does your organisational culture (including day to day working practices) promote innovation?
- Is innovation demonstrated through leaders' and managers' everyday behaviours, practices and stories?
- Is innovation demonstrated through values, norms and working practices?
- Is there the safeguarding of time for reflection and creative thinking?
- Is innovation demonstrated through involving people with challenging and diverse views?
- Do you encourage fresh approaches and healthy debates, challenging and testing accepted assumptions?
- Do you pro-actively look elsewhere for fresh ideas (e.g. from regional / national conferences, other sectors and internationally)?
- Do you celebrate innovations?
- Do you submit successful innovations for national recognition and awards? (Do you maintain an awards database for PR purposes?)
- Is there a no-blame approach, when well-planned experiments fail?
- Is the organisation recognised as an example of best practice in any areas? (Do you present at regional / national conferences or submit best practice articles to local government journals?)

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
5	<p>Day to day working practices encourage everyone to come up with ideas for innovations.</p> <p>If you successfully innovate, everyone celebrates and praises your achievement.</p>	<p>Elected members proactively represent the issues and concern of their local communities.</p> <p>Managers and employees look for innovative ideas outside of the council.</p>	<p>Elected members and managers encourage debate and listen to people with different views, including critics and people with very different ideas and opinions.</p> <p>The organisation acts as a</p>

	<p>Successful innovations achieve the final stages of national awards.</p> <p>National award successes shared with residents and services users via local media.</p> <p>When carefully planned experiments go wrong, everyone tries to learn from the failure.</p>	<p>good practice reference site for aspects of service delivery / development of working practices.</p> <p>Managers / key officers are invited to present at regional / national conferences to share their best practice approaches.</p> <p>Managers / key officers submit articles on good practice to local government journals.</p>
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6. Cross organisational innovations – key questions

- Does the organisation work across services and across organisational boundaries to achieve innovations, e.g. shared service provision?
- Are cross-boundary approaches generating significant innovations?
- Are you successfully delivering innovations through cross-council working?
- Are you successfully delivering innovations through positive partnerships with external organisations?
- Are you successfully delivering innovations through your commissioning, procurement and contract management arrangements?
- Are you selling your innovative products/services to other organisations?
- Do elected members support managers in seeking opportunities for shared service provision or selling products/services?

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
6	Managers and employees work with people from other council services to achieve innovations.	Managers and employees work with people from external organisations to achieve innovations.	<p>The organisation is a leading authority for shared service provision.</p> <p>The organisation capitalises on its innovative strengths by selling products/services developed in-house to other organisations.</p>

7. Employee support for innovation – key questions

- Are your employees motivated and skilled for innovation?
- Do you have enough employees, in the right positions, with:
 - a commitment to achieve the council’s vision and priorities?
 - fresh perspectives and ideas?
 - the determination and drive to make innovations happen?
- Do you encourage all employees to come up with and develop better ways of doing things?
- Is there a central point for ideas submission that is accessible to employees?
- Do you involve frontline employees in innovation processes?
- Do you recognise and reward employees for innovating?
- Do you respond to employees’ concerns about innovations?
- Do you deal with job losses or role changes fairly?

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
7	Processes in place to encourage, capture, review and recognise employee ideas.	Managers listen to and respond to employees’ concerns about the impact of proposed innovations.	Managers involve employees in planning and implementing innovations.

8. Tracking the delivery of key innovations – key questions

- Do you have effective, disciplined delivery mechanisms for innovations?
- Do you have effective ways of tracking and delivering innovations (such as programme and project management)? (Do you share these via established networks?)
- Do you have sufficient innovation process experts to support delivery of major innovations?
- Do you have significant innovations being achieved in all services?
- Do you have a systematic approach to evaluating and learning from both successful and unsuccessful innovations?

	Bronze	Silver	Gold
8	Operational project and programme management in place for the consistent delivery of projects.	Elected members and senior managers have effective ways of tracking the progress of key innovation projects to make sure they happen.	Innovative monitoring mechanisms / toolkits are shared via best practice networks.

Local Government Knowledge Navigator

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on the Local Government Knowledge Navigator programme and builds on the previous paper discussed at the Improvement and Innovation Board on the 2 November 2012.

Professor Tim Allen, one of three appointed Navigators, will provide a short presentation as well as seek to engage with the Board to learn their views on the key issues facing local government and how the project will help.

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- i) nominate a councillor to the Knowledge Navigator Steering Group; and
- ii) offer initial steers for the Knowledge Navigator Team in terms of areas where research, and research derived, knowledge and data will help local government in meeting improvement and innovation challenges in the short and longer term.

Action

Take forward in line with Members' recommendations.

Contact Officer: David Pye
Position: Programme Manager- Research
Phone no: 020-7664 3267
Email: david.pye@local.gov.uk

Local Government Knowledge Navigator

Background and context

1. The Local Government Association (LGA) has been working with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Society of Chief Executives (SOLACE) to develop an approach to ensure that local government both inputs to and benefits from publically funded research programmes commissioned under the auspices of the UK Research Councils.
2. A new approach is required because the Local Authority Research Council Initiative (LARCI) that had been tasked with developing linkage between local government and work funded by the UK's research councils (RCUK) was disbanded in March 2011. Once LARCI closed, the principal funders (LGA, RCUK and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)) commissioned a review by Dr Clive Grace to examine its successes and the challenges it faced, from the perspectives of both local government and the research councils. The review report is available at: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/media/news/2012news/Pages/120702.aspx>.
3. It concluded that:
 - 3.1. local government and the research councils have very different 'research' priorities – the one principally in harvesting existing knowledge and applied research to solve problems, the other in the production of new knowledge;
 - 3.2. a major change was needed in culture and understanding – the 'public' (i.e. not-for-profit) market between local government and the research community is not working; and
 - 3.3. local government needs to be an effective and assertive client in claiming a share of the national research asset to support community well-being and better public services.

Developments since LARCI closure

4. The LGA worked closely with the LARCI funders to consider ways forward by which the original aims of LARCI could be achieved through a different approach. The LGA learnt that, independent of these discussions, ESRC were planning to appoint a one-year fixed-term 'Local Government Knowledge Navigator' post, whose role was to bring together ESRC funded research that might be of benefit to the local government sector. Following discussions with the ESRC in the summer of 2012, LGA and SOLACE reached agreement with ESRC that the navigator post would be extended to two years, with an increase in ESRC funding for this post from £100,000 to £170,000, to make it more likely to deliver outputs and outcomes of value.

5. More specifically it was agreed that the navigator would be tasked with:
 - 5.1. influencing the strategic research agenda within ESRC, other research councils and through other relevant research bodies to achieve better local government leverage on national investment in research, and to begin to shape research agendas to benefit local government;
 - 5.2. working closely with existing networks, boards and events (within and outwith the sponsoring organisations) to scope out the knowledge and evidence needs of the local government sector in both the short and longer-term and therefore, also, to identify those local government challenges that would benefit from investment in research;
 - 5.3. achieving early wins through a series of 12 to 15 rapid evidence reviews on priority areas identified by the sector;
 - 5.4. finding ways to meet gaps in evidence and broker links with academic experts around key issues of sector concern so that the sector both benefits from high quality and reliable research outputs, but can also access experts with a proven track record; and
 - 5.5. identifying and developing networks to ensure that elected members and officials can access and communicate with the research community in ways that are mutually beneficial.
6. With regards to accountability and programme management it was agreed that:
 - 6.1. The LGA and SOLACE would be lead partners in appointing the Navigator in November 2012, and in shaping and signing off the work programme.
 - 6.2. The Navigator would be accountable to a steering group composed of an elected member and senior officer from LGA as well as representation from SOLACE and ESRC.
 - 6.3. The LGA would manage the programme with funds for this (around £80,000) coming from unspent LARCI budgets held by ESRC on behalf of the LARCI funders.

Benefits of the Knowledge Navigator approach

7. The agreed approach has a range of benefits for the LGA in particular and the sector more generally. These are that:
 - 7.1. There will be a Local Government Knowledge Navigator, fully-funded by ESRC and appointed by LGA, SOLACE and ESRC, who will enable councils to get the best from publically funded research and to input to these research programmes. This appointment will be at a minimal cost to LGA.

7.2. LGA will be part of the steering group and provide the programme management.
This will ensure we are able to direct the work to maximise the benefit to the sector.

7.3. Via our Boards, the LGA and the sector will be able to influence the priorities for the work of the Navigator and all associated programme outputs.

Appointment

8. The Local Government Knowledge Navigator was appointed on the 28th November 2012.
The appointment period concludes at the end of December 2015.

9. The appointment was to PRA Consultancy Services Limited, which brings together a consortium of three senior people as the 'Navigator' who have complementary skills and experience in local government and local government oriented research.

10. The three are:

10.1. Professor Tim Allen (previously Programme Director for Research at the LGA between 2006 and 2011);

10.2. Dr Clive Grace (previously Chief Executive of Torfaen Council, Deputy Auditor General for Wales and Chair of Solace Foundation Imprint); and

10.3. Professor Steve Martin (Director of the Centre for Local & Regional Government Research, Cardiff University).

11. The consortium also includes Jill Mortimer who previously worked in the LGA Research & Information team.

12. As noted, the Knowledge Navigator team will account to a Steering Group comprising representatives from LGA, SOLACE and ESRC. The Improvement & Innovation Board is the sponsor for this programme and will therefore influence the work over the navigator team over the next two years.

Next steps

13. Now that the appointment has been made the Improvement & Innovation Board is asked to:

13.1. nominate a councillor to the Knowledge Navigator Steering Group; and

13.2. offer initial steers for the Knowledge Navigator Team in terms of areas where research, and research derived knowledge and data will help local government in meeting improvement and innovation challenges in the short and longer term.

14. Professor Tim Allen will attend the Board Meeting and provide a short presentation and to engage with Board Members to learn their views on the key issues facing local government and how the project will help. Knowledge navigator team members will be attending other LGA Boards in due course.

Update on LG Inform

Purpose of report

For decision.

Summary

Steady progress is being made on the build of the new LG Inform, and the launch remains on track for the revised timeline of Spring 2013. The Board is asked to consider the principle and timeline for the following:

1. making LG Inform open to the public; and
2. publishing local, previously unpublished, data to the public.

Recommendations

That the Board:

1. note the progress of the new version of LG Inform;
2. agree that LG Inform should be made open to the public in Summer 2013, thereby giving authorities time to update their websites to make use of it; and
3. agree that data collected directly from councils into LG Inform should be published in principle, after a suitable period.

Action

Officers to take forward in line with the Board's direction.

