

# Executive Advisory Board

## Agenda

**Friday, 15 May 2020**  
**2.00 pm**

Meeting to be held remotely – Zoom details  
to be circulated separately

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

**LGA Executive**  
15 May 2020

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There will be a remote meeting of the LGA Executive at: **2.00 pm on Friday, 15 May 2020.**

#### **Attendance**

Member Services will take out a register at the start of the meeting.

#### **Apologies**

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

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

#### **LGA Contact**

Alexander Saul  
Alexander.Saul@local.gov.uk / 020 7664 3232

#### **Carers' Allowance**

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

#### **Social Media**

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

The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgaexec.

## Executive Advisory Board – Membership 2019/2020

Councillor and Role	Authority
<b>Conservative 9</b>	
Cllr James Jamieson (Chairman)	Central Bedfordshire Council
Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE (Vice Chairman)	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr John Fuller OBE (Deputy Chairman)	South Norfolk District Council
Cllr Robert Alden (Deputy Chairman)	Birmingham City Council
Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE (Deputy Chairman)	Bexley Council
Cllr Peter Fleming OBE (Board Chair)	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Ian Hudspeth (Board Chair)	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr David Renard (Board Chair)	Swindon Borough Council
Cllr Kevin Bentley (Board Chair)	Essex County Council
<b>Labour 9</b>	
Cllr Nick Forbes CBE (Senior Vice-Chair)	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
Cllr Michael Payne (Deputy Chair)	Gedling Borough Council
Cllr Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Chair)	Hackney London Borough Council
Cllr Tudor Evans OBE (Deputy Chair)	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Georgia Gould (Deputy Chair)	Camden Council
Cllr Simon Blackburn (Board Chair)	Blackpool Council
Sir Richard Leese CBE (Board Chair)	Manchester City Council and City Regions Board
Cllr Richard Watts (Board Chair)	Islington Council
Cllr Judith Blake CBE (Board Chair)	Leeds City Council
<b>Liberal Democrat 5</b>	
Cllr Howard Sykes MBE (Vice-Chair)	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE (Deputy Chair)	Sutton London Borough Council
Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Board Chair)	Portsmouth City Council
Cllr Anita Lower (Balancing Member)	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
Cllr Bridget Smith (Balancing Member)	South Cambridgeshire District Council
<b>Independent 4</b>	
Cllr Marianne Overton MBE (Vice-Chair)	Lincolnshire County Council
Cllr Clive Woodbridge (Deputy Chair)	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Cllr Paul Woodhead (Balancing Member)	Cannock Chase District Council
Cllr Rosemarie Harris (Balancing Member)	Powys County Council

<b>Regional Representatives 9</b>		
Cllr Robert Stewart	LAB	Swansea City and County Council
Cllr Marc Bayliss	CON	Worcester City Council
Cllr David Finch	CON	Essex County Council
Cllr Simon Henig CBE	LAB	Association of North East Councils
Cllr John Hart	CON	South West Councils
Cllr Peter John OBE	LAB	Southwark Council
Cllr Shabir Pandor	LAB	Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Cllr Roy Perry	CON	Hampshire County Council
Cllr Nicholas Rushton	CON	East Midlands Councils
<b>Named Substitutes</b>		
Cllr Ralph Bagge	CON	South Bucks District Council

**Non-voting Members of LGA Executive**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Representing</b>	
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	LAB	SIGOMA
Alderman Sir David Wootton	INDE	Local Partnerships
Cllr David Williams	CON	County Councils Network (CCN)

