

# Executive Advisory Board

Agenda

**Thursday, 3 December 2020**  
**1.30 pm**



**To:** Members of the LGA Executive  
**cc:** Named officers for briefing purposes

**LGA Executive**  
3 December 2020

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There will be a meeting of the LGA Executive at: **1.30 pm on Thursday, 3 December 2020**

### **Apologies**

**Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting, so that a substitute can be arranged and catering numbers adjusted, if necessary.**

<b>Conservative:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: <a href="mailto:lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk">lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Labour:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: <a href="mailto:Martha.Lauchlan@local.gov.uk">Martha.Lauchlan@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Independent:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: <a href="mailto:independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk">independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk</a>
<b>Liberal Democrat:</b>	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: <a href="mailto:libdem@local.gov.uk">libdem@local.gov.uk</a>

### **LGA Contact**

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### **Carers' Allowance**

As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme a Carer's Allowance of £9.00 per hour or £10.55 if receiving London living wage is available to cover the cost of dependants (i.e. children, elderly people or people with disabilities) incurred as a result of attending this meeting.

### **Social Media**

The LGA is committed to using social media in a co-ordinated and sensible way, as part of a strategic approach to communications, to help enhance the reputation of local government, improvement engagement with different elements of the community and drive efficiency. Please feel free to use social media during this meeting. **However, you are requested not to use social media during any confidential items.**

The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgaexec.

## Agenda

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### **Executive Advisory Board**

Thursday 3 December 2020

1.30 pm

Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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Item	Page
<b>2. The LGA's Current 'Hot Topics'</b>	1 - 2

Report to follow in the supplemental agenda.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday, 21 January 2021, 1.30 pm



### **LGA Headline Issues 3/12/2020**

The following priority issues reflect the short term needs for councils in order to deal with the COVID crisis as well as topical policy issues that are being pursued by the Government which we are responding to.

**Finances** – The announcements at the Spending Review go some way towards meeting core spending pressures and estimated COVID-19 costs next year, but only if councils make full use of council tax raising powers. However, this one-year Spending Review has not addressed the underlying pressures and urgent need for investment in early intervention, adult social care and public health.

### **Immediate Covid Issues:**

The following issues are the sector's immediate priorities.

**Tiers** – We need transparency about the data and criteria used for deciding movements between the three tiers as well as how the process for the fortnightly reviews will work. Those areas in tier 3 will need greater support for businesses. The approach to discretionary self-isolation payments protects low-income working households from hardship and reduces the risk of covid transmission, but may require more funding. We need to plan now for how any review will work in the run-up to 30th December.

**Community Testing at Scale** – The new prospectus is welcome but questions remain about the additional resources and training available to councils. We need to ensure the way data is gathered alongside Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) is improved to understand any inequality in terms of who is taking up these tests. There is also a need to understand when an individual will be told to self-isolate, after a LFT or PCR test; if the former then it is important that the flow to CTAS is seamless as individuals can't claim the 'self-isolation payment' until they have a confirmed CTAS reference number. We also need to understand the goals of mass testing and localised tracing both before and after a rollout of a vaccine.

**Vaccine** - What role will councils be asked to play in the distribution of a vaccine once one becomes widely available and how will it be made available to frontline care staff and residents in the priority cohort? We also need to agree the role for councils in community engagement to ensure all communities trust the vaccination programme.

**Test and trace system** – Tier 2 councils are seeking a localised system which is nationally enabled. Councils need funding to build up their tracing teams. The system must be integrated with any community testing arrangements. A more localised regime would be able to use test and trace more effectively to engage difficult to reach groups.

**PPE supply** – The current arrangement for the supply of PPE to councils expires at the end of March. Councils need clarity on the plans for procuring PPE from 1 April 2021 so they can put in place their procurement strategies for sourcing PPE during 2021.

**Care homes** – the proposals to use Lateral Flow Tests to test visitors to care homes is not fully funded and is putting further financial pressure on the fragile care provider market. Issues for care providers in securing appropriate insurance are delaying the identification of designated settings for COVID positive patients into the care system, and there is an urgent need for the government to ensure care providers have the insurance they need.

**Public Services** – We need localised decisions over how and when key public services are re-opened post lockdown to reflect the capacity in different areas of the country. Capacity issues remain a very significant challenge in many areas.

**Enforcement** – Councils now have clarity about which tier they will be in and a broad overview of the tier rules. We need clarity on interpretation (eg definition of a substantial

meal). We are calling for flexibility for councils to spend funds from the MHCLG enforcement fund over a longer period.

**Longer term Covid planning:**

Councils are keen to engage on a longer-term strategy for recovery and clear guidance for events that will be affected by continuing restrictions in the months ahead.

**University terms** - What role will councils be asked to play in delivering the HE return window and associated testing?

**Exams**- The Government must ensure that students are treated fairly next year. We do not believe that a single set of end of year exams will be fair to students. We would like to see a more blended approach to assessment including teacher assessment and coursework when grades are decided for all pupils.

**Elections** – What resources will be available for spring elections that will need to be made COVID secure and allow self-isolating and shielding individuals to vote and have results that are not vulnerable to challenge? Candidates and political parties also need to be able to campaign safely and fairly.

**Children’s services** – The impact of the pandemic is expected to significantly increase the need for children’s services. The £300 million announced for adult and children’s social care in the Spending Review is not sufficient. How will councils be supported to increase capacity and resources to support children and families to overcome short-term difficulties and avoid these escalating into crises?

**Economic vulnerability** – Councils have delivered a range of vital short-term, crisis support. Supporting people to recover financially requires the local knowledge and strong relationships that councils are best placed to provide. We need to move towards a more sustainable, preventative approach to economic and financial wellbeing to secure an effective recovery. We also need clarity on the sustainability of key VCS partners.

**Other issues of immediate importance for the sector:**

**EU exit** – The new responsibilities from the end of EU transition must be seen in the context of all the winter pressures on councils, especially for regulatory service which are at the forefront of our work on covid. We continue to stress the opportunities and risks to councils.

**Social Care** - Putting adult social care on a sustainable footing remains an urgent priority. The Spending Review (SR) provides some new funding which will help address some, but not all, pressures facing councils. We continue to make the point that the precept is not a sustainable, long-term solution.

**NHS Reform** – The NHS Reform Bill provides a good opportunity to facilitate local NHS, council and community leaders to join up care, health and wellbeing services to get better health and wellbeing outcomes. It is clear from the early lessons of cutting-edge ICSs that local strategies must be designed and delivered in partnership. We are keen to support early engagement on the whole Bill especially anything affecting social care and public health.

**Economic Recovery** - We need continued national/local collaboration, especially to shape the future UKSPF and Levelling Up funds. There is an offer to co-design from the sector. We also need to ensure that councils have good support to help them lead their communities towards recovery and renewal.

**Planning Reform** - We await a Government response to the white paper consultation.

**LGR/Devolution** - We continue to monitor developments, but we don’t anticipate further announcements until spring 2021.