Contact officer: Juliet Whitworth
Position: Research and Information Manager
Phone no: 020 76643287
E-mail: juliet.whitworth@local.gov.uk

Update on LG Inform

Background

1. LG Inform is the on-line data and benchmarking service developed by the LGA, as part of its support for councils. This free, online service allows anyone in councils and fire and rescue services to access and compare both contextual and performance data for their local area, covering around 1,000 individual items. Users can view data or pre-written reports, and create their own reports, using the most up to date published information.
2. The prototype was launched in Summer 2011, with a view to testing the principles of such a service, and getting feedback from councils about desired design and functions. In Spring 2012, the LGA commissioned Reading Room to develop the new version of LG Inform, taking on board the views and comments we had received from users of the prototype.

Update on LG Inform

3. At present, more than 90 per cent of councils have someone registered to access the LG Inform prototype, with a total of more than 1,700 users. However, we anticipate usage increasing rapidly once the new version of LG Inform is launched in the spring, which will be a better looking and better performing tool.
4. Steady progress is being made on the build of new LG Inform, and the launch remains on track for the revised timeline of Spring 2013. We are expecting to take delivery of the new tool in January, and begin a period of rigorous user testing.
5. Alongside work on the online tool, the LGA Research and Information Team is also working with a number of regional groups of authorities to develop the 'benchmarking club' function of LG Inform. This will allow authorities to agree a set of data items they all want to collect, either more frequently than collected by central government or because they are not currently collected centrally at all. LG Inform will give those authorities the ability to submit the data, and then compare with others who have also submitted data. The groups we are working with are performance networks in the North West and East Midlands. We are also discussing with London Councils the scope for convergence between their Local Authority Performance Solution (LAPS) tool and LG Inform at some point in the future.
6. We are also developing a communication plan to announce and promote the new version of LG Inform over the coming year, to encourage widespread take-up and use of the tool and the benchmarking amongst both officers and councillors.
7. The Board is asked to note the progress of the new version of LG Inform, and comment where appropriate.

Opening LG Inform to the Public

8. With the focus on transparency and the desire to increase local accountability, it has always been anticipated that LG Inform will eventually be made open to the public, as well as to councils and fire and rescue services. The majority of data within LG Inform is already public, albeit found across a large number of mainly central government websites, and in a format that is not easy for the public to view. From discussions with councils during specification and build of the new system, this element has become more important.
9. The new version of LG Inform is being developed to have a public (unregistered user) interface, as well as allowing councils to sign in to their own area where they can personalise their view, as well as build their own reports and view reports shared with them by others.
10. It is anticipated that the public will be able to access the data held in LG Inform in three ways:
 - 10.1. by visiting their council website, where the council will have embedded charts and tables that they created within LG Inform into their web pages (and the user does not leave the council web page);
 - 10.2. by visiting their council website, where the council will have inserted a web link to LG Inform (and the user will be taken to LG Inform where they can view data for their area); and
 - 10.3. by going directly to LG Inform.
11. Our intention has always been to encourage councils to make use of one of the first two methods, as we believe that residents will go to their council's own website to view information about its performance. This has the added bonus of the council being able to write a commentary around the charts or tables, in order to help the resident understand the information or explain possible reasons for notable performance. Should councils not take advantage of one of the first two methods, the public will still be able to access information about their authority area directly from LG Inform.
12. However, councils are likely to require some time to prepare if they want to use one of the first two methods. Depending on how they present the data from LG Inform, they will need to consider which data they want to use to demonstrate their performance, build a report or charts using that data, write a commentary or explanation to accompany the data, and modify their council websites.
13. Although it is possible that LG Inform could be made available to the public at the same time as it is made available to councils, our recommendation is that it should be opened later in the year in order to give councils time to prepare.

14. The Board is asked to agree the following:

- 14.1. the principle that the published data held within LG Inform should be made available to the public; and
- 14.2. that, should the principle be agreed, LG Inform will be made available to the public in Summer 2013, thereby giving authorities time to prepare for it using their own websites.

Opening Locally Collected Data to the Public

15. As mentioned above, following the launch of the new version of LG Inform, we will be developing the 'benchmarking club' element. We are planning to start collecting performance data directly from councils and sharing this between them via LG Inform on a regular basis. This new data will be of two types. First, we will collect 'provisional data' that is also submitted to central government but takes a long time before it is returned to the sector for benchmarking. Secondly, we will collect 'local data', where authorities have agreed to collect and share it on a comparable basis, as it is not collected centrally anywhere else, either for benchmarking or transparency purposes.
16. Once we have collected this data, and shared it between authorities, the question is then whether this data should be made available to the public along with the other data in LG Inform.
17. We are aware that, once we have received the data, it could become subject to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request which would require us to disclose it publicly. There is also an argument that such data should be made open anyway, although equally we may not want premature disclosure.
18. Having looked into this in more detail, we believe that we will not be required to publish the 'provisional data', since it will be published by central government following a quality assurance process – at which point we will make that data available in LG Inform. Because of this, we believe we will be exempt from any FOI request.
19. However, only the LGA will hold the 'local data'. In this case, we believe the best option is to commit to publish the data (to the public) via LG Inform following a period of restricted access. This period of restricted access will be determined on an individual data item basis, prior to data being collected, but will not exceed a year from the date of submission. This delay is to allow authorities the opportunity to submit data, review it once it has gone through quality assurance procedures within the LGA and then to effectively manage the release of this information in a useable format for the public, rather than simply publishing raw data files. We believe that this commitment will also exempt us from having to respond directly to any FOI request. We are currently checking

with the Information Commissioner's Office whether our understanding is correct, and hope to have an answer by the date of the Board meeting.

20. It is likely that some authorities will be put off from participating in the benchmarking club on the basis that we will be committing to publication, albeit up to a year after submission. However, this will avoid premature disclosure on the basis of a FOI request, and be in keeping with our commitment to open data.
21. The Board is asked to agree the principle that data collected directly from councils as part of the benchmarking club should be published, after a suitable period to allow for quality assurance and review.

Financial Implications

22. There are only small financial implications from these decisions, since the publication of the data would be through LG Inform and therefore any costs would be picked up from the limited contingency funding available in the programme budget.

15 January 2013

Item 5

African Peer Review Project

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

Following the successful completion of a majority of activities, this report provides an update on the progress of the project and next steps forward for the LGA.

Councillor Dave Wilcox, Chair of the European & International Board, will be giving a verbal update on the progress of the project.

Recommendation

Members are asked to discuss comment on upcoming activities.

Action

LGA officers to take forward as directed by Members.

Contact officer: Andy Bates
Position: Principal Advisor (Peer Support)
Phone no: 07919 562849
E-mail: andy.bates@local.gov.uk

Contact officer: Ian Hughes
Position: Programme Director (European & International)
Phone no: 0207 664 3101
E-mail: ian.hughes@local.gov.uk

African Peer Review Project

Background

1. The LGA delivers a number of projects which provide support to local government in the developing world. This work includes capacity building, peer support and general training/development.
2. There are a number of basic political steers which guide the LGA's work in this area:
 - 2.1. All work is based on demand from sister LGAs or councils in the developing world.
 - 2.2. The funding for projects is sourced externally.
 - 2.3. Delivery is based on practitioner-to-practitioner support, rather than the use of expensive consultants.
3. In 2010 the LGA was asked to undertake a peer review with the South African LGA based on the UK's experiences of peer challenge. As a result United Cities & Local Government Africa (the pan-African LGA) commissioned the LGA to support it in piloting the concept across Africa during the course of 2012. Funded by the government of Luxembourg, the programme draws on the UK's experience of peer review over the last decade in delivering five pilot peer reviews in five African countries for either a local authority or a national local government association in Uganda, Ghana, Cameroon, Namibia and Ivory Coast.
4. The programme has been developed and delivered by the LGA through a successful collaboration between the Programmes Team and the Peer Support Team, drawing on their respective skills and expertise, and is a good example of how joint working across the organisation is delivering positive outcomes and enhancing the LGA's wider reputation.

The Project

5. Since the start of the programme the majority of the activities in the project plan have been carried out. This includes;
 - 5.1. design and delivery of a bespoke training program on peer review in London for a cohort of African peers from 13 African countries (Feb/March 2012); and

Item 5

- 5.2. completion of four out of the five pilot peer reviews in Namibia, Ghana, Cameroon and Uganda (June to November 2012).
6. Due to a number of logistical challenges, the fifth and final pilot peer review in the Ivory Coast was unable to take place before the end of 2012. UCLGA has subsequently made a formal request to the government of Luxembourg for a six month extension until June 2013 in order to complete the final peer review, an external evaluation and audit activities.

Project outcomes

7. So far the project has been well received by the participating organisations and the UK and African peers. There is growing international interest in the UK's peer review model, particularly its emphasis on the sector-led, self-improvement. For the African peers and the African organisations receiving a peer review, the project has proven to be a unique learning experience. The feedback from the training in February and each of the five peer reviews demonstrated a broad consensus that the philosophy and methodology of the UK's peer review model is adaptable to most African contexts. Moreover, the personal development that the African peers experienced on their peer reviews has been considerable.
8. Feedback from the UK peers has also been very positive, not only in terms of what they were able to offer their African counterparts but also the personal reflections on their work back home that the experience provided. Considering some of the challenging environments the UK peers worked in, as well as the cultural, political and linguistic sensitivities they navigated, their commitment and professionalism has been a powerful example of what can be achieved by UK local government peers internationally.
9. Throughout the course of the programme there have been a number of logistical and communication challenges which is understandable on a transnational programme of this nature. The LGA has also, at times played a greater role in the delivery of the programme than was envisaged. It has therefore become crucial that the remaining activities, including the evaluation process ensures African ownership of the outcomes.

Next steps

10. The project has produced a high level of demand across Africa for peer support based on the LGA's peer review model. It is likely that UCLGA will want to commission more work from the LGA in order to respond positively. Over the coming months the LGA and UCLGA will be having discussions with a number of development donors and international local government networks about opportunities to scale up this work in a way that takes into account the learning from the pilot and the additional resources required.

Item 5

11. An internal evaluation will be carried out between UCLGA and the LGA as soon as the final peer review has been completed. Parallel to this, UCLGA will be commissioning an external evaluator for the project and this report will form the basis for wider dissemination of the project's achievements as well as the design of future activities.

Financial Implications

12. The current project has been entirely externally funded and all expenses incurred by the LGA in the delivery of its activities have been reimbursed, including administration costs. Any continuation of the LGA's international peer review work is reliant on external resources.

Draft Local Audit Bill

Purpose of report

For information and discussion.

