

Improvement and Innovation Board

Agenda

Wednesday, 8 March 2017
11.00 am

Rooms A&B, Ground Floor, Layden House,
76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG

To: Members of the Improvement and Innovation Board
cc: Named officers for briefing purposes

www.local.gov.uk

This meeting is



Guidance notes for members and visitors

Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG

Please read these notes for your own safety and that of all visitors, staff and tenants.

Welcome!

Layden House is located directly opposite the Turnmill Street entrance to Farringdon station, which is served by the Circle, Hammersmith & City, and Metropolitan lines as well as the Thameslink national rail route.

Security

Layden House has a swipe card access system meaning that a swipe enabled security passes will be required to access the lifts and floors 1-5.

Most LGA governance structure meetings will take place on the **ground floor** of Layden House which is open access and therefore does not require a swipe enabled security pass. **Access** to the rest of the building (floors 1-5) is via swipe enabled security passes.

When you visit Layden House, **please show your Local Government House security pass to reception** and they will provide you with a temporary pass which will allow you access to floors 1-5 if required. **Please don't forget to sign out at reception and return your security pass when you depart.**

If you do not have a LGH Security Pass, please email [member services](#) with your name and a recent photo and a pass will be made for you. You can pick this up from the Layden House reception desk on your next visit.

Fire instructions

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, vacate the building immediately via the nearest fire exit onto Turnmill Street and take the next turning on your left – Benjamin Street to St John's Gardens.

DO NOT USE THE LIFTS.

DO NOT STOP TO COLLECT PERSONAL BELONGINGS.

DO NOT RE-ENTER BUILDING UNTIL AUTHORISED TO DO SO.

Soft Seating Area

There is a small soft seating area on Floor 2 which will also operate as an 'Open Council' area for visiting members and officers from member councils. Please note however that unlike Open Council, this area does not have tea and coffee facilities, nor access to computers.

Toilets

There are accessible toilets on the Ground Floor, 2nd and 4th floors.

Accessibility

If you have special access needs, please let the meeting contact know in advance and we will do our best to make suitable arrangements to meet your requirements.

Parking is available at the rear of the building for Blue Badge holders, accessed via the Turks Head Yard, North underpass. Disabled WCs are situated on the ground and 4th floors. An induction loop system is available in the 5th floor conference venue. For further information please contact the Facilities Management Helpdesk on 020 7664 3015.

Guest WiFi in Layden House

WiFi is available in Layden House for visitors. It can be accessed by enabling “Wireless Network Connection” on your computer and connecting to LGA-Free-WiFi. You will then need to register, either by completing a form or through your Facebook or Twitter account (if you have one). You only need to register the first time you log on.

Further help

Please speak either to staff at the main reception on the ground floor, if you require any further help or information. You can find the LGA website at www.local.gov.uk

Why have the LGA’s Headquarters moved?

The LGA has temporarily relocated from Local Government House (LGH) in Smith Square to Layden House in Farringdon, effective from Monday 31 October 2016. This is to allow extensive refurbishment work to be carried out to LGH.

The refurbishment works will see the ground floor conference centre and all meeting rooms fully refurbished. Floors 1, 2 and 3 will be upgraded and released for commercial letting to enable the LGA to maximise the income from this building as part of its drive for financial sustainability. A new and larger Open Council will be located on the seventh floor. The refurbishment is expected to last for nine months and we expect to be back in LGH by September 2017.

We appreciate your understanding and flexibility during this time.

Improvement & Innovation Board
8 March 2017

There will be a meeting of the Improvement & Innovation Board at **11.00 am on Wednesday, 8 March 2017** Rooms A&B, Ground Floor, Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG.

A sandwich lunch will be available at 1.00pm

Attendance Sheet:

Please ensure that you sign the attendance register, which will be available in the meeting room. It is the only record of your presence at the meeting.

Political Group meetings:

The group meetings will take place from 10.00 -11.00am. Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

Apologies:

Please notify your political group office (see contact telephone numbers below) if you are unable to attend this meeting.

Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3334	email: Labour.GroupLGA@local.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk

Location:

A map showing the location of Layden House is printed on the back cover.

LGA Contact:

Joseph Ling
0207 664 3166 / joseph.ling@local.gov.uk

Carers' Allowance

As part of the LGA Members' Allowances Scheme a Carer's Allowance of up to £7.20 per hour 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 #lgaiib

Improvement & Innovation Board – Membership 2016/2017

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (8)	
Cllr William Nunn (Chairman)	Breckland Council
Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Robert Gould	Dorset County Council
Cllr Linda Robinson	Wychavon District Council
Cllr Harvey Siggs	Somerset County Council
Cllr Michael Wilcox	Lichfield District Council
Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
Cllr Glen Sanderson JP (Observer)	Northumberland Council
Substitutes	
Cllr David Finch	Essex County Council
Cllr Dominic Gilham	Hillingdon London Borough Council
Cllr Richard Wenham	Central Bedfordshire Council
Labour (8)	
Cllr Judi Billing MBE (Deputy Chair)	North Hertfordshire District Council
Cllr Bob Price	Oxford City Council
Cllr Phil Davies	Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Andy Moorhead	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Sue Woodward	Staffordshire County Council
Cllr Sue Whitaker	Norfolk County Council
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE (Observer)	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Amy Cross	Blackpool Council
Cllr Nicole Meardon	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr Colin Glover	Carlisle City Council
Independent (3)	
Cllr Ron Woodley (Deputy Chair)	Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Cllr Bob Jennings	Epping Forest District Council
Cllr Mike Haines (Observer)	Teignbridge District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Andrew Stringer	Mid Suffolk District Council
Liberal Democrat (3)	
Mayor Dave Hodgson MBE (Vice-Chair)	Bedford Borough Council
Cllr Cherry Beath	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Cllr Howard Sykes MBE (Observer)	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Substitutes	
Cllr David Neighbour	Hart District Council
Observers	
Mr Richard Priestman	Local Government Improvement and Development
Mr Philip Sellwood	Energy Saving Trust

Attendance for 2016/17

Councillors	29/11/16	24/01/17
Conservative Group		
William Nunn	Yes	Yes
Peter Fleming OBE	Yes	Yes
Robert Gould	Yes	Yes
Linda Robinson	Yes	Yes
Harvey Siggs	Yes	Yes
Michael Wilcox	Yes	Yes
Barry Wood	Yes	Yes
Labour Group		
Judi Billing MBE	Yes	Yes
Bob Price	Yes	No
Phil Davies	Yes	Yes
Andy Moorhead	Yes	Yes
Tudor Evans OBE	Yes	Yes
Sue Woodward	Yes	Yes
Sue Whitaker	Yes	Yes
Independent		
Ron Woodley	Yes	Yes
Bob Jennings	Yes	Yes
Lib Dem Group		
Mayor Dave Hodgson MBE	No	Yes
Cherry Beath	Yes	No
Substitutes		
David Neighbour	Yes	
Amy Cross	Yes	
Nicole Meardon	Yes	
Richard Wenham	Yes	
Observers		
Philip Sellwood	Yes	No
Richard Priestman	Yes	Yes
Lead Peers		
Mike Haines	Yes	Yes
Howard Sykes	No	Yes
Glen Sanderson	Yes	Yes
Stephen Houghton CBE	Yes	No
Phelim MacCafferty	Yes	No

Agenda

Improvement & Innovation Board

Wednesday 8 March 2017

11.00 am

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Item	Page
<u>PART 1: PUBLIC</u>	
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2. Note of the Previous Meeting	1 - 6
3. Productivity Programme	7 - 14
a) Presentation from Cllr Sue Woodward and Wayne Mortiboys from Staffordshire County Council about their work as part of the Design in the Public Sector Programme.	
4. Independent Evaluation of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Programme: responding to the recommendations	15 - 20
b) Appendix A - Rising to the Challenge: An Independent Evaluation of the LGA's Corporate Peer Challenge Programme	21 - 26
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5. LGA Boards' Improvement Activity	33 - 34
a) Appendix A - Summary of improvement activity	35 - 39
<u>PART 2: PRIVATE</u>	
6. Reputation campaign: Presentation	

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 9 May 2017, 11.00 am, Rooms A&B, Ground Floor, Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG

Note of last Improvement & Innovation Board meeting

Title:	Improvement & Innovation Board
Date:	Tuesday 24 January 2017
Venue:	Rooms A&B, Ground Floor, Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Declarations of Interest	
	No declarations of interest were made.	
2	Note of the Previous Meeting	
	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed .	
3	Improvement and Innovation Board: Priorities	
	Dennis Skinner (Head of Improvement) introduced the item. He explained that, subsequent to decisions made at the previous board meeting, the board priorities and Terms of Reference had been amended. He also asked members to offer views on the improvement priorities for 2017/18.	
	Discussion	
	During the discussion, members reiterated the importance of effective engagement by members with the work of the board, including awareness of other LGA boards' improvement work, opportunities to communicate the LGA's improvement offer to the sector, and participating in the work led by the priority member leads eg Innovation Zone. Members asked to be informed of upcoming LGA board meetings, leadership programme training dates, etc.	
	Decisions	
	The members;	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed the Board priorities and member leads. Agreed the revised Terms of Reference. Agreed to exploit existing opportunities to engage members in the Board's work rather than to appoint portfolio roles. Offered views on the improvement priorities for 2017/18. 	

