

Improvement and Innovation Board

Agenda

Tuesday, 14 July 2015
11.00 am

Smith Square 3&4, Ground Floor, Local
Government House, Smith Square, London,
SW1P 3HZ

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

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This meeting is



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Improvement & Innovation Board
14 July 2015

There will be a meeting of the Improvement & Innovation Board at **11.00 am on Tuesday, 14 July 2015** Smith Square 3&4, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.

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:

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Apologies:

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

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

Location:

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

LGA Contact:

Hannah Boylan
020 7664 3166 hannah.boyland@local.gov.uk

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LGA Improvement & Innovation Board Attendance 2014-2015

Councillors	13.10.14	20.01.15	12/5/15			
Labour Group						
Judi Billing	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Claudia Webbe	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Phil Davies	No	Yes	Yes			
Darren Cooper	Yes	Yes	No			
Bob Price	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Kate Hollern	No	Yes	N/a			
Imran Hussain	No	No	N/a			
Conservative Group						
Peter Fleming	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Keith Glazier	Yes	Yes	No			
Roy Perry	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Teresa O'Neill	Yes	No	No			
Richard Stay	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Glen Miller	No	No	No			
Tony Jackson	Yes	No	Yes			
Lib Dem Group						
Jill Shortland OBE	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Theresa Higgins	Yes	Yes	No			
Independent						
Shirley Pannell	Yes	Yes	No			
John Blackie	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Substitutes						
Barry Wood	Yes		Yes			
Adrian Naylor	Yes					
Susan Woodward	Yes	Yes				
Sue Whitaker	Yes	Yes				
Dominic Gilham		Yes	Yes			
Janet Blake			Yes			
Sue Whitaker			Yes			
Observers						
Philip Sellwood	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Richard Priestman	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Lead Peers						
Paul Bettison	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Howard Sykes		Yes	Yes			

Improvement & Innovation Board – Membership 2014/2015

Councillor	Authority
Labour (7)	
Cllr Judi Billing (Deputy Chair)	North Hertfordshire District Council
Cllr Claudia Webbe	Islington Council
Cllr Phil Davies	Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Darren Cooper	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Bob Price	Oxford City Council
Vacancy	Labour Group
Cllr Bryony Rudkin (Observer)	Suffolk County Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Sean Fielding	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Sue Whitaker	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Sue Woodward	Staffordshire County Council
Conservative (8)	
Cllr Peter Fleming (Chairman)	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Keith Glazier	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Roy Perry	Hampshire County Council
Cllr Teresa O'Neill	Bexley Council
Cllr Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Glen Miller	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Cllr Tony Jackson	East Herts Council
Cllr Paul Bettison (Observer)	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Substitutes	
Cllr David Finch	Essex County Council
Cllr Janet Blake	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
Liberal Democrat (3)	
Cllr Jill Shortland OBE (Vice-Chair)	Somerset County Council
Cllr Theresa Higgins	Essex County Council
Cllr Howard Sykes MBE (Observer)	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Paul Tilsley CBE	Birmingham City Council
Independent (2)	
Cllr Shirley Pannell (Deputy Chair)	North Kesteven District Council
Cllr John Blackie	Richmondshire District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Adrian Naylor	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Cllr Michael Haines	Teignbridge District Council
Cllr Laura Conway	North Kesteven District Council

Agenda

Improvement & Innovation Board

Tuesday 14 July 2015

11.00 am

Smith Square 3&4, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday, 20 October 2015, 11.00 am, Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ



**Improvement and Innovation
Board**

14 July 2015

Innovation in councils

Purpose

For information and discussion.

Summary

This report provides an update on the LGA's work on innovation in councils further to the previous report in May 2015.

Recommendation

That the Improvement and Innovation Board notes the report and offers any comments.

Action

Officers to progress this work in light of the Board's comments.

Contact officer: Rhian Gladman
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Innovation in councils

Background

1. This report provides an update on the LGA's work on innovation in councils further to the previous report in May 2015.

Issues

Innovation Zone

2. Once again the Innovation Zone at the LGA Annual Conference 2015 was a highly successful interactive learning event for all involved. Over 50 councils showcased their innovative approaches under the following themes: Political Leadership, Commercialisation, Digital, Community Action, Integration and Partnership Working. The first day saw a focus on the role that political leadership plays in driving new ways of working. Councillors from Wolverhampton City Council, Hampshire County Council, South Lakeland District Council and Professor Colin Copus from De Montfort University shared their experiences of improving services through politically-led innovation. Key themes included:
 - 2.1. the importance of politicians being ambitious for their local area and communities, and being fully involved in delivering these ambitions
 - 2.2. councillors using social media to encourage greater conversations with local people – being visible to local communities and staff is key
 - 2.3. the role of councillors in bringing together communities, stakeholders and partners to plan for the future of their place
 - 2.4. driving innovation through co-location of services – overcoming information-sharing issues and improving the service for customers
 - 2.5. the legal and financial barriers to innovation faced by councils.
3. The second day of the Innovation Zone saw a focus on all things digital, kicking off with standing room only for the London Borough of Croydon as they shared their experiences of setting up their "My Croydon" app. The app includes a decibel feature to enable residents to monitor and report noise levels to the council. Other highlights included Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury Councils using Routemaster to optimise their waste collection routes to rebalance rounds and workloads fairly across the workforce. They are also developing app and in-cab customer relationship management so that customer reports of missed bins will go directly to staff on the bin-trucks for resolution.
4. Telford and Wrekin Council are using their "Everyday Telford" app to enable residents to report many issues including flytipping, potholes and graffiti, and are developing its functionality to enable residents to report benefit fraud. They have generously made this app available for free to other councils for them to adapt and customise to their own brand and services rather than starting from scratch.

5. Maggie Philbin drew a sell-out crowd into the Zone as she talked about her work with TeenTech, an organisation that runs lively events with a supporting award scheme to help young teenagers see the wide range of career possibilities in science, engineering and technology. Jo Miller, the Chief Executive of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, also shared her positive experience of how the council is using Teen Tech to provide clearer pathways for local young people into varied and successful careers.
6. The third and final day of the Zone focussed on how design tools and skills can be used to improve public services, with the Design Council showcasing many innovative examples from across local government.
7. To search and access further details and information regarding councils featured in the Innovation Zone, please visit the LGA Innovation Zone Database at www.local.gov.uk/innovation.

Innovative councils webpage

8. The previously mentioned Innovation Zone Database within our innovation [resource](#) continues to go from strength to strength with over 100 examples added to last year's 40. This resource has now expanded to include examples of notable practice from other councils across the country. The page has been very well received and from the date of the launch on 23 March 2015 until now, we have had over 2,724 visits to the main landing page.

Design in the public sector programme

9. Two launch events have been held in the East and the South West of England signalling the start of the LGA and Design Council's Better by Design programme. The programme is proving very popular, with each event attracting officers from 16 councils. The following councils from the South West have been successful in their application to the programme: Teignbridge District Council, Devon County Council, Mendip District Council, South Somerset District Council, North Somerset District Council and Tewkesbury District Council. Delegates will be exposed to critical design leadership content and supported to identify design-led opportunities. They will then receive the mentoring and guidance needed to implement new activity and tangible projects over a 90 day period and reconvene to share their knowledge.

Next steps

Members are asked to:

10. note the report and offer any comments for officers to progress accordingly.

Financial Implications

11. None.



**Improvement and Innovation
Board**

14 July 2015

Launch of the 2015/16 Highlighting Leadership offer

Purpose

For information and discussion.

Summary

This report outlines our political and managerial leadership sector-led improvement offer for 2015/16 and initial take up from bookings to date.

Recommendation

That the Improvement and Innovation Board notes the report and offers any comments.

Action

Officers to progress this work in light of the Board's comments.

Contact officer:

Pascoe Sawyers

Position:

Principal Adviser - Leadership and Localism

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Launch of the 2015/16 Highlighting Leadership offer

Background

1. Refreshed and rebranded last year, the LGA's Highlighting Leadership Programme forms part of our wider package of sector-led improvement, and offers a range of programmes aimed at supporting and developing councillors at all levels.

Highlighting Political Leadership Programme

2. **Leaders' Programme** – with a new government in place and many newly-elected council leaders, the LGA has revised this programme for 2015, with a fresh look and accredited content. It is aimed at council leaders from across the political spectrum who have no more than five years' experience in the role and provides them with a unique opportunity to develop their capacity, knowledge and networks to lead change within the sector.
3. **Leadership Academy** – the LGA's flagship accredited leadership development programme for leading councillors comprises three two-day residential modules over a three month period. Leading councillors from across the country and political spectrum have found the Leadership Academy helps to ensure they can effectively address modern challenges and make the most of new opportunities. The programme is accredited by the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM).
4. **Leadership Essentials** - a variety of leadership events for leading members focus on specific portfolio areas or particular themes such as finance, children services, commissioning, cultural services and digital leadership.
5. **Next Generation** – a programme of modules per political group, including the Independent Group, aims to support and encourage ambitious and talented councillors to be bold and confident political leaders. Delegates focus on representing, understanding and working with their communities and constituents, upholding their own and their parties' values and morals, progressing in their political careers and championing local government. There is a competitive application process for this programme, which opened at the end of June 2015.
6. **Focus on Leadership** - seminars and workshops, such as effective opposition and the young councillors weekend, help councillors in their existing roles, provide a bridge to more senior leadership positions and build valuable networks with peers across the country.
7. **Community Leadership** – member training sessions are being offered on subjects such as being an effective ward councillor, chairing skills, scrutiny, effective personal impact, social media and licensing. Each session is tailored to the needs of a council/s, working alongside council officers, LGA member peers and with input from LGA Principal Advisers. These sessions supplement the suite of councillor workbooks available to download from our website. Since the beginning of this financial year we have delivered community leadership training sessions 'in-house' for a number of councils including East Staffordshire, Horsham, Malvern Hills, Wychavon and Selby. We also have confirmed bookings to deliver training events for members at Portsmouth, Epsom and Ewell,

Babergh and Mid Suffolk, Birmingham, Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire councils in the next few months.

