

Setting priorities – member governance arrangements

Purpose of report

Background information to broader discussion

Summary

New member governance arrangements across the LG Group came into effect on 1 September 2010, as part of the Getting Closer programme. The new arrangements

- established an LG Group Executive with a broader membership and a remit that covered the whole Group.
- brought together all policy, improvement, workforce and regulatory work within the role of the newly constituted programme boards

This paper summarises the current arrangements, which are due to be reviewed by the LG Group Executive in the Autumn.

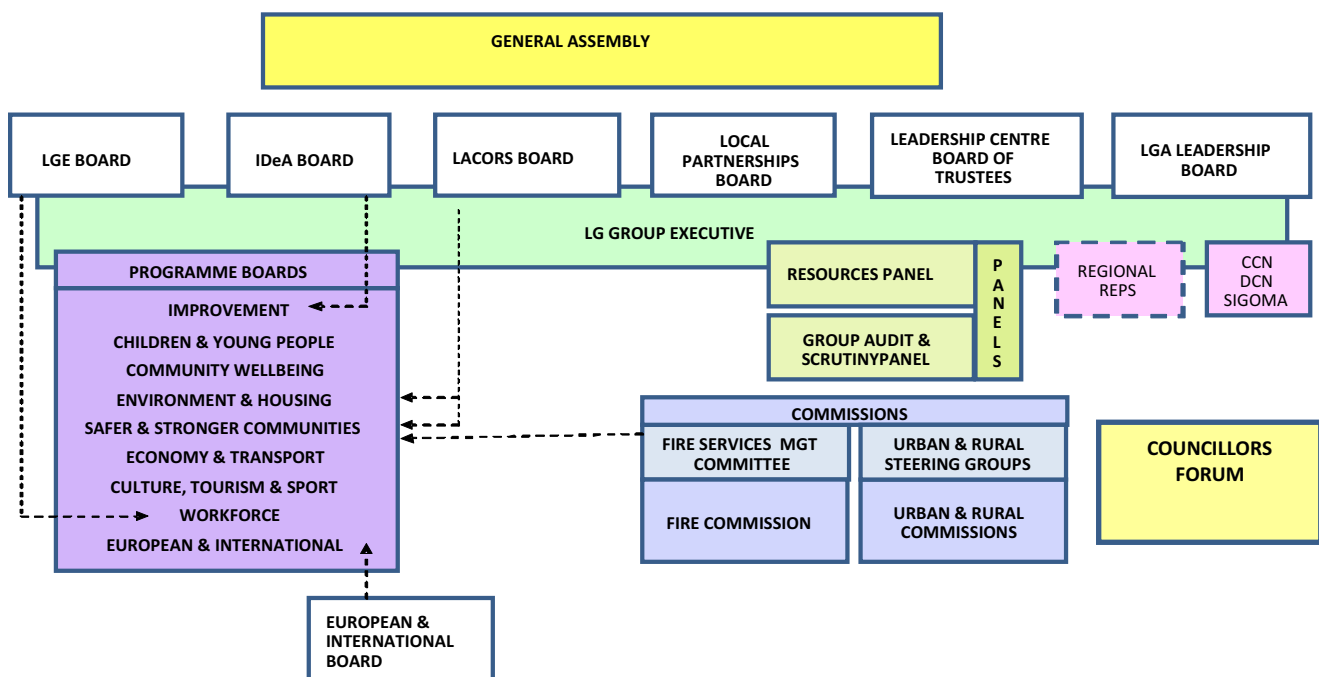
Recommendation(s)

Action

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Setting priorities – member governance arrangements

Summary of current arrangements



LG Group Executive (meets monthly on a Thursday)

The Executive provides strategic direction to the work of the LG Group, taking advice from the LGA Leadership Board and the company boards, and representing the views of local government. It is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that the LG Group is focused on councils and councillors.
2. Setting the strategic direction and priorities through the LG Group Business Plan, and ensuring overall delivery.
3. Ensuring activity across the LG Group is coordinated and integrated.
4. Determining LG Group policy for cross-cutting policy issues such as finance and efficiency and local democracy, after consultation with member authorities.
5. Holding the Programme Boards to account.
6. Maintaining strong links with the wider membership to ensure priorities are based on the views of all member councils.

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The Executive can allocate responsibility to one or more of its members for particular areas within its remit, and/or establish member task groups. It can invite the chairs of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to attend to present their Annual Report.

The Executive is chaired by the chairman of the LGA and has approximately 35 voting and non-voting members.

Voting

- Office Holders of the Association
- Chairs of the programme boards
- Representative of the Welsh LGA
- One representative of each of the sub-national groupings
- Chairs of the company boards (where not chaired by a programme board chair)
- Additional members to balance political proportionality (to be determined once all external appointments are known)

Non-voting

- Chair of the Resources Panel
- Representatives of the County Council's Network (CCN), District Councils Network (DCN) and Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (SIGOMA)
- Chair of LG Leadership

LGA Leadership Board (meets monthly on a Wednesday)

The purpose of the LGA Leadership Board is to direct the Association's activities and business, on behalf of its membership, in accordance with the strategic priorities and direction set by the LG Group Executive and to report and make recommendations to the Group Executive on the Association's activities.