## LGA Executive Attendance 2019-2020

<b>Councillors</b>	<b>12/9/19</b>	<b>31/10/19</b>	<b>23/1/20</b>	<b>12/03/20</b>
<b>Conservative Group</b>				
James Jamieson	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Izzi Seccombe OBE	Yes	No	No	Yes
John Fuller OBE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
David Simmonds CBE	Yes	No	N/a	N/a
Robert Alden	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Teresa O'Neill OBE	N/a	N/a	No	Yes
Peter Fleming OBE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ian Hudspeth	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
David Renard	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Kevin Bentley	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Labour Group</b>				
Nick Forbes CBE	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Peter Box CBE	No	Yes	N/a	N/a
Michael Payne	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Anne Western CBE	No	No	N/a	N/a
Anntoinette Bramble	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tudor Evans OBE	N/a	N/a	N/a	Yes
Georgia Gould	N/a	N/a	N/a	Yes
Simon Blackburn	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Sir Richard Leese CBE	No	Yes	Yes	No
Richard Watts	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Judith Blake CBE	No	No	Yes	No
<b>Lib Dem Group</b>				
Howard Sykes MBE	Yes	Yes	No	No
Ruth Dombey OBE	Yes	No	Yes	No
Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE	Yes	No	Yes	No
Anita Lower	N/a	Yes	Yes	No
Bridget Smith	N/a	Yes	No	No
<b>Independent</b>				
Marianne Overton MBE	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Clive Woodbridge	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Paul Woodhead	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rosemarie Harris	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Regional Representatives</b>				
David Finch	No	No	No	No
Simon Henig CBE	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
John Hart	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Peter John OBE	No	No	No	Yes
Shabir Pandor	N/a	Yes	Yes	No

Roy Perry	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Debbie Wilcox	No	Yes	No	No
Nicholas Rushton	No	No	Yes	No
<b>Non Voting Members</b>				
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	No	No	No	No
Alderman Sir David Wootton	No	No	No	No
David Williams	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Substitutes / In attendance</b>				
Marc Bayliss	Yes			
Linda Haysey	Yes			
Muhammed Butt	Yes			
Georgia Gould	Yes		Yes	
Ian Stephens	Yes			
Sue Baxter			Yes	

## Agenda

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### Executive Advisory Board

Friday 15 May 2020

2.00 pm

Meeting to be held remotely

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1. <b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
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Paper to be circulated as a supplementary agenda.	
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**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday, 16 July 2020, 2.00 pm







## The LGA's response to COVID-19: update

### Purpose of report

For information.

### Summary

This report provides members with a brief update on the range and scale of actions taken by the LGA in response to COVID-19 to date.

### Recommendations

That the LGA Board notes the work undertaken by the LGA in response to COVID-19.

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## **The LGA's response to COVID-19: update**

### **Background**

1. At its meeting on 22 April the LGA Board received an update from the Chief Executive on a new programme of activity based on issues affecting councils most when responding to COVID-19:
  - 1.1. Financial costs and income losses for councils
  - 1.2. Public health
  - 1.3. Adult social care, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and testing
  - 1.4. Community hubs, shielding, vulnerable people and convening the voluntary sector
  - 1.5. Livelihoods
  - 1.6. Children's services
  - 1.7. Deaths management
  - 1.8. Council governance and decision making
  - 1.9. Councils' and contractors workforce
  - 1.10. Councils' supply chain, logistics, digital
2. As well as these vital policy matters, we are also focused on activities designed to support and enable our work on the above:
  - 2.1. COVID-19 issues identification/ management/ response
  - 2.2. Corporate services and business continuity
  - 2.3. Briefings
  - 2.4. Refocusing our improvement support offer
  - 2.5. Regional insights and intelligence gathering
3. This paper seeks to give the Board an overview of the scale and range of activity undertaken across the LGA in response to COVID-19.

### **Issues**

4. The LGA began to gear up its work in response and preparation for Coronavirus in January. In March a programme of work was established with the following aims:
  - 4.1. Provide support to councils to meet the challenges of COVID-19 while maintaining business as usual to the extent that this is possible and/or appropriate;
  - 4.2. Provide support to councils to plan for the medium term in light of the impacts of COVID-19;

