

## Localism Programme

### Purpose of report

This report sets out the proposed work of the Localism Programme and seeks Members' guidance on it.

### Recommendation

That Members

- confirm that the scope and aims of the Localism Programme are what they would hope to see.
- give a steer as to which aims or activities they would wish to discuss and drive in more detail in the future.

### Action

Officers to action in accordance with the Leadership Board's discussion/decision.

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## Localism Programme

### Summary

As Members know, the LG Group operates through programmes of work. Most of these report to the Programme Boards. The newly-established Localism Programme reports to the Executive and it has been agreed that its main reporting mechanism should be to the Leadership Board. This note sets out the proposed work of the Localism Programme and seeks Members' guidance on it.

### Background

The Localism Programme is an innovation. Historically, the Group has dealt with policy on the overarching issues – governance, the constitutional place of local government, place-based budgeting, public service reform – in an ad-hoc way and without systematic officer support or follow-up. That has radically limited our ability to take a strong political steer and to make an impact. But, as with the examples of place-based budgeting, say, or the General Power of Competence, where we have taken a lead, we have made the weather. The aim of the new programme is to put the Group in a position where members can routinely exercise that kind of sector leadership on the big issues.

The programme we are developing has three main planks:

- Localism, decentralisation and public service reform; this includes work on the Open Public Services white paper, Greg Clark's decentralisation report, the Localism Bill;
- the Big Society – particularly councils' relations with voluntary and community sector organisations, and ours with those organisations at national level;
- Community Budgets.

The projects we currently propose to undertake are set out in the annex to this note. In line with the general approach of the merged Group, much of this work will involve teams from across the organisation. It will also be obvious that the Localism Programme links closely to the work of other programmes. It is currently particularly closely linked from day-to-day to the procurement and innovative delivery themes of the Productivity Programme, and to the Finance and Children and Young People's programmes; but Members will see the implications for other programmes, too, of themes such as working with the voluntary sector, or of widespread place-based budgeting should that develop further.

12 October 2011

**Item 2**

**Recommendation and next steps**

For now, we are simply seeking Members' confirmation that the scope and aims of the Localism Programme are what they would hope to see. This replicates the governance role which the Programme Boards have exercised in respect of the Group's other programmes. We would welcome it, however, if members also gave a steer as to which aims or activities they would wish to discuss and drive in more detail in the future.