Summary

The LGA Executive received a report at its 12 December 2012 meeting, on the draft Local Audit Bill and agreed that the LGA should explore options of establishing a sector owned approach to the procurement of external audit on behalf of local government (when the current contracts come to an end) in order to minimise costs to the sector. This report is attached for information at **Appendix A**.

Paragraph 6 in the report exemplifies the impact of the Commission's recent outsourcing exercise for the audit fees of some councils represented on the Executive. The following table provides a similar illustration for this Board.

Council	Proposed Fee for 12/13	Final scale fees for 12/13
Sevenoaks DC	£84,962	£56,641
Somerset CC	£199,756	£133,164
LB of Hounslow	£288,806	£192,537
East Lindsey DC	£92,340	£61,560

It is expected that the report of the ad hoc Committee of the House of Commons appointed to conduct pre-legislative scrutiny of the Draft Local Audit Bill will be published in the New Year. If this occurs before the Board meets, an oral update will be provided at the meeting.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note and comment on the report.

Action

Officers to take forward as directed by Members.

Contact officer: Dennis Skinner
Position: Head of Leadership and Productivity
Phone no: 020 7664 3017
E-mail: dennis.skinner@local.gov.uk

Appendix A – Report to Executive on 12 December 2012

Draft Local Audit Bill

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

This report updates members on the progress of the draft Local Audit Bill and invites members to agree that the LGA should explore options of establishing a sector owned approach to procurement of external audit on behalf of local government in order to minimise costs to the sector.

Recommendation

Members are asked to decide whether the LGA should explore the options of a sector owned approach to procure external audit on behalf of the sector when the current external audit contracts come to an end.

Action

Officers to report back to a further meeting

Contact officer: Dennis Skinner
Position: Head of Leadership and Productivity
Phone no: 020 7664 3017
E-mail: dennis.skinner@local.gov.uk

Draft Local Audit Bill

Background

1. In July 2012, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published a draft Local Audit Bill and accompanying policy narrative raising a number of specific consultation questions on the content of the draft Bill. The draft Bill gives effect to the announcement on 13 August 2010 by Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government of plans to disband the Audit Commission, allow councils to appoint their own auditors and to refocus audit on helping local people hold councils and local public bodies to account for local spending decisions.
2. In September the House of Commons appointed an ad hoc Committee to conduct pre-legislative scrutiny of the Draft Local Audit Bill. The Committee is chaired by the Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Hodge MP, Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, and its membership includes Clive Betts MP, Chair of the Commons Select Committee on Communities and Local Government.
3. The LGA submitted written evidence to the Committee and on 6 November Carolyn Downs, Chief Executive, gave oral evidence along with Joanna Simons, Chief Executive of Oxfordshire County Council; Stephen Hughes Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council and Steve Parkinson, National Executive Member from the Society of Local Council Clerks.
4. The core issues involved in the proposals around the future of local public audit – and the sector's views on them - have been well rehearsed and are summarised in the LGA's evidence to the ad hoc Committee, attached at **Appendix A**.
5. The current external audit contracts that have been let by the Audit Commission run until the completion of the 2016/17 audits. The Government's legislative timetable suggests that the Audit Bill is likely to be formally introduced in parliament in May/June 2013 with Royal Assent by March 2014. This would then allow for the Audit Commission to close in March 2015. The Government have indicated they will establish an interim body that manages the audit contracts from April 2015 through to 2017.

The issue

6. Over the last few months we have picked up increasing concern within the sector about the potential for audit fees to rise when councils appoint their own auditors. The Commission's recent outsourcing exercise resulted in a 40 per cent reduction in audit fees and the Commission attribute this to their bulk purchasing arrangements and the resulting economies of scale. Some examples of what this has meant in individual authorities is set out below:

Item 6 – Appendix A

Council	Proposed Fee for 12/13	Final scale fees for 12/13
RB Kensington & Chelsea	£238,950	£159,300
South Holland DC	£87,723	£58,482
Portsmouth City	£297,270	£198,180
Dudley MBC	£267,265	£178,177
Lincolnshire CC	£214,650	£143,100
Sevenoaks DC	£84,962	£56,641

7. Individual appointment is likely to increase audit firms tendering costs and this is likely to be passed on. In addition some councils are concerned that, either by virtue of their size or geographic location, they will become an unattractive proposition for audit firms and that this will also lead to a fee increase.
8. In addition the principle of “independence” in the appointment of auditors is proving a sticking point. On the one hand Government is committed to the proposal that councils should only be able to appoint auditors following consideration of a recommendation from an independent audit panel with a majority of independent members and an independent chair. Councils, on the other hand, are clear that these requirements are unnecessary and impractical. As we have argued the eligibility and regulatory processes under Part 4 of the draft Bill will ensure the professional integrity and independence of auditors and most councils think they will have great difficulties in sourcing appropriately knowledgeable people to serve as independent members of an audit panel.
9. One way forward which would help deal with these two issues would be to explore the establishment of some form of sector-led body to procure audit on behalf of the sector.
10. There are a number of potential advantages. Such a body could:
 - 10.1. overcome the problem that arises under the current proposals about how to maintain the independence of audit and avoid the requirement on all councils to appoint an audit panel;
 - 10.2. have the potential to secure economies of scale in audit procurement and as a result minimise the administrative burden on councils and keep also audit fees down;
 - 10.3. overcome the potential problems councils in remote geographic areas might face in finding and appointing auditors; and

Item 6 – Appendix A

- 10.4. strengthen sector-led improvement by giving the local government family a direct involvement with auditor appointment and regulation.
11. But there are also likely to be some challenges and significant issues to consider if the proposal was taken forward including:
 - 11.1. removing the potential discretion for councils to appoint their own auditors from a free market;
 - 11.2. being seen as retaining the remaining elements of the Audit Commission and maintaining an unnecessary body;
 - 11.3. to deliver the economies of scale the body would probably need similar statutory powers to those held by the Audit Commission in relation to the appointment of auditors;
 - 11.4. whether the body should just cover local government or as in the current case also deal with the appointment of auditors to NHS bodies and the police;
 - 11.5. LGA involvement could be perceived by some councils as another step towards the LGA becoming some form of quasi inspectorate – something councils strongly warned against in their responses to us on “Taking the Lead”.
12. Other alternatives to creating a sector-led body could include:
 - 12.1. encouraging councils to procure jointly at different spatial levels;
 - 12.2. creating a framework contract which councils could then call on;
 - 12.3. creating a national Independent Audit Appointment Panel but with councils carrying out their separate procurement process.
13. None of the options in paragraph 12 are likely to have the advantages of economies of scale that a small sector-led body is likely to achieve if it was procuring audit work on behalf of the whole sector.

Conclusion and next steps

14. There would clearly be a range of practical issues to be worked through in any exercise to establish some form of sector-led approach to procure audit on behalf of the sector. As stated above these would include: the statutory basis of the body; the range of functions powers and duties; implications for the appointment of auditors for police and health bodies; funding; and of course understanding whether councils would support the proposal.

Item 6 – Appendix A

15. Subject to members' views about the principle of establishing a sector-led approach to procure audit on behalf of the sector, officers will undertake detailed exploratory work of the options and report back to members in due course.

Financial Implications

16. There are no significant financial implications arising as a result of this report. Costs associated with exploring the issues identified in this report can be contained within the LGA core budget.

Draft Local Audit Bill: **Submission by the Local Government Association (LGA)**

15 October 2012

Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Government Association (LGA) exists to support, promote and improve local government. We will represent local government's interests and support councils through challenging times, focusing our efforts where we can have real impact. We will be bold, ambitious, and support councils to make a difference, deliver and be trusted.
- 1.2 The LGA welcomes this opportunity to offer written evidence to the ad-hoc Committee established to provide pre-legislative scrutiny of the draft Local Audit Bill. This response builds on our earlier submission to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee inquiry into the future arrangements for the audit and inspection of local authorities and our responses to previous Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) consultations on the future of local public audit.

1.3 Summary

- The proposals for local public audit are part of a new approach that devolves responsibility locally. They place the emphasis on greater transparency, stronger local accountability and sector owned and led improvement – the proposals should be assessed in this context.
- The proposed requirement for auditor appointments to be made on the basis of advice from an independent audit panel comprising a majority of independent members and an independent chair is both unnecessary and impracticable. It should be deleted from the Bill.
- Sufficient flexibility should be retained to allow councils to come together to explore the opportunities for joint procurement of audit.
- A new simpler and more easily understandable framework for published accounts is required that better enables local people to understand the true financial health of public sector organisations and empowers them to hold those responsible to account.
- The Commission's value for money profiles and financial ratios analysis tool are of potential on-going value to the sector and we are keen to work with the Commission to explore the synergies with LG Inform (the sector's own data comparison tool).
- We do not agree that the NAO should undertake examinations which include identifying 'improvements' in local government. Clause 94(3)(b) should therefore be deleted from the Bill.
- The Bill should be amended to introduce a requirement on the NAO to consult the LGA on its programme of studies and to involve the sector in the conduct of individual studies. The LGA and NAO should be required to agree a Memorandum of Understanding setting out how they will work together.

Submission

Objectives of the proposed arrangements

- 1.4 The Government's proposals for local public audit are part of a new approach to assessment and inspection that places greater weight on stronger local accountability rather than central monitoring and reporting.
- 1.5 The deficiencies of the previous 'new performance framework' with its panoply of centralised targets, performance indicators, Government office monitoring, data reporting and multiple inspections have been well documented. These limitations include the following points:
- National targets and assessment regimes by their nature encourage compliance with centralised objectives inhibiting the ability and opportunity for locally elected councils to respond effectively to the priorities identified by local people and communities.
 - The assessment and inspection regimes have considerable compliance costs diverting scarce public resources away from direct delivery. In our evidence to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee inquiry the LGA estimated these costs to be in the order of £900m per annum though others, including the NAO, arrived at higher estimates.
- 1.6 Instead the new approach – of which local public audit is part – devolves responsibility locally and places the emphasis on greater transparency, stronger local accountability and sector owned and led improvement. The proposals for local public audit need to be assessed within this wider context, not apart from it.

Local appointment

- 1.7 The Committee's call for evidence invites views on whether the draft Bill provisions empowering local bodies to appoint their own independent external auditors will provide adequate safeguards, for example, to ensure independence.
- 1.8 In our view the proposed requirement for appointments to be made on the basis of advice from an independent audit panel comprising a majority of independent members and an independent chair is both unnecessary and impracticable. It should be deleted from the draft Bill.
- 1.9 The proposals are unnecessary for a number of reasons. Firstly, the eligibility requirements and regulation process provided under Part 4 of the draft Bill will be sufficient to ensure the professional integrity and independence of potential auditors. In practice this means that:
- Audit firms will have to comply with the rules and practices governing the eligibility of firms to be appointed as local public auditors and the qualifications, experience and other criteria individuals must reach before being permitted to carry out a local public audit and sign off an audit report. These will be set by the professional accountancy bodies (recognised supervisory bodies)

which will be responsible for registration, monitoring and discipline for local public audit.

