

Review of Governance – roles of the Leadership Board, Executive and Programme Boards

Purpose of report

For decision.

Summary

At their October meeting the LGA Leadership Board agreed a number of amendments to the current governance arrangements and commissioned a review of the respective roles and responsibilities of the LGA Executive, Leadership Board and Programme Boards. Following discussions with each of the Group Leaders, this report sets out proposals for the Leadership Board to consider prior to submitting their recommendations to the LGA Executive.

Recommendation(s)

The Leadership Board are asked to agree their recommendations to the Executive.

1. That a new interim Finance Task Group is established with responsibility for Finance Policy, and for the National Fraud Framework, reporting to the LGA Executive.
2. That the General Assembly in June 2012 is invited to approve the creation of a new Finance Programme Board
3. That the roles and responsibilities of the Executive, Leadership Board and Programme Boards are amended to reflect the new integrated LGA (**paragraph 3**)
4. That the Programme Boards are renamed Boards.

Action

Officers to prepare a report to the Executive reflecting the Leadership Board's discussions and conclusions.

Contact officer: Claire Holloway
Position: Head of Corporate Governance
Phone no: 020 7664 3156
E-mail: claire.holloway@local.gov.uk

Review of Governance – roles of the Leadership Board, Executive and Programme Boards

Background

1. The LGA Leadership Board considered the current governance arrangements on 14 September and 12 October and so far has agreed to recommend to the Executive:
 - 1.1 That the LGA becomes the dominant front-facing brand for the LG Group, with the LGID (IDeA) company becoming the trading/service delivery arm.
Agreed by Executive 13 October 2011; brand change complete, actions underway to rationalise company structure over 12 months
 - 1.2 That the Councillors' Forum should be open to any interested member to attend
Agreed by Executive 13 October 2011 and actioned.
 - 1.3 To set up a Finance Programme Board to take responsibility for local government finance policy
Creation of a new Programme Board will require formal approval by the General Assembly - see paragraph 5
 - 1.4 That from 2012 the chair of the Safer, Stronger Communities Programme Board also chairs the LACORS company board
LACORS Board has begun the process of winding down
2. In addition, the Leadership Board:
 - 2.1 Agreed to establish an informal New Leaders' Forum.
Executive approval is not needed for an informal grouping - first meeting 23 January 2012.
 - 2.2 Agreed to meet with representatives of the fire & rescue authorities to discuss appointment/election to the chair of the Fire Services Management Committee.
Meeting held; referred for discussion at Fire Commission on 9 December
 - 2.3 Authorised officers to investigate potential for the LGA to host a membership scheme for police and crime commissioners
Endorsed by the Executive 13 October 2011. Discussions are progressing, with a view to establishing a scheme in time for the introduction of Police & Crime Commissioners in November 2012.
 - 2.4 Commissioned a wider review of the role and responsibilities of the Leadership Board, Executive and Programme Boards

Roles & responsibilities of Executive, Leadership Board and Programme Boards

3. **Table 1** sets out the current roles and responsibilities of the LGA Executive, Leadership Board and Programme Boards, along with proposed amendments developed in discussion with the chairman and Group Leaders.

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Table 1

Current	Proposed
<p>LGA Executive</p> <p>Provides strategic direction to the work of the LGA, taking advice from the Leadership Board and company boards, and representing the views of local government. It is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the LGA is focused on councils and councillors. • Setting the Association's strategic direction and priorities through the Business Plan, and ensuring overall delivery. • Ensuring activity across the LGA is coordinated and integrated. • Determining LGA policy for cross-cutting policy issues such as finance and efficiency and local democracy, after consultation with member authorities. • Holding the Programme Boards to account and ensuring they deliver their objectives. • Maintaining strong links with the wider membership to ensure priorities are based on the views of all member councils. <p>The Executive can allocate responsibility to one or more of its members for particular areas within its remit and/or establish member task groups.</p> <p>It can invite the chairs of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to attend meetings.</p>	<p>LGA Executive</p> <p>Provides strategic direction to the work of the LGA and a mechanism to listen and influence national government legislation and public opinion. It supports councils and councillors to serve their communities in the best ways possible and is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the LGA is focussed on serving councils and councillors across England and Wales. • Maintaining strong links with the sector, including through the sub-national groupings of councils, to ensure LGA priorities are based on the views of members and member councils. • Agreeing the LGA's vision and priorities through the LGA business plan, taking advice from the LGA Leadership Board. • Determining LGA policy for cross-cutting policy issues, including the localism agenda. • Holding the Programme Boards to account and providing a steer on complex policy issues. • Setting the annual LGA budget and subscriptions, taking advice from the Resources Panel. <p>The Executive can allocate responsibility to one or more of its members for particular areas within its remit and/or establish member task groups.</p> <p>It can invite the chairs of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to attend meetings.</p>