Action

Officers to provide members with information about upcoming LGA board meetings, leadership programme training dates, etc.

4 Independent evaluation of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge programme

Paul Clarke (Programme Manager, Peer Challenge) introduced Dr James Downe (Cardiff University) who presented the interim findings of Cardiff Business School's independent evaluation of the LGA's Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) programme.

Corporate Peer Challenge is a core element of the LGA's support to sector-led improvement launched in 2011. The Centre for Local & Regional Government Research were appointed (in August 2016) to carry out an independent evaluation to provide an assessment of the effectiveness, impact, and value for money of the programme.

Discussion

In the ensuing discussion, members raised the following points;

- The effectiveness of the CPC depending on it not being seen as an 'inspection' but rather as an improvement tool, with peers seen as "critical friends".
- The balance between containing all the feedback given to a council in the final report, and having that report published.
- The need to communicate the importance of CPCs through various channels, including members, senior officers, LGA principal advisers and the media. This is especially true for those authorities who as of yet have not received a CPC.

Decisions

The members;

1. **Noted** the interim evaluation items presented.
2. **Noted** that a final evaluation report will be available in due course.
3. **Requested** that the final findings be circulated to the Board as soon as they are published, and that the recommendations are reported at the next Board meeting, along with proposed responses.

Actions

Officers to;

1. **Distribute** the final findings of the evaluation when they are published.
2. **Submit** a report on the findings to the next Board meeting.

5 Highlighting Leadership offer: 2016/17

Cllr Judi Billing (Deputy Chair) introduced the report. She provided an overview of the programmes currently offered and highlighted the positive results from the impact evaluation included in the report. Ninety six percent of delegates surveyed said that they felt more confident in their role as a councillor having participated in the leadership programmes.

Discussion

Members raised the following points;

- The importance of the programme responding to the needs of the sector.
- The importance of developing new thinking and listening skills through the programme.
- The importance of demonstrating the leadership programme's value for money to DCLG and its uniqueness in the sector.
- The need for the LGA's leadership offer to skill both politicians and officers in the sector.

Members requested the following items;

- That as regards the table of bookings for the leadership programme consideration be given to including a percentage figure for uptake, as compared to the number of councillors in a region.
- That officers explore how we might better understand what happens to all ngdp graduates following completion of the programme.
- That officers consider how to demonstrate the value for money of the programme.

Decision

Members **noted** the contents of the report.

Actions

Officers to pursue the requests outlined above;

6 Managing member peers

Angela Page (Head of the Conservative Group Office) introduced the item on behalf of all PGOs, which covered the process of appointing and accrediting peers; peer training and reviewing peer performance.

She explained that the process for managing member peers differed for each political group and briefly described the approaches and the informal feedback mechanisms in place.

Discussion

Members discussed the following issues;

- The importance of supporting member peers in their continuous personal development through formalised training.
- The possibility of refreshing the training provided to the existing member peer pool.
- The importance of developing a mechanism to demonstrate the impact of our peer mentoring work to DCLG.

Decisions

Members;

1. **Noted** the approaches for appointing, training and reviewing peer performance adopted by the Group Offices.
2. **Advised** that consideration be given to ways in which the impact of our peer mentoring work can be assessed and demonstrated.

Action

Officers to pursue ways in which the impact of our peer mentoring work can be assessed.

7 #NewConversations: Engaging effectively with communities

Cllr Judi Billing (Vice Chair) introduced the item, outlining the development and launch of a new resource designed to assist councils engaging and consulting effectively with their communities. She invited the members to attend the launch event on Monday 27th February, in Layden House.

Heather Wills (Principal Adviser) explained that the resource was intended to be part of an overall strategic approach by a council, and thus would be useful to all authorities.

Decision

Members;

1. **Noted** the progress in developing a best practice resource for councils on engagement and consultation.
2. **Advised** that councils need to constantly and meaningfully engage with their communities in order to best utilise the relationship.

Action

Officers to **circulate** an invitation to the upcoming launch event to all board members.

8 Care and Health Improvement Programme (CHIP) 2017/18 and beyond

Andrew Hughes (Head of Implementation) introduced the item. He provided the board with an overall background for the Care and Health Improvement Programme (CHIP) at the LGA, as well as an overview of their programme areas and proposals for 2017/18. He invited views on the proposed programme for CHIP for 2017/18 and beyond.

Discussion

Members;

- Expressed general support for the programme and its future aims and objectives.
- Highlighted the importance of supporting councillors in their local leadership of the integration process and providing political reassurance.

Decisions

The members **noted** the presentation.

Action

Officers in the Care and Health Improvement programme to progress as directed by members.

9 LGA Boards' improvement activity

Vicky Goddard (Improvement Support Adviser) introduced the item highlighting the improvement activity undertaken by other LGA boards.

Decision

The members **noted** the report.

Action

Officers progress in line with members' direction.

10 Local Government Reputation campaign

Victoria Daly (Senior Media Officer) introduced the item, updating the board on the progress of the reputation campaign. She summarised the proposals for the campaign and provided a proposed campaign timetable.

Discussion

Members;

- Expressed general support for the campaign but questioned whether the proposed strapline was the right one.
- Requested officers to present further details to the board at the next meeting.

Decisions

Members;

1. **Noted** the progress of the campaign.
2. **Requested** further details to be presented to the board at the next meeting.

Action

Officers to **present** further details to the board on the reputation campaign at the next board meeting.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr William Nunn	Breckland Council
Vice-Chairman	Mayor Dave Hodgson MBE	Bedford Borough Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Judi Billing MBE Cllr Ron Woodley	North Hertfordshire District Council Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Members	Cllr Peter Fleming OBE Cllr Robert Gould Cllr Linda Robinson Cllr Harvey Siggs Cllr Michael Wilcox Cllr Barry Wood Cllr Phil Davies Cllr Andy Moorhead Cllr Tudor Evans OBE Cllr Sue Woodward Cllr Sue Whitaker Cllr Bob Jennings Cllr Glen Sanderson JP Cllr Mike Haines Cllr Howard Sykes MBE Mr Richard Priestman	Sevenoaks District Council Dorset County Council Wychavon District Council Somerset County Council Lichfield District Council Cherwell District Council Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council Plymouth City Council Staffordshire County Council Norfolk County Council Epping Forest District Council Northumberland Council Teignbridge District Council Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Local Government Improvement and Development
Apologies	Cllr Bob Price Cllr Cherry Beath Sir Stephen Houghton CBE Mr Philip Sellwood	Oxford City Council Bath & North East Somerset Council Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Energy Saving Trust (EST)
In Attendance	Dr James Downe	Cardiff University

Productivity Programme

Purpose

For discussion.

Summary

This report updates the Board on the progress being made in the Productivity Programme as we approach the end of 2016/17, with a particular focus on the achievements of the programme over the second half of the year.

There will be a presentation by Staffordshire County Council on its work as part of the Design in the Public Sector Programme to develop a community-based approach to its work with 'at risk' families (paragraphs 18-21 of the report refer to this programme).

Recommendations

Members of the Improvement and Innovation Board are asked to;

1. Note the updates and progress on the Productivity Programme.
2. Provide such guidance as the Board considers necessary to ensure that the programme meets its objectives.

Action

Officers to pursue the activities outlined in the light of member guidance.

Contact officer: Alan Finch
Position: Principal Adviser, Finance & Productivity
Phone no: 020 7664 3085
Email: alan.finch@local.gov.uk

Productivity Programme

Background

1. The Productivity Programme comprises a range of projects to help improve productivity and efficiency in councils through delivering savings, generating income and making better use of assets. The programme is devised by reference to the Memorandum of Understanding agreed with the Department of Communities and Local Government.
2. Local authorities can reduce their financial dependence on government and their call on local taxpayers in three ways;
 - 2.1. **Transforming services** either to make them more efficient and less wasteful or to find more effective ways of delivering to local people's needs.
 - 2.2. **Smarter sourcing** commissioning and buying the services, goods and works that contribute to local outcomes more effectively and, where possible, more cheaply, and managing the resulting contracts to optimise value from them.
 - 2.3. **Generating income**, which involves generating a greater proportion of funding locally, such as by commercialising the authority's existing skills, assets or commodities or investing to grow the local economy to generate wealth for the area.
3. The productivity programme contains work that will support local authorities in each of these three areas and several of our projects cut across more than one. Our programme complements and supplements the work of other agencies we work with such as the Cabinet Office, Crown Commercial Services and Local Partnerships.