- Recognised supervisory bodies will monitor the quality of audits undertaken by their member firms and investigate complaints and disciplinary issues.
- The accountancy bodies themselves will be recognised and supervised by the Financial Reporting Council which will be the overall regulator. The FRC will be able to issue guidance to supervisory bodies. The Accountancy and Actuarial Disciplinary Board (part of the FRC) can investigate significant public interest disciplinary cases and impose sanctions on those auditors found guilty of misconduct in both the companies and public sectors.
- The approach auditors must follow when auditing local public bodies is set out in the audit codes of practice which will in future be the responsibility of the NAO to develop and maintain.

“If there needs to be an audit committee with a majority of independent members in order to select an independent auditor there is something wrong with the process for determining auditors’ eligibility for the role.” Feedback from a County Council.

(Source: LGA, June 2011 response).

1.10 Secondly, councils already operate within a complex regime of existing safeguards and controls designed to guarantee regularity and propriety including the requirement to set balanced budgets, to restrict borrowing to what is affordable, maintain sound systems of internal financial control, publish financial statements and secure continuous improvement. Monitoring Officers and Section 151 Officers ensure the legality and financial prudence of decisions.

1.11 And finally, councils are already responsible for procuring large volumes of goods and services in order to discharge their wider functions and have the skills and ability to appoint their own auditors. Indeed the Government has recognised that there are ‘...no barriers in terms of expertise that would prevent local public bodies appointing their external auditors...’ (para 57, Government response to the future of local audit consultation, January 2012).

1.12 We also believe the proposals to be impractical because councils’ experience demonstrates that it will be very difficult for some authorities to source appropriate (i.e. suitably knowledgeable and qualified) independent people to appoint to a committee, especially given the amount of time required to understand the complex environment within which councils operate. Of those councils expressing a view on this issue 89% indicated it would be difficult to source independent members compared with 11% who said it would not (para 5.7 *Future of local public audit – consultation: Summary of responses*, January 2012).

“The requirement to establish an audit panel is excessive and potentially unworkable as there will be difficulty in finding suitable independent members with the requisite skill set.” Feedback from a Shire district.

“The appointment of an independent auditor panel is considered to be an unnecessary bureaucracy. The requirement for independence is a clear duty on the appointed auditor and is implicit and explicit in the culture and legislation surrounding auditing.” Feedback from a County Council.

(Source: LGA response to draft Bill consultation, September 2012).

1.13 Foundation Trusts, Universities and Further Education Colleges appoint their own auditors. In the absence of any compelling evidence to support the need for passing these responsibilities to unelected people we continue to be of the view that the current audit committees provide a good basis for making recommendations to council about the appointment of auditors. Approximately 80% of councils already have some form of audit committee with the remit to challenge, review and scrutinise member and officer decisions on financial issues. This may include independent members and is often chaired by members of the opposition group. There is no reason to suggest that these arrangements could not provide a good basis for making recommendations to council about the appointment of auditors.

1.14 Giving councils the freedom to appoint their own auditors provides an opportunity to consider new approaches. We envisage there will be significant interest in some form of joint procurement. Sufficient flexibility should therefore be retained to allow councils to explore the opportunity to procure audit services, for example on a ‘class’ basis or a joint basis at local, regional or national level.

Transparency

1.15 The Committee’s call for evidence invites views on whether the provisions in the draft Bill will ensure that the results of audit are accessible to the public in a transparent and intelligible manner and data of interest to the public is easily available so that local bodies can be held to account for local spending decisions.

1.16 We see audit as one of the key mechanisms providing accountability for public resources. The primary audience for audit and audit reports should be local people and communities, including the voluntary sector and business community.

1.17 However the way accounts are presented has become tightly constrained. Councils are required to prepare their financial statements in accordance with international reporting standards (IFRS) with the effect that financial statements become longer and complex.

- 1.18 As the Audit Commission has noted: '*published financial information has become even more difficult for the general public to understand*' (para 20, Audit Commission draft Strategic Plan 2010).
- 1.19 A new simpler and more easily understandable framework for published accounts is required that better enables local people to understand the true financial health of public sector organisations and empowers them to hold those responsible to account.
- 1.20 In terms of the availability of data to enable local people to hold their councils to account for spending decisions councils already publish a wide range of information and data locally about their policies, performance and use of resources.
- 1.21 In addition the LGA has developed LG Inform, a free online service which allows local government officers and councillors to access and compare key data. It contains performance and financial data, as well as contextual data, across a range of services and themes. Users can view reports for every one of the 800 data items, make comparisons with other groups of authorities, and create their own charts or reports using the data. In 2013 a new version of LG Inform will be launched which allows the public to view the data, either for their own area or for an area of their choice, and choose their comparison groups as well. This will give local people easy access to data to make performance and cost comparisons.

Legacy and the winding up of the Audit Commission

- 1.22 The Committee's call for evidence invites views on whether the provisions in the draft Bill make adequate provision for the Commission's liabilities and ensuring that the expertise built up by the Commission is not dissipated.
- 1.23 As part of the work it undertakes to support local auditors the Audit Commission has developed and maintains value for money profiles which bring together data about costs, performance and activity of councils and fire and rescue authorities. It has also developed a financial ratios analysis tool to assist local authorities to compare their financial performance on a range of financial ratios against similar bodies.
- 1.24 These tools and the expertise necessary to maintain and develop them are of potential on-going value to the sector as a means of helping councils understand their performance in comparison with others. Raising public awareness of the tools could also provide an additional means of helping local people hold their councils to account. We are therefore actively exploring the synergies with LGA Inform (the sector's own data comparison tool).

The role of the National Audit Office

- 1.25 The Committee's call for evidence invites views on the intended role of the NAO and specifically whether the arrangements for value for money are adequate and whether in time the NAO will take over the role of the Audit Commission.

1.26 The draft Local Audit Bill gives new powers to the National Audit Office to undertake examinations into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which English councils have used their resources in discharging their functions. Any examination is to be carried out for the purpose of

- ensuring that the use of resources by a government department to fund councils represents an economical, efficient and effective use of resources and
- identifying 'improvements' that may be made by local authorities in the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which they use resources in the discharge of their functions.

1.27 We do not agree that the NAO should undertake examinations which include identifying improvements.

1.28 The Government already supports a sector-led approach to improvement led via the LGA with funding provided via 'top slice.' Vesting improvement activity in another separate organisation is therefore inappropriate and risks duplication and a waste of scarce public money. The sector itself is better suited to undertake this activity, working with the LGA.

1.29 We therefore propose that the new power described in Clause 94(3)(b) should be deleted from the Bill. This view is supported by a large majority of the responses we have seen from councils commenting on this Part of the draft Bill.

1.30 However we do acknowledge the potential value of the NAO undertaking studies that focus on the use of resources by government departments to fund council activities (though we are aware that not all in the sector agree) because of the synergies with the NAO's primary role of helping to hold government accountable on behalf of Parliament for how government makes use of their resources.

1.31 As the NAO prepares to embark on these studies it is important to draw on experience of the Audit Commission's studies programme and to respond to the recommendations of the Communities and Local Government Select Committee inquiry into audit and inspection about the need to develop a coherent and coordinated programme of studies. We therefore propose that:

- The number of NAO studies undertaken each year should be limited to a maximum of six because experience demonstrates that the sector does not have the capacity to respond to and implement the recommendations from a large number of studies each year;
- the NAO should have regard to studies that the sector itself, including the LGA, may commission as part of sector led improvement;
- there should be consultation and agreement with the sector on the theme of the studies in advance;
- the NAO should not investigate and make judgements about the performance of individual local authorities or indeed classes of local government.

1.32 These views are supported by over 80% of the responses we have seen from councils commenting on this part of the draft Bill.

1.33 Whilst the policy narrative accompanying the draft Bill appears to indicate that DCLG are sympathetic to the LGA's views it seems they have no levers to influence NAO. We therefore propose that, as a minimum, the draft Bill should be amended to introduce a requirement on the NAO to consult the LGA on its programme of studies and to involve the sector in the conduct of individual studies. The LGA and NAO should be required to produce and agree a Memorandum of Understanding setting out how they will work together.

15 October 2012

END.

Productivity Programme Update

Purpose of report

This report updates the Board on the progress being made in the Productivity Programme, and sets out an outline programme for 2013/14 for Members comment.

Recommendations

1. To note the work being undertaken in the Waste Innovation Programme.
2. To update the Board on evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme, and to approve the identified level of LGA funding in 2012/13.
3. To update the Board on the launch of the Commissioning Academy Pilots.
4. Update the Board on the Housing Tenancy Fraud Pilot.
5. To approve the outline Productivity Programme 2013/14.

Action

Take forward as per Members' direction.

Contact officer: Brian Reynolds
Position: Head of Productivity
Phone no: 020 7664 3257
E-mail: Brian.reynolds@local.gov.uk

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.

Waste Innovation Programme

2. The Waste Innovation Programme is a pilot set up to investigate the impact of the use of Food Waste Disposers (FWDs) in kitchen sinks, enabling households to dispose of food waste without the need for it to be collected.
3. The programme commenced with a review of available literature on FWDs - the aim being to identify potential barriers to the proposed pilot study and to ensure that these will be fully mitigated against and investigated as part of the project.
4. A report was produced and findings of the research showed, overall there were no major barriers preventing the programme from moving forward.¹
5. Following this, in September 2012 the LGA reached an agreement with Shropshire County Council and Severn & Trent Water to install FWDs in all 200 properties at Riverside Meadows, a new build site in Shrewsbury (further sites in the area are currently being scoped with the intention of involving up to 1000 properties in the pilot), and to subsequently monitor the waste water stream.
6. Food waste amounts to 22% of Shropshire's total landfill costs; there is the potential for large savings if the monitoring exercise shows no negative impacts on the sewer network or additional costs to partners. In this small pilot of 1000 properties we anticipate we can remove over £157,000 from landfill costs over the 12 year life span of a macerator, including the initial outlay of £80,000 for procurement of FWD's in year one (figures based on each property producing 1 tonne of waste per year).
7. A formal on site press launch for the programme was held on 19 November with Councillor Peter Fleming in attendance along with Councillor John Hurst-Knight, portfolio holder for Waste at Shropshire Council, with a press release following this.
8. The final phase of the programme was to commence in early 2013, involving a 12 month exercise to monitor the impact of the use of FWDs on the sewer network and to make sure that there are no additional costs to consumers and partners at any point in the process. However, following the press launch, Severn & Trent Water asked that their name not be associated with the programme any longer, arguing that they had reconsidered their position and now believed the installation of FWDs to be illegal in the UK.