- 4.3. Lead and coordinate councils' liaison with Government and represent the interests of the sector;
  - 4.4. Support councils to support the country; and
  - 4.5. Enable the LGA to maintain and develop its delivery of the above in the context of COVID-19.
5. As part of this programme of work, the LGA has:
- 5.1. Established workstreams bringing colleagues from across the organisation to work together on themes such as Community Hubs, Logistics and Livelihoods;
  - 5.2. Redirected officers from some 'business as usual' operations, ensuring sufficient capacity is in place to support priority workstreams with new and challenging workloads. As at 1 May, over 40 officers were in temporary placements supporting the response;
  - 5.3. Created an Adult Social Care hub, jointly managed by the LGA and ADASS, to co-ordinate the response across adult social care and health partners, particularly with regards to hospital discharge, Care Act easements and the additional £1.3 billion funding;
  - 5.4. Established a Coronavirus Enquiries system ([coronavirus.enquiries@local.gov.uk](mailto:coronavirus.enquiries@local.gov.uk)) in order to:
    - 5.4.1. Capture and process the large number of enquiries and issues being received by the LGA and ensuring a timely response; and
    - 5.4.2. Using the information collected in this way to enable analysis of the main issues being raised and informing the development of Frequently Asked Questions.
  - 5.5. As at 6 May, more than 1,500 enquiries had been received from over 280 councils; the largest proportion of currently active cases relate to adult social care (18 per cent) and councils' workforce (16 per cent);
  - 5.6. Developed a dedicated web hub, which has achieved over 183,100 total page views, and 113,100 visits since its launch in February 2020. This extensive information resource for councils includes:
    - 5.6.1. 136 Frequently asked questions on 19 different themes, enabling councils to access the latest information for themselves;
    - 5.6.2. Examples of good practice by councils on 10 different themes;
    - 5.6.3. The Remote Council Meetings hub;

- 5.6.4. LG Inform reports on COVID-19 cases (England overview and map of English authorities over time): the reports have been downloaded over 30,000 times, making them the most popular LG Inform reports ever;
- 5.6.5. Guidance to councillors on the COVID-19 outbreak;
- 5.6.6. Seven COVID-19 related publications achieving over 15,000 downloads.
- 5.7. Refocused support and developed new ways of delivering support to councils and communities:
  - 5.7.1. Webinars on social care and workforce issues;
  - 5.7.2. Online leadership development tools are now available on an open access platform (including a new module on holding council meetings online);
  - 5.7.3. The Planning Advisory Service is holding 'fireside chats' – filmed discussions with councillor peers on planning good practice; and
  - 5.7.4. A new coaching offer for chief executives and senior officers launched with SOLACE.
- 5.8. Engaged extensively with councils across all regions and provided support via Principal Advisers and regional teams:
  - 5.8.1. Contacted all councils with information and provided direct support or advice to over 260 councils;
  - 5.8.2. Contributed to over 300 meetings with chief executives and regional groups since the middle of March;
  - 5.8.3. Held regular discussions with Regional Member peers;
  - 5.8.4. Provided mentoring support to councillors who have requested this;
  - 5.8.5. Held two regional webinars on various themes, each attended by over 70 councillors, with more planned in the weeks ahead.
- 5.9. Negotiated new Memoranda of Understanding with MHCLG (with a value of £19.2 million) and Department of Health and Social Care (£7.5 million);
- 5.10. With NHSX launched the Social Care Digital Innovation Accelerator programme that generated interest from 52 councils and 185 partners;
- 5.11. In addition to their regular and ongoing contacts with Chief Executives, Leaders and regional organisations, Principal Advisers and the LGA's regional teams are also engaging with Local Resilience Fora and Strategic Coordinating Groups;
- 5.12. Introduced a new online First bulletin, sent weekly to 21,219 councillors;

- 5.13. Introduced a daily bulletin from the Chairman and Chief Executive: initially 7 days a week from mid-March, now 5 with the ability for weekend bulletins when required. We have received positive feedback that our bulletins are highly valued by senior councillors and officers. The Chief Executive's bulletin published on 31 March 2020 achieved the highest click-through rate during our campaign at 91 per cent, and the bulletin was read over 11,540 times;
- 5.14. Introduced a daily bulletin for adult social care ensuring the sector is informed, in particular relating to the interface between care and health services;
6. Having moved to work entirely from home, the LGA has also changed the way it works:
  - 6.1. All member meetings are now being conducted via Zoom;
  - 6.2. The Employee Forum is now being held as a webinar – achieving record levels of staff engagement;
7. A paper on the LGA's work on core business continuity is included as a separate item on the agenda.