Transforming Services

Digital work-stream

4. The LGA is working with councils to maximise the opportunities and better understand the risks that digitalisation creates. One of our digital work-streams is an annual grants programme which has had a different theme or focus each year.
5. The LGA Productivity Programme funded 27 Digital Expert council led projects early in 2015 to use digital tools and solutions to redesign and improve access to council services. We have captured and reported case studies for those projects as of the Autumn of 2016.
6. The funding was used in a number of ways including the implementation of a book and pay service; introduction of webchat or developing in-house agile project management skills to redesign services. Case studies include details of the issue the project set out to address; their approach; the tool or solution they applied, the impact this had for residents and the council, and the savings it helped generate. We also captured a summary for those small numbers of projects that had not completed their work, focusing on the underlying causes and drawing out the key lessons and learning for other councils. These are all available on the [LGA website](#).
7. An end of programme report will shortly be published on the LGA website, this highlights the benefits generated from these projects which includes over £2 million in savings and

£0.5 million in income. It also draws out the learning from across all the projects and highlights the key elements to delivering a successful digital project.

8. Last year we funded 16 further council led projects to use digital tools and approaches to support their work on national programmes of transformation including: Troubled Families, the integration of health and social care and welfare reform. These Digital Transformation projects are due to complete their work over the coming months so we will shortly commission the evaluation to capture the impact, the assets and savings generated, to help share the learning from these projects.
9. For this year we recently invited bids from councils for funding to support work on 'channel shift' – using digital technology to ensure that residents who choose to can access council services more quickly and easily. The deadline was Friday 3rd February and 64 bids were received. These will be assessed with the successful bids receiving funding before the end of March. The focus for this funding is to help councils use digital tools and approaches to get more services online and get more residents or businesses carrying out their business online with their council.

Cyber Security

10. The LGA is working with the recently launched National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) to help highlight the increasing risks of cyber-attacks as well as the guidance and support available to help councils. This includes: 10 steps to Cyber Security; protecting your organisation from ransomware; a weekly threat report available on the NCSC website.
11. The LGA has brought together the other sector representative bodies including, Solace, Socitm, ADASS, CIPFA, and LLP into the LG Cyber Security Stakeholder Group. This stakeholder group is working with the NCSC and Cabinet Office to help them better engage with the sector at a strategic level. A separate officer group with technical expertise is also being set up to work as an Advisory Board and to help the NCSC work directly with the relevant local and regional stakeholders, including Local Resilience Forums.

Shared Services and Collaboration

12. As previously reported, the popular LGA Shared Services map was updated for 2016 and relaunched in May last year and shows that the vast majority of councils are involved in shared service arrangements across the country. These arrangements are contributing to taxpayers saving more than half a billion pounds.
13. We have also launched a shared services "matchmaking" service to provide assistance to support councils who wish to share services and/or management teams with other councils. The offer includes access to funding for a dedicated shared service expert and/or paid for external mediation advice and support.
14. Since the launch of the "matchmaking" service in September 2016, 13 councils have contacted us to express an interest in accessing support from the LGA to extend their current shared service arrangements and support is being provided as appropriate.

Managing Demand & Service Design

Behavioural Insights Programme

15. Behavioural insights have been used across public services to generate low cost interventions to improve service outcomes. The approach is based on the idea that interventions aimed at encouraging people to make better choices for themselves and society will be more successful if they are based on insights from behavioural science. As behavioural insights continue to be applied to increasingly complex issues in local government, the LGA is looking to build an evidence base of what works.
16. Funding for phase 1 of the LGA's Behavioural Insight programme was awarded earlier this financial year and the following trials are currently taking place:
 - 16.1. Liverpool (public health): reducing sugar consumption in the local population.
 - 16.2. Lincolnshire (skills and enterprise): how to motivate employers (particularly SMEs) to encourage their staff to attend skills training.
 - 16.3. Leeds (adult social care): improving efficiency and outcomes during initial contact with adult social care services.
17. Funding has recently been awarded to four further projects:
 - 17.1. Reducing sugar consumption in schools – Brighton and Hove Council.
 - 17.2. Reduce incidents and impact of domestic abuse – Kent County Council.
 - 17.3. To increase the uptake of online STI testing – LB Lambeth and Southwark.
 - 17.4. Reduce demand on Housing service – Tunbridge Wells and 5 neighbouring district councils.

Design in the Public Sector

18. We have been working with the Design Council to support councils to examine the ways in which they deliver services and how they can be redesigned to save costs and improve their effectiveness. The project has been pursued on a region-by-region basis.
19. In this financial year to date a total of 15 councils have received support through this programme. The West Midlands cohort of 7 councils (Coventry, Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, Lichfield, Herefordshire, South Staffordshire, Shropshire) has finished the Design in Public Sector programme.
20. The 8 councils from the East Midlands (Northamptonshire, Hinckley and Bosworth, Cambridgeshire, Blaby, Ashfield, South Kesteven, Leicestershire and Milton Keynes) started in Nottingham in September. They have now just completed Day 5 of their programme.
21. The application process for the final cohort for this financial year - London - was launched in December. In addition we have produced a [webpage](#) to share the learning from the programme so far.

Smarter Sourcing

Procurement

22. The National Procurement Strategy sets out our objectives in relation to national category strategies in local government's main spend areas: Construction, ICT, Social Care and Energy. Councils can use the category strategies to test themselves against best practice in order to procure more effectively in these areas.

22.1. **Construction.** Since the last update we have commissioned a new category strategy for construction which will outline developments in the construction and Facilities Management markets, consider the implications for councils' procurement teams on developments such as Brexit, living wage, the new government Industrial Strategy, devolution and wider public sector collaboration, the apprenticeship levy and wider social value implications.

22.2. **ICT.** Collectively, Local Government spends around £2.5 – £3bn per annum on IT, with £1bn of this spent on sourcing and supporting all software applications, but this sum does not reflect the total financial influence that new technology and digital services can have. This new strategy, which is expected to be published this month, sets out how the sector can leverage this spend to enable real digital transformation - meaning councils can save significant amounts, not just in terms of IT expenditure, but more importantly deliver savings across their business operations.

22.3. **Social Care.** We have been working on implementing the recommendations in the social care category strategy and following feedback from the local authority stocktake on social care, we are working with the Whitehall in Industry Group and Public Sector Transformation Academy as our delivery partners on a social care market shaping workshop to be held in April. Depending on the success of the event we will look to roll out similar events in a number of regions.

22.4. **Energy.** We have recently commissioned sector experts to produce a new category strategy for energy which will focus on energy procurement in a rapidly changing market. This will include areas such as energy efficiency and demand management, energy storage and collaboration with partners (such as other councils, housing associations, businesses) and how savings can be measured. We envisage that the energy category strategy will be launched in Summer 2017.

23. In addition to the work outlined in the 2014 national procurement strategy we have identified a number of other important work-streams relating to procurement:

23.1. **Encouraging Innovation in LG Procurement.** The research phase for this work is now complete and we are in the process of writing a guidance document based on what we have learned. Our report will be published in Spring 2017

23.2. **Strategic Supplier Management.** We have identified a number of key suppliers to local government and are in the process of undertaking a detailed analysis of potential variations in cost, operating models and service levels, with a view to identifying differences in contracts with councils for exactly comparable unit costs and service levels. In parallel we also want to achieve a better understanding of issues facing the market, to identify barriers to suppliers being more innovative and

ultimately to form a fundamentally different more transparent relationship with suppliers.

- 23.3. **Skills.** Councils are currently duplicating effort across procurement which could be delivered more effectively through better use and sharing of resources. We have started to map out the skills and competencies that we believe a '21st Century Procurement Officer' might need and our plan is to identify existing good quality provision of skills training currently being delivered, this will help us to identify the gaps and we can focus on how to fill these gaps, through formal and informal training.

Income Generation

Commercialisation

24. Local Government's interest in commercialisation continues to grow and this is reflected in the response to the LGA's support offer to councils' commercial activities. The Advanced Commercial Group has met on 4 occasions this year and includes representatives from 25 councils. In addition experts have been commissioned through the LGA's Commercial Experts programme to work with 6 councils so far this year to contribute towards £7.6 million additional income for these councils.
25. In partnership with the Institute of Directors (IOD) we have launched our Commercial Skills training for senior officers. This offer has proved popular with all 20 places for the first cohort starting in February 2017 have been taken and so a second cohort starting in April in the North West has been released.
26. The LGA Commercial Skills Procurement Solution (CSPS) has been launched to provide councils with a place to procure commercial skills at a competitive rate to make the delivery of commercial projects easier. 40 councils have already registered an interest.

