

## **Chief Executive's Monthly Report – July 2012**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

The LGA business plan 2012/13 centres on five priorities –

- Public service reform
- Growth, jobs and prosperity
- Funding for local government
- Efficiency and productivity
- Sector-led improvement

The monthly Chief Executive's report sets out the LGA's main achievements against those priorities, along with our performance against key corporate indicators, including membership and budget.

### **Recommendation**

That the Leadership Board notes the Chief Executive's report for July 2012.

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## **Chief Executive's Monthly Report – July 2012**

### **Part 1- achievements against our five main priorities**

#### **Priority 1 - Public Service Reform**

- Launched LGA/DfE action research on the **council role in education**, showcasing eight councils responding positively to greater school autonomy by working in partnership with local schools on place planning, school improvement and supporting vulnerable children.
- Ran the first meeting of the national network for those involved in setting up **police and crime panels in mid-June** attended by all but three force areas in England. The Home Office briefed the meeting on the new regulations laid in parliament on notifications, appointments and nominations. Published a guide to co-opting non-councillor co-opted members on to the panels.
- Confirmed the selection of 6 councils to move into the **second phase of the 'Creative Councils' programme** in recognition of their pioneering work on radical new ways to deliver public services. The 6 finalists will receive to £150,000 follow-on funding as well as non financial support to build on their proposals.
- Launched the **health and wellbeing board learning set products** at the NHS Confederation Annual Conference jointly with NHS Confederation, Department of Health and the NHS.
- Cllr David Rogers, Chair of the Community Wellbeing Board, spoke at the House of Lords All Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Social Care for Older People, stressing the crucial role of **Health and Wellbeing Boards** in providing leadership and driving change across the system to redirect resources towards prevention and early intervention.
- The **Commission on Dignity in Care**, led by partnership of the LGA, Age UK and NHS Confederation, launched its report containing recommendations aimed at improving dignity in hospitals and residential care.
- Agreed bids from Birmingham City Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council to be included in the **Future Councils Programme**, which provides practical and financial support to implement a new, more radical, model of council.
- Richard Ottaway MP presented his **scrap metal dealers bill** to introduce a licensing regime for dealers administered and enforced by councils. The Bill had its first reading in the House of Commons on 20 June.
- Responded to the Government's consultation on **dangerous dogs** stressing that compulsory microchipping will not resolve the issue and expressing concern that Government has failed to develop a holistic and sustainable approach with delivery partners.
- Provided **evidence** to the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill Committee, the Work and Pensions Committee on Youth Unemployment, the CLG Select Committee on The Role of Councillors, and an All Party Parliamentary Group Inquiry into Local Enterprise Partnerships.

### **Priority 2 - Growth, jobs and prosperity**

- Launched **Local Growth**, drawing on Town Hall debates across the country and setting out councils' ambition for growth, the barriers to local economic development and proposals for new civic partnerships to support businesses and growth in the UK. Our accompanying growth offer includes LGA support to councils for local work.
- Launched **Climate Local** - a new initiative to help councils drive local action to maximise opportunities and reduce risks from climate change. Some 20 councils have signed up so far, committing to identify local priorities for action and to share learning with other councils.
- Through the Planning Advisory Service, tested a new type of **peer challenge** in Swindon, focussing on how planning, regeneration, economic development and housing services deal with growth and investment. The challenge team included a developer and held discussions with major local employers and land owners.
- Following LGA lobbying, secured agreement between the European Parliament, Commission and Council that the new **energy efficiency legislation** targets for renovation of public buildings and procurement of energy efficient products and services will exclude local government. The final vote in the European Parliament is expected in September.
- In line with LGA lobbying, the Department of Energy and Climate Change **Green Deal** consultation response includes provision to improve energy efficiency in the most deprived areas under the Energy Company Obligation. Energy companies must spend 15% of their obligation (£190 million to 2015) with councils and Registered Social Landlords, 15% of which must be in rural areas.
- Contributed to the Local Housing Delivery Group's advice to councils and developers to help ensure that **local plans** are deliverable.