#### **Implications for Wales**

8. This report summarises actions taken in relation to the LGA's work with and support to English councils. The LGA will continue to liaise with the WLGA as both organisations review and develop their response to COVID-19.

#### **Financial Implications**

9. The actions outlined above have been delivered within existing resources.

#### **Next steps**

10. Members of the LGA Board note the scale and range of activity undertaken in relation to the organisation's response to COVID-19 to date.





## **LGA's work on Adult Social Care as part of the Covid-19 Response**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion.

### **Summary**

Adult Social Care is at the forefront of the Covid-19 challenge. As providers and commissioners for the major part of local provision, adult social care council teams have been prominent in leading local responses.

Supporting councils with the adult social care response has been a dominant part of the LGA's programme over the last 2 months across improvement, policy, public affairs and media.

We have supported our member councils in all aspects of this response including:

- the huge effort at the end of March to create bed-space in hospitals by supporting the quick discharge of patients home and to care homes
- support to ensure additional government funding is used to sustain local providers
- working with government on guidance to the Care Act easements that is proportionate, sensible and gives councils flexibility in prioritising work through the emergency.
- Working with government to ensure national and local data reporting requirements are balanced and proportionate

As social care has become the front line for spread of infection and deaths we have redoubled our efforts – lobbying government to improve the supply and effectiveness of PPE, to establish a coherent testing regime for social care users, carers and staff and to support councils in leading an effective system to support social care resilience.

### **Recommendations**

That the Executive Advisory Board considers the actions taken to support the adult social care Covid-19 response and makes recommendations for any further work or follow-up as appropriate.

### **Actions**

Officers to action any recommendations for further work or follow-up as appropriate.

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## **LGA's work on Adult Social Care as part of the Covid-19 Response**

### **Background**

1. Adult Social Care is at the forefront of the Covid-19 challenge. As providers and commissioners for the major part of local provision, adult social care council teams have been prominent in leading local responses. Supporting councils with the adult social care response has been a dominant part of the LGA's programme over the last 2 months across improvement, policy, public affairs and media.
2. A key part of our role has been working with DHSC and MHCLG alongside national partners, particularly ADASS, NHS bodies and the care provider associations, to ensure that government policy is informed by what can best support councils and local partners to help keep residents and staff safe and supported.
3. In the early days of the response social care played a huge role in protecting the NHS and preparing it for readiness, creating bed-space in hospitals by supporting the quick discharge of patients home and to care homes. In recent weeks the focus has shifted from hospitals to social care, particularly care homes, and we have pressed the need for a commensurate shift in focus to protecting social care.
4. Given the scale of the adult social care Covid-19 challenge we have established a joint PMO (the ASC "Hub") jointly with ADASS. We have created this by temporarily refocussing the work of staff from the Care and Health Improvement Programme (CHIP). This is ensuring that we are using the joint resources of LGA and ADASS to best effect, avoiding duplication and co-ordinating sector leadership with Government and the NHS. We are able to co-ordinate communications including a daily ASC Update to complement the daily LGA chief executive/chairman bulletin and we now host a Knowledge Hub for key documents and exchange of information. The ASC Hub is integrated with the LGA Covid-19 PMO.
5. In our parliamentary work, our deputy chief executive, Sarah Pickup, gave evidence on the response to Covid-19 to the Health and Social Care Select Committee and we wrote publicly to the Secretary of State on the crucial issue of PPE. We are meeting regularly with Ministers and senior civil servants. We have been incredibly active in national and trade media, both reacting to a high volume of stories and leading key debates through proactive press work.
6. We have supported our member councils in all aspects of this response including:
  - 6.1. The huge effort at the end of March to create bed-space in hospitals by supporting the quick discharge of patients home and to care homes.
  - 6.2. Working with government and providers to ensure the fragile social care sector remains sustainable.
  - 6.3. Support to ensure additional government funding is used to sustain local providers.