The LGA Leadership Board is responsible for:

1. Managing and maintaining relationships with member authorities.
2. Being the national voice of local government, by providing the principal spokespersons for the LGA.
3. Setting the Association's annual budget and subscriptions.
4. Monitoring the Association's Income and Expenditure against the budget.
5. Developing and delivering the LGA business plan.
6. Managing and maintaining external relationships, with other representative bodies in local government, with Whitehall, Government, the legislature and partners.
7. Representational activity on behalf of the LGA.

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8. Agreeing the format of the LGA General Assembly Annual Meeting, in line with the Constitution.
9. Agreeing the programme and format of the LG Group Annual Conference on behalf of the LG Group.
10. Agreeing the LGA approach to the annual political balance.

The LGA Leadership Board may allocate responsibility to one or more of its members for particular areas within the remit of the LGA Leadership Board.

The Leadership Board is politically proportional and has 11 members. It is chaired by the chairman of the LGA and is made up of the vice and deputy chairs.

Councillors' Forum (meets monthly on a Thursday)

The LG Group Councillors' Forum receives internal and external briefings and presentations, and discusses key issues impacting on local government. It holds the LG Group to account by:

- Considering the monthly Chairman's and Chief Executive's reports
- Receiving reports from the LG Group Programme Boards, providing views and challenge

Programme Boards (meet 4-6 times a year)

The Programme Boards engage with and develop a thorough understanding of councils' priorities in relation to their particular programme area. They help shape the LG Group business plan and develop a programme of work to deliver the strategic priorities set by the LG Group Executive.

Each Programme Board has 14 members and its own terms of reference. Alongside formal meetings Boards may hold events around the country ranging from small discussions to major residential conferences. The Programme Boards are:-

- Children & Young People Programme Board
- Environment & Housing Programme Board
- Economy & Transport Programme Board
- Safer & Stronger Communities Programme Board
- Community Wellbeing Programme Board
- Culture, Tourism & Sport Programme Board
- Workforce Programme Board/Employers Organisation (LGE) Board
- European & International Programme Board/LGIB Board
- Improvement Programme Board/ IDeA Board

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Panels (meet 4-6 times a year)

The two Panels, each made up of nine members, oversee and report to the LG Group Executive and the relevant company boards on the internal operation of the LG Group.

- Resources (responsible for the management of LG resources and for policies on resource management across the LG Group)
- Audit & Scrutiny (responsible for monitoring financial reporting, audit, risk, delivery of business plan and use of resources)

The chair of the Resources Panel is a non-voting member of the Executive

Commissions

The three Commissions provide a forum for member authorities to come together to discuss matters of common interest and concern, to exchange good practice and to influence the priorities and activities of the LG Group. Each Commission is led by a steering committee and reports annually to the LG Group Executive. The Commissions are

- Urban (Urban Commission Steering Group)
- Rural (Rural Policy Review Group)
- Fire (Fire Services Management Committee)

**Company Boards of the IDeA, LGE, LACORS & Local Partnerships;
Board of Trustees of Leadership Centre**

The Company Boards direct the activities and business of the central bodies, and ensure their proper management in accordance with their Memoranda and Articles of Association and with the strategic priorities and direction set by the LG Group Executive.

They contribute to the development of the LG Group business plan and oversee delivery of projects commissioned outside the LG Group. However, increasingly, this element of their work of the company boards is integrated into the work of the relevant Programme Board.

- the board of the IDeA is chaired by the Chair of the Improvement Programme Board and councillors appointed to it sit on the Improvement Programme Board,

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- the Board of LGE is chaired by the chair of the Workforce Programme Board and councillors appointed to it sit on the Workforce Programme Board
- the chair of the LACORS board is currently a separate appointment by the Groups, but members appointed to it sit on the Environment or Safer & Stronger Communities Programme Boards.
- The chairs of Local Partnerships and the Leadership Centre are not appointed by the LGA and sits outside our proportionality arrangements

Special Interest Groups

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are not part of the formal governance arrangements of the Group but have an important role in setting priorities. Any **ten** or more councils in full membership of the LGA, with common features, interests or concerns can apply to become a SIG. SIGs are eligible for some secretarial support and meeting rooms in Local Government House.

SIGs can make representations direct to Government and elsewhere on matters arising directly from their special interest, and may receive LG Group assistance in doing so. Representations should not conflict with or undermine LGA policy as a whole or damage the interests of other member authorities

SIGs are required to submit a full report at the end of April each year to the LGA Leadership Board and may be invited to report in person to the LG Group Executive, LGA Leadership Board or relevant Programme Board.

There are currently 19 SIGs

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- Affordable Loans Network SIG
- Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH)
- Coastal Issues SIG
- Councils with ALMOs Group (CWAG)
- County Councils Network (CCN)
- District Councils Network (DCN)
- Fourth Option (FOSIG)
- F40 Group of Education Authorities
- High Ethnicity Authorities' SIG
- Local Authority Pension Funds (LAPFF)
- National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA)
- Integrated Transport Authority Special Interest Group [formerly PTA SIG]
- Radioactive Waste Management and Nuclear Decommissioning SIG
- Research SIG
- Public Transport Consortium SIG
- SPARSE Rural
- Special Interest Group of Metropolitan Authorities (SIGOMA)
- Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group
- Local Authorities World Heritage Forum (LAWHF)