8. **E-learning modules** – individual councillors can sign up to use an online platform to access modules on councillor induction, effective ward councillor, facilitation and conflict resolution, and handling complaints for service improvement. Responding to feedback from councils, the modules are now available for councils to add to their own learning management systems. To date, just over 4000 people are able to access our e-learning modules either via the portal provided by the LGA, through making them available on their own council systems or through other suppliers of e-learning to councils. Further modules are currently being scoped for this financial year.
9. **Be a Councillor** – this offers resources to help increase the pool of talent from which councillors are elected by encouraging fresh new talent to stand for election and by helping talent-spothers to attract people who would make great councillors.
10. **Bookings to date** on the Leadership Academy (LA), Leadership Essentials (LE) and Focus on Leadership (FoL) programmes are as follows:

Political party group	LA	LE	FoL	Total
Labour	10	48	7	65
Conservative	12	60	10	82
Liberal Democrat	1	1	4	6
Independent	3	4	3	10
Total:	26	113	24	163

Region	LA	LE	FoL	Total
East of England	6	24	1	31
East Midlands	3	14	3	20
Greater London	1	6	3	10
North East	0	2	0	2
North West	2	11	1	14
South West	4	6	1	11
South East	2	27	9	38
West Midlands	4	6	5	15
Yorkshire & Humber	4	17	1	22
Total:	26	113	24	163

Type of council	LA	LE	FoL	Total
District	15	41	7	62
County	5	19	4	28
Metropolitan	4	20	1	25
London	1	6	3	10
Unitary	1	23	9	33
Fire	0	4	0	4
Total:	26	113	24	163

Gender	LA	LE	FoL	Total
Male	18	67	17	102
Female	8	46	7	61
Total:	26	113	24	163

Highlighting Managerial Leadership Programme

11. **National Graduate Development Programme (ngdp)** – the ngdp for local government is a graduate recruitment and management training programme that aims to bring the next generation of talent into local authorities across England and Wales. The ngdp has continued to grow in popularity with councils in the past year (its 16th year of existence). With 110 graduates from the 2014 intake employed in over 50 councils, the ngdp expects to place 120 graduates in over 50 councils this autumn following a record number of requests.
12. **Leading Edge** – this area of work focuses on the critical interface between elected leaders and senior officers, challenging them to consider the key issues facing councils, communities and the wider public sector. This year's Leading Edge programme will involve up to 50 leaders and chief executives from a variety of councils who will be invited to take part in one of a series of workshop events. The events will focus on the most challenging issues facing local government including devolution, coping with extreme financial pressure and demand management.
13. For a full list of Highlighting Leadership programmes, including dates and booking information, visit the refreshed website at <http://www.local.gov.uk/councillor-development> and at <http://www.local.gov.uk/officer-development;jsessionid=F821EEF5A0E3076A9FA6253E64B7B679.tomcat1>. A new brochure covering the overall suite of programmes and a number of leaflets with details about specific programmes have also been produced to help promote the new Highlighting Leadership offer.

Next steps

14. Members are asked to note the report and offer any comments.

Financial implications

15. None.

Sector-led improvement: finance support for councils

Purpose

As government austerity measures continue, financial pressures bearing upon councils are becoming more acute and there is an increasing need for councils to take difficult decisions in order to achieve a financially sustainable future.

At its meeting last October, the Improvement and Innovation Board considered a paper on work to develop the sector-led improvement offer with respect to financial issues. This paper reports back to members on the progress of this work and the proposed finance offer.

The Board's comments and guidance are requested.

Summary

As we move forward, the importance of local councils ensuring they have strategies to maintain financial sustainability will become increasingly important, and this is happening against a background of change and increased financial risk. Last year the Board recognised the need for the current financial offer to councils, which had evolved over a number of years, to be reviewed and supplemented.

The report sets out the achievements of the review and the support that is now being delivered to councils and reflects on some of the issues raised.

Recommendation

The Board is invited to comment on the issues raised and agree the shape of the financial support programme moving forward.

Action

Officers to progress the work taking account of the comments of the Board.

Contact officer: Alan Finch
Position: Principal Adviser, Finance
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Sector-led improvement: finance support for councils

Background

1. Effective financial management has never been more important to local authorities than it is now. The sector-led improvement offer to local government has developed over a period that has coincided with large-scale change in the way local authorities operate. A key driver for this change has been financial; the reduction in government funding, increased spending pressure and changes in the way funding is distributed have changed the way councils need to think about their finances. An imperative to transform services, innovate and work in partnership demands new approaches to financial decision-making and the management of financial risk.
2. Work with councils has identified a demand for good practice and support to help them manage their overall finances. This can range from achieving productivity or efficiency savings, through to ways of helping them engage with their local communities to prioritise how they spend resources.

Issues

3. Review of Financial Support

- 3.1 Recognising that financial sustainability and resilience had moved to the top of the agenda for most authorities, officers, with Board support, have been working to review and supplement the support available to the sector.
- 3.2 The Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) methodology reflects financial issues; one of the key guiding questions for each CPC is, "Does the council have a financial plan in place to ensure long term viability and is there evidence that it is being implemented successfully?" However, with limited time on site and a wide range of other issues to challenge and consider, and normally without finance specialists as part of the team, CPC peer teams are not in a position to delve into financial issues to the extent that councils need.

4. Financial Review

- 4.1 We have therefore devised a specialist form of peer challenge called the Financial Review, which has now been piloted in three authorities and is now available to go 'live'. The Financial Review broadly follows the format of other peer challenges and involves:

- 4.1.1 pre-review preparation to frame the review with the council and to undertake desktop research on the council's financial position
- 4.1.2 typically two days on-site at the council for peers to meet with a wide range of people including officers, councillors and others connected with the council with formal feedback to an audience of the council's choosing.
- 4.2 Report and follow-up comprise a feedback report prepared for the authority, which it will be encouraged to publish. The review includes the option of follow up activity.

- 4.3 The Review covers five areas as a minimum as set out in the following table:

Financial leadership	Does the authority have plans for its long-term financial sustainability, which are owned by its members and officer leaders?
Financial strategy, planning & forecasting	Does the authority understand its short and long term financial prospects?
Decision-making	Are key decisions taken in the understanding of the financial implications, risks and options?
Financial outcomes	Are financial results (including those of the Council's investments and transformation projects) monitored and acted upon so as to realise the authority's intentions?
Partnership & innovation	Is finance at the cutting edge of what the authority is working to achieve , working with partners and seeking innovative approaches?

- 4.4 The Financial Review does not primarily focus on stewardship (the system of controls and accountabilities), which is covered by statutory audit, or on financial management, which can be assessed through existing commercial products such as the CIPFA Financial Management Model. The focus is, instead, around the relationships and processes that enable financial management and financial decision-making to be successfully part of developing and implementing council policy, the corporate vision and strategy.

- 4.5 Inevitably there will be a cross-over between Financial Reviews and CPCs. A Financial Review cannot replace a CPC and should not be considered as an alternative but it may frequently be deployed alongside a CPC to provide extra capacity to the CPC review where financial issues are considered to be key.
- 4.6 The three pilot Financial Reviews have been well received by the councils concerned. It is too soon, on the basis of just three reviews, to discern a pattern but the issues raised have included:
 - 4.6.1 how financial management information can be used to improve decision-making by councils
 - 4.6.2 how longer term financial planning can help councils identify risks and shape a strategic vision
 - 4.6.3 the need for finance to be an integral part of the performance management and savings delivery systems of the council.
- 4.7 As with the CPC, the Financial Review offer will be free to councils and will be resourced from Revenue Support Grant in 2015/16. Subject to demand, it is hoped that 20-25 Reviews will be undertaken in a full financial year.

5. Other elements of the finance offer

- 5.1 Elements of the existing offer that have been in place for some years will also continue. These include:

Finance Health Check	an in-depth technical analysis and assessment of financial management conducted over two days by a qualified associate
Budget Challenge	aimed at leaders and finance leads, a facilitated discussion with a member peer on budget options and issues
Diagnostic tools	modelling and analysis of an authority's financial position, incorporating, inter alia, the Future Funding Outlook and Spidergram. Additional detail on how these are being developed and utilised is set out below.

6. Diagnostic tools

- 6.1 The ability to reflect back to authorities data and analysis on their current financial position is vital to the sector-led improvement offer. The Future Funding Outlook modelling has been updated for each authority as well as nationally for 2014. At the time of writing, the 2015 iteration of the Future Funding Outlook is due to be

released to member authorities following the Chancellor's July Budget so as to reflect the latest available information on the government's spending plans.

- 6.2 The 2014 Financial Spidergram was released in November that year and included 16 new measures of financial resilience reflecting the financial opportunities and risks that councils may wish to consider. The Spidergram also provided information on the council's direction of travel, showing how its relative position had changed since the 2013 release, and it is felt that in time this feature will be particularly useful to councils. A revised Spidergram will be released this autumn.
- 6.3 With the final closure of the Audit Commission in March 2015, the responsibility for the Value for Money indicators has transferred to Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA - a company created by the LGA under the IDeA company structure), and the intention is that over time, the relevant indicators will also be added to future iterations of LG Inform and also to diagnostic reports used by CPC and Financial Review teams.

