

LGA Leadership Board - Review of the Year 2012-2013

Purpose of report

For discussion.

Summary

The 2012 audit of the LGA's corporate governance arrangements recommended the introduction of an annual self-appraisal by the Boards and Panels to "reflect upon the preceding twelve months in terms of what has been achieved, progress against plan, what went well and lessons learnt".

This report summarises the work that the Leadership Board has undertaken since 1 September 2011, and its key achievements. The Leadership Board's terms of reference are attached at **Appendix B to Item 3** on this agenda.

Recommendation

That the LGA Leadership Board review its work and achievements over the past year and its programme of meetings for 2012/2013 and consider lessons learned.

Action

Officers to take forward in line with the Board's steer.

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Background

1. Under its terms of reference, the LGA Leadership Board's purpose is to develop the strategic priorities of the Association, in consultation with member councils and the LGA Boards, and make recommendations to the General Assembly and the LGA Executive. The Board directs the activities and business of the LGA in line with those priorities. Its terms of reference are attached at **Appendix A.**

LGA Membership and the LGA's Membership Offer

2. In December 2011, the Board agreed the 2012/13 **membership subscriptions**, based on the recommendations of the Resources Panel. The 7% reduction overall enabled us to meet our target reduction of 20% over 4 years one year early.
3. The Board periodically reviewed membership levels throughout the year and in March this year agreed a **revised membership offer** and a new approach. During April and May, every member received a Membership Offer booklet, distributed via the Group Offices, tailored to their own particular authority. Feedback has been positive particularly from backbenchers. Copies were also sent to every chief executive, along with their subscription invoice.
4. The number of councils out of membership reduced from seven in 2011/12 to two in 2012/13. 30 authorities are currently on notice to leave from 1 April 2013, although a significant number of these have rolled over notice at least once.
5. Two National Park Authorities are currently on notice and in May, the Board agreed in principal a **corporate National Parks Authorities membership scheme** through the English National Parks Authorities Association (ENPAA) and the relocation of ENPAA to Local Government House. Work is ongoing with ENPAA on the practical arrangements.
6. The Board continues to oversee the development of options for an LGA membership scheme for **Police and Crime Commissioners.**

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LGA Business Plan

7. Alongside quarterly performance monitoring reports, the monthly **Chief Executive's report** sets out the main achievements of the Executive and the nine boards against our business plan priorities and key corporate indicators, including membership and budget. They enable the Board to hold the Chief Executive to account against the delivery of business plan.
8. At its June meeting the Leadership Board received the end of year report of the LGA's performance in delivering the priorities in the **2011/2012 Business Plan**. Overall, 39 of the 76 objectives had been achieved (assessed as "green"), with the remaining 37 at "amber".
9. The Leadership Board also took a lead role in shaping the development of **2012/13 Business Plan** priorities and the LGA's vision for local government. The final 2012/13 Business Plan was presented to the LGA Executive in March. The first quarterly performance report for 2012/2013 is at Item 4 on this agenda.
10. In February 2012, as part of the business planning process, in February, the Board agreed **six high profile campaigns** and identified a Leadership Board sponsor for each. The Board monitors progress on the campaigns through the member sponsor and through periodic update reports.

Commissioning Academy

11. At its June meeting, the Board agreed a policy position on commissioning for local services. The Board agreed that the LGA should partner the Cabinet Office in developing the **Commissioning Academy** and its two pilot projects. This work programme is now progressing.

Public Affairs updates

12. The Board reviewed the programme of **activities, events, legislation and announcements** throughout the year through regular reports from the Public Affairs team, including on the Queen's Speech. Through these, the Board discussed emerging key issues for the LGA and provided a steer for officers in taking this work forward.

External relationships

13. During 2011/2012, the Board met with a number of external organisations
 - **Clive Betts MP, Chair of the HoC CLG Select Committee** for an introduction to the work of the Select Committee and to identify issues the

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Leadership Board would like the Committee to tackle. These included empty homes and reform of the Housing Revenue Account.

- **Graham Allen MP, Chair of the HoC Select Committee on Political and Constitutional Reform** to discuss how the LGA and the Select Committee could work together to give greater prominence to the development of a draft code as the basis of the relationship between central and local government. The deadline for submitting evidence to the Select Committee is 5 October.
- **Derek Myers, Chairman, and Kathryn Rossiter Managing Director of SOLACE** to discuss potential joint working and the ongoing relationship between the two organisations
- **Dr Jane Martin, Acting Chair and LG Ombudsman and Anne Seex, LG Ombudsman** to discuss changes to the role of the LG Ombudsman

Annual Conference and General Assembly

14. The Board oversaw the development of the **2012 LGA Annual Conference** programme through a series of reports. A review of the 2012 Conference and planning for the 2013 Conference is at Item 6 on this agenda.

LGA Constitution

15. Following the elections on 3 May, the Board agreed the new LGA **political balance**. The political groups are now using their respective processes to populate the LGA governance structures for 2012/2013, with effect from 3 September 2012.
16. On the Board's recommendation, the General Assembly agreed a number of **changes to the LGA Constitution** at its meeting in Birmingham on 26 June - the creation of a new Finance Panel to lead the Association's work on local government finance policy, deletion of the Audit & Scrutiny Panel, expansion of the remit of the Resources Panel to include scrutiny and the creation of a small Audit Committee; expansion of Board membership from 14 to 18 members and the addition of new membership schemes for Police and Crime Commissioners and National Park Authorities.
17. In May 2012, the Board invited LGA President, Lord Best, to convene the **Independent Remuneration Panel** to consider the remuneration of lead member peers, the new Finance Panel and Audit Committee and the Chairman and Group Leaders. The Independent Panel's conclusions and recommendations will be presented to the LGA Executive on 12 July.

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LGA Forward Plan

18. The Board reviews the Forward Plan of the **LGA Executive, Leadership Board and Councillors' Forum** monthly to ensure that all key and emerging issues for the sector are appropriately included. For example, over since September 2011 the Councillors' Forum has debated the following topics:

- The Reputation of Local Government;
- An agenda for Cities (with Greg Clark MP)
- Local Authority Budgets in 2012-2013 and beyond;
- Troubled Families (with Louise Casey CB,)
- Police and Crime Commissioners (with the Deputy Chief Constable, Avon and Somerset Police)
- The Future of Adult Care and Social (with Stephen Dorrell MP)
- Directly Elected Mayors (with David Cowling, BBC Political Research)
- HoC CLG Select Committee (with Clive Betts MP, Chair of the Select Committee)

Liberata Contract Negotiation

19. Whilst the Resources Panel is responsible for detailed monitoring of the **Liberata contract**, the Board has taken an active interest, considering regular reports on the contract re-negotiation presented by the Chairman of the Resources Panel. The Board will shortly examine a full options appraisal, alongside the findings of the benchmarking review, and an assessment of the financial, legal and practical implications.

Conclusion

20. The Leadership Board has discussed and taken decisions on a wide range of topics and issues during the year. Members are invited to consider any lessons to build into the forward planning and ways of working of the Leadership Board from 1 September 2012.