### **Priority 3 - Funding for local government**

- Launched **Funding outlook for councils from 2010/11 to 2019/20**, which propelled LGA conference to the top of UK topics discussed on Twitter that day. Described by Eric Pickles MP, as "powerful" and Ed Balls as "required reading for all Ministers and Shadow Ministers", it led to the tabling of an oral question DCLG Questions in the House of Commons on 2 July and prolific media coverage.
- Over 70 member authorities have so far taken us up on our offer to generate their **individual funding outlooks** from the financial model.
- A LGA cross party delegation met Baroness Hanham to outline concerns on the **Local Government Finance Bill**. The debate during the House of Lords' Second Reading drew heavily on our briefing, with a large number of LGA Vice-Presidents taking part. Our concerns are reflected in a series of amendments tabled by Peers, ahead of the Lords Committee stages of the Bill, and have also featured on BBC's Today Programme.
- Secured good media coverage of our work projecting the **future costs of care into the future**, highlighting the need to address the issue of care funding now.
- Lobbied the Cypriot Government to ensure the case for delivery of funds through local (rather than national or regional government) is clearly on the EU's agenda in the next six months.

(Cyprus holds the EU Presidency from July-Dec 2012 and its ministers will chair crucial meetings on reform of **EU structural funds** – currently providing £8b investment in the UK).

#### **Priority 4 - Efficiency & productivity**

- Responded to government's call for evidence on proposals for a **Right to Choice** emphasising local government's strong track record in expanding choice and the importance of building on local approaches, not centrally prescribed models for choice.
- We are partnering the Cabinet Office in development of a **Commissioning Academy** aimed to support the development of knowledge and skills for commissioning at senior level across the public sector. Two pilot cohorts will begin the programme in 2012.
- We have been actively involved in the work of the **Commission on the Future of Local Government** led by Leeds City Council and have committed to setting up a network of Enterprising Councils to promote and exchange innovation.
- Continued to make progress on the **transition of public health**, including urgent discussions to finalise terms of the TUPE-like transfer schemes to be drafted over the coming months; development of pension options for new starters (recommendations due in July) and progress on Department of Health statutory guidance on the appointment, role and responsibilities of Directors of Public Health.
- The NJC for Local Government Services has established a sub-committee to look at issues in **career development for social workers** following the publication of our benchmark role profiles late last year.
- Published an essay titled 'The General Power of Confidence', commissioned from Pannone Solicitors to inform thinking and stimulate debate around the potential of the new **General Power of Competence** implemented as part of the Localism Act 2011.
- Promoted the **Enterprising Councils** guidance on promoting trading and charging. An article on the opportunities it presents will appear in a forthcoming edition of MJ.
- Secured 73 **National Graduate Development Programme** placements across 43 councils for the 2012 intake, which is a significant increase on 2011.

#### **Priority 5 - Sector-led improvement**

- Published a range of materials as part of **Corporate Parenting Week** to help councils meet the pressures of rising demands on services for children in care, including a case study report on approaches to fostering and adoption, a report on the views of children and young people on services and an updated scrutiny guide.
- Released **Sector-led Improvement in Local Government** which sets out a comprehensive and coordinated approach to sector-led improvement, the support available to councils, and where to go for further information or advice.
- Completed the first of five **peer reviews commissioned by the pan-African local government association (UCLGA)**, in Namibia. The reviews will build expertise in local government self-regulation in Africa and transfer the LGA's expertise in running peer reviews. The programme is financed externally.

- Secured a further £500,000 from the Department of Health for 2012/13 for the ***Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care*** programme on sector led improvement. The improvement of the third council out of seven assessed as adequate in adult social care under the previous inspection regime was endorsed by the Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care programme board.

## **Part 2 – Performance against our corporate priorities**

### **Priority 6 - Our own efficiency and effectiveness**

#### **Delivery**

- The independent benchmarking review of the Liberata contract is due to be reported in July. Following this, work will take place over the summer to review the Liberata contract, with decisions being taken by Resources Panel.
- In June the LGA was mentioned 1506 times in national, regional, trade and online publications. There were 34 mentions in national newspapers. The most prominently covered stories were the LGA's funding outlook report, research on the mismatch between job vacancies and vocational courses run by colleges, a call for action to tackle the rising tide of metal thefts and a joint report from the Commission on Improving Dignity in Care for Older People which called for a 'major cultural shift' to improve dignity in care.

#### **Membership**

- The Audit and Scrutiny Panel's scrutiny review of the LGA's offer to councils is close to completion and recommendations will be made to the Leadership Board in September.

#### **Financial sustainability**

- Programme and financial management arrangements are in place for the new financial year to inform regular reporting to Leadership Board and the Strategic Management Team on delivery against the LGA's business plan.
- There has been continued and sustained effort on debt recovery, with over 70 per cent of the LGA's corporate subscriptions for 2012/13 now paid.