7. Bespoke Support

- 7.1 Whilst the formal support offers provide a framework that can be used to deliver support at scale across the sector, the ability to tailor support to councils' individual needs is a vital part of the offer. The recruitment of more expertise to the pool of associate and peers increases our capacity to do this at relatively short notice. It is a role of the Principal Adviser (Finance) to support our teams in the regions to help them devise and resource tailored packages of support, which frequently also involves support from the Productivity Team in helping councils identify strategic options for making savings and generating income. The Principal Adviser (Finance) has also been able to provide direct support to councils where necessary through the regional support network.

8. Highlighting Political Leadership

- 8.1 Alongside the work described above, a Leadership Essentials programme on finance ran successfully at Warwick as a pilot on 30-31 October 2014, attracting highly favourable comments from those who attended. This will now run again twice during the current year - at Roffey Park on 29-30 September and at Warwick on 14-15 October.

9. Resourcing the offer - peers and associates

- 9.1 In order to deliver a Financial Review offer to a larger number of authorities, it will be necessary to recruit more financially qualified peers and associates. Finance peers are also often required for CPCs. As at July 2014 there were 27 peers on our database who were recorded as having a CIPFA qualification and this has now increased to 52, in addition to which, ten freelance associate peers have been recruited. It is thought that realistically around 75-80 peers will be required

when the programme is in full swing, allowing for the need to match peers to individual authorities according to their skills and expertise. The next step will be to undertake a further recruitment process to identify more peers, and a tendering exercise to supplement these with expert associates. The support of other stakeholders such as CIPFA will be enlisted to publicise the benefits of being a peer to a wider group of potential peers.

10. Good Practice

- 10.1 In order to support authorities fully in their journey towards financial sustainability, it will also be necessary to identify good practice and make it available, both as part of the feedback from financial health checks and peer challenges, and more widely to the sector as a whole. There are a number of areas where good practice would seem particularly important and opportune; for example, authorities are increasingly moving away from incremental approaches to budgeting towards outcome-based or programme-based approaches that are widely considered to more effective in periods of rapid change. Through our support for councils we can help to capture best practice in implementing new budget approaches.
- 10.2 Good practice will need to be captured from ongoing conversations with authorities and by revisiting previous peer challenges. It will take time to collect good practice specifically on financial management but work will initially focus on analysing good practice collected from other sources, in particular the CPCs. Good practice will be reflected in our new online innovation database.

Next Steps

11. The main next steps that officers will pursue over the next few months are to:

- 11.1. rollout the Financial Review to more authorities beginning in the autumn
- 11.2. continue to build the pool of finance peers and associates to deliver a greater number of reviews and build our bespoke offer
- 11.3. work with other stakeholders in public finance to understand best practice and the financial state of the sector and reflect that back to councils.

12. The Board's views and comments on the approach outlined are invited.

Financial Implications

13. The costs of the financial support offer will be met from within agreed sector-led improvement budgets.

Productivity programme

Purpose

This report updates the Board on the progress being made in the Productivity Programme.

Further to the discussion at the last Board on the work of the Advanced Commercialisation Group (ACG) and members' request for further information, we will be joined by Chris Bradley, Senior Commercial Manager at Surrey County Council, who is a member of the Group and will give a brief presentation to the Board. Further information on the ACG is also provided in Section 10 of this report.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the updates and progress on the Productivity Programme.

Action

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

Contact officer:	Alan Finch
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Productivity programme update

Background

1. The Board has previously agreed the Productivity Programme to develop and operate a range of projects to help improve productivity and efficiency in councils. This report provides an update on a number of work streams within the Productivity Programme.
2. Local authorities can reduce their financial dependence on government and their call on local taxpayers in three ways; by:
 - 2.1. **Transforming services**, either simply 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.

Issues

Transforming Services

4. Digital Submission for the Autumn Spending Review

- 4.1. As members will recall, March's Budget statement in 2015 included a reference to digital and the extension of Government Digital Services (GDS) remit to local services:
- 4.2. *"... the digital ambition will extend beyond central government and arms-length bodies, to consider local services. HM Treasury, the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Government Digital Service will collaborate with partners in local government, as the sector develops a set of proposals that will enable more customer-focused, digitally-enabled and efficient local services in time to inform future budget allocations".*
- 4.3. In May 2015, the LGA hosted an LG Digital Summit with council representatives to discuss the implications of this, to work out and agree the sector's key messages on digital for the new government in response to this announcement. Following the summit, the LGA has been working with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (Solace), the Society of IT Managers (Socitm), the Local Chief

Information Officers (CIO) Council and DCLG to develop a submission for the autumn Spending Review.

5. We are working on a twin track approach, which is to:
 - 5.1. get a better understanding of councils' current online transactions. This is to demonstrate what the sector has already done, the savings generated and to help identify possible transactions for councils to digitise next, to deliver better online services, maximise efficiency savings and to inform a business case for the Spending Review
 - 5.2. explore how best to develop a case for local public service transformation enabled by digital, looking at national programmes of local transformation (eg Troubled Families, health and care integration and Universal Credit) to see where digitalisation has already driven improvement and savings - and use this to help inform a business case for extending this across councils.
6. We are currently carrying out desk research and have sent out a survey to all councils to get a better assessment of what councils have already digitalised. This will be followed up with some deep-dive analysis. Once we have this information, we will:
 - 6.1. develop an outline programme plan and recommendations to build sector capacity and leadership to support digitalisation of both transactions and wider work on transformation
 - 6.2. identify key opportunities where efficiency through digital can be delivered. This will then be used to produce a draft report and recommendations by this September, ahead of final submission to HMT this October.
7. **Public Service Network new compliance regime**
 - 7.1. The LGA has been working closely with government and other stakeholders to resolve ongoing issues with regard to Public Service Network (PSN) and the negative impact this had on councils' ability to carry out their business. Last summer, the LGA set up and now oversees a sector board, the LG PSN Programme Board, which meets regularly to discuss issues about the compliance process, how this impacts on sharing information securely with partners, as well as to share feedback from councils on specific problems.
 - 7.2. As a result of this ongoing dialogue, the PSN team have revised the compliance process with the objective to make this less burdensome both for councils and the Cabinet Office. They worked initially with a small group of councils earlier this year, to 'beta' test and refine this revised process. The aim is to now 'go live' with this and those councils scheduled to go through their annual compliance check from this June onwards will be asked to use the new process.
 - 7.3. To enable councils to find out about the changed compliance process and ask questions, the LGA hosted a LG PSN Workshop at the end of May 2015 at which over 70 delegates from councils participated. The overall consensus is that the new process is clearer and simpler with less paperwork. The onus is now on the council to make a 'risk based assessment' that reflects their business needs as opposed to meeting an externally imposed security standard.

7.4. Previously the compliance check was annual with a certificate awarded for one year. However, after lobbying from the sector, Cabinet Office have agreed to introduce a two year certificate for those councils that are able to demonstrate they are on top of their compliance, aware of and managing any risks associated with PSN. There has also been the shift to a single compliance assessment for councils in a shared service arrangement, ie where previously two councils that were in a shared service had two separate compliance assessments they now can look to have one that better reflects their arrangements and the associated risks.

7.5. The LGA will continue to support councils as the new process beds in and work with the PSN team to make sure that the needs of the sector are understood and considered at all times.

8. Shared Services Map

8.1. The LGA has launched an updated version of the popular shared services map.

8.2. The map allows the user to browse shared services by region and the accompanying infographic sets out the headline figures.

8.3. The map highlights that:

- 8.3.1. since the map was first compiled in 2012, councils have made £462 million of savings by sharing services
- 8.3.2. there has been a huge increase in savings made from councils sharing back office functions such as legal, audit and HR which resulted in £145 million in savings
- 8.3.3. big savings have also been made through the sharing of adult services, procurement and capital assets
- 8.3.4. councils sharing services with other public sector organisations have resulted in savings of more than £15 million.

8.4. The shared services map is a useful resource for councils to learn about existing arrangements in their area and for reference before embarking on new shared services projects.

9. Health and Social Care Projects and Programmes

9.1. Efficiency opportunities through health and social care integration

- 9.1.1. During April and May 2015 the Productivity Team and Newton Europe had discussions with Directors of Adult Social Care and key health partners to identify those areas that will be participating in the project. Following those discussions, field work is now underway in Kent and work will begin in Swindon and Blackburn with Darwen over the coming month. The robust, evidence based approach will help to identify efficiency opportunities across the Health and Social Care system with a view to determining what a more sustainable model for the future might look like. Early findings from Kent were discussed at a parallel plenary session at the LGA Conference.

9.2. Learning Disability Services Efficiency (LDSE) Project

- 9.2.1. Having agreed their efficiency plans last year, the five authorities participating in the LDSE project (Barking and Dagenham, Cumbria, Darlington, Kent and Wiltshire) are now well into the delivery phase of the project. During June 2015, the Programme Advisor, Professor John Bolton, was visiting the participating areas to provide challenge and support to the work. An interim position report will be published in July 2105 to share learning from this stage of the project. Later in the programme, participants will be encouraged to each host a regional event to share learning with peers in their area.

10. Public Health

- 10.1. To mark the two year anniversary of the transfer of Public Health Services to councils, the Productivity Team is working with a number of councils to scope out a project to share early learning with the sector in making the most efficient use of limited resources. A number of areas are being explored, which complement the existing programme of Public Health support. These include the use of digital technology in delivering Public Health Services and more effective outcome based commissioning. This project has gained in importance in view of the recent in-year reductions in Public Health Grant that have been announced.