Economic Growth Advisers

27. Councils have been invited to submit project proposals to receive a £7000 grant and access to our 'pool' of local growth experts to help them deliver economic growth in their area. So far this financial year, three experts are working with five councils to implement local economic growth priorities.

One Public Estate

28. January 2017 saw the announcement of an expansion to the One Public Estate Programme (OPE). A further 79 councils in 17 partnerships have joined the One Public Estate programme. The 17 partnerships have been allocated over £2 million funding for 2016/17 to work collaboratively on land and property initiatives, generating new jobs and homes, creating more joined up public services to local communities, and delivering savings for the taxpayer. A further £2.45 million has been earmarked to these partnerships for 2017/18 with a formal announcement anticipated in the new financial year.
29. In addition to new areas joining the programme, the 43 existing OPE Partnerships also had the opportunity to apply for additional funding to expand their current OPE programmes. A further £1.6 million has been allocated to councils across 21 existing partnerships in 2016/17, with a further £2.36 million earmarked for 2017/18.

Cross-cutting Offer

Productivity Experts

30. The Productivity Experts Programme provides an opportunity for councils to access expertise that will provide them with the skills they need to realise ambitious efficiency savings and income generation. The programme offers bespoke support, brokered by the LGA, on a specific project or initiative. The LGA also provides £6,000 grant funding towards this support for each project. Productivity Experts are currently working with 34 councils to deliver £26.5million efficiency savings, against a target from DCLG of working with 25 councils to deliver £25 million efficiency savings. The experts provided support around a wide range of areas, including economic growth, procurement, asset management and specific service efficiency reviews. In August 2016 we commissioned an external evaluation of the Productivity Experts programme from its launch in 2012 through to January 2016 when the evaluation began. The evaluators found that during this time the programme had contributed to efficiency savings/income generation in the vicinity of £133 million.

Innovation Zone

31. At its November meeting the Board agreed to a small, informal Board advisory group to provide strategic direction to the Zone's development. Vicki Goddard, Improvement Support Adviser, has since been working with the Board's innovation lead Cllr Peter Fleming OBE, and the Political Group Offices, to organise and work with the advisory group, which comprises Cllrs Fleming (Conservative), Judi Bulling MBE (Labour), Bob Jennings (Independent) and Mayor Dave Hodgson MBE (Liberal Democrat). The group's role includes advising of examples that could feature in the Zone, commenting on the developing programme and participating in the Zone itself. Additionally:

- 31.1. Newton Europe, who sponsored the Zone last year, has been confirmed as this year's sponsor.
- 31.2. Officers have been widely promoting opportunities to showcase in the Zone from all sectors on any subject, as suggested by the Board, and have collated over 80 ideas.
- 31.3. Officers are now in the process of assessing those ideas and will seek the views of the Board's Innovation Zone advisory group before inviting the strongest examples and structuring the programme.
- 31.4. With Cllr Fleming, we are exploring a general Zone theme of "positive disruption" as a way of linking all showcased examples.

Financial Support to Councils.

32. Individualised support on financial issues has been provided throughout the year in the form of Financial Reviews and Financial Health Checks and bespoke support to councils facing challenging financial circumstances. Since financial issues rarely stand on their own, this is usually as part of a wide package of sector led support. We have additionally funded CIPFA to develop a range of fraud awareness tools for elected members which are expected to be available before the end of the current financial year. A procurement exercise began in January to recruit, as a pilot, a small number of Finance Improvement

& Sustainability Advisers to enhance our capacity to support councils on financial matters. These will work alongside regional teams to ensure that we are proactive in supporting councils with financial challenges.

Implications for Wales

33. There are no implications for Wales contained in this report.

Financial Implications

34. The Productivity Programme for 2016/17 be funded from grant provided by DCLG under our Memorandum of Understanding with the Department.

Next Steps

35. Officers will pursue the activities outlined in the light of member guidance.

Independent Evaluation of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Programme: responding to the recommendations

Purpose

For information and discussion.

Summary

The Centre for Local & Regional Government Research at Cardiff University has recently completed an evaluation of the Corporate Peer Challenge programme. This report sets out the recommendations made by the Centre for Local & Regional Government Research (**Appendix A**) and provides an initial response to each of them (**Appendix B**), for members' consideration.

Recommendations

Members of the Improvement and Innovation Board are asked to:

1. Note the key findings of the evaluation report (**Appendix A**).
2. Consider the recommendations from the evaluation, including the initial response proposed, as set out in paragraph 7 and **Appendix B**.

Action

As agreed by members.

Contact officer: Paul Clarke
Position: Programme Manager (Peer Challenge)
Phone no: 07887 706960
Email: paul.clarke2@local.gov.uk

Independent Evaluation of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Programme: responding to the recommendations

Background

1. Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) is a core element of the LGA's support to sector-led improvement launched in 2011. Feedback is regularly and routinely collated from councils who have had a peer challenge. External challenge and independent assessment is sought on a regular basis to ensure the offer remains fit for purpose and continues to be an effective tool to support improvement in councils.
2. The Centre for Local & Regional Government Research at Cardiff University has recently completed their evaluation of the Corporate Peer Challenge programme. The purpose of the evaluation was to provide an independent assessment of the effectiveness, impact, and value for money of the CPC programme. Dr James Downe attended the Board meeting on 24th January 2017 to present the interim findings.
3. The evaluation tells us that CPC remains a highly effective tool at the heart of the Sector-Led Improvement programme, has a positive impact for participating councils and the sector as a whole, and provides value for money. The research carried out shows that:
 - 3.1. CPCs are commissioned for a variety of reasons. The ability for councils to choose the timing of their CPC continues to be an important feature, as is the focus on the five core components of priority setting, leadership, governance, finance and capacity. The quality of peer teams, and the role of the LGA and its peer challenge managers in managing and delivering the CPC programme, are recognised as important factors.
 - 3.2. There are clear examples of CPCs providing positive impacts for councils. These tend to occur in five main areas, all of which are of significance to ensuring councils are best placed to meet the challenges they face - including: providing reassurance, improving external reputation, prompting behaviour change, informing organisational change and supporting service transformation and financial sustainability.
 - 3.3. The CPC is a good example of the sector helping itself by providing improvement support at a lower cost than is available through external consultancy. While there are costs to the LGA in managing CPCs and officer time is needed by councils receiving CPCs, there are a range of benefits that offer a return on the cost and investment, including peer learning and sharing of practice. CPCs can also be a catalyst for a range of support that can help prevent failure and the costs of intervention.
4. The evaluation findings are summarised in 'Rising to the Challenge - An Independent Evaluation of the LGA's Corporate Peer Challenge Programme – Executive Summary' which is attached at Appendix 1.

Issues for consideration

5. The evaluation stresses the importance of the CPC continuing to evolve, and identifies areas for further improvement and development. It suggests the LGA needs to:
 - 5.1. Market and promote CPC more pro-actively by using 'impact stories' from those who have had a CPC to show how the process helps councils to improve and to encourage more councils to have one.
 - 5.2. Ensure more rigorous preparation of CPC teams and consider ways to make sure the CPC process is consistent – including earlier provision of background information and standardisation of questions.
 - 5.3. Continue to plan-ahead to ensure that CPC is future-proofed and can take account of new forms of collaboration such as shared services and management, commercialisation and devolution.
 - 5.4. Put a greater emphasis on sharing learning on 'good practice' both within the CPC process and across the whole sector.
 - 5.5. Do more to emphasise the importance of activities that follow a CPC, and show the value of the whole sector-led improvement system.
6. The Centre for Local & Regional Government Research make a number of recommendations to address these. Appendix 2 provides the full list of recommendations and sets out an initial response to each of them for members' consideration.
7. Many of the recommendations helpfully reinforce work that is already planned or in progress. Some of the recommendations require further consideration and will benefit from members' consideration. The views of the Board are sought on the following recommendations and proposed responses:

Recommendation	Comments and proposed response
7.1. Consider offering CPC's to councils where the bespoke element focuses solely on one of the core components (for example the leadership of place)	7.2. Given the inter-dependencies of the five core components and their importance in terms of council performance and improvement, all need to be considered as part of a CPC. The current CPC offer allows councils to focus on certain aspects of the core components so that the emphasis is proportionate to requirements and context. We have a Finance Peer Review and other peer challenge offers which can be tailored.
7.3. Not allow any council to select a lead peer that it has had previous significant dealings with	7.4. Peer teams are assembled in response to the scope/focus of the CPC agreed with the council. As part of the set up/scoping meeting there is a discussion about the peer team required. Sometimes this involves identifying specific chief executives and leaders that might