- 6.4. Working with government on guidance to the Care Act easements that is proportionate, sensible and gives councils flexibility in prioritising work through the emergency.
- 6.5. Working with government to ensure national and local data reporting requirements are balanced and proportionate.
- 6.6. Lobbying for consistent access to appropriate PPE.
- 6.7. Lobbying for a comprehensive and focussed testing regime for social care.
- 6.8. Lobbying that social care be afforded the same “protected” status as the NHS.

## Issues

7. **Hospital Discharge** – following publication of new hospital discharge guidance on 19 March we mobilised CHIP staff and, in conjunction with the Better Care Support Team, launched a series of webinars that started the following day and continued through the following week, reaching over a 1000 council staff. This unprecedented effort to facilitate hospital discharge was a huge credit to all our councils.
8. **Sustaining the Care Provider Sector** – Given the fragility of the care provider sector, the Covid-19 emergency poses a real threat to its sustainability and we have established working groups with national partners and government to address key areas around workforce and finance as well as related issues such as widening indemnity insurance. Of particular note, we published a joint statement with ADASS and the CPA on 17th March on the steps councils could take to support providers’ financial resilience and followed this up with a further joint statement with ADASS on 9<sup>th</sup> April, which included the issue of fee-uplifts. By promoting the importance of local discussions and a sector-led approach, we avoided the introduction of a national fee rate which, even if implemented temporarily, could have caused significant problems for councils.
9. **Care Home Resilience** - Subsequently we have worked with government on the development of a more coherent approach to care home resilience, bringing together all the elements needed to ensure safety of residents and staff:
  - 9.1. Infection control
  - 9.2. Workforce recruitment and co-ordination
  - 9.3. Use of alternative accommodation where appropriate
  - 9.4. NHS support, including primary care, community services and specialist support
  - 9.5. Access to and use of PPE
  - 9.6. Access to testing

We have successfully argued that this approach needs council leadership in bringing together key local partners to put the various elements in place. We will continue to argue that any additional costs related to the care homes resilience planning must be funded over and above previous council funding allocations.
10. **PPE** – shortages and quality of appropriate PPE has persisted as a significant problem for council staff and for local social care providers. The promised national supply

arrangements have not materialised for social care and councils are still reliant on what started as emergency drops to LRFs, with many councils still reporting supplies well short of what is needed. Councils are working hard with LRFs to ensure that the distribution of what is available is being prioritised according to need. The LGA is working with care provider associations and with DHSC to ensure greater consistency of supply and better clarity of what LRFs can expect.

11. There has also been confusion about appropriate use of PPE by social care staff. Following some unhelpful initial guidance which simply replicated advice to NHS staff, the LGA supported work with provider associations and with DHSC to develop quickly bespoke guidance for social care staff.
12. **Testing** - Following our extensive lobbying with councils and care providers the Government announced on 15 April that it would offer testing “for everyone who needs one” in social care settings. However, the prioritisation of testing for social care was undermined by the subsequent development of confusing multiple testing regimes, with social care staff and providers feeling they were often competing for testing slots as well as experiencing difficulty accessing test centres
13. Following further lobbying by LGA, government last week announced that it would prioritise 30,000 tests per day for staff and residents in care homes with DASS’s and DPH’s being asked to provide leadership to this initiative.
14. **Funding** - Early in the pandemic the LGA spoke strongly on the need for the funding necessary to enable councils to continue providing all their essential services. An important part of the focus for this work was on the funding needed for social care to help keep people safe and well. We know that the most significant share of the £3.2 billion allocated by government is being spent in adult social care, albeit that it is intended to provide for a much wider range of cost pressures, and that it falls well-short of the total costs and income losses that councils have experienced.
15. There has been some unfounded criticism of councils from the national care provider associations who have argued that councils have failed to pass on funding to local providers. In instances where councils have been named, we have always been able to establish that this is not the case. We are also gathering information from our regions about how councils have allocated their covid-19 funding. Notwithstanding our differences with national provider associations, we are continuing to work with providers and others connected to social care to fully understand the level of additional resource that may be needed, including for providers that operate predominantly in the self-funder market. We have been clear that the Government must honour its commitment to make available ‘whatever it takes’ to help the country through this emergency.
16. **Data returns** – Maintaining effective relations with local providers is part of all upper-tier councils’ responsibilities to support an appropriate balance and range of social care