Smarter Sourcing

Commissioning Academy

11. Learning more about commissioning is essential for any councillor, especially so for those who define policy and shape the future of public services. The Commissioning Academy for elected members could also be very useful to those newly elected members with a role to play in the commissioning of public services, for example portfolio holders and members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
12. The next Commissioning Academy for elected members will be held on the 3 and 4 November 2015 at Warwick University with further sessions to be held on 21 and 22 January 2016. Promotion and call for delegates will have started at the LGA Annual Conference 2015. The programme is free to attend and open to all members. Those interested in booking a place should contact Grace Collins at grace.collins@local.gov.uk.

Procurement fraud

13. The cost of fraud to local government is estimated at some £2.2 billion per year. Of this, £876 million has been attributed to procurement fraud. In order to raise awareness of this, the LGA has partnered with the Counter Fraud unit at CIPFA to produce a guide 'Managing the risk of Procurement Fraud'. Copies of the guide will have been available on the LGA stand at our annual conference and will be publicised widely and available on our dedicated procurement website www.lg-procurement.org.uk shortly after then.

Waste and recycling

14. Waste and recycling is a core local government service and research indicates that a significant number of councils will be renewing their contracts for these services over the next two years. We wish to support a more consistent and joined-up approach in this area and our wider aim is to promote efficiency, using innovative concepts that can be replicated within the sector on a local, regional or national scale and believe that such efficiencies can be made in the areas of:

- 14.1. joint procurement of waste vehicles and vehicles maintenance
- 14.2. joint procurement of waste collection contracts
- 14.3. joining up waste collection and disposal
- 14.4. standardising council specifications of goods and services relating to waste
- 14.5. innovative ways of increasing recycling rates, particularly in urban areas.

15. We are expecting to advertise a call for bids on this project by the end of June 2015 with a closing date of end of July 2015.

Public Contracts Regulations 2015

16. The Public Contracts Regulations govern the tendering and award of most types of high value contracts by local authorities. New Regulations were introduced towards the end of the last Parliament. The LGA, in partnership with the Welsh LGA, has commissioned some additional guidance on the Regulations. The guidance will take the form of a handbook and will help to equip elected members and officers to undertake effective decision making on matters relating to delivery and procurement in this new legal environment.

Income Generation

Commercialisation

17. At the last meeting of the Improvement and Innovation Board, members expressed an interest in learning more about the Advanced Commercial Group (ACG), an important part of the LGA's commercial workstream. Towards the end of 2014, many of the councils who were further along in their commercial activity in terms of innovation and scale and therefore had already spoken at LGA learning events on this subject were keen to form together to learn more about each other's commercial activity. The LGA agreed to set up an Advanced Commercial Group for councils and approached Stephen Hughes, formerly the Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council, to chair the group. The LGA Principal Advisers were also approached and asked to nominate those councils from their regions who were particularly advanced and innovative in their commercial thinking to the Group. The aims of the ACG are to:

- 17.1. share different approaches to commercialisation to enable mutual learning
- 17.2. enable councils already advanced in their thinking to move further and faster
- 17.3. identify possible barriers to commercialisation to inform LGA lobbying on behalf of the sector

- 17.4. identify potential opportunities for brokering/negotiation of greater discounts on behalf of a wider group of councils (eg due diligence)
 - 17.5. identify potential synergies/opportunities for collaboration/partnerships/joint ventures where appropriate
 - 17.6. consider the development of a sector-led improvement offer for commercialisation, on a cost or cost plus basis.
18. In November 2014 the first meeting of the ACG was held at the LGA. The last meeting of the ACG met in Birmingham in March 2015.
19. The ACG consists of the following councils:
- Birmingham City Council
 - Surrey County Council
 - Manchester City Council
 - Aylesbury Vale District Council
 - Warrington Borough Council
 - Cheshire East Council
 - Nottingham City Council
 - Peterborough City Council
 - Eastleigh Borough Council
 - Reigate and Banstead District Council
 - Leeds City Council
 - Northamptonshire County Council
 - Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
20. The councils on the ACG are generating significant six figure incomes from their commercial activity and taking very diverse approaches. For example, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council receives 30% of its income from grant and tax, and 70% from other sources - the reverse of the normal proportion. It gets £15.5m from its commercial property portfolio (fifth biggest in the country) and £3.5m from investment income per year.
21. Leeds City Council has a commercial team as part of its Public Private Partnerships and Procurement Unit, which consists of experienced commercial lawyers, accountants and technical officers who provide expert professional support and advice as part of multi-disciplinary project teams at all stages of the project lifecycle for complex procurement and programmes of work. The multi-disciplinary team approach has enabled the Council to develop a national reputation for the successful delivery of complex PFI/Public Private Partnership projects and helped to secure in excess of £1.5 billion in infrastructure in the City across the schools, waste, street lighting, social care, health and housing sectors. In addition the Unit is regarded as a regional centre of expertise and has worked collaboratively with other bodies.
22. Warrington Borough Council has taken a different approach by designing and running commercial skills training for its employees across the Council. The programme is suitable for both those wishing to explore commercial approaches who had not previously had the opportunity to do so, and also those who already adopt commercial approaches, who wish to expand and enhance current knowledge and skills. The programme modules are: Creative Approaches, Marketplace Understanding and Engagement, Financial

Approaches and Modelling, Effective Operational Delivery and Commercial People Management. The programme has been running for 18 months.

23. Whilst aware of the risk of the group becoming unwieldy, the LGA and ACG are open to new members joining as our understanding of the good practice in this area grows, and to that end the Principal Advisers continue to suggest councils who are advanced in their commercial activity rather than at the start of that journey. In order to share the lessons from those councils on the ACG with the rest of local government, we have asked them to produce case studies, which we have shared at www.local.gov.uk/income-generation.
24. In addition many councils have expressed concerns that they are spending significant amounts of money accessing expert legal, procurement and financial advice to undertake due diligence on their new commercial ventures. In response to this the LGA is at the early stages of investigating whether to support setting up a dynamic purchasing system to negotiate a fairer rate for councils to access commercial advice.

One Public Estate

25. As Members are aware, the Chancellor's Autumn Statement announced that the One Public Estate (OPE) programme is to be extended over the course of this Parliament. The Cabinet Office Government Property Unit and the LGA are currently in consultation with Whitehall and senior local authority officials over terms for a future OPE offer.
26. The proposals under development will look to build on the successes of the current programme by increasing the scale and pace of the OPE programme, which enables local and central government bodies working in partnership on assets and service transformation initiatives. To increase the scale and pace, consideration is being given to the merit of working on a cross City Deal or Combined Authority level, where complementary to local devolution aspirations. In addition, proposals to increase the pace of delivery under consideration are:
 - 26.1. simplified capital controls – particularly greater freedom to use capital receipts for one-off revenue purposes
 - 26.2. retention of 10% of government property sales in local areas, where these are applied to initiatives that generate local economic growth, or lead to significant service transformation
 - 26.3. priority purchaser status for local authorities looking to purchase surplus central government assets to enable economic growth
 - 26.4. a forum, chaired by senior Ministers, to help unblock barriers to delivery of service integration and economic growth.
27. A Public Land and Property Seminar involving Chief Executives from OPE, local authorities, senior Treasury, DCLG and Cabinet Office officials was held on 9 June 2015 at Smith Square as part of the consultation process. Officers will provide a verbal update on any further developments at this meeting.

Energy Programme

28. It was agreed that the productivity team would launch a new programme for the 2015/16 work programme looking at how councils could use different energy opportunities, both energy efficiency, and renewable and low carbon energy generation to help in reducing

the funding gap. The first output of the programme will be a report into the different opportunities and the potential efficiency savings and income generation available to councils of different tiers and sizes. The report, which is being produced by Verco Advisory Services Ltd, is due for completion in July 2015.

29. A report on options for the LGA collective switching framework is contained elsewhere on this agenda.

Cross- cutting programmes

Economic Growth Advisers

30. The LGA will shortly be launching Phase 3 of the Economic Growth Adviser programme. Councils will be invited to submit a project proposal to receive a £7000 grant and access to our 'pool' of local growth experts to help them deliver economic growth in their area. Local authorities that have not received funding as part of a previous phase of the programme will be invited to submit a project proposal setting out how they would use the expert support to help them implement their local economic growth priorities.

Next steps

31. LGA officers will continue to keep the Improvement and Innovation Board informed and provide regular updates to the sector via various established networks and bulletins.

Financial Implications

32. Costs of delivering the programme will be contained within available programme budgets.

Collective Switching Framework

Purpose

This report sets out the options available to the Board once the current collective switching framework comes to a natural end in November 2015.

Summary

Collective switching of energy supplies is a process whereby consumers band together in a sufficiently large group to arrange a 'reverse auction' with energy suppliers.

In November 2013 the LGA launched a collective switching framework, which is due to come to a natural end in November 2015.

This report sets out the available options in relation to the collective switching framework and also provides detail of alternative methods used by some councils to support their residents to reduce their energy bills.

Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

1. consider the options set out in paragraphs 14-25 of the report regarding the LGA collective switching framework and determine a preferred way forward. The recommended option is to retender for a framework (Option B) to begin during 2016 (paragraph 26).
2. consider the alternative or supplementary methods of support and determine whether any options warrant further investigation (paragraph 27-34).