¹ http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=498d1a65-8942-4083-ab0e-ad6d096c2c54&groupId=10171

9. Members may recall that at an earlier Board meeting the general antipathy of the water industry to FWDs was discussed, and the LGA sought and obtained confirmation from DEFRA as to the legality of FWDs. Urgent meetings are being sought with Severn & Trent Water, and the trade body Water UK, and it is intended to provide an oral update to the Board.

Evaluation of Troubled Families Programme

10. The Productivity Team have been working alongside DCLG's Troubled Families Team to develop the specification for the evaluation of the troubled families programme. It is estimated that the combined public sector spends around £9bn per annum on responding to and managing troubled families; the research will look at the ways that new working can reduce these costs, and will be one of the largest and most comprehensive pieces of research in this field
11. The evaluation is to run from January 2013 to October 2015, six months after the end of the Troubled Families Programme
12. The contract is now out to tender with the evaluation process to be completed by early January. The evaluation comprises three elements:
 - 12.1. Process evaluation - including our request to look at ways in which services have been redesigned and systems changed to improve the way troubled families are supported, for example a shift to earlier intervention / prevention measures, evidence of new finance initiatives and changes to the 'resource mix'.
 - 12.2. Impact evaluation - the effect of the programme on the families themselves against a range of outcome measures. The successful bidder will need to be able to demonstrate that the outcomes achieved are attributable to the programme. Bidders are asked to consider the 'churn' of families coming back in to the programme after they have progressed out of it and the sustainability of outcomes. The work includes an option to track identified families longitudinally with a re-visit two years after the formal evaluation ends to determine the longer term outcomes.
 - 12.3. Economic evaluation - the costs and benefits arising from the programme, including the 'cashability' of savings across partner agencies. This element includes a comparison of the cost effectiveness of different delivery models.
13. Learning from the evaluation will be shared at the earliest opportunity with 'significant work' on process, outcomes and savings to be fed back before the mid point (September 2013). The LGA would sit on the Troubled Families Advisory Group and as such be in a position to steer communications arising from the programme as well as playing a key role in sharing learning and supporting those that are struggling to implement their objectives in this area. We are anticipating some of the most important, practical, learning to emerge from this research, and hope to produce transferable lessons for all LAs.

14. The level of the submitted bids is likely to be between £500k and £1million, depending on the detail proposed by individual providers. The level of funding put forward by the LGA needs to be commensurate with the scale and cost, i.e. a quarter to a third of the total cost of the evaluation. The Board are asked to approve a contribution of £100,000 in 2012/13 (this sum is in the base budget for this year) and, subject to resources and subsequent approval, further sums of up to £100,000 in each of 2013/14 and 2014/15.

The Commissioning Academy

15. The Commissioning Academy is a development programme for senior commissioners from all parts of the public sector. The first pilot cohort of 20 commissioners across the public sector, containing 10 senior local government officers from 5 councils, graduated from the academy on the 26th of November 2012. The second pilot cohort commenced on the 1 November and contains a further 10 senior commissioners from 5 councils.
16. The LGA recognises that in order to transform public services in a climate of fewer resources and more demand, we need capable, confident and courageous people in the public sector who are responsible for designing and delivering the very best services. The Academy programme is looking at innovative ways of bringing commissioners together to learn from the examples of the most successful commissioning organisations, developing a cadre of professionals that are progressive in their outlook on how the public sector uses the resources available.
17. The Academy will build an alumni network of senior commissioners who have the skills, know-how and confidence to assist other councils on their commissioning journey. We will run events and establish online resources to enable this to happen.
18. The LGA have played a key role in encouraging councils to participate in the academy and to host site visits and as a result pilot two was oversubscribed from local government applicants. The feedback from participants has been wholly positive with comments including: 'a fantastic opportunity and a privilege to have the input from the variety of speakers and the opportunity to undertake visits to other councils – so much to take back to my own authority'.

Housing Tenancy Fraud Pilot

19. From April 2011 issues relating to fraud report to the Finance Task Group, though some members of the Improvement Board have remained active in supporting LGA counter Fraud activity. Therefore a short update on the LGA Housing Tenancy Fraud Pilot is included.
20. The LGA Housing Tenancy Fraud Pilot approached a small number of local authorities closely engaged with the work of the Fighting Fraud Locally Board to submit bids encouraging cross boundary collaboration on housing tenancy fraud.
21. We have received five bids, which we will be reviewing in the coming weeks. The five lead authorities are Stroud District Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Three Rivers District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council & Northampton Borough Council. The result of the evaluation process will be reported orally to the Board.

Procurement

EU reform of procurement rules

22. The LGA continues its work with the EU institutions and the Cabinet Office to ensure the new set of EU rules governing public procurement will be workable for councils. The new rules are currently under negotiation at EU level and an agreement could be reached as early as the first half of 2013, with a subsequent 18 months for the new directive to be transposed into national law.

23. At this stage in the process LGA is particularly seeking to ensure:

- 23.1. an exemption from the rules for shared services agreements between councils;
- 23.2. that green and social criteria in procurements can be determined locally or nationally rather than at EU level;
- 23.3. that lowest cost purchasing, in addition to the 'most economically advantageous tender', remains a possibility;
- 23.4. flexible e-procurement and e-invoicing rules which encourage SME participation;
- 23.5. a lighter regime for social services;
- 23.6. an exclusion for legal and financial services;
- 23.7. no onerous requirements as regards checking the origin of products; and
- 23.8. no over-regulation of the subcontracting chain.

24. A future update can be provided to the Board once a concrete agreement is reached and the new rules have been published in the EU's official journal.

National Procurement Strategy

25. Members will recall that Andrew Smith, Chief Executive of Hampshire County Council, has led on the LGA's behalf an investigation into the potential opportunities for councils to collaborate more in the purchase of goods and services in some of the big spend categories. Deloitte were appointed and have produced a draft Local Government Procurement Strategy, 'the Case for Change'.

26. The draft report is 106 pages long and perhaps not the easiest of reads. The report highlights three broad themes for the sector to focus on;

- 26.1. One Cohesive Voice – influencing policy and responding to key issues as a collective local government procurement group.

Item 7

- 26.2. Procurement at the Top Table – gaining recognition of procurement as strategically important (engaging support from senior councillors and officers).
- 26.3. Strategic Category Management – leadership of key spend categories across the sector to drive market management, develop new models of service delivery and deliver policy through procurement.
27. LGA officers have reviewed the document and noted the following:
- 27.1. The themes highlighted resonate, in particular, the need for strategic leadership support and developing a cohesive voice on procurement issues. To support this, the LGA is working with a Chief Executive Steering Group and the National Advisory Group for Local Government Procurement Officers (NAG4LGP).
- 27.2. The report focuses on strategic category management in local government, this follows on from earlier work on the 'Big' and 'Quick Wins' guidance document developed previously under this work stream. However, LGA officers and the NAG4LGP believe there are other areas for the sector to pursue for efficiencies as well including the need for more rigorous contract management.
- 27.3. It provides an overview and high level assessment of current local government buying arrangements for the big spend categories however, it does not get into any real detail in the categories it recommends for further collaboration.
- 27.4. Whilst it makes a case for the need for change it lacks the robustness of a detailed business case.
- 27.5. It does not provide the evidence that there is the willingness amongst the sector for deeper collaboration, although that is not to imply that does not exist in some areas.
28. LGA officers held a teleconference call with the National Advisory Group for Local Government Procurement Officers (NAG4LGP). These representatives are senior procurement officers who also represent their region. Their views were as follows:
- 28.1. They welcomed this work, recognised the leadership the LGA and Andrew Smith have provided and saw the document as a case for change rather than a business case.
- 28.2. They noted that in its current format though useful for helping inform the sector on current arrangements as well as helping stimulate debate on what now needs to be done it was very long and detailed. Therefore, a short succinct summary paper would be necessary to engage the sector both at a strategic level and more widely.
- 28.3. They supported fully the first two of the three broad themes, namely procurement at the top table and one cohesive voice.
- 28.4. In relation to category management the group highlighted that this was not simply a case of 'bulk-buying', although there may be a case for doing so in some cases, that category management includes other strategic areas such as demand

Item 7

management, market management, and commissioning and contract management. These are all part of the procurement lifecycle. Therefore to maximise the savings and have the biggest impact, we need to consider category management in the round.

28.5. They recognise and support the need for greater collaboration however, also highlight the need to build on the arrangements currently in place rather than trying to create something separate.

28.6. There was general agreement for the need to pursue further work into two of the categories identified in the report. Namely, energy and construction to better understand these markets, the levels of demand, details of spend and potential savings and to bring options forward to deliver savings in these two areas on behalf of the sector.

29. The Chairman has written to Andrew Smith to thank him for all his work and assured him that the LGA will now work with the sector to take this forward.

Conclusion and next steps

30. Officers recommend that we take this work forward. There is both appetite and commitment from the sector via the NAG4LGP and the Chief Executive's Steering Group. It also builds on the procurement work stream that we have supported over the last two years.

31. However, officers recognise that the LGA will need to build a strong business case and therefore recommends that we work with NAG4LGP and the Chief Executive's Steering Group to draft a proposal to commission further work into two of the categories - energy and construction.

32. Officers will continue to support work with the sector on commissioning and promoting good practice as outlined in the Local Government Procurement Pledge.

33. It is estimated that the cost of the work will be in the region of £60,000 over the course of the remainder of this year and into 2013/14. The draft business plan for 2013/14 includes resources to support this work and costs incurred this year can be contained within the overall LGA core budget.

The 2013/14 Productivity Programme

34. The LGA Productivity Team have been considering their work programme for 2013/14 and new initiatives are proposed in:

34.1. Monetising waste – working with a small number of councils to scope the capacity for increasing the value of waste arisings, with the aim of substantially reducing collection and disposal costs.

34.2. Capital & Assets – the Cabinet Office has become concerned as to the pace of central government engagement in active arrangements to reduce their surplus

land and property, and has noted the LGA's success in working with its Members to rationalise the local government estate. Broad agreement has been reached between the Cabinet Office and The LGA on a 'One Public Estate' programme where local government will lead on the ground, and with the Minister for the Cabinet Office, Francis Maude, chairing a cross departmental Ministerial Forum. A more detailed oral report will be provided at the Board.

