# The LGA Work Programme - developing the local government agenda - Decisions and Actions Required

## Decisions

*1.     This paper sets out a proposed approach to the handling of a range of cross-Board issues within the LGA. It is a precursor to more detailed consideration of cross-cutting performance and improvement issues (see accompanying paper).*

## Actions Required

*2.     The Board is asked:*

> *a.   formally to agree the approach to handling of cross-cutting themes set out in the paper (paragraphs 4 and 5);*

> *b.   noting the issues identified in paragraph 6, to consider whether other areas of SCB business particularly lend themselves to a more-cross cutting approach in future and how that might best be addressed.*

> *c.   to address the decisions and actions required in Paper 1A on Performance and Improvement – key challenges for the sector*

**Action by:**     *Safer Communities Board team*

*Contact Officer:  David Williams, 020 7664 3266, david.williams@lga.gov.uk*

# The LGA Work Programme - developing the local government agenda

## Summary

1.    *Proposed approach to handling of cross-cutting policy issues.*

## Background

2.    *LGA strategy and policy staff have been developing a policy position for the LGA that encapsulates the work of individual Policy Boards and the strategic direction set by the LGA Executive. Although Board interventions for 2006/07 are individually well aligned to the vision set out in People and Places, taken together they do not readily offer a clear articulation of the LGA's overall priorities, either internally, to the local government sector or to external audiences.*

3.    *One of the LGA's key strengths, in lobbying on behalf of local government, should be our ability to join up agendas across service providers: we need to exploit this fully. Central to this is telling the local government story in an integrated way across the different service and corporate agendas. A more joined-up approach, aimed at maximising the impact of our work for citizens and communities, would offer:*

- *clarity of message*
- *maximum leverage with government departments*
- *a demonstration nationally of the leadership set out in the White Paper*
- *reduced duplication and increased learning*

*Such an approach should also provide a solid platform for future work on what local government might look like in 3-5 years time ('raising our game' - as trailed by the LGA Chairman in his speech to the General Assembly in December).*

4.    *Against that background, we plan to frame the overall LGA strategy and work programme around a number of cross-cutting themes, as follows:*

- *Performance and Improvement (including development of LAAs)*
- *Governance (including role of lead member, OSC and CCA)*
- *Place Shaping*
- *Transforming Public Services*
- *Community Cohesion*
- *Resources*

*To strengthen and systematise our cross-cutting work, we will submit joint papers on each of these themes to interested boards: the accompanying paper on the performance framework is the first of these.  We also envisage appropriate cross-Board representation at Ministerial meetings and regular meetings between the Board Chairs, Director of Strategy and Programme Directors.*

## What does this mean for the Safer Communities Board work programme?

5.	The Board is asked formally to agree that we pursue this approach for the rest of this policy cycle and to build on this approach for the future. We will review this process with Board chairs in July before the next policy cycle begins. Whilst on the one hand it could mean a greater 'corporate LGA' interest in how the Board sets it priorities for future work, it should also make it easier for us to demonstrate how Safer Communities work supports higher level themes which enjoy LGA Executive interest and engagement.

6.	In practical terms, given the widespread nature of the Safer Communities agenda, it is not surprising that aspects of the Board's work fall under each of the cross-cutting themes set out above, but the major areas of alignment are:

a.	_Performance improvement and LAAs_: (See also separate supporting paper)  The Home Office are seeking some 35 or so of the 200 national indicators envisaged in the Local Government White Paper to cover crime and disorder issues handled through CDRPs. We are well placed to engage with them and DCLG as this work moves forward – and in ensuring that development of the new APACS police/criminal justice performance system is streamlined and aligned as far as possible with the wider local government performance framework, while still providing adequate mechanisms to highlight and address under-performance. On LAAs, work on approaches to reducing reoffending in particular offers a good opportunity to shape the development of LAAs at both the local and perhaps sub-regional level.

b.	_Governance_: The LGA is fully plugged into Home Office work on implementation of the CDA Review. This covers an LGA lead (Emma Varley) on production of guidance on local leadership roles in tackling crime and disorder, and work on the practical implementation of the Act's provisions for Overview and Scrutiny, and Community Call for Action. On this latter point, our aim is to ensure alignment with the equivalent provisions in the Local Government Bill for other areas of service delivery, leading to consistent guidance on how these processes should operate at the local level.

c.	_Community Cohesion_: This issue runs across a number of Boards, but Safer Communities and Community Wellbeing have the closest interest. We have been able to identify some specific policy resource within LGA to raise the profile of our work in this area. The first priority is to work in conjunction with the IDeA to support the activity of Darra Singh's Commission on Integration and Cohesion – there is an opportunity for the LGA to show real sector leadership here. The SCB also has particular interest in parallel work within the DCLG on tackling extremism.

d.	_Transforming public services_:  this heading is focussed on the development of public service delivery in the medium to long term. It could cover the full range of SCB work, but it has particular relevance to intervention work on (i) the Fire Vision (for discussion as a separate agenda item in the January meeting) and (ii) improved information sharing (within CDRPs generally and on reoffending issues) as a way of improving service delivery. The 101 Single Non-Emergency Number project also has potential to highlight new ways of interaction between partners at the local level and of engagement with citizens and communities leading to tailored service delivery to meet local needs.

## Implications for Wales

*7.      There are no specific implications for Wales from these proposals. Relevant issues under each of the themes will need to be brought out in subsequent submissions.*

## Financial/Resource Implications

*8.      There are no specific resources implications from these proposals, although the approach should help to ensure greater alignment between the "direction of travel" set by the LGA Executive and the interventions of individual Policy Boards. It should therefore help to ensure that policy resources are focussed on areas of priority.*


*Contact Officer:  David Williams, 020 7664 3266,* [*david.williams@lga.gov.uk*](mailto:david.williams@lga.gov.uk)