Action

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

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Collective Switching Framework

Background

Collective energy switching

1. Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) figures released in March 2015 show there has been a gradual decline in the number of households switching energy supplier. From a peak of almost 1.5 million electricity customers switching supplier in quarter three of 2008, the number fell to 900,000 for the same quarter in 2014. Similarly, over 1.1 million gas customers switched supplier in quarter 3 of 2008, whereas less than 500,000 switched in the same quarter in 2014.
2. With the reduction of transfers and dominance of the 'big six' energy companies that control over 95 per cent of the UK domestic energy market, it is increasingly likely that many customers are not getting the best available price for their energy requirements.
3. The purpose of a collective energy switching scheme is to allow consumers to group together to increase their buying power and to negotiate a better deal from gas and electricity suppliers.
4. Since 2014, energy suppliers have had to reduce the number of tariffs offered to consumers to four core tariffs. However, offers made through the process of collective switching can come outside of these tariffs, giving energy suppliers the ability to offer a bespoke, market leading rate to potential switchers through a 'reverse auction' process.
5. Collective energy switching can negotiate better energy deals for consumers on all tariffs, including consumers on pre-payment meters and can provide an 'offline' switching service for those without access to the internet.

The LGA collective switching framework

6. The LGA launched a collective switching framework in November 2013. The framework is open to all English local authorities as well as small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The framework offers councils and SMEs a free, OJEU compliant solution to procuring a switching partner on behalf of residents. There are a number of ways in which enabling councils to do this adds social value, including:
 - 6.1 supporting those in fuel poverty to get a low price for their energy as well as preventing more people slipping into fuel poverty
 - 6.2 supporting financial inclusion
 - 6.3 ensuring that the needs of vulnerable residents are met (for example, the elderly or those with disabilities).
7. The LGA worked in partnership with the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) to develop a framework that streamlined the procurement process for councils, as the supplier had already been assessed for their health and safety, equality and diversity, environment and sustainability, and quality.

8. NEPO are responsible for the ongoing framework and contract management and whilst the aim of the framework is to simplify the process by covering all procedural compliance matters, it is recognised that sometimes specific guidance, advice or assistance may be required and NEPO provide this support at the request of councils looking to call off the framework.
9. The framework procured the service of a single 'switching provider', iChoosr, and this organisation runs periodic 'reverse auctions' – the 'reverse' element referring to the fact that it is the buyer and not the seller who initiates the auction. The auctions procure energy at prices accessible to local authorities that have signed up to the framework and put themselves forward to participate in that particular auction. Energy suppliers have the advantage of being able to sell to a packaged number of buyers and can offer more favourable prices.
10. Over the three auctions held in 2014, over 21,000 households from 40 councils switched using the LGA collective switching framework. Results for the February 2015 auction were even stronger with over 15,000 households registering for this single auction and over 5500 of those switching through the LGA framework. All auctions run through the LGA collective switching framework have produced bespoke, market leading tariffs for most payment options. The latest auction, held on 19 May 2015 resulted in four bespoke market leading tariffs and one market leading tariff, meaning 91 per cent of registrants could be offered a more favourable tariff than any available through a price comparison website or by dealing directly with the supplier.

Policy/regulatory environment

11. In determining whether to renew the collective switching arrangement, it is important to confirm that the regulatory environment has not changed or is not due to change in a way that undermines the original model. Officials at DECC have advised that there are no policy options currently being considered that will impact on collective switching.
12. The Competition and Markets Authority is investigating the retail energy market and the findings of this review are due at the end of July 2015. We are advised that it is unlikely that the final report will contain anything that would adversely impact collective switching.

Market environment

13. Since the start of the existing framework, Ofgem have tightened the controls on energy tariffs such that energy suppliers are permitted to have four core tariffs. Collective switching tariffs are a permissible fifth tariff meaning that energy suppliers are able to offer more favourable rates through collective switching than those available via energy switching sites or direct from the supplier. The willingness of energy suppliers to offer such bespoke, market leading tariffs is evidenced by the results achieved through the existing LGA collective switching framework. For example the May 2015 auction resulted in bespoke, market leading tariffs for four out of the five energy payment types and achieved an average household saving of £238 per year.

Issues

Collective Switching

Officers have considered four options for the future of collective switching:

14. Option A – extend the existing collective switching framework: The existing framework can be extended for up to 24 months on its current terms.

15. Advantages:

- 15.1. the 59 councils already calling off the framework will be able to continue participating in collective switching without any disruption
- 15.2. this option would be zero cost for the LGA as no further tendering exercise would be necessary until 2017
- 15.3. critical mass is achieved by using one switching provider for all schemes
- 15.4. NEPO have experience running and managing the framework.

16. Issues to consider:

- 16.1 the terms of the contract with the sole supplier on the current framework are fixed; therefore it would not be possible to negotiate a better deal for councils under the existing framework. There is now more competition in the collective energy switching market than when the LGA collective switching framework was established. This includes a variety of models of collective switching that offer more or less of a service and offer different switching contributions. In the LGA model, the switching contribution is the money received by the council for every switch. By extending the current framework, the LGA would be unable to access any offers that may provide a better deal for councils.

17. Option B – develop a new collective switching framework: A new framework could include a single supplier or multiple suppliers who can be called off via a mini competition against pre-published award criteria or via direct award depending on the precision of the terms laid down. Officers would ensure the framework is compliant with the relevant legislation.

18. Advantages:

- 18.1 the area of collective switching and the number of suppliers offering this service has grown over the last two years. Developing a new framework would allow a re-evaluation of the services councils want from a collective switching provider as well as providing the opportunity to access the new offers and models of operation now available
- 18.2 a framework can have multiple suppliers on it, allowing councils calling off the framework to have a greater choice as they will be able to set the terms of a mini-competition to choose between switching providers
- 18.3 the framework can be set for a specific period with an option to extend for a flexible amount of time, which allows some flexibility to take account of market circumstances.

19. Issues to consider:

- 19.1 this option would require investment of approximately £20,000 from the LGA to procure a partner to set up and manage the framework. This can be met from within the Procurement Programme budget
- 19.2 setting up a framework would take approximately six months, however it would be possible to extend the existing framework for a short period to minimise the disruption between frameworks whilst also allowing sufficient time for soft market testing
- 19.3 there can be no substantive change to the specification or the terms and conditions once the framework is awarded and therefore these must remain the same for the entire duration of the framework, regardless of changes to the market
- 19.4 councils currently calling off the existing framework would not automatically transfer on to a new framework.

20. **Option C – develop a dynamic purchasing system:** A dynamic purchasing system (DPS) is like a framework agreement except that during its life other suppliers may, if they meet the published criteria, join the system at any time. Officers would ensure the DPS was compliant with relevant legislation.

21. Advantages:

- 21.1 the area of collective switching and the number of suppliers offering this service has grown over the last two years and developing a DPS would allow a re-evaluation of the services councils want from a collective switching provider. It would provide the opportunity to access the new offers and models of operation currently available
- 21.2 a DPS differs from a framework in that it allows suppliers to continue joining throughout the lifetime of the DPS meaning that councils would be able to continue to access new offers and models of operation
- 21.3 a DPS can have multiple suppliers on it allowing councils calling off it to have a greater choice as they would be able to set the terms of a mini-competition to choose between switching providers.

22. Issues to consider:

- 22.1 this option would require investment of approximately £20,000 from the LGA to procure a partner to set up the DPS and manage the suppliers on the DPS. This can be met from within the Procurement Programme budget
- 22.2 a DPS provides no mechanism to limit the number of suppliers joining it. If residents were spread too thinly across too many suppliers this could weaken the reverse auction results or at worst discourage energy suppliers from engaging with collective switching
- 22.3 setting up a DPS would take approximately six months, however it would be possible to extend the existing framework for a short period to minimise disruption between the framework and DPS whilst also allowing sufficient time for soft market testing
- 22.4 councils currently calling off the existing framework would not automatically transfer on to a new DPS.

23. **Option D – allow the collective switching framework to come to a natural end:** If no action is taken, the LGA collective switching framework will come to a natural end in November 2015.

24. Advantages:

24.1 there are no discernible advantages to this option given the minimal resource implications for the LGA of continuing to operate a framework, as set out in paragraph 25.

25. Issues to consider:

25.1 all benefits would cease upon expiration of the framework meaning that councils already calling off it would have to procure a switching provider should they wish to continue offering a collective switching service to their residents

25.2 the framework has proven popular with a steady stream of new councils calling off it, including councils moving over from alternative frameworks

25.3 the ongoing running of the framework is zero cost to the LGA and requires minimal officer time as NEPO contract manage the framework.

26. Any of these options are open to the Board, but in view of the benefits of collective switching, the fact that the collective switching market has matured since the framework was last tendered and the risks associated with the lack of control over the number of suppliers on a DPS, it is recommended that we retender for a framework (Option B) to begin during 2016. It is recommended that a framework lasting 24 months with the option to extend for up to a further 24 months provides a sufficient length of time to encourage councils to call off the framework whilst also providing the opportunity to review the market conditions with appropriate frequency.

Alternative methods of support

27. The LGA recognises that collective energy switching is just one of many ways in which councils can help their residents to save money on their energy bills. In addition to behaviour change campaigns, councils across England have adopted various methodologies. Members are asked to indicate which of the following options the LGA should consider supporting.

28. **Alternative collective purchasing models:** Councils in Norfolk are piloting the UK's first large-scale solar photovoltaics (PV) collective purchasing scheme. The scheme aims to reduce the price of solar PV panels and installation through a collective purchasing model. The initiative has already achieved success in 70 local authorities in the Netherlands and Belgium where a total of nine schemes led to the installation of over 15,000 systems; a total of 40 MW of power. The results of the first auction in the UK are not yet available but it is estimated that more than 1000 residents will purchase solar PV through the scheme.