34.3. Economic Growth – the LGA had been considering working with a number of councils to use their land & property assets in a more imaginative way to help create economic growth. This is particularly important in areas of low value where simple sale and disposal are not easy options. The extent to which this programme could work alongside the activity with the Cabinet Office needs further thought – however Members views would be welcome.

34.4. Technology – the Productivity Team has received considerable feedback from councils that more support on the use of technology in driving productivity improvements would be welcome. This is particularly the case as large organisations move away from standard or even, bespoke, computer systems to the use of simple 'Apps' and 'Cloud Technology'. It is unclear precisely what format this offer might take, but the team will be putting effort into scoping a possible offer in 2013.

35. The above is not the sum total of the LGA's productivity work next year. For example we will be holding an Energy Summit with DCLG; we will be putting together a procurement framework for councils to easily access 'collective switching' agents; we will be commissioning research on the forthcoming Social Value Act; and we have had requests to expand the Adult Social Care and Productivity Experts programmes, as well as to do more promoting shared services. However, at this stage The Board is asked to comment on and approve this broad programme for 2013/14.

Financial Implications

36. The draft 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.

37. The proposed Productivity Programme for 2013/14 is subject to formal approval of resources.

Supporting digital and service transformation in local government

Purpose of report

For support and direction.

Summary

Councils need to deliver efficiencies, make savings and reduce demand. This can be partly achieved through the service redesign and taking advantage of the emerging government digital landscape and connecting with the single domain, GOV.UK. This paper sets out how the LGA can help councils prepare, through joining up web and communications teams with service delivery areas, to meet the digital transformation challenges at a practical level.

As part of its digital strategy, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has referenced a new local government 'Digital Programme' to develop with partners, including the LGA. This programme will be launched at the LGA on 4 March 2013.

The LGA is facilitating a network of practitioners called LocalGov Digital, which will seek to help shape and disseminate the principles of this programme through the sharing of good practice, standards and development across local government.

The LGA also supports the Local Government Delivery Council, a group of council Chief Executives involved in transforming local public services, who have feedback their views to DCLG and Cabinet Office on the wider Government Digital Strategy and how central and local government need to collaborate to deliver more joined up public services.

Recommendations

1. Provide member endorsement of the 'LocalGov Digital' network of practitioners, facilitated at Steering Group level by the LGA, as a sector-led improvement initiative.
2. Support the development of the 'Digital Programme' that seeks to join up council web teams and service delivery areas through the sharing of knowledge and experience across councils, central government and suppliers.
3. Chair and participate in the 'Digital Summit' at the LGA on 4 March 2013 (Brandon Lewis MP will be in attendance to jointly launch the Digital Programme).

Action

Members to agree the recommendations set out in this paper and help raise the profile of digital service transformation at senior officer and member levels across all councils.

15 January 2013

Item 8

Contact officers: Sarah Jennings (Communications) /
Siobhan Coughlan (Productivity)

Positions: Head of Digital Communications and Knowledge /
Programme Manager

Phone nos: 020 7664 3033 /
020 7664 3023

E-mails: Sarah.jennings@local.gov.uk /
Siobhan.coughlan@local.gov.uk

Supporting digital and service transformation in local government

Background

LocalGov Digital Network

1. Earlier this year, the LGA was approached by a group of innovative council web managers, seeking national-level support to help in their quest to ensure all councils are prepared to meet the challenges of channel shift and service transformation.
2. This group set up the 'LocalGov Digital' network, meeting virtually as a small core of individuals on the Knowledge Hub and at two face-to-face meetings at the LGA offices in London to agree the remit of the group. The **terms of reference** for the network is included in **Appendix A**.
3. The overarching purpose of the network is to raise standards in the use of digital by councils across the country. It intends to do this by:
4.
 - 4.1. sharing learning and knowledge across the sector;
 - 4.2. creating a flexible digital framework where aspects (eg. design, code, apps etc) can be re-used and customised as required by different councils; and
 - 4.3. working with members, senior officers and service delivery areas to ensure that councils can continue to deliver services that are efficient, productive and serve local needs.
5. The network is set to grow in size and will be represented at national level by an **LGA facilitated Steering Group** whose membership will cover all regions, council types and the core digital and innovation specialisms.
6. In addition to senior LGA officer support, the Local Government Delivery Council (LGDC) recognises the important role of the network. LGDC is also well placed to provide a strategic steer at Chief Executive level and ensure better connections are made between digital and service delivery areas to support transformation.

DCLG Digital strategy and the Digital Programme

7. Following the publication of the 'Government Digital Strategy' and the launch of GOV.UK in November 2012, each government department was set the task of articulating its own digital strategy. With input from the LGA, DCLG published its strategy in December 2012.

Item 8

8. The LGA's position which was developed with input from the sector (detailed below) focused firmly on local government digital service transformation being both sector-led and taking into account locality.
9. Although clearly a DCLG owned paper, the LGA's comments were incorporated and, amongst other initiatives, the creation of a '**Digital Programme**' was outlined for development in partnership with:
 - 9.1. **Central government:** DCLG, Government Digital Service (GDS).
 - 9.2. **Local Government:** LGA, LGDC, Local Government CIO Council, LocalGov Digital, Camden Digital Partnership.
 - 9.3. **Suppliers:** Socitm.
10. Feedback cited in the strategy from councils to date on the digital challenges facing councils focus around:
 - 10.1. Leadership of transformational change by councillors and senior officers;
 - 10.2. service officers seeing the potential of digital transformation;
 - 10.3. in-house digital expertise to manage these changes effectively;
 - 10.4. suppliers, both existing suppliers and new entrants to the market;
 - 10.5. management of outsourced and shared services;
 - 10.6. providing excellent services to customers; and
 - 10.7. the need for strong links with central government digital transformation projects such as universal credit which are creating a de facto national digital infrastructure.
11. The 'Digital Programme' will seek to address these areas and will concentrate on practical action to support councils and their partners, to:
 - 11.1. improve the quality of their digital services through use of customer insight;
 - 11.2. simplify the user experience of transactions;

Item 8

- 11.3. understand the issues surrounding those people who remain in the ‘assisted digital’¹ category; support their transition to transacting with digital services; and how to cater for their needs via other channels in the meantime; and
 - 11.4. support join up and strong local authority input into relevant national digital service transformation programmes.
12. The ‘Digital Programme’ will launch on 4 March 2013 at the LGA to an invited audience from across central and local government, attended by Brandon Lewis MP. An agenda is under development, but it is suggested that a ***member of the Improvement and Innovation Board chairs the meeting.***

Key Issues

13. In order for the principles of ‘LocalGov Digital’ to gain traction in councils, support at senior level is required. This can be achieved by the LGA supporting the establishment of this group and endorsing membership of the network.
14. The LGA and member councils need to play an active role in the development of a ‘Digital Programme’ to ensure that it keeps to the principles of sector-led improvement and is appropriate for local government.

Financial Implications

15. DCLG will bear the costs of the Digital Programme.
16. Facilitation of LocalGov Digital will be absorbed within the core digital communications budget.
17. As this work progresses, budget for any project based work will be requested separately.

¹ The Government’s [Digital Landscape Research](#) shows that 18% of UK adults are offline (defined as rarely or never being online). 82% of people are online (defined as regularly or occasionally using the internet) but some have lower digital skills and may need help, at least initially, to use digital services.

Appendix A - LocalGov Digital: Terms of reference

Purpose

LocalGov Digital is a practitioner network created and functioning in the spirit of local government's sector-led improvement agenda. Its overarching purpose is to raise standards in web provision and the use of digital by councils across the country, and to create a digital framework that is flexible enough to respond to local needs. It exists to support improvement strategies in the delivery of services so that local government can be efficient, productive and serve local needs.

Steering group

At the core is a steering group that is mobilised and committed to actively growing the network. The members represent the breadth of local government both regionally and by authority type so can act as a voice for digital practitioners across local government.

They embrace and promote best practice from inside and outside local government, locally, nationally and internationally, and are committed to open collaborative working at all of these levels.

Principles

The overarching and fundamental principle is that local government is 'open by default and digital by design'

Members of the group are committed to:

1. Coordinating a wider network of local government digital/web practitioners.
2. Raising aspirations for digital provision in local government.
3. Working to a common set of principles and standards.
4. Establishing a list of good suppliers.
5. Helping each other to learn and improve.
6. Sharing ideas, best practice and tools amongst peers
7. Collaborating on common solutions.
8. Raising the profile of local government web issues with senior officers and elected members.

Responsibilities

The steering group will:

1. Meet in person or via video/audio conferencing.
2. Use a collaborative space (currently the Knowledge Hub) to develop ideas and thinking.
3. Publish coherent thinking to a public site.
4. Explore opportunities for peer review and challenge of council digital services to ensure improvement is sector-led and relevant.
5. Nominate new members to ensure a varied mix of skills, geographical location and authority type is maintained within the group.

Item 8 - Appendix A

Members will:

1. Play an active role in the group.
2. Proactively involve their surrounding councils in group activity and promote the work of the network.
3. Participate in a range of digital projects that may or may not be either commissioned via the group but, if it the subject matter is relevant to the aims of the group, they are requested to represent 'LocalGov digital' and report progress back.

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title:	Part 1: Improvement and Innovation and Community Wellbeing Board
Date:	Friday 2 November 2012
Venue:	Bevin Hall, 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	Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Tony Jackson	East Herts Council
	Chris Hayward	Three Rivers DC
	Barry Wood	Cherwell DC
	Glen Miller	Bradford City
	Teresa O'Neill	Bexley LB
	Tony McDermott MBE	Halton BC
	Tim Cheetham	Barnsley MBC
	Helen Holland	Bristol City
	Edward Lord OBE JP	City of London Corporation
	Rory Palmer	Leicester City
	Sir David Williams CBE	Richmond upon Thames
Apologies		
Observers/Other attendees	Cllr Paul Bettison	LGA Conservative National Lead Peer
	Philip Sellwood	Energy Savings Trust
	Richard Priestman	Lombard
	Oliver Mills	Towards Excellence National Programme Director
LGA Officers	Michael Coughlin, Dennis Skinner, Brian Reynolds, Nick Easton, Juliet Whitworth, Mike Short, Teresa Payne and Frances Marshall.	

