

20 June 2005

LACORS Review

Decisions

1. The Board is asked to:
 - (i) note the findings of the LACORS Quinquennial Review;
 - (ii) note the response by the LACORS Board of Directors; and
 - (iii) endorse the decision and agreed actions of the Improvement Board that the LGA and LACORS officers form a project group to develop an implementation plan for the recommendations of the action by the LACORS Board for the Safer Communities Board and Improvement Board as appropriate.

Actions Required

2. LGA Safer Communities Board and LACORS officers develop an implementation plan for the key recommendations of the LACORS Quinquennial Review that are appropriate to the Board.

Action by Derek Allen and LGA

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Summary

1. This report highlights the key issues from the Quinquennial Review (QQR) of LACORS undertaken by Peter Hyde of Peter Hyde Management Consulting who carried out the review on behalf of the LGA. The Executive Summary of his report is **attached** as appendix 1. Also, **attached** as appendix 2 is the formal response of the LACORS Board to the review recommendations. Full copies of the report will be available at the meeting.

Background

2. The LGA has an agreement with the ODPM to undertake a review of each of the top slice funded central bodies once every five years. Under the LGA new Member arrangements LACORS is the first review of the central bodies to go before the Improvement Board, although there have been reviews of three of the other central bodies over the past two years.
3. Overall the report is very positive about LACORS role and value and identifies areas for improvement and further opportunities to meet new challenges, particularly on the important and emerging improvement agenda for local authority regulatory services.
4. The Safer Communities Board is the key LGA Board that has within its wider portfolio of responsibilities, local authority regulatory services and includes all the regulatory services currently within the LACORS remit. The Board also has as one of its key objectives the development of a coherent approach to regulatory services, and within that objective there are three key strands:
 - (i) raising the profile
 - (ii) recruitment and retention
 - (iii) responding to Hampton

Recommendation from QQR

5. There are 15 recommendations made by Peter Hyde in his report. All of them will be considered by LACORS Senior Management Team and an implementation plan developed with key work activities, milestones, lead officers and resources identified. Whilst the SCB and LACORS are likely to focus on the following recommendations, the formation of a LACORS LGA project group will also include recommendation 15 for consideration in relation to the performance partnership.

Recommendation 1

The LGA and LACORS should together undertake a systematic review of the regulatory and related services which are currently outside LACORS' remit and make an explicit assessment of where there might be value in widening LACORS' scope to include them.

Recommendation 6

There should be more explicit criteria to define underperformance and a more explicit process by which LACORS identifies the main target local authorities. There should then be a portfolio of potential interventions (from informal pressure through to offers of consultancy support) tailored to each target authority.

Recommendation 7

Furthermore, as part of the systematic review LACORS will examine what it currently delivers and explore opportunities to rationalise, drive through further efficiencies and refocus activities where it can demonstrate further added value and effectiveness in achieving improvement in local authority regulatory services.

Next Steps

6. It is therefore recommended that LACORS SMT and officer representatives of the LGA, form a project plan implementation group, chaired by LACORS' Executive Director, to focus on key recommendations and report back over the next two meetings on proposals to take forward and implement the recommendations. However, particularly in regard to recommendation 1, i.e. the systematic review of services currently outside LACORS remit, assessment on widening the scope may lead to recommendations to widen LACORS remit which is likely to have resource implications affecting the size of LACORS top slice bid for next year (2006/07). It is recognised it will be very important to produce a properly costed bid with clear performance criteria to measure successful implementation and effective and efficient contribution to the service improvement of local authority regulatory services.
7. Furthermore, as part of the systematic review LACORS will examine what it currently delivers and explore opportunities to rationalise, drive through further efficiencies and refocus activities where it can demonstrate further added value.

Implications for Wales

8. At this stage there are no direct implications to Wales. However, a similar exercise to undertake a review of LACORS services in Wales will take place and consider the benefits of alignment, should any decision be made to widened remit to support English local authorities, as currently all LACORS remit and services cover both England and Wales. This could also help achieve further efficiencies and economies of scale.

Financial/Resource Implications

9. There are no direct financial implications to this report in developing a project plan for implementation. Clearly, any future developments that may have financial implications will be cleared through the appropriate LGA Boards, panels and Executives.

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