service provision. This includes gathering appropriate data on market intelligence. As part of the covid-19 response, government has imposed national requirements for data returns from social care providers. NHSE/I collect information from care homes; CQC from home care providers.

17. Together with ADASS, the LGA has worked very hard with government and with provider associations to try and keep this new requirement proportionate and complementary to local data gathering, rather than duplicating effort and potentially undermining council responsibilities. This has involved supporting the rapid transfer of national data returns into LG Inform so that councils have ready access to up-to-date local intelligence. We have also continued to argue that the limited and covid-related national data collections are no substitute for local market intelligence; at the same time accepting that if the national returns are effective and comprehensive then providers should not be expected to supply the same information more than once.
18. **Care Act Easements** – Government passed legislation that came into force on 31 March allowing councils some limited flexibility to opt out of Care Act responsibilities during the covid crisis. Accompanying guidance set out how such decisions should be taken and made it a requirement that councils implementing easements would need to notify DHSC.
19. As at 7 May, 7 councils have informed DHSC of a decision to implement easements. DHSC has asked CQC to provide some oversight of those councils, including the reasons for the decision and the expected impact. CQC have said they will use this information as part of their prioritisation for monitoring of providers.
20. There was some initial media attention on implementation of the easements largely due to the information emerging on social media prior to its publication. There is no evidence that any of the councils have failed to comply with the requirements with regard to implementing these easements.
21. **Learning Disability and Autism** – We are working national partners including NHSE/I and the National Development Team for Inclusion on a number of initiatives to support people with learning disability and/or autism and their representative organisations. NHSE/I host a weekly webinar for learning disability and autism stakeholder organisations.
22. **Digital and Technology Enabled Care** – Many councils are seeking to use technology to support their covid response. LGA is working with NHS Digital to provide funding to support a number of initiatives and has also developed a framework, working with a number of councils, to support rapid deployment of tech solutions rapidly.



23. We are also working hard with NHSx, who lead digital innovation across health and care, to ensure that wider covid-led changes are delivered in collaboration with the social care sector.

24. While the above summarises the main thrust of our adult social care support to date, this is a rapidly changing environment and as the covid focus shifts, so do our challenges. It is worth noting that we are presently focussing more effort on **safeguarding**, where there are some concerns that safeguarding referrals are down while we know that increased isolation and pressures on people and services will inevitably lead to increased safeguarding risks. We are also starting to do more to respond to pressures on **mental health** services.

### **Implications for Wales**

25. This report covers only the response by and support to English councils. Welsh councils face a similar set of challenges, albeit that they will be impacting differentially depending on the approach being taken in these areas by the Wales Assembly Government under its devolved responsibilities.

### **Financial Implications**

26. There are no direct financial implications to the LGA from this report, however for councils the implications are significant as described at paragraphs 8, 13 and 14.

### **Next steps**

27. Officers to action any recommendations for further work or follow-up as appropriate.

## COVID-19: Local Government Finance update

### Purpose of report

For information.

### Summary

This report provides a summary of the work by the LGA on funding and finance issues related to the impact of COVID-19. Most of the work has concentrated on dealing with the immediate challenges. In the coming weeks, there will be an increasing focus on how we move from 'crisis' to 'recovery', including the future financial sustainability of councils. This report is being discussed by LGA Resources Board on 12 May and a verbal update will be provided at the meeting of Executive Advisory Board.

