

Rewiring Public Services: Next Steps

Purpose of report

For discussion and direction.

Summary

Following the successful launch of *Rewiring Public Services* at the LGA Annual Conference in July, this report updates the Executive on progress over the summer and sets out a programme of future action, including lead member responsibilities.

Recommendation

That the Executive endorses the action plan and arrangements for member oversight set out in **Appendix A** of the report.

Contact officer: Daniel Goodwin
Position: Executive Director, Finance & Policy
Phone no: 0207 664 3109
E-mail: daniel.goodwin@local.gov.uk

Rewiring Public Services: Next Steps

Background

1. At our annual conference in July, we published *Rewiring Public Services: Rejuvenating Democracy*, along with a suite of supporting documents and an updated *Funding Outlook* model (see <http://www.local.gov.uk/campaigns/>).
2. Together these documents have been well received by the LGA's members and widely covered in national and trade press, including 31 interviews and mentions in national media and a total of 560 mentions in national, local and trade media during the conference (See **Appendix B** for a detailed listing). Leadership Board and Executive considered the feedback to date at their July meetings and concluded that:
 - 2.1 *Rewiring* has been a successful campaign to date.
 - 2.2 Feedback from conference had been overwhelmingly positive.
 - 2.3 This provides a good platform for campaigning over the next 12 months.

Actions to progress *Rewiring's* ten big ideas

3. Since the conference, officers have reviewed media coverage and feedback from members, and set in train a number of actions to progress the report's 10 Big Ideas. This report updates the Executive on the latest position.
4. The action plan in **Appendix A** sets out the initial objectives and actions to deliver the ten Big Ideas set out in *Rewiring Public Services*. It proposes that member oversight is provided by the appropriate Board, Panel or by the Executive.

Parliamentary and party lobbying actions

5. It has always been the aim of the *Rewiring* campaign to focus on the policies of the incoming 2015 government. Officers will work with the LGA's political group offices to ensure that the political parties are aware of the *Rewiring* demands and how better arrangements for local government would support and/or complement their parties' policy initiatives. For example, all of the LGA's speaking slots (currently we have 80) at this year's autumn party conferences will reference our *Rewiring campaign*.
6. Over the next year the LGA will utilise a number of channels, whether through the parliamentary process or in the wider public arena, to ensure that the key *Rewiring* propositions are debated and ultimately adopted by the wider political community. This work will continue alongside policy shaping and action with government officials over the coming months and will be reported back to Executive accordingly.
7. The engagement of parliamentarians in the campaign is essential to the process of getting government, or those parties wanting to govern after the 2015 election, to adopt the propositions contained in *Rewiring*.

8. The LGA will use a wide number of parliamentary channels to ensure that *Rewiring* is given prominence in Westminster. To achieve this there will be number of actions, ranging from using the private members bill system to attempt to enshrine some of the propositions in law to ensuring that the propositions are debated on the floor of both houses. *Rewiring* will be built into the extensive on-going influencing programme of both MPs and Lords and we will continue to use the 40 LGA Vice-Presidents who sit in both houses.
9. The LGA is currently lobbying on a number of pieces of legislation progressing through Parliament. It is essential that our messaging on these Bills, and any future legislation that is introduced, is cross referenced with our *Rewiring* propositions.

On-going campaigns

10. *Rewiring* Public Services will form the bulk of our campaigning activity up to the next general election. The overarching strategic aim of the campaign is to influence the party manifestos so the next national government adopts our ideas for the future of local public services. Detailed campaign plans will be developed for the '10 big ideas' and those others identified in the *Rewiring* papers and set out **Appendix C**.
11. The next phase will also concentrate on further developing third party endorsement for *Rewiring* public services beyond the local government sector.

Decision-making and oversight

12. The table in **Appendix A** sets out general Board and Panel oversight and anticipates that Board programmes will converge with *Rewiring* priorities. It is proposed that progress against these objectives is reported to Executive every two months.
13. During the development of *Rewiring* there were a number of roadshows and workshops to ensure that our members nationally were able to contribute their ideas and steer the programme. We are running roadshows around the country this Autumn to inform our overall programme. Members may also wish to commission specific workshop events to develop the themes and actions further.

Departmental and SMT overview

14. The Strategic Management Team will maintain a strategic overview of the *Rewiring* Public Services Campaign to ensure activity is co-ordinated across the organisation, in line with our corporate priorities. Regular reports will be provided to Leadership Board and Executive detailing activity and successes.
15. Guided by the Boards and Panels, the Finance and Policy Directorate will lead on developing and formulating policy in each of the key areas of the campaign. These will form the basis of our proactive presentation of the new models of structuring, funding and delivering local public services.
16. Working with Finance and policy colleagues, the Communications Directorate will lead on the campaign activity, using the full range of public affairs, lobbying, media, events and conferences, briefings and meetings to deliver the campaign objectives. This will include

utilising our Vice-Presidents and other key Parliamentarians, platforms at the party conferences, Smith Square Debates, arranging member meetings with Ministers, MPs and Peers and regular updates through the Parliamentary bulletin and other channels to our member councils.

17. The Improvement Directorate will work with councils to highlight best practice which could be included in our future models and share it across the sector as policy is further developed.

Conclusion and next steps

18. The 'England Question' and how the country should be governed in an age of greater devolution has been featuring increasingly in national media as debate on the Scottish Referendum builds. Including the Chairman's initial Daily Telegraph article in June, there have been twelve articles linking the LGA with debate on this issue in a wide range of national media, along with a range of more specialist coverage. In *Rewiring* we have proposed that this should be based on a new deal between central and local government, based on a transformed sector. Many of the elements are in place in different parts of the country and the recent announcements of city deals and joint authorities point the way forward in line with the vision that we have set out for our communities and our sector.
19. The Communications Directorate is developing a communication and lobbying strategy with input from colleagues across the organisation. This will be informed by the discussions and decisions at this meeting and further developed over the Autumn.
20. Executive is recommended to comment on the actions proposed in this report, to guide the officer team on how it would like to be involved in developing the work outlined and the future reporting arrangements that it would like to see.
21. All of the above will be used to generate the next set of big ideas for our 2014 national conference programme which will need to focus on the emerging manifestos and the crucial early months of the incoming 2015 government. This programme will be subject of further discussion in the Autumn.

Financial Implications

22. The actions proposed in this report will be contained within the LGA's budgeted resources, and managed through the business plan.