	<p>potentially be approached. This is intended to ensure peer teams are seen as credible by the council, which is an important consideration given the improvement focus of the CPC process. Obviously for second CPCs and follow up visits it is often helpful to have some of the original peer team.</p> <p>7.5. Those involved in set up/scoping meetings will be asked to ensure this is considered and any concerns registered.</p>
7.6. Widen and refresh the pool of member peers	7.7. Whilst there has been recruitment of new member peers over the past couple of years, this will be considered further with LGA Political Group Offices.
7.8. Make it a requirement that all member peers who are council leaders or cabinet members have a CPC in their own council	<p>7.9. Political Group Offices have been asked to consider this when sourcing member peers for CPCs.</p> <p>7.10. This may not be practicable to implement in reality (e.g. in instances where member peers are part of a coalition administration). It is also likely to adversely impact on the existing peer capacity we have to draw on for other peer challenges (where specific portfolio experience is required).</p>
7.11. Provide training for all member peers	<p>7.12. Training is currently offered to all new member peers. In addition all peers receive a briefing and guidance from the Peer Challenge Manager before any CPC they are deployed to.</p> <p>7.13. More peer training sessions to be arranged, in liaison with Political Group Offices, to ensure that existing and experienced member peers are offered refresher training.</p>
7.14. Consider publishing a list of councils that have not yet engaged with CPC nor appear to have used other similar processes, so that the sector can see the extent of non-engagement with sector-led improvement	<p>7.15. Views of members on this recommendation are required as it may have impact for LGA membership.</p> <p>7.16. CPC take-up is currently monitored and there is a narrative/intelligence on all councils that have not yet had a CPC and the reasons/rationale behind that. CPC is one part of the wider SLI offer, so including take-up of other parts of the offer would need to be considered.</p>
7.17. Discuss with member peers the reasons why some have not had a CPC in their own authority	7.18. We know from our monitoring of take-up and demand that there are a number of different reasons why some councils have not yet committed to a CPC.

	7.19. Members views are sought on whether as part of the future recruitment of new peers there should be a requirement of having had a CPC in their council
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Implications for Wales

8. The Corporate Peer Challenge programme applies to councils in England only. The WLGA does not commission us to work on wider improvement issues, including peer challenge.

Financial Implications

9. No financial implications arising directly from this report. However, some actions considered and agreed in response to recommendations may potentially have an impact on the CPC budget and costs.

Next steps

10. Actions agreed in response to the recommendations will be progressed accordingly.
11. A copy of the full evaluation report ('Rising to the Challenge') will be made available on the LGA website.

Appendix A

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE: AN INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE LGA'S CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE PROGRAMME

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

James Downe, Ian Bottrill and Steve Martin
Centre for Local & Regional Government Research
Cardiff Business School
February 2017



Introduction

1. **Just over two-thirds of councils have commissioned a CPC.** As a significant part of the local government sector has now been through the process, it is a good time to reflect upon the experiences to date.
2. The LGA commissioned the Centre for Local & Regional Government Research at Cardiff University to **assess the effectiveness, impact and value for money of the CPC programme** in helping the sector with improvement and financial sustainability.
3. The **researchers conducted several activities** including documentary analysis, a workshop with LGA challenge managers, interviews with key stakeholders (including lead officer and member peers), case studies with 12 councils, and the shadowing of a CPC for four days.

The corporate peer challenge process

4. Councils gave a **wide variety of reasons for volunteering for a CPC** that included wanting to get an external view on their improvement journey, validation of proposed plans and strategies, and help to tackle 'knotty issues'.
5. **The timing of when the CPC takes place remains crucial for all councils.**
6. Whilst the CPC is improvement focused, **self-assessments (or position statements) often reflect past performance rather than future ambitions** and the challenges to achieving them. We think the LGA could be more explicit in their guidance to councils by stating the purpose of the self-assessment/position statement. There is also a responsibility on councils to get out of the inspection mind-set where achievements were 'sold' to inspectors and clearly explain where they need support to help make improvements.
7. **The LGA has strengthened the CPC's focus on financial management and sustainability** through the provision of supporting information. A finance briefing is produced by the LGA prior to each challenge which provides data and some commentary on a council's financial situation. There is potential to supplement the briefing with performance data using LG Inform, something we know the LGA is currently working on.
8. The operating environment in which councils are working has changed in the last few years. These contextual changes have been reflected in adjustments made to the core components with **greater emphasis now being placed on the leadership of place and, in particular, the financial sustainability of councils.**
9. There was **unanimous support for core components being a major part of the process.** Arguably, this is even more important at a time of significant reductions in finance as it provides a chance for councils to consider, from both a managerial and political perspective, what are the council's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to change.

10. The LGA needs to continue to be clear that **examining the five core components is a non-negotiable part of the CPC process**. But there also needs to be an appropriate **balance between these areas and any bespoke element** agreed. The process should be used flexibly depending upon the nature of the challenge and the performance of councils.
11. **Very positive comments were received on the quality of CPC teams** with interviewees praising their professionalism and ability to offer challenge as 'critical friends'. A significant amount of effort goes into the selection of the team to reflect the focus of each CPC, as well as the type of council, political make-up and characteristics of the place it serves.
12. **The relationship between the lead officer peer and the host chief executive is the most important one in the process**. While there should be some discussion on the chief executive best placed for each challenge, councils having a CPC for the first time **should not be allowed to pick a lead peer who they have had significant previous dealings with**.
13. The work of member peers is appreciated by councils and **having a politician on the team is crucial for an effective CPC**. There is a view from some members, however, that this choice is unnecessarily restricted and there is something akin to a "closed shop".
14. The LGA recognises the importance of recruiting and developing member peers as part of sector-led improvement. But more could be done, working with political group offices, in **widening the recruitment of peers and ensuring that training takes place**.
15. **We found considerable support for having people from outside local government on the team**. Representatives from the private or voluntary sector could potentially offer useful perspectives.
16. We believe that the forensic view of externals, especially those who have been 'insiders' and understand the sector, can add to the internal view of the local government family. **The LGA should consider more often where engagement from externals could help on a particular CPC**.
17. Our research suggests that all the feedback processes have value, but **it is the daily conversations between the lead officer peer and chief executive where the real learning often takes place**.
18. We recognise that the reports are written constructively to inform and support improvement, but **they need to provide sufficient information to enable all councillors and the public to hold the council to account**.
19. Follow-ups can help to show stakeholders, both within the sector and externally, about the positive impact CPC can have. The LGA should **consider whether different approaches should be taken in different councils, so the follow-up visit depends upon context**.

The impact of corporate peer challenge process

20. There are **five main areas where the CPC can lead to impact**. These include:
- 20.1. Providing reassurance
 - 20.2. Improving external reputation
 - 20.3. Behaviour change
 - 20.4. Organisational change
 - 20.5. Service transformation and financial sustainability.
21. Councils used CPC to **provide some reassurance or endorsement around their performance** and advice on whether their emerging plans and proposals for future service delivery were robust.
22. CPC can also have knock-on effects like **improving morale and confidence across the organisation**, although this is difficult to quantify. Where a group of experts from within the sector suggest that they are responding to challenges in similar ways, it can provide comfort to senior managers and politicians.
23. CPC was credited by interviewees with **helping to introduce a range of new behaviours**. We heard from several councils that they had become much more outward-facing as a result of CPC and that was part of their reason for engaging in the first place. Councils have been encouraged to make visits to other councils to explore good practice.
24. The CPC team can also **act as honest brokers**. Where difficult conversations need to be take place, these can more easily be held after the team had flagged up an important issue.
25. CPC can have an **impact on the behaviour of members** and this is greatly assisted by them being involved in the process and having some ownership of the changes.
26. Our case studies revealed ways in which CPC had led to **improvements in how councils were run**. In some cases, there were changes to officer structures to improve the speed and quality of decision making and improve joined-up working.
27. In around half of our case studies, the CPC raised issues of capacity which councils responded to by **realigning resources so there was more emphasis on the 'front-line'**. In three cases, recommendations from the CPC led to new senior management appointments.
28. CPC had an **increasing impact on the financial sustainability of councils**. CPC teams can do several things to help improve the financial performance of councils. Having outside experts examine financial plans can also provide a **healthy dose of realism**.

29. CPC has helped councils to take a **more strategic approach to making financial savings** rather than just salami slicing. Teams have encouraged councils to change many aspects of service delivery.
30. Holding a mirror up to councils is useful, but for many, **what happens after a CPC is often more important than the CPC itself and leads to impact**. The process has variously been described to us as an MOT or health check and as a potential “trigger” for a set of improvement activities and support from the LGA.