29. Potential LGA input in this area could include developing a framework or dynamic purchasing system, to reduce the procurement burden on councils interested in participating in collective solar PV purchasing. If members wished to pursue this option, officers would investigate further and report back to the Board later in the year.

30. **Alternative methods of supporting residents to switch energy provider:** Sevenoaks District Council provides a platform for residents to compare energy providers and to switch if it would be beneficial for them to do so. The process takes consideration of the household circumstances to provide the most appropriate recommendation and the service can be accessed in a variety of ways: internet, free telephone service, face to face assistance at the council offices, or face to face help at outreach surgeries. The scheme has achieved a conversion rate of 18 per cent with an average household saving of £262. The only direct cost to the council is for promotional materials including leaflets, banners and easy-to-read information flyers, however these costs are partly recovered through the switching contribution received by the council which is £16 for a single fuel or £32 for dual fuel.
31. A number of councils have developed their own energy comparison websites, providing live up to date information allowing residents to identify the cheapest tariff available to them and using the council 'brand' to increase trust in the process for people who may otherwise not switch.
32. Potential LGA input in this area could include developing a training programme, information pack and marketing advice for officers to provide face to face support to vulnerable groups.
33. **Supplying energy to residents:** A number of local authorities have sought to become even more involved in the energy market by generating energy and supplying it to residents. There are a variety of technologies and operating models including waste to energy facilities and district heating. Nottingham City Council will soon be launching 'Robin Hood Energy', a council owned energy company.
34. Such schemes are large and complex and the opportunity for LGA involvement is therefore modest in comparison to the overall resources required. The LGA is already supporting councils in this area by developing guidance for councils interested in energy generation. As part of a wider energy programme, the productivity team has commissioned a report that seeks to bring together information on the various opportunities for councils to generate renewable and low carbon energy as well as details of the financing options available to councils. The report is due for publication in July 2015.

Next steps

35. Officers will carry out soft market testing or prepare arrangements for the chosen option in relation to the collective switching framework.
36. Officers will prepare a report for the autumn on the alternative options Members want the LGA to consider supporting.

Financial Implications

37. There are different financial implications for the different options ranging from zero cost to approximately £20,000. These are set out above alongside further details of each option in paragraphs 14-25. Financial implications for the LGA supporting alternative methods of support to collective switching are currently uncoded but would need to be met from within the Productivity Programme budget.



**Improvement and Innovation
Board**

14 July 2015

LGA Boards' improvement activity

Purpose

To update the Board on improvement activity undertaken by LGA Boards.

Recommendation:

Members are asked to note the update on improvement activity undertaken by LGA Boards.

Action:

Officers to respond as necessary to any comments.

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LGA Boards' improvement activity

Background

1. Members have agreed that it is important for the Improvement and Innovation 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. In order to achieve this, the Board agreed that:
 - 2.1. officers be asked to 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 quarterly 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 full report describing the improvement activity and support provided through LGA Boards was submitted to the Improvement and Innovation Board in October 2014, with updates to subsequent meetings.
4. At the January 2015 meeting, the Board also provided strategic input to the on-going work of the Planning Advisory Service and views on the development of the integrated Care and Health Improvement Programme for 2015/16.
5. An update on the improvement activity undertaken by other Boards since the last meeting is **attached**.

Next steps

6. Subject to Members' views, officers will continue to update the Board on the improvement activities across all LGA Boards.

Financial implications

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

LGA Boards' improvement activity

City Regions Board and People and Places Board

1. Support offer on devolution

- 1.1 These two Boards have begun to consider the shape of a potential support offer on devolution, outlined below.
- 1.2 As councils have been getting to grips with the devolution agenda over the past year, requests for LGA support have been increasing. Initially, the requests were primarily related to understanding the policy context. Over time, demand for the LGA to offer more intensive and bespoke assistance to groups of authorities seeking to develop new governance pitches and proposals for devolution has steadily risen.
- 1.3 To date, the LGA has been managing requests for bespoke assistance on a case-by-case basis. Now that the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill has been published and the Government has extended the offer to negotiate with all places, we can expect the demand for support to ramp up even more.
- 1.4 Based on the nature of current demand, there could be three broad elements to the support offer:
 - 1.4.1 peer support to provide assistance with brokering
 - 1.4.2 knowledge exchange to bolster the strategic case
 - 1.4.3 access to technical advice.

2. Peer support

- 2.1 Our analysis shows that the majority of councils are in discussions about formalising sub-regional partnerships; most are still scoping out their options. The stage where places particularly seem to want help is to get from determining that they want to establish a formal partnership, to working out just what that arrangement might look like. The LGA has recently arranged for a couple of places at this stage to get advice about how to proceed from members and senior officers already in combined authorities, which has been very well-received.
- 2.2 It is suggested that the LGA build on our existing peer support offer to pull together a roster of member and officer peers with first-hand experience of establishing combined authorities or other joint arrangements and negotiating with government to provide tactical advice to areas at a more formative stage. Peers could be matched to areas based on the specific issues that they are working through. By holding the ring on a peer exchange arrangement, the LGA could also help to ensure that demands on individual peers are kept at a manageable level and benefit from their feedback.

3. Knowledge exchange

- 3.1 We have also picked up on a strong appetite among councils to learn from each other when it comes to preparing for and delivering new responsibilities. One of the disadvantages of a process that focuses on bespoke negotiations can be that opportunities to share learning across the country can be missed, which is where the LGA could step in to assist. We could gather good practice and disseminate learning through on-line resources and events, as places undertake their preparations and start to deliver on their devolution agreements. This would also give us the opportunity to track the outcomes that result from devolution, to help us strengthen the overall case.

4. Access to technical advice

- 4.1 Proposals for devolution will have to be backed up by detailed business cases. With the prolonged squeeze on council budgets also having led to an erosion of in-house expertise, many places are finding that they have to commission external analysis and financial modelling at significant cost. Last year, the LGA established a “Growth Advisor” programme, which enabled local authorities to commission up to 14 days expert help to progress local economic growth initiatives. A broad range of advisors with expertise on a wide range of issues was made available to councils. A similar initiative to enable councils to access technical expertise to develop their devolution proposals would likely be well-received.
- 4.2 Finally, Andrew Campbell, currently Acting Director General, Finance and Corporate Services at DCLG, is about to join the LGA on secondment to support work offering LGA support to councils. He is expected to work at the interface between councils, combined authorities and Whitehall, advising councils on the best way to formulate their bids and supporting them in negotiations, as well as facilitating discussions between groups of councils on the structures and governance they may need to put in place in order to access deals.

Community Wellbeing Board

Care and Health Improvement Programme – update

5. The 2015/16 Programme

- 5.1 The LGA has used its experience of successfully working with the Department of Health since 2012 on a range of social care improvement and health integration programmes, to inform the development of the *Care and Health Improvement Programme for this year*.
- 5.2 In developing the Programme, the LGA listened very carefully to what local authorities, regional leaders and professional associations told us they want. These views were tested and ratified by Lead Members from the Community Wellbeing Board in February 2015. The consensus is for a continuation of a sector-led improvement programme that recognises the significant change that is happening within the care and health sector, and provides the support and capacity to help local authorities improve services and manage change in a coherent and planned way.

- 5.3 The Programme therefore will seek to help ***improve outcomes for local people by helping local authorities and Health and Wellbeing Boards*** to:

Objective	Sub-objective
<i>Deliver better quality care and health</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support a joined up and consistent approach to the delivery of sustainable social care and health services • To support the effective implementation of the Care Act • To facilitate joined-up working across partners and providers to support the effective presentation, delivery and sharing of data across the health and social care sectors • To provide bespoke support to local authorities and Health and Wellbeing Boards as required to assist with service improvement and implementation
<i>Embed Health and Wellbeing Boards as place-based health and care leaders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support Health and Wellbeing Boards to become system leaders and encourage the integration of health and social care services by councils
<i>Make care and health sustainable locally</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the development of measures that increase the resilience of services • To encourage the protection of services for the vulnerable and those at risk of harm • To support councils overcome barriers in the care of people with learning disabilities or mental health conditions
<i>Use sector-led improvement to enable local authorities to increase public, regulator and government confidence in local care and health services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify and share good practice to support service improvement

- 5.4 This broad and challenging programme responds to local and national needs. Its key areas include:

- 5.4.1 *Social Care Improvement*: addressing risk management, resilience, workforce, safeguarding, learning disabilities and mental health and improvement
- 5.4.2 *Health and Wellbeing Boards*: supporting systems leaders to be effective in their roles and to plan ahead
- 5.4.3 *Care Act*: helping local authorities to embed the Act's social care changes and plan for its funding
- 5.4.4 *Integration*: supporting local authorities to deliver their approved better care fund plans and prepare for the second year of the fund
- 5.4.5 *Informatics*: helping authorities and clinical commissioning groups share data to improve the delivery of care services.

6. Post-election review

- 6.1 The Programme is governed through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Health. The Conservative government's new policy direction, principally set out in their manifesto, will have an impact on the Programme. In order to ensure that the Programme continues to support local authorities to respond to emerging priorities (Ministerial, policy and operational), a review of the Programme will begin in July 2015.

7. Benefits to local authorities

- 7.1 Local authorities, and their social care departments in particular, are facing unprecedented changes, increased demands and the growing impact of austerity. The range, scope and pace of change is significant and far reaching with implementation of the Care Act being part complete, the future nature of the Better Care Fund being uncertain, and Health and Wellbeing Boards taking an increasingly strategic role in the local health economy. At the same time, an aging population is placing ever increasing demands on services, and the Care Act brings a new client group (carers) within the scope of local authorities' responsibilities. This, coupled with on-going austerity, is placing increasing pressures on local authorities.
- 7.2 The needs and requirements of the sector have been placed at the heart of the *Care and Health Improvement Programme* in 2015/16. The structuring of the Programme reflects the inter-relationships between legislation and policy initiatives at a local level. For example, the links between the Care Act implementation and adult safeguarding or the Better Care Fund and integration pioneers are recognised.