### Recommendations

That members consider the planned actions, provide thoughts on other work which could be included in an LGA finance work programme on recovery and note this update.

### Action

Officers will proceed with the delivery of the LGA's work on the response to, and recovery from, the COVID-19 programme. This will include:

- gathering financial data using the MHCLG survey returns and the other approaches highlighted in this report to use in lobbying for further resources and freedoms and flexibilities;
- undertake case studies of individual councils to supplement information from the survey and other sources to provide further detail on the impacts of COVID-19 and to help refine the high-level messaging;
- in-house analysis of longer-term financial implications, potentially combined with commissioned work where appropriate and subject to the availability of resources;
- consideration of the implications of COVID-19 on local government finance reforms, such as the Fair Funding Review and 75 per cent business rates retention;
- other work on the basis of a steer from members and subject to capacity.

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**Position:** Head of Local Government Finance  
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## **COVID-19: Local Government Finance update**

### **Introduction**

1. This report provides a summary of the work by the LGA on funding and finance issues related to the impact of COVID-19.
2. It is essential that local government is able to stay focused on leading the local response to the greatest challenge we have faced as a nation for decades. There are considerable financial pressures facing councils as a result of Covid-19, both in terms of the direct costs associated with responding to the crisis, as well as continuing to deliver 'business as usual' services with significantly reduced income flows. As a result, most of the LGA Finance Team's work has concentrated on dealing with the immediate challenges arising and on influencing announcements to date by Central Government.
3. In the coming weeks, there will be an increasing focus on how we move from 'crisis' to 'recovery', including the future financial sustainability of councils. We would welcome a steer from the Executive Advisory Board on what the focus should be for this work.
4. This report is being discussed by LGA Resources Board on 12 May and a verbal update on those discussions will be provided at the meeting of Executive Advisory Board.

### **Government announcements to date**

5. We have been successful in achieving a number of positive financial announcements to help councils deal with the impact of Covid-19, including:
  - 5.1. Two additional funding announcements, worth £1.6 billion each, to help meet the immediate impacts of the crisis on council financial positions.
  - 5.2. Over £4 billion of upfront grant payments (including the £1.6 billion COVID grant, £850 million of adult social care grant and pre-COVID-19 section 31 business rates relief compensation) and £2.6 billion of deferred payments of business rates to central government to aid cash flow.
  - 5.3. A three-month extension of the timescales for production of annual financial accounts and statements.
  - 5.4. A Government review of other reporting and data collection requirements for the next three months, which has resulted in postponed deadlines.
6. On 28 April, the Government announced that:
  - 6.1. the Review of Relative Needs and Resource and 75 per cent business rates retention will no longer be implemented in 2021-22; and that

- 6.2. the Government will continue to work with councils on the best approach to the next financial year, including how to treat accumulated business rates growth and the approach to the 2021-22 local government finance settlement.
7. The announcement did not provide any clarity over the length of the delay to these reforms so at the time of writing it could not be assumed that these are one-year delays. Officers will provide a further update, if available, at the time of the meeting.