Current	Proposed
<p>Leadership Board</p> <p>Directs the Association's activities and business on behalf of its membership in accordance with the strategic priorities and direction set by the LGA Executive. It reports and makes recommendations to the Executive on the LGA's activities and is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing and maintaining relationships with member authorities. • Being the national voice of local government, by providing the principal spokespersons for the LGA. • Developing and delivering the LGA business plan. • Setting the Association's annual budget and subscriptions. • Monitoring the Association's Income and Expenditure against the budget. • Managing and maintaining external relationships with other local government representative bodies, Whitehall, Government, the legislature and partners. • Representational activity on behalf of the LGA. • Agreeing the format of the LGA General Assembly Annual Meeting, in line with the Constitution. • Agreeing the programme and format of the LGA Annual Conference. • Agreeing the LGA approach to the annual political balance. <p>The Leadership Board may allocate responsibility for particular areas within its remit to one or more of its members.</p>	<p>Leadership Board</p> <p>Develops the strategic priorities of the Association in consultation with member councils and the LGA Boards and makes recommendations to the Executive. It directs the activities and business of the LGA in line with those priorities and is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building and maintaining positive relationships with member authorities and maximising LGA membership levels. • Maintaining a forward programme of forthcoming legislation and events, identifying and discussing emerging and key issues and highlighting them to the Executive. • Developing and overseeing the delivery of the LGA business plan. • Overseeing delivery of the Board work programmes. • Managing and maintaining relationships with other local government representative bodies, Whitehall, Government, the legislature and other partners. • Undertaking representational activity on behalf of the LGA and providing the principal spokespersons. • Ensuring activity across the LGA is coordinated and integrated. • Agreeing the format of the LGA General Assembly Annual Meeting, in line with the Constitution. • Agreeing the programme and format of the LGA Annual Conference. • Agreeing the LGA approach to the annual political balance. <p>The Leadership Board may allocate responsibility for areas within its remit to one or more of its members.</p>

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Current	Proposed
<p>Programme Boards</p> <p>Engage with and develop a thorough understanding of councils' priorities in relation to their particular programme area. Each has its own terms of reference, but responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a thorough understanding of council priorities and performance in the areas of responsibility, using strong networks and robust information. • Helping to shape the LGA Business Plan by ensuring the priorities of the sector are fed into the process. • Overseeing a programme of work to deliver the strategic priorities set by the LGA Executive, covering lobbying, campaigns, research, policy, good practice, improvement support and events – as specified in the business plan, linking with other boards where appropriate. • Representing and lobbying on behalf of the LGA including public statements in its areas of responsibility. • Building and maintaining effective relationships with key stakeholders. <p>Programme Boards may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint members to relevant outside bodies in accordance with the Political Conventions. • Appoint member champions (who must be a current member of the Board) on key issues. <p>Programme Boards should seek to involve councillors in supporting the delivery of these priorities eg through task groups, Commissions, SIGs, regional networks and other means of wider engagement.</p>	<p>(Programme) Boards</p> <p>Engage with and develop a thorough understanding of the issues within their brief and how legislation does or could affect councils and their communities. Each Board has its own terms of reference, but responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the priorities of councils are fed into the business planning process. • Developing a work programme to deliver the business plan priorities relevant to their brief, covering lobbying, campaigns, research, improvement support and events and linking with other boards where appropriate. • Sharing good practice and ideas to stimulate innovation and improvement • Representing and lobbying on behalf of the LGA including making public statements on its area(s) of responsibility. • Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders. • Involving representatives from councils in its work, through task groups, Commissions, SIGs, regional networks and mechanisms. • Responding to specific issues referred to the Board by one or more member councils or groupings of councils. <p>Boards may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint members to relevant outside bodies in accordance with the Political Conventions. • Appoint member champions from the Board to lead on key issues.

Proposed Finance Programme Board

4. Clause 4.2 of the Constitution states “The General Assembly shall determine the terms of reference, delegated powers, size and political composition of all the Association’s governance structures”.
5. A new Finance Programme Board would require the approval of General Assembly. However, within its terms of reference, the Executive can set up member task groups to lead on areas within its responsibility. It is suggested that the Executive set up a Finance Task Group as an interim arrangement pending approval of the General Assembly in June for a Finance Programme Board.
6. Responsibility for issues relating to fraud, including the National Fraud Strategy, currently sits with the Improvement Programme Board. The Chairman of the Board has indicated that this responsibility might sit more appropriately with the new Finance Programme Board and/or its interim arrangement once the Improvement Board have completed their current work with the National Fraud Agency.

National Parks Authorities

7. The LGA currently offers an Associate membership scheme to National Parks Authorities (NPAs). In view of changes to their governance and funding since the scheme was first established, we are working with the English National Parks Authorities Association (ENPAA) to develop a revised offer. This is based on a corporate membership through the ENPAA, who would pay a single subscription on behalf of all English NPAs.

Conclusion and next steps

8. A report setting out the Leadership Board’s recommendations will be presented to the Executive in January.

Financial Implications

9. The creation of a new Finance Programme Board will result in an increase in the number of Special Responsibility Allowances to members. If no members of the new Programme Board hold other office within the LGA, then the maximum additional cost will be £64,820 plus chairman’s travel and subsistence.