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
1	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Councillor Rodgers, Chairman of the Community Wellbeing Board opened the meeting by welcoming all those present and outlining the structure of the meeting. He highlighted the unique opportunity the meeting provided to discuss in detail such important across cutting issues.</p>	
2	<p>Sector-led improvement in Adult Services</p> <p>Dennis Skinner (Head of Leadership and Productivity) and Oliver Mills (Towards Excellence National Programme Director) introduced the report which provided an update on sector-led improvement in adult services being taken forward through the Towards Excellence in Councils' Adult Social Care (TEASC) programme board. In doing so, Dennis Skinner outlined the core principles underpinning the overarching sector-led improvement framework and the seven core components of the LGA's support offer to the sector. Oliver Mills contextualised the work of TEASC within this framework and highlighted the key priorities going forward.</p> <p><u>Decisions</u></p> <p>That the Boards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. noted the progress made so far in sector-led improvement in adult services; andii. agreed that officers take this work forward as outlined in paragraphs 5 - 14.	
3	<p>Productivity Programme Update: Opportunities for efficiency savings in Adult Social Care</p> <p>In introducing John Bolton, a Professor at the Institute of Public Care who would be updating the meeting on the LGA's Adult Social Care Efficiency (ASCE) programme, the Chairman contextualised the ASCE programme within the financial landscape of reducing funding for adult and social care services and the impact on service provision.</p> <p>John Bolton summarised the ASCE programme's objectives, outlined the progress made thus far and highlighted a number of emerging lessons arising from the programme which involved 44 local authorities. In terms</p>	

of going forward, an event would be held on 27 November 2012 to launch a report summarising the early findings from the programme. A progress review was scheduled for summer 2013, with a final programme report, including details of efficiency savings achieved, planned for 2014. In concluding, John Bolton outlined the manner in which the learning from the programme would be disseminated within the sector and emphasised that the success of the programme was dependant upon the sector being open, self critical and willing to learning from each other.

Decision

That the Boards **noted** the report and progress made.

4 Sector-led improvement and Health reform

Alyson Morley (Senior Advisor – Health) outlined the report which sought Members' views on the future scope for sector-led support on the health improvement role for local authorities. She outlined key changes to the health system with single and upper-tier local government receiving new powers and duties under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to work with partners and communities to improve health outcomes for their local populations. In outlining the implications of these changes for the sector, she summarised the key areas of concern (Health and Wellbeing Boards, Commissioning, Public Health and Public Engagement) and noted the current support already available during the transition period. In terms of going forward, she welcomed Members' input and noted that any proposals for a sector-led improvement offer on the role of local authorities in health improvement would involve wide consultation with key groups within the sector.

Decision

That the Boards **noted** the key proposals outline in the report.

5. Discussions section and feedback

Councillor Fleming, Chairman of the Improvement and Innovation Board introduced the discussion and feedback session by reiterating the unique opportunity this session provided to push the debate forward regarding the role of the sector in self assessment, improvement and productivity. In small cross party groups, Members discussed the following questions and fed back to the full Board meeting on the key points raised during these break out sessions:

1. What are the key priorities that the LGA's sector-led improvement offer needs to address to help local authorities improve outcomes in adult social care and health?
2. What more does the LGA need to do to support councils in delivering savings in adult social care?
3. How can the LGA best help political leaders and councils improve local health outcomes through Health and Wellbeing Boards?

The notes from the break out sessions are attached at **Appendix A**.

Decision

The Boards **asked** that Members' comments be taken into account in developing and progressing: (a) the Towards Excellence in Councils' Adult Social Care programme; (b) the Adult and Social Care Efficiency programme; and (c) the LGA's sector-led offer to local authorities to improve health outcomes.

Title:	Part 2: Improvement and Innovation Board
Date:	Friday 2 November 2012
Venue:	Rathbone Rooms 1&2, Local Government House

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed Members to the second part of the Improvement and Innovation Board meeting and noted that there had been a number of changes to the Board Membership as a result of the recent appointment of new national and regional lead member peers. The Chairman suggested that in future, given the important role of national and regional lead member peers, that they be invited to attend Improvement and Innovation Board meetings as observers.

5. Second Quarter Performance Report - 2012/13

Dennis Skinner presented the report which provided an overview of the LGA's progress in delivering the 2012-13 business plan priorities for the first six months of the financial year and on the financial performance in respect of the LGA's improvement programmes. Members were invited to review the second quarter performance report to the end of September 2012.

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

- With reference to expenditure on Peer Reviews, the Chairman encouraged Member to promote the LGA's offer of one free peer review over a 3 year period.
- In response to questions regarding the current underspend in the improvement programme budget, Dennis Skinner assured the Board that projected overall spend was set to be very close to meeting its target by the end of the financial year and that officers were monitoring spend closely.
- Dennis Skinner highlighted an amendment to the expenditure figure in the report on the waste element of the productivity programme.

Decision

That the Board **noted** the second quarter's performance report to the end of September 2012.

Action

Invite national and regional lead member peers to attend future Improvement and Innovation Board meetings.

Frances Marshall

6 Business Planning 2013/14

The Chairman introduced the report from the Leadership Board which provided a high level steer on the LGA's priorities for 2013/14. In doing so, the Chairman highlighted the key proposed changes which related specifically to the work of the Innovation and Improvement Board. Whilst noting the potential benefits of having sector-led improvement underpinning all of the LGA's priorities, he expressed concerns about the proposal that efficiency and productivity become part of the public service reform objective, rather than a stand alone priority. The Chairman sought Members views, which would then inform the business planning process.

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

Item 9

- A number of different views were expressed regarding the proposal that efficiency and productivity priority become part of the public service reform objective. Whilst some Members were in support of it remaining a stand alone objective, other Members expressed the view that including it within the wider priority could potentially expanded the breadth of the work stream. Members were however clear, that the wording of the priority would be key to ensuring that efficiency and productivity were integral to the public service reform objective.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the omission of any reference to procurement from the initial business plan proposal. Members also noted the need to include references to protecting vulnerable individuals, addressing inequalities and encouraging political leadership.
- A Member highlighted the need to further raise the profile of the sector through lobbying activities.
- A number of different views were expressed regarding the proposal that sector-led improvement no longer be a stand alone priority. On the one hand, a Member indicated that removing it as a priority risked sending out the wrong message to external audience, particularly Government, in terms of the sector's commitment to sector-led improvement. However, other Members were more sympathetic to the Leadership Board's view that sector-led improvement should be core to everything the LGA does and therefore it was appropriate that it underpin the LGA's key priorities.
- Members were assured by officers that as the business planning process progressed, measurable targets and outcomes would be developed.
- In response to questions from Members, it was confirmed that the overall budget for 2013/14 would be less than the previous financial year.

Decision

That the Board **asked** that their comments about the shape of the LGA Business Plan for 2013/14 inform the business planning process.

Action

To feed the Board's views into the development of the LGA Business Plan for 2013/14.

Dennis Skinner

7. Update on Transparency

Councillor Tim Cheetham, lead Member for Transparency introduced the report which provided an overview of recent data transparency and policy developments. These included updates on: the results of the local government transparency survey; the open Data Strategy from government departments; the LGA's position for the consultation on the Code of Practice on Transparency; consultation on voluntary and community spending guide; LG Inform and the single data list; and INSPIRE. In particular he invited Members to contribute to the shaping of a policy position on transparency and he outlined the key themes and issues that arose from a workshop on transparency with representatives from the sector.

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

- In discussing the INSPIRE regulation, Members welcomed the fact that DEFRA was working with the LGA to develop a business case for a local government publishing service, however it was noted that the funding would only relate to elements of the regulations that went beyond the standard approach of publishing data under transparency. Although it was noted that authorities would benefit from INSPIRE because it would lead to better internal data management, a Member expressed the view that this would not amount to direct financial savings.
- With regard to the Government's consultation on the Code of Practice on Transparency, Members were united in their view that central Government should be subject to the same level scrutiny and data transparency obligations as local government.
- In discussing the development of a local transparency policy, a Member asked that health data be a key focus.

Decisions

That the Board:

- (i) **noted** the progress made and ongoing work of the transparency programme;
- (ii) **supported** the proposed transparency policy and principles and **asked** that their comment on the be taken into account;
- (iii) **supported** the formation of a Local Transparency Task and

Finish Group to co-ordinate the LGA's input into the overall governance structure for transparency;

- (iv) **endorsed** the LGA position in response to the Code of Practice on Transparency; and
- (v) **supported** the proposal to consider a local government publishing service to meet INSPIRE regulation, funded through new burdens assessment by DEFRA.

Action

The Research and Information Team will continue to develop the programme in the light of the Board's views. Research and Information Team

8. Local Government Knowledge Navigator - Update

Juliet Whitworth (Research & Information Manager) presented the report which updated the Board on the appointment of an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded Local Government Knowledge Navigator. In doing so she drew particular attention to how the LGA had been working with the ESRC to ensure that local government both inputs into and benefits from publically funded research programmes commissioned by the research council.

In the following discussion, Members commented on the anticipated project outcomes and emphasised the importance that the appointed Local Government Knowledge Navigator engages with the LGA and has an in-depth and practical understanding of the sector.

Decision

That the Board **noted** the forthcoming appointment of the Local Government Knowledge Navigator and planned programme of work; and **asked** that their comments be taken into consideration in taking this work programme forward.

Develop the programme in the light of the Board's views.

Research and
Information Team

9. Notes of the last meeting and actions arising

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

10. Date of next meeting - 11.00am Tuesday 15 January 2013

Appendix A - Notes of joint Improvement and Innovation and Community Wellbeing Board group discussions

1. What are the key priorities that the LGA's sector-led improvement offer needs to address to help local authorities improve outcomes in adult social care and health?

Sharing best practice and learning

- The LGA importance of sharing learning was highlighted across a majority of groups.
- The LGA should share good practice examples, within all parts of the health system, for example closing walk-in centres to maintain a GP presence in A&E or GPs conducting community consultations to address hard to reach or isolated community groups.
- The LGA should also think about how to share learning when things go wrong – e.g. a list of difficult questions that members could ask of officers to prevent repetition of a similar problem that has occurred in another council – with a view to preventing it happening again?
- Further information about the use of lean principles would be welcome.
- The LGA must utilise sub-national / regional opportunities and mechanisms to help the sector share good practice, in addition to London-based events and online resources.
- The Knowledge Hub was identified as a resource to collate this information but some felt that information held and distributed via the web was often not appropriate for very busy portfolio holders.
- Developing ways to challenge one another within the LGA was suggested – e.g. building on the joint Board meeting to buddy up members from different boards who can be critical friends for each other. They could use Skype as a way of communicating regularly.

Communicating our offer and lobbying activity

- The LGA sends a lot of emails to LGA Board members – is it coordinated? The organisation should consider a way of distinguishing between different types – e.g. those emails for information; or for comment and response; or for local action.
- The LGA should publish and share the progress of community budgets pilots and policy development.
- Members noted that it was sometime difficult to ascertain what support had been offered by the LGA and it was suggested that the LGA could do more to publicise what support it had provided.