8. Offer to the sector

- 8.1 The Programme provides for a broad range of support to local authorities and Health and Wellbeing Boards including:

9. Leadership support

- 9.1 leadership essentials for Health and Wellbeing Board Chairs and Vice Chairs
- 9.2 induction sessions for new Health and Wellbeing Board Chairs and Vice Chairs
- 9.3 leadership training for Directors of Social Care

10. Peer challenge, support and diagnosis

- 10.1 health and wellbeing peer challenges and follow-up support
- 10.2 social care commissioning peer challenges and follow-up support
- 10.3 social care practice deep dives to support implementation and improvement
- 10.4 risk assessment identification and management

11. Integration, implementation and improvement support

- 11.1 products and tools to support implementation of the Care Act, Adult Safeguarding Boards, Safeguarding and Commissioning for Better Outcomes

- 11.2 supporting local authorities and their Clinical Commissioning Group partners to redefine the way people with mental health and challenging behaviour are cared for locally
 - 11.3 products and tools to support the Better Care Fund
 - 11.4 bespoke support to those places and areas that require it
12. Public reporting and analysis
- 12.1 social care annual report
 - 12.2 use of resources
 - 12.3 area profiles for adult social care, public health, and health and wellbeing areas
13. Regional networks
- 13.1 supporting networks of regional Lead Members, Health and Wellbeing Chairs, Chief Executives, Directors of Social Care and operation managers to share information, best practice and experience
 - 13.2 providing expert senior Care and Health Improvement Advisers, working with LGA Principal Advisers, to support improvement and change locally.
- 14. Sector-led improvement on/for health and care – priorities for 2015/16**
- 14.1 The Community Wellbeing Board considered a full report on the Care and Health Improvement Programme and proposed the following objectives for 2015/16:
 - 14.1.1 achieve the successful transfer of the 0-5 public health services to local authorities with adequate funding
 - 14.1.2 support councils to take a proactive approach to specific conditions – autism, mental health and dementia
 - 14.1.3 deliver effective programmes of support to local health and care systems (grant funded) which meet councils' needs to cover Health and Wellbeing Board leadership, Care Act Implementation, adult social care improvement, the Better Care Fund and the Transforming Care Programme.

Culture, Tourism and Sport Board

- 15. Sport England and Arts Council England are funding a comprehensive sector-led leadership offer for sport and culture portfolio holders. We will deliver seven leadership events (three Sport Leadership Essentials Programmes, two Culture Leadership Essentials Programmes and two Library Seminars) and three peer challenges between July 2015 and the end of March 2016, with the aim of supporting over 150 portfolio holders to lead transformational change.

Safer and Stronger Communities Board

16. Police Effectiveness Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspections

- 16.1 The PEEL programme of inspections has been introduced by HMIC to give the public the information they need to be able to judge the performance of their force and policing as a whole. In recent years HMIC has undertaken inspections on specific subjects or services, but even when combined these do not provide a rounded assessment of the 43 forces in England and Wales, so PEEL has been developed to fill this gap. The 2014 PEEL assessment piloted the approach, with the 2015 assessment being the first with fully graded judgments. These assessments will be published in February 2016. The Board has been part of the stakeholder group looking at the methodology used to assess effectiveness and has indicated a desire to also be involved in the work around the legitimacy strand of the inspections.

17. Police and Crime Panels

- 17.1 The Board published a good practice guide for police and crime panels in June to help them in their scrutiny of police and crime commissioners. The Board will also be considering the '*Tone from the Top*' report by the Committee on Standards in Public Life on leadership, ethics and accountability in policing as this contained a number of recommendations directed at police and crime panels and the LGA.

18. Gambling

- 18.1 The Board has revised and updated its councillor handbook on gambling to cover issues around betting shop clustering and the use of Fixed Odds Betting Terminals. The handbook sets out the range of tools that councils can use to shape local gambling regulation in their area.

19. National FGM Centre

- 19.1 Progress is being made with establishing the joint LGA and Barnardo's National FGM Centre. Discussions have been held with a number of local authorities to secure their agreement to becoming pilot areas for the Centre's work and work is now progressing to formalise these arrangements. Key staff including social workers and project workers to deliver the Centre's programme have been recruited and planning is already underway for the Centre's first conference in the autumn.

20. Prevent and Counter-Terrorism

- 20.1 The two new statutory duties on councils to prevent terrorism came into effect on 1 July. The Board ran a plenary session at the LGA Annual Conference to look at what the new duty means for local authorities. The Home Office have also announced that there will be £10,000 available to each non-priority council

to implement the new duty as a one-off payment, and that there will be a national package of support for councils which will include:

- 20.1.1 access to training if required – including online access to WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent)
- 20.1.2 regional Awareness Raising Events – 8 regional events held across England, Scotland and Wales directed at those most affected by the Duty
- 20.1.3 an innovation fund – a public fund available to specified authorities, third sector groups and business to support the expansion of Prevent activity and to increase the number and range of local partners delivering Prevent work
- 20.1.4 a peer support group – a team of expert practitioners who will provide a dedicated source of expertise and best practice for bodies, particularly those who might be facing challenges in implementing the new requirements
- 20.1.5 additional sector specific information – where required, provided by lead departments and sectors, to support implementation.

21. The Board will be reviewing its proposals to support councils implement the Prevent duty in light of the support available from the Home Office.

22. Fire and Rescue Service – Beyond Fighting Fires

- 22.1 June saw the publication of ‘Beyond Fighting Fires’ a joint piece of work between the Community Wellbeing Board and the Fire Services Management Committee on the role of the fire and rescue service in improving public health. With the fire and rescue service successful in reducing the number of fires by half over the last decade the case studies in this publication set out examples of how Fire and Rescue Authorities are using their expertise in prevention to improve the public’s health.

Children and Young People Board

23. Education and Adoption Bill

- 23.1 The Education and Adoption Bill contains new powers for the Secretary of State and Regional Schools Commissioners to more rapidly intervene in schools rated Inadequate or as Requiring Improvement. Schools that are unable to achieve ‘Good’ within an acceptable timescale will be turned into academies. The legislation also contains measures to encourage councils to join together to create regional adoption agencies.

- 23.2 It will be important to respond to new developments on the expansion of academies (as the Department for Education is unable to effectively support the rapid expansion in schools converting to academy status) and to build on the success of recent years in using the adoption system to find children new homes.
- 23.3 The LGA Executive has therefore agreed that this Bill be treated as a high priority in lobbying terms.

24. Ofsted support and buddying

- 24.1 The LGA has recently started offering informal 'buddying' support to children's lead members when their council undergoes an Ofsted Single Inspection. This system, which mirrors arrangements made by ADCS and Solace, allows lead members to get advice and support from another lead member whose authority has already been inspected. Early feedback from members has been positive.

Leadership Board

25. The Leadership Board has approved the LGA's response to a consultation of the future of the public sector ombudsman sector.
26. In 2014, the Minister for Government Policy commissioned Robert Gordon to test whether the current public sector ombudsman sector is best for citizens, best for Parliament and delivers value for money. The report, published along with the Cabinet Office Consultation, puts forward the case for reform of the current ombudsman sector and, in particular, recommends the creation of a new Public Service Ombudsman, bringing together the existing jurisdictions of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Local Government Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman.
27. The creation of a new Public Service Ombudsman is intended to improve customer experience, by providing an integrated service and the opportunities to improve public service systems. The Local Government Ombudsman supports the proposed change.
28. Overall, the LGA has welcomed the proposal to create a single Public Service Ombudsman covering health, housing and local government and considers that this move to streamline and reduce duplication and confusion for citizens is long overdue.
29. We support the three principles underpinning the reform – improved service to citizens, greater value for money and the continued independence from Government of the Ombudsman. In addition we would propose a fourth principle - early resolution at the most local level.
30. Responding to the specific consultation question: *Would you support a wider role for a PSO as a champion of effective complaints handling across the public sector?*
- 30.1 The LGA responded: *there is some merit in the PSO taking on a wider brief that would enable them to identify trends to support improvement across the public sector. The LGA would support this in principle, provided it is done in a collaborative way and does not put create additional burdens for local authorities and other public service providers.*



**Improvement and Innovation
Board**

14 July 2015

Annual review of the year

Purpose:

To comment and approve.

Summary:

All Boards have been asked to take an end of year report to their June/July meeting, looking at the key Board achievements of the year. The report will also be considered by the LGA Executive in September 2015.

Recommendations

Members are asked to comment and approve the end of year report.

Actions

Officers to progress as appropriate in the light of members' views.