The value for money of corporate peer challenge

31. **The amount of time that a council has spent on a CPC is difficult to quantify** because most do not record the staff time given over to it. The general view was that “it takes as long as it takes”. While these costs can be significant, they are **nothing like as burdensome as the costs of a formal inspection**.
32. Councils benefit in several ways from being involved in a process of peer learning. **Peers gain new insights on how other councils operate** and have the opportunity of bringing back learning to their own organisation.
33. There was a unanimous view that **CPC is a good example of the sector helping itself by providing improvement support at relatively low cost**. CPC is just one mechanism that can help councils improve and support (both formal and informal) which is provided after a CPC is valuable and difficult to put a price on.

The voluntary nature of the process

34. We heard a consistent view that **some authorities are keeping their heads down and don't want to engage for fear of being “found out”**. If this is the case, there is a danger that CPC may not be reaching the councils that need improvement support the most.
35. There was some support for a degree of compulsion and a ‘middle ground’ between a voluntary CPC and a prescriptive inspection regime. **The LGA should be bolder in setting out the expectation that all councils should have a CPC (or Finance Peer Review) every four to five years** and getting councils to engage unless there is a compelling reason not to.
36. There are some **regional peers (including council leaders) who have significant experience of being part of teams going into other authorities, but have not volunteered for a CPC in their own council**. This does not set an appropriate example for the sector.
37. CPC does not have all the answers, but it can act as a **very effective trigger for a range of support mechanisms** that can help struggling councils to avoid getting into serious difficulty.

Conclusions and recommendations

38. It is important that the process continues to evolve. **The report outlines a series of recommendations** for the LGA to consider to improve the process.
39. The LGA needs to **market CPC even more pro-actively by using ‘impact stories’** from those who have had a CPC to show how the process helps councils to improve and to encourage councils to rise to the challenge.
40. There needs to be **more rigorous preparation of the CPC teams** and efforts made to ensure the process is consistent.
41. The LGA needs to **plan-ahead to ensure that CPC is future-proofed** and can take account of new forms of collaboration.
42. There needs to be a **greater emphasis on sharing learning on ‘good practice’** both within the CPC process and across the whole sector.
43. The LGA could **do more to emphasise the importance of activities that follow a CPC**, and show the value of the whole sector-led improvement system rather than just the individual components.

Appendix B

Independent Evaluation of the LGA's Corporate Peer Challenge Programme: Recommendations and responses

Recommendation	Comments and proposed
Before the CPC	
1. Continue to encourage councils to be honest and open in their self-assessment about where the CPC can most usefully help them.	We will ensure LGA Principal Advisers and Peer Challenge Managers continue to do this as part of the liaison re scoping and preparation. We will also ensure that national and regional peers make this clear in their discussions with council leaders. We will also amend the CPC Preparation Guidance Note and provide examples to reiterate this.
2. Provide examples of council's self-assessments that demonstrate how the CPC process can be tightly scoped to target a council's priorities and needs.	Peer Challenge Managers will continue to do this as part of their preparation liaison with councils. We will provide 'top tips' and consider a standard template.
3. Further develop the pre-challenge information provided to peer teams by including performance data from LG Inform in addition to the finance briefing.	A performance briefing for CPC teams is in development and will be rolled out across CPCs during 2017, in addition to the current finance briefing which is valued by peers.
4. Consider introducing greater standardisation of the process including the provision of questions for team members to pose in interviews.	A key principle to date has been that the CPC is proportionate to the issues and challenges facing the council, so the focus needs to be on bespoke and tailored conversations rather than standardised interviews. There are however common areas/topics that are covered in sessions such as staff workshops and we will develop some standard questions/prompts and include in our peer team briefings.

The CPC process	
5. Continue to work closely with councils to scope a CPC which can be delivered in three or four days.	We will continue to do this.
6. Consider offering CPC's to councils where the bespoke element focuses solely on one of the core components (for example the leadership of place).	Given the inter-dependencies of the five core components and their importance in terms of council performance and improvement, all need to be considered as part of a CPC. The current CPC offer allows councils to focus on certain aspects of the core components so that the emphasis is proportionate to requirements and context. We have a Finance Peer Review and other peer challenge offers which can be tailored.
7. Ensure that CPC continues to evolve to meet the future requirements of the sector.	The core components are reviewed regularly. The CPC approach is designed to be adaptable to the context within which the council is operating – eg if it is part of a Combined Authority/Devo deal. We will engage member peers about this at the Member Peer Conference in September.
The CPC team	
8. Try to have a qualified accountant (or at least someone with financial expertise) as part of each team as this will help to provide challenge on council's finances	We will continue to do this. Where there is a particular focus on finance, or where we know finance is going to be a key issue, we ensure the peer team includes someone with a finance role (eg S151 officer and/or cabinet member with the finance portfolio).
9. Not allow any council to select a lead peer that it has had previous significant dealings with	Peer teams are assembled in response to the scope/focus of the CPC agreed with the council. As part of the set up/scoping meeting there is a discussion about the peer team required. Sometimes this involves identifying specific chief executives and leaders that might potentially be approached. This is intended to ensure peer teams are seen as credible by the council, which is an important consideration given the improvement focus of the CPC process. Obviously for second CPCs and follow up visits it is often helpful to have some of the original peer team.

	Those involved in set up/scoping meetings will be asked to ensure this is considered and any concerns registered.
10. Widen and refresh the pool of member peers.	Whilst there has been recruitment of new member peers over the past couple of years, this will be considered further with LGA Political Group Offices.
11. Make it a requirement that all member peers who are council leaders or cabinet members have a CPC in their own council	Political Group Offices have been asked to consider this when sourcing member peers for CPCs. This may not be practicable to implement in reality (e.g. in instances where member peers are part of a coalition administration). It is also likely to adversely impact on the existing peer capacity we have to draw on for other peer challenges (where specific portfolio experience is required).
12. Provide training for all member peers.	Training is currently offered to all new member peers. In addition all peers receive a briefing and guidance from the Peer Challenge Manager before any CPC they are deployed to. More peer training sessions to be arranged, in liaison with Political Group Offices, to ensure that existing and experienced member peers are offered refresher training.
13. Increase the number of non-local government people on CPC teams.	Peer teams are assembled in response to a council's requirements. Several of the CPCs during 2016/17 have had one or more non-local government people on the team.
14. Provide CPC teams with extracts from a best practice database to share with councils.	To be considered further as part of the work to develop a performance briefing for peer teams.

Feedback and reporting	
15. Continue to be clear that a CPC is not an inspection but rather a tool to support sector-led improvement and that the team are invited to be 'critical friends'.	We will continue to do this through Principal Advisers, regional peers, and others.
16. Consider ways in which CPC reports can more closely align with the verbal feedback so that all messages received are clear and consistent.	We will consider this further. The key alignment is with the feedback presentation delivered onsite.
17. Provide sufficient information in reports to enable all councillors and the public to hold the council to account on the areas for improvement.	Peer feedback, and the reports that summarise that feedback, are written for the council receiving the CPC and designed to inform and support improvement. We will consider further when reviewing the current report style and template.
18. Outline clear recommendations for improvement in all reports.	All CPC reports include recommendations. We are providing report writing training to all peer challenge managers supported by the Plain Language Commission.
19. Provide follow-up support to those councils in greatest need and consider different ways in which they could assess progress in other councils	We will continue to do this. A follow-up visit is currently part of the standard CPC offer and a range of other follow up activity occurs where it needs to. Follow up support is agreed with the LGA Principal Adviser to ensure activity is proportionate to need and risk.
Impact of the CPC	
20. Put greater emphasis on assessing where CPC leads to improvement and consider how they can re-design the process to capture impact	To be considered further with LGA Principal Adviser and Peer Challenge Managers. We will consider how the current evaluation survey carried out with chief executives and the CPC follow up visit can be developed to better incorporate this.