Addressing service quality, data and performance issues

- Quality of service was highlighted as the key issue. Members expressed a concern that the people delivering and controlling services do not want to change service delivery. The LGA needs to address the fact that the profession of adult social care can be insular, whilst the nature and demands of the end user has changed.
- It is important to strike a balance between getting consistent performance and financial information to enable local authorities to benchmark their activity and the need local flexibility for local authorities to tailor their information to local needs. Members also questioned whether, in the new localist health and social care environment, if it was possible or advisable to provide models of 'what good looks like' in commissioning and provision.
- Is the LGA's sector-led improvement offer for ASC and corporate peer challenge rigorous or challenging enough to provide a real check on whether councils are adequately addressing the health and social care

agendas? If not, then how do we develop a challenging model without just replicating the old performance management regime?

- The NHS is data rich but information poor – data should be in an accessible format and officers and members should have the skills to analyse the data. The LGA could do more nationally to help local areas in developing shared data sets and shared resource for analysis and intelligence to ensure that they know whether their commissioning and procurement is effective in reducing costs and improving outcomes.
- LGA should support examples of sub regional groups of HWBs, e.g. the Greater Manchester group of 10 leaders “Coalition of the willing” delivering efficiencies in SEN Transport/procurement.
- The LGA has a role to identify and tackle “introvert” “hard to reach” councils, through its political group offices.

Working regionally to share information, and to offer training

- Elected members valued the regional networks for ASC and HWB Chairs for exchanging information but suggested that the LGA should use them far more to deliver specific training on health and adult social care issues.
- Councillors need targeted supported to develop their skills, capacity and knowledge – especially on the use of evidence, commissioning and efficiency, which will enable to scrutinise and challenge the professionals.

The role of District Councils

- LGA could do more to support officers and members from district councils to understand their role and contribution to public health, prevention and early intervention. District council services – housing, planning, leisure, environmental health and so on – all contribute to health improvement.

Reshaping the system at a local level

- HWBs are integral to providing an overview of the system and holding partners to account for how they were spending resources – for many this was regarded as the only way to make diminishing resources work effectively.
- The LGA’s improvement offer will need to think about shifting resources and identify the silos that must be broken down to achieve genuinely integrated care pathways. How do you integrate health and social care to ensure both systems are focused on prevention?
- Councils must not lose sight of the wider determinants of health that are also part of local government’s brief, such as housing and leisure. The LGA’s programme should recognise that opportunities exist to improve health outcomes by actions in a variety of policy areas, from tobacco; drugs and alcohol to obesity.
- In some areas there are difficulties in engaging with the health agenda at a local level – councils are thinly stretched. Helping to address concerns over diminishing capacity at senior officer level would be helpful.
- Some members would welcome further support in helping establish a culture of prevention and invest-to-save. Some members questioned whether a focus on reablement actually saves councils’ money.

National relationships and perceptions

- Closer working between the LGA, local authorities and the Department for Health was highlighted as central to improving outcomes in adult social care and health.
- The whole sector must be aligned around health and wellbeing and local government must be seen as a key player by central government.

2. What more does the LGA need to do to support councils in delivering savings in adult social care?

National relationships and perceptions

- It was felt that the public support the NHS and hospitals but not Adult Social Care (ASC). Members identified the need for greater political weight behind and in support of ASC.
- Adult social care and health professionals need to engage people outside the system and their colleagues across the council to get a wider perspective on how to improve effectiveness.

Support for procurement and commissioning

- The LGA could provide local authorities with support, advice and good practice on procurement of services – this is where there is real potential for efficiencies and integration and local authorities could work far more effectively together or with clinical commissioning groups (CCGs).
- Do local authorities know what good looks like in terms of commissioning cost-effective health and social care services? Members questioned whether we can do this, given the need for local approaches.
- It was suggested that whilst the LGA could undertake more lobbying activities, there was also an onus on elected members to focus this work by direction and key 'asks' were.

Sharing good practice and innovation

- The LGA needs to be more effective and coordinated in communicating good practice, benchmarking data, case studies and as well as the work it already undertakes to support councils.
- Communication should not rely solely on the Knowledge Hub system as elected members often do not have the time to engage in web debates/chats. A variety of engagement tools such as regional forums, shadowing, national and regional good practice events, and publications are needed.
- The LGA also need to learn what self-funders are spending their personal budgets on – this will be important in developing local care markets which are robust and responsive.
- The LGA should disseminate the findings of the Adult and Social Care Efficiency (ASCE) programme. Members felt that there was potential value in a more international study comparing the UK with other systems.
- It was felt that a useful role for the LGA would be facilitating opportunities to learn from each other about how to meet the challenges of service transformation and delivering savings in adult social care, and also how local government can work with the voluntary sector to achieve outcomes that the former is mandated to deliver.

Areas for future work

- Members identified a need for more political peer challenge in adult social care.
- Members felt that savings in adult and social care could not effectively be achieved without support from Government for more collaborative working as well a more holistic approach to health and adult social care budgets (i.e. such as community budgets.)
- Members highlighted the need for a set of Government approved national eligibility standards/criteria.
- A Member suggested that one way of making savings in adult social care was to provide only statutory services, however this view was not supported by other three Members in the group.

3. How can the LGA best help political leaders and councils improve local health outcomes through Health and Wellbeing Boards?

Political commitment to Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs)

- Councillors need to be more involved in HWBs, especially the Leader and the Leader of the Opposition group - some health and wellbeing boards (HWBs) may not have cross-party buy in and the LGA should support this where possible. The LGA needs to help share good practice across HWBs.
- The symbolic importance of council leaders leading HWBs was highlighted – this can show local partner organisations councils' commitment to the agenda.

Operating in a political environment

- The LGA should support GPs to understand how to operate in a political environment, and should engage with the General Medical Council (GMC).
- Public health coming over to local government is a huge opportunity. But it will require a significant culture change for public health teams given the difference between their previous accountability arrangements and those they will be part of in local government.
- It was suggested that the LGA could run sessions for public health directors on local government accountability and what it means to be a publicly accountable body.
- The LGA needs to share all the preventative work that councils are doing. A system is required whereby if Councils invest in preventative services the savings that often accrue in other organisations are returned to local government.

Governance, accountability and mapping local connections

- Councillors require a greater sense of how all parts of the new health architecture fit together and relate to one another. A guide or map which explains this and, for each organisation, how they are funded, who they are, how they are accountable would be helpful.
- There need to be improved links between districts, counties, and single-tier authorities.
- There is a lack of clarity around the statutory and 'local choice' elements of Health and Wellbeing Boards' governance arrangements. Members suggested the LGA could do more in this area to disseminate guidance.
- The LGA needs to help councils build CCGs' understanding of local government – it would be helpful if there was some material councils could use so that there was some consistency in what CCGs were learning about local government.
- CCGs often appear to have a priority on fixing current problems not thinking in a long term manner. Some Members recommended a set target % for budgetary spend on prevention. Members also felt that there was a risk of CCGs underplaying the role of pharmacists could play in public health.
- A Member expressed the view that the LGA should be lobbying Government to secure elected member representation on Clinical Commissioning Groups, However this view was not shared by the other Members in the group who felt that political representation on Health and Wellbeing Board was sufficient and more appropriate.
- Further information on the role of scrutiny in the new public health system was requested.

Involving district councils

- Some District councils feel isolated from the social care/health debate, and yet it is their housing and leisure services which must be integrated to improve public health outcomes. A greater emphasis is needed on these preventative services delivered by district councils.
- Members highlighted the important role of districts in delivering the HWB agenda and questioned how the LGA can get them more involved and ensure that those districts which are on HWBs effectively share information to other districts in their area.

Areas of potential further work

- The LGA should set out how significant savings and/or better outcomes can be reached through successful operation of HWBs. There also needs to be a progress check for health and wellbeing boards. Some Members felt that HWBs may become too officer and process-driven, rather than focusing on outcomes.
- The LGA should help members understand the new health agenda and their roles and responsibilities. It is a steep learning curve and the answer is more than just paper briefings – we need regionally based briefing events that relate the issues to individual localities.
- The Health and Well Being Leadership Programme was cited as an example of how local leaders come together to discuss current issues but it was felt that identifying areas with similar issues and bringing them to together could be a more tailored way of offering support.
- The LGA could have a role in identifying the effectiveness of public health interventions in terms of impact on local populations and good use of public money, as there was felt to be a lack of evidence and research into this area. Identifying which local partner will realise the savings and in what timeframe would assist with managing the cash flow locally. An example was cited of £1 spent on encouraging physical activity through the councils' leisure facilities appeared to achieve a £23 return. 'Social prescribing' was also identified as a way to achieve effective outcomes.
- Encouragement for councils to plan ahead and be collaborative in their procurement practices.
- The LGA should share details of lobbying activity with Ministers in the Department for Health with councillors.
- A Member requested that communication between the LGA and councillors be 'individualised' and communicated to all councillors in LGA membership.

Action Monitor Schedule

Title:	Part 2: Improvement and Innovation Board
Date:	Friday 2 November 2012
Venue:	Rathbone Rooms 1&2, Local Government House

Item	Action	Progress
5.	Second Quarter Performance Report - 2012/13	
	Invite national and regional lead member peers to attend future Improvement and Innovation Board meetings.	National and regional lead member peers to attend future Improvement and Innovation Board meetings on 26/11/12.
6	Business Planning 2013/14	
	To feed the Board's views into the development of the LGA Business Plan for 2013/14.	The Board's comments were fed into the business planning process.

LGA location map

Local Government Association

Local Government House
Smith Square
London SW1P 3HZ

Tel: 020 7664 3131

Fax: 020 7664 3030

Email: info@local.gov.uk

Website: www.local.gov.uk

Public transport

Local Government House is well served by public transport. The nearest mainline stations are:

86 Victoria and Waterloo: the local underground stations are

St James's Park (Circle and District Lines), **Westminster** (Circle, District 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 stops in Horseferry Road close to Dean Bradley Street.

Bus routes – Horseferry Road

507 Waterloo - Victoria

C10 Canada Water - Pimlico - Victoria

88 Camden Town - Whitehall - Westminster - Pimlico - Clapham Common

Bus routes – Millbank

87 Wandsworth - Aldwych

3 Crystal Palace - Brixton - Oxford Circus

For further information, visit the Transport for London website at www.tfl.gov.uk

Cycling facilities

The nearest Barclays cycle hire racks are in Smith Square. Cycle racks are also 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 (off Great College Street)

Horseferry Road Car Park
Horseferry Road/Arneway Street. Visit the website at www.westminster.gov.uk/parking