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Improvement and Innovation Board: Review of the Year

Sector-led improvement

1. A significant focus of our work this year was to **review the approach to sector-led improvement** in the light of the wide-ranging evaluation and political thinking in the run up to the General Election. The review was initiated at a workshop for members of the Improvement and Innovation Board and representatives of other LGA Boards last year, following which we spent some time engaging sector representatives in the development of a consultation paper to local authorities. "Taking stock: where next with sector-led improvement?" was launched on 20 January 2015 with the consultation closing on 13 March 2015.
2. There was a strong response from the sector, with a total of 160 individual responses, covering 37 per cent of authorities. When responses from representative regional bodies were taken into account, 65 per cent of authorities were covered by the responses received. In addition, responses were received from a wide range of national stakeholders, professional bodies and regional local authority representative/improvement bodies. A response was also received from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. A full analysis of the responses was presented to our meeting in May 2015 and we are currently considering how to take the results forward in the context of a new Government.
3. The timing of the consultation coincided with the Leadership Board's decision that sector-led improvement should be one of the LGA's **campaigns** for 2014/15. This has led to: a revamp and greater prominence to the website content on sector-led improvement, the exploration of alternative ways of promoting the benefits of the LGA's support offer to councils, the development of some infographics and the use of social media leading to greater engagement. A short film/podcast was also produced and launched half way through the consultation period. The film captured a range of different views on some of the key issues in the consultation with a view to promoting debate and stimulating responses. The film was hosted on the LGA YouTube channel and on the LGA website.
4. Alongside the consultation, the results from the **LGA Perceptions survey** further demonstrated the sector's continuing support for the approach and the value attached to the support offer. More than three-fifths (63 per cent) of respondents agree that sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context. This is consistent with results in 2013. Overall, more than four in five respondents (83 per cent) think that the support provided by the LGA for sector-led improvement is useful, increasing to 89 per cent of Leaders and Chief Executives. Four fifths of respondents (80 per cent) believe that the support and resources offered by the LGA for sector-led improvement will have a positive impact on their own authority's capacity to monitor its own performance and continuously improve – consistent with the 2013 figures.

Innovation

5. Once again this year a key element of LGA Innovation activity has been the **Innovation Zone** at the LGA's Annual Conference in 2015. Over 50 councils showcased their innovative approaches under the following themes: political leadership, commercialisation, digital, community action, integration and partnership working. We

have also developed a searchable database of the innovative examples featured in the past two years' Innovation Zones. The database was launched in March 2015 as part of the new [LGA Innovative Councils](#) website, which signposts councils to all innovative work that the LGA is involved in.

6. In addition, in an exciting new partnership with the Design Council, the LGA has agreed to part fund "Better by Design" pilots in two regions - the South West and East of England. Each cohort will have 16 participants with six to eight councils selected to participate in each regional cohort clustered around particular geographic and cross sectorial issues. Delegates will be exposed to critical design leadership content and supported to identify design-led opportunities. This programme aims to equip councils with tools and confidence in this area.

Improvement

7. We continue to deliver a large number of **peer challenges** to the sector – 132 peer challenges in total in 2014/15 across a wide range of service areas, including 38 corporate peer challenges. By March 2015, councils had contributed more than 3,200 days of senior councillor and officer time to Corporate Peer Challenge teams representing a considerable investment by the sector in its own improvement, equivalent to millions of pounds of consultancy.
8. Working through the LGA's Lead Member Peers and Principal Advisers, we have provided **targeted support to individual councils** and groups of councils, for example: change of control support to 32 councils, bespoke peer mentoring support to 63 councils, follow-up support to 45 councils who received peer challenge and direct improvement support to 112 councils, eg around financial sustainability or where councils are facing specific improvement challenges.
9. **Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA)** has been successfully established by the LGA (though independent from it), and commenced business on 1 April 2015. It is a transitional body established to manage the current audit contracts with private sector audit firms carrying out external audits of a range of local NHS bodies, the police and local authorities. The contracts will run until at least 2017. We are currently consulting the sector on the desirability of extending the current contracts (thereby locking in estimated savings in the region of £24m a year in total) and the potential appetite for the establishment of a sector-led body that would procure external audit on authorities' behalf when the contracts expire.

Productivity

10. Through our productivity programme we have been supporting councils with pooling resources and redesigning services, identifying the key productivity gains for local government and making sure councils deliver these savings quickly. For example:
 - 10.1. We have captured and promoted good practice of councils **sharing services**. Our interactive web-based map includes examples from 416 shared service arrangements between councils resulting in £462 million of efficiency savings.
 - 10.2. We launched the **National Procurement Strategy** and initiated a programme of work to implement it, including instituting national category plans for high spending types of work.
 - 10.3. The joint LGA/Cabinet Office **One Public Estate programme** to help local and central government asset holders rationalize assets across central and local

- government is proving successful. To date the programme has seen the 32 local authorities involved save £129 million in capital receipts and £77 million in running costs, with further long term savings expected.
- 10.4. Following the conclusion of the Adult Social Care Efficiency (ASCE) Programme with a final report and event last year, we have initiated a **Health & Social Care Integration programme** with a view to identifying the benefits of integrated working at local level.
 - 10.5. The **Productivity Expert programme** provides councils with expertise in a skills area of their choice in order to support them to deliver ambitious efficiency savings or income generation projects. Over three years, the programme has supported 54 councils across 36 projects and has contributed to £72 million in efficiency savings and income generation. The programme will support a further 20 projects this financial year.
 - 10.6. Our evaluation of the **Customer-Led Transformation programme**, which provided support to 63 projects, highlighted that the programme delivered over £331 million of financial benefit to the public and public services.

Supporting Political and Managerial Leadership

11. The LGA's refreshed leadership development support offer "Highlighting Leadership" has proved very popular - www.local.gov.uk/councillor-development. The offer provides: better targeting with clear, differentiated audiences, a more cohesive offer with new content and formats, and the flexibility to respond to changing local government agenda. Political leadership is at the heart of the refreshed offer and we have continued to support councillors through our highly acclaimed leadership programmes, with 577 councillors attending programmes in 2014/15.
12. During the year, we also introduced a number of additions to the offer including:
 - 12.1. **Tailored Community Leadership sessions at councils** run with LGA member peers and linked to the wider sector-led improvement offer on a variety of themes such as being an effective ward councillor, chairing skills, scrutiny, effective personal impact, effective meetings and licensing
 - 12.2. Community Leadership **e-learning modules** with over 2400 people signed up to the e-learning portal and over 350 councils with access to the platform - currently available are e-modules on being an effective ward councillor, facilitation and conflict resolution, and handling complaints for service improvement
 - 12.3. **a Next Generation programme for Independent Group councillors**, sitting alongside the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat programmes, all of which aim to support and encourage ambitious and talented councillors in becoming bold political leaders
 - 12.4. **new modules** on commissioning, finance and digital leadership (for the Leadership Essentials programme) and effective opposition modules (for the Focus on Leadership programme).
13. The **National Graduate Development Programme** (ngdp) continues to be successful in attracting new talent into local government. The 2014 ngdp intake (Cohort 16) is coming to the end of their first year on the programme, with 110 graduates working in over 50 councils across England and Wales. Demand from councils to take part in the 2015 intake (Cohort 17) continues to be strong, with over 120 placement requests received from over 50 councils across England and Wales.

Transparency

14. We have continued to help councils get to grips with the implications of the Local Government Transparency Code and have published practical guidance to help authorities in implementing the Code. There were between 1600 and 2400 downloads for each of the various guidance documents during the first two months of publication. Based on our lobbying, local authorities received between £7,000 and £13,000 of new burdens funding from DCLG to pay for the ongoing cost of publications, depending on the type of authority.
15. We also secured £2.64 million between 2013 and 2015 in open data funding for authorities, via BIS' local open data Breakthrough Fund and the Cabinet Office Release of Data Fund, to help authorities release and use data in meaningful, practical ways to engage with local people and improve local services. Over 30 local authorities received grant funding to support the release and use of open data over the last two years.
16. **LG Inform**, our on-line data and benchmarking service, has increased its reach. It now has 97 per cent of councils registered and over 3,000 registered users. Since its launch, the public site has had over 93,000 visits from 53,000 unique visitors. We have continued to promote the new LG Inform to councils and to work with the sector to develop a free local benchmarking club. Now around 140 authorities are regularly taking part in this exercise, to collect and compare data that is not available elsewhere or is available quicker through LG Inform. Good progress has been made with **LG Inform Plus** (formerly known as esd-toolkit), our subscription package for local authorities offering a range of additional data tools and access to ward-level data. This met its income target for the year and brought in a small surplus.

Oversight of LGA Improvement activity

17. Members have agreed that it is important for the Improvement and Innovation 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. We have received regular reports on the improvement activity of LGA Boards and had the opportunity, amongst others, to provide strategic input to the on-going work of the Planning Advisory Service and views on the development of the integrated Care and Health Improvement Programme for 2015/16.

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LGA location map

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Public transport

Local Government House is well served by public transport. The nearest mainline stations are: Victoria and Waterloo: the local underground stations are

St James's Park (Circle and District Lines), **Westminster** (Circle, District and Jubilee Lines), and **Pimlico** (Victoria Line) - all about 10 minutes walk away.

Buses 3 and 87 travel along Millbank, and the 507 between Victoria and Waterloo stops in Horseferry Road close to Dean Bradley Street.

Bus routes – Horseferry Road

507 Waterloo - Victoria

C10 Canada Water - Pimlico - Victoria

88 Camden Town - Whitehall - Westminster - Pimlico - Clapham Common

Bus routes – Millbank

87 Wandsworth - Aldwych

3 Crystal Palace - Brixton - Oxford Circus

For further information, visit the Transport for London website at www.tfl.gov.uk

Cycling facilities

The nearest Barclays cycle hire racks are in Smith Square. Cycle racks are also available at Local Government House. Please telephone the LGA on 020 7664 3131.

Central London Congestion Charging Zone

Local Government House is located within the congestion charging zone.

For further details, please call 0845 900 1234 or visit the website at www.cclondon.com

Car parks

Abingdon Street Car Park (off Great College Street)

Horseferry Road Car Park
Horseferry Road/Arneway Street. Visit the website at www.westminster.gov.uk/parking