<p>21. Ask councils to write a short summary (1-2 pages) on where CPC has directly led to improvement. These should feature in the LGA's portfolio of good practice examples.</p>	<p>We propose to try out this approach on a number of forthcoming CPCs which will inform consideration as to the best timing for this activity. We will also consider how the current evaluation survey carried out with chief executives and the CPC follow up visit can be developed to include this.</p>
<p>22. Consider how to ensure greater public understanding of the value of CPC.</p>	<p>To be considered further.</p>
<p>23. Place greater emphasis on sharing good practice within the CPC process and across the sector.</p>	<p>To be considered further. We will reiterate the emphasis on peers being ready to share experience, knowledge and examples as part the peer training and peer team guidance and briefing.</p>
<p>24. Continue to support councils in their financial planning, which will be particularly important in the light of changes to Revenue Support Grant in 2020.</p>	<p>We recognise the importance of this and will continue to do this. Financial management and viability will remain a core component of the CPC. The Finance Peer Review will also remain part of the offer.</p>
<p>The value for money of CPC</p>	
<p>25. Try to capture data on the costs of CPC as part of the feedback survey conducted with each council.</p>	<p>We ask about whether the preparation is proportionate in our CPC evaluation survey with chief executives. We are considering how the current survey can be adapted further.</p>
<p>The voluntary nature of the process (increasing take-up)</p>	
<p>26. Consider publishing a list of councils that have not yet engaged with CPC nor appear to have used other similar processes, so that the sector can see the extent of non-engagement with sector-led improvement</p>	<p>CPC take-up is currently monitored and there is a narrative/intelligence on all councils that have not yet had a CPC and the reasons/rationale behind that. CPC is one part of the wider SLI offer, so including take-up of other parts of the offer would need to be considered.</p> <p>Views of members on this recommendation are required as it may have impact for LGA membership.</p>

<p>27. Reiterate a clear policy statement that it expects all councils to have a CPC (or Finance Peer Review) every four to five years unless there are exceptional circumstances.</p>	<p>We will reiterate this as part of publishing and promoting the independent evaluation report. LGA Principal Advisers will continue to make this clear in their liaison with council chief executives and officers. We will also ensure that national and regional peers make this clear in their discussions with council leaders.</p>
<p>28. Continue to target efforts on those councils that have not yet signed-up for a CPC.</p>	<p>We will continue to do this and work closely with members. We monitor take-up and demand. More than half of the CPCs delivered during 2016/17 were first time CPCs.</p>
<p>29. Discuss with member peers the reasons why some have not had a CPC in their own authority.</p>	<p>We know from our close monitoring of take-up and demand that there are a number of different reasons why some councils have not yet committed to a CPC. Members' views are sought on whether it should be a requirement for being a member peer.</p>
<p>30. Conduct a marketing campaign featuring 'impact stories' from those who have had a CPC to show how the process can help councils to improve.</p>	<p>To be considered further. The evaluation report contains examples of impact and this will be published. A CPC Programme Annual Report 16/17 is planned.</p>

LGA Boards' Improvement Activity

Purpose

For note.

Summary

To present a progress report to the Board on improvement activity undertaken by other LGA Boards. A summary of the activity is presented in **Appendix A**.

Recommendation

Members of the Improvement and Innovation Board are asked to note the progress report on improvement activity undertaken by other LGA Boards.

Action

Officers to respond as necessary to any comments.

Contact officer: Vicki Goddard
Position: Improvement Support Adviser
Phone no: 0207 664 3078
Email: vicki.goddard@local.gov.uk

LGA Boards' Improvement activity

Background

1. Members have agreed that it is important for this Board to retain a strategic or “overarching” perspective on the improvement activity currently undertaken across LGA Boards. This will help ensure consistency with the key principles underpinning the approach to sector-led improvement and help avoid any potential duplication.
2. To achieve this:
 - 2.1. officers coordinate the flow of business through the Boards so that the Improvement and Innovation Board can be invited to express strategic views about any significant improvement issues put before other Boards
 - 2.2. during the year the Improvement and Innovation Board receives suitably timed progress reports on the major improvement programmes
 - 2.3. as far as possible, the Improvement and Innovation Board meets towards the end of each cycle of meetings so it can consider any significant issues put before other Boards and then report back to Boards at their next meeting.
3. A progress report drawing together a summary of significant improvement activity led by other LGA Board's since this was last reported is set out in **Appendix A**.

Implications for Wales

4. There are no implications for Wales.

Financial implications

5. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

Next steps

6. Subject to members' views, officers will continue to brief the Board on the latest improvement activities across all LGA Boards.

Appendix A

Summary of Improvement Activity

1. This progress report draws together a summary of significant improvement activity led by other LGA Board's since this was last reported in January:

City Regions and People and Places Boards

2. The LGA's work on devolution is led by the City Regions and People and Places Boards. Under their direction, the LGA has sought to support councils with their devolution ambitions, with activity primarily focussing on: negotiating deals, moving from a deal to implementation and sharing knowledge and best practice. Recent activity has included:

- 2.1. Continuing to add to the suite of publications and online tools related to devolution:

- 2.1.1. A workshop in support of the launch of an LGA commissioned ESPRESSO (Estimated and Simplified Public Revenue and Expenditure Standardised Statistical Output) tool by New Economy, which allows local authorities to develop an understanding of total tax and spend within a given area in support of devolution and public service reform initiatives.

- 2.1.2. The publication of a guide – *Don't be left in the Dark, Devolution and Mayors* – to support councils and the public in advance of mayoral elections this May in six devolution deal areas.

- 2.2. Working with Universities UK and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to:

- 2.2.1. Take forward the pilot phase of the Leading Places project, which aims to strengthen and develop place-based collaborative leadership between the local government and higher education sectors, in advance of a national conclusion event on 28 March.

- 2.2.2. Supporting the launch of a new leadership development programme called the Local Growth Academy aimed at building the operational capacity of anchor institutions to support inclusive growth and place-based leadership.

- 2.3. Continuing to develop and deliver our bespoke support offer to areas looking to secure and advance local devolution, including: leadership support, overview and scrutiny support, policy development, communications and negotiations with Whitehall.

Community Wellbeing Board

Care and Health Improvement Programme (CHIP)

3. The maturing collaboration with NHS Clinical Commissioners on Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) leadership support included the year's final HWB Chairs and Vice Chairs Leadership Essentials on 24 and 25 January co-facilitated by Cllr Jennifer Mein, Leader

of Lancashire County Council, and Dr Graham Jackson, Chair of NHS Clinical Commissioners. The Annual Chairs and Vice chairs summit on 22 March is due to attract over 50 councillor HWB Chairs and GP Vice Chairs, co-chaired by Cllr Jonathan McShane and Dr Graham Jackson. The theme is “Local Leadership, Local Solutions” with a blend of national and local speakers, workshops and a panel session with contributions from the Department of Health, Think Local Act Personal, the Association of Directors of Public Health, London Councils, acute providers, Salford City and Nottinghamshire. The annual state of the nation research on health and wellbeing system leadership will also be launched. This research, which we commission Shared Intelligence to undertake, is unique in being the only longitudinal study of HWBs.

4. This quarter we have supported HWB/system development and Chairs in: Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Bexley, Stoke, York, Gloucestershire and Bracknell Forest. A growing trend is HWB cluster working and we delivered a highly successful event in Cheshire and Wirral for three HWBs attracting 45 attendees led by Cllr Ruth Dombey. In total this year 29 individual HWBs have received tailored support plus three clusters and including three district based boards.
5. The “Prevention Matters” workshop for all elected members, has been phenomenally well received and 30 have been delivered in the last two quarters, eg for 60 members in Trafford, with 14 expressions of interest for the new financial year when CHIP funding for a Prevention stream is agreed. Prevention Matters has been delivered to clusters of councils, districts, upper tier councils and joint sessions by a trained member peer and public health specialist. This workshop has widened the programme’s reach.
6. We piloted the new approach System Wide Care and Health Peer Challenge with Kirklees and jointly with Coventry and Warwickshire. We are undertaking an evaluation exercise and engaging with NHS partners to build their support for the peer challenge so that it has real traction with the system.
7. Facilitated integration workshops enable local health and wellbeing system leaders to identify their ambitions, capacity, capability and commitment to make meaningful progress to achieving a fully integrated local health and care system, and enable them to identify where they are now and what more they need to do to escalate the scale and pace of integration. The rollout of these workshops has included sessions in: Milton Keynes, Barking and Dagenham, Bromley, Luton, Herefordshire and Northamptonshire bringing the total so far to 18 and with 16 expressions of interest for the next quarter including four clusters. The credibility and experience of the facilitator is paramount in the effectiveness of this offer and we have built up an excellent cadre of NHS and Local Government peers and associates to deliver.

Children and Young People Board

8. The third and final children’s Leadership Essentials course took place in January. A total of 48 members attended the three courses held between September 2016 and January 2017, and planning will soon begin on the next round of courses, due to commence in September this year.
9. The LGA/Association of Directors of Children’s Services/Solace Children’s Improvement Board, met on 24 January, where discussions focussed on developing a sector response

to the National Audit Office 'children in need of help or protection' report and the effectiveness of the Department for Education's 'Partners in Practice' programme. The Board also received a presentation from the Isos partnership on an LGA-commissioned project looking at the role of different delivery models in driving improvement in children's services.

Culture, Tourism and Sport (CTS) Board

10. Culture peer challenges were completed during January and February in Cheshire West and Chester, Sutton, Reading and Carlisle councils.
11. Leadership Essentials in Sport events were delivered in July and November 2016.
12. Leadership Essentials Culture events were delivered in November and December 2016. There are no further such events planned up to March 2017.

Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport (EEHT) Board

13. The South East housing improvement event was held on 27 January. This very successful event focused on building homes and funding associated infrastructure. The event attracted 90 attendees including councillors and council officers. The Keynote speech was given by
14. Lord Bob Kerslake, President, Local Government Association. The event was an opportunity for councils to share experiences and showcase good practice.
15. A buses conference, 'The Road Ahead for Buses' was held at Layden House on 15 February. Attended by councillors and officers, the event brought together government, councils and the private sector to discuss the future of the sector in the context of the Buses Bill. The Feedback from the event has been very positive.

Safer and Stronger Communities Board

Countering extremism – new Leadership Essentials course

16. We will be holding this at the end of February to explore councils' role in countering extremism. The programme covers understanding extremism, assessing risks, distinctions with delivering the Prevent duty, effective approaches to tackling extremism, scrutiny of local strategies and how to challenge extremist ideologies. The course will encourage members to discuss some of the key issues for councils around this agenda, and provide opportunities to share good practice with members in similar roles.

Taxi licensing

17. We held the last in a series of successful events for councils on taxi licensing in February 2017. The event in Preston was attended by forty Members and officers and provided support to councils around oversight and scrutiny of licensing, the role of the licensing committee, as well as sharing best practice and tackling specialist issues like the role of licensing in preventing child sexual exploitation and supporting disabled access.

18. We also held our annual LGA licensing conference at the start of February. Over eighty delegates heard from a range of expert speakers about the future of the Licensing Act 2003, using health data in licensing, taxi licensing (in particular accessibility and safeguarding) and managing the night time economy. Afternoon workshops focused on the use of risk assessments and local area profiles which was led by the Gambling Commission, the digitalisation of licensing, and the role of the member on licensing committees.

Fire reform - Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

19. LGA policy and workforce teams have driven forward the creation of a MoU on equality, diversity, behaviours and organisational culture in the fire service. The MoU commits its signatories to demonstrably uphold and promote the principles it sets out, deliver the commitments within it and take the specific actions it contains within the timetable agreed. In particular the MoU states that the fire and rescue service as a whole should reflect the diversity of the communities it serves. The employment of specific groups within the service, such as firefighting personnel should also meet this requirement. A more diverse workforce is needed at all levels up to and including senior managers.

20. The LGA is one of a number of signatories to the final document who also include:

- 20.1. Asian Fire Service Association
- 20.2. Association of Principle Fire Officers
- 20.3. Chief Fire Officers Association/National Fire Chiefs Council
- 20.4. Fire Brigades Union
- 20.5. Fire Officers' Association
- 20.6. GMB Union
- 20.7. Quiltbag
- 20.8. Retained Firefighters Union
- 20.9. Stonewall
- 20.10. Unison
- 20.11. Women In The Fire Service.

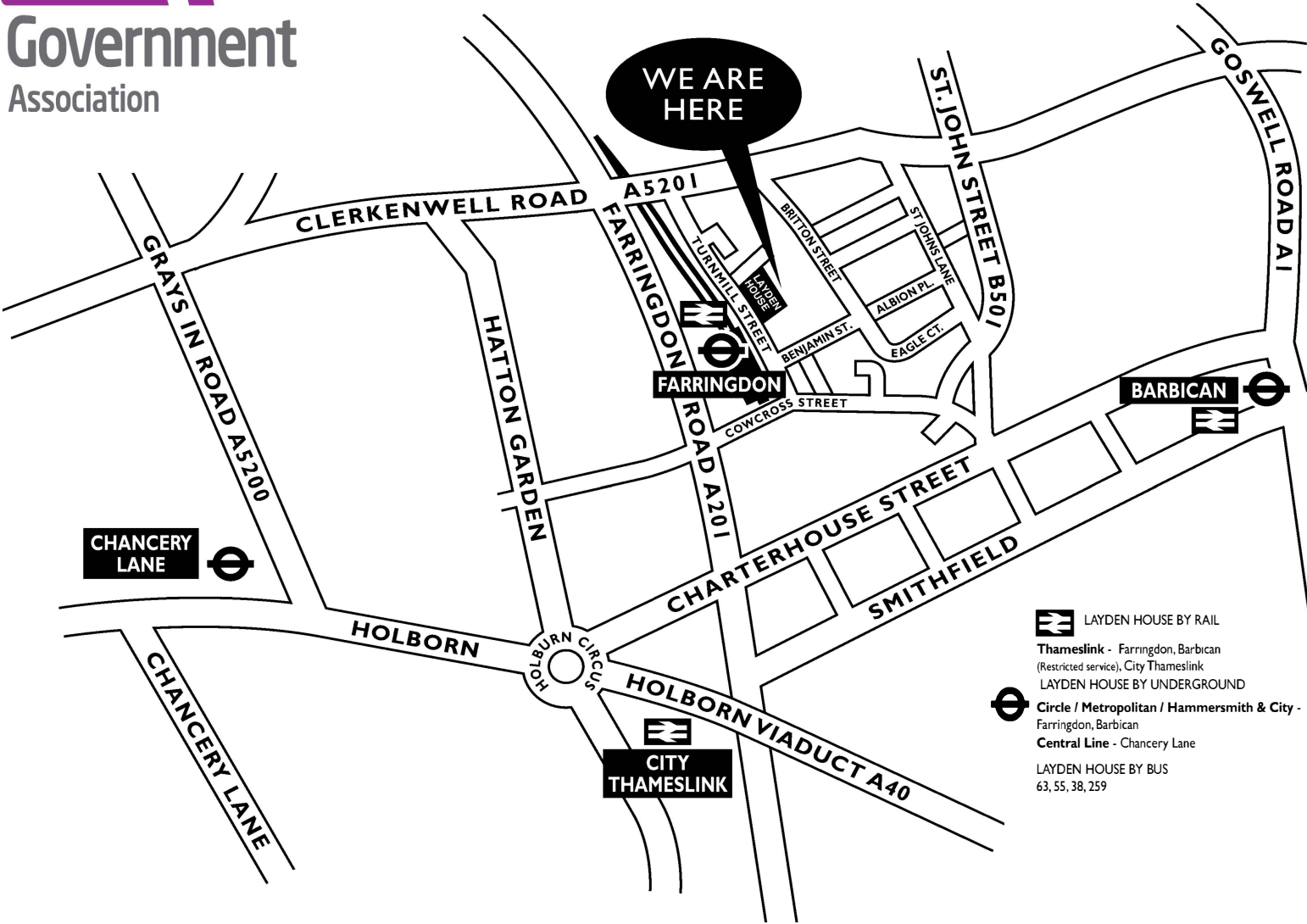
Fire reform - "An inclusive service: the 21st century fire and rescue service"

21. At the LGA's Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition, taking place on 7-8 March in Gateshead, the LGA is launching this new publication to support the fire and rescue service to improve its equality, diversity and inclusion. It includes contributions from a number of organisations as well as case studies and questions for members.

Resources Board

Workforce

22. The Come Back to Social Work pilot has now concluded resulting in 20 people being retrained and ready to re-enter the profession. Councils have been very supportive of the Campaign and we are confident all 20 will soon be offered employment within the sector. The success of the pilot means we are now in discussions with the Department for Education and the Department of Health about running the campaign again on a national basis, providing retraining opportunities for potentially up to 100 former social workers.



-  LAYDEN HOUSE BY RAIL
- Thameslink** - Farringdon, Barbican (Restricted service), City Thameslink
- LAYDEN HOUSE BY UNDERGROUND**
-  **Circle / Metropolitan / Hammersmith & City** - Farringdon, Barbican
- Central Line** - Chancery Lane
- LAYDEN HOUSE BY BUS**
63, 55, 38, 259

Layden House

76-86 Turnmill Street,
 London
 EC1M 5LG

Tel: 020 7664 3000 Fax: 020 7664 3030

**The Local Government Association will be based at Layden House whilst refurbishment takes place at their offices in Smith Square.*

Public Transport

Layden House is served well by public transport. The nearest mainline station is **Farringdon** (Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan Lines. It also has Overground lines)

Bus routes - Farringdon Station

- 63 - Kings Cross - Crystal Palace Parade (**Stop A/B**)
- 55 - Oxford Circus -High Road Leyton (**Stop E/K**)
- 243 - Redvers Road - Waterloo Bridge (**Stop E/K**)

Cycling Facilities

The nearest Santander Cycle Hire racks are on Theobold's Road.
 For more information please go to www.tfl.gov.uk

Car Parks

- Smithfield Car Park - EC1A 9DY
- NCP Car Park London Saffron Hill - EC1N 8XA