### **Administration of support for businesses**

8. As part of the Government's coronavirus business support package, the UK government has distributed £12.3 billion to local authorities in England to distribute through two separate grant schemes, both linked to business rates:
  - 8.1. The Small Business Grants Fund is a £10,000 grant per eligible business, originally announced during the Chancellor's Budget. Businesses included in this scheme are those which on 11 March were eligible for relief under the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme (including those with a rateable value between £12,000 and £15,000 which receive tapered relief) or the Rural Rate Relief Scheme.
  - 8.2. The Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Business Grants Fund was announced by the Chancellor on 17 March. Businesses in scope are those that were eligible on 11 March for a discount under the Expanded Retail Discount scheme and with a rateable value of less than £51,000.
9. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy publishes [weekly data updates](#) on progress of delivery of the grant. At the time of writing, the latest update – published on 5 May – reported that £8.6 billion (70 per cent of the grant) has been paid out to more than 697,000 business properties (73 per cent of identified properties).
10. In addition, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has expanded its Retail Discount Scheme so that all occupied retail, leisure and hospitality properties for the financial year 2020/21 receive 100 per cent business rates relief. This is being delivered through councils and is fully funded by MHCLG. Additionally, all Ofsted registered non-local authority nurseries will qualify for 100 per cent business reliefs in 2020/21.
11. In response to the representations by councils and the LGA for businesses out of the scope of current measures to receive further support, on 2 May BEIS announced an additional discretionary fund for those businesses which cannot receive support through the Small Business and Retail Leisure and Hospitality Grants. They will have to demonstrate that they have high overheads and that they have had a significant loss of income. The total value of the uplift could be 5 per cent on the original £12.3 billion, worth approximately £617 million. The Government will ask councils to use any underutilised funds from the original grants first before seeking to access additional resources. At the time of writing, detailed allocations and guidance on this new fund had not yet been published.

12. LGA and council officers have engaged extensively on all these schemes with Government officials, promoting the efforts of councils and raising issues relating to the schemes and interpretation of the Government guidance. In particular, we have raised with officials the fact that non-ratepayers (who may pay their rates as part of rents) and local authority premises (such as markets or nurseries) do not qualify for the support. In response to representations by councils and the LGA, BEIS announced on 2 May an additional discretionary fund for those businesses not eligible for support through the existing grants.

### **Key current LGA financial messages**

13. In its engagement with Government the following are the main messages currently utilised by the LGA. They are kept under constant review to ensure that they reflect the fast-changing situation councils find themselves in.
14. The lines as at 1 May are:
- 14.1. Cost pressures, the loss of income, and liquidity issues that all councils are experiencing are significant issues which need monitoring and addressing as they arise.
  - 14.2. The additional £1.6 billion funding announced on 18 April (taking the total package to £3.2 billion) and cash flow measures have been welcome and provide additional certainty over the short term. It is also welcome that the funding will not be ringfenced and that councils will be able to spend this on local priorities and pressures. However, the financial challenge facing councils is multiple times the £3.2 billion grant announced so far.
  - 14.3. Income losses constitute a significant part of the financial challenge. This is due to predicted drops in collection of council tax and business rates income, as well as losses of fees, charges and commercial income.
  - 14.4. The Government must continue to demonstrate a rock-solid commitment that it will meet the extra costs local authorities are facing due to the additional demands created by COVID-19, any additional costs of delivering 'business as usual' and the loss of income resulting from the lockdown. Only this will ensure council chief finance officers have the certainty they need to not consider issuing section 114 reports in the coming weeks and months.

### **Assessing the financial challenges faced by councils**

15. We are working closely with Chief Finance Officers and MHCLG to assess councils' financial need including:
- 15.1. The impact on costs;
  - 15.2. The loss of income from fees and charges;
  - 15.3. The potential loss of collected taxation, both in the short term and in the long term;



- 15.4. Cash flow issues and whether current measures in place provide sufficient relief;  
and
- 15.5. Future cost base implications and impact on savings plans.
16. As signalled by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government in late March, the Government embarked on a regular survey exercise, asking councils to submit high level returns setting out projected cost pressures, income losses and cash flow issues. Overall, they received 329 responses – a 97 per cent response rate – to the April round.
17. Councils were asked to share their April survey returns with the LGA. At the time of writing the LGA had received over 170 of the MHCLG survey returns from councils (just over half of all returns received by MHCLG). Analysis of those returns suggests the following emerging picture:
- 17.1. Just under half of the initial £1.6 billion allocation will have been spent on adult social care.
- 17.2. The total projected financial pressure in the year 2020/21 arising from the impact of COVID-19, including cost pressures, lost income and savings opportunities, nationally amounts to 3 to 4 times the £3.2 billion that has been allocated by Government so far.
- 17.3. Of this, around two-thirds is due to projected losses in income, such as council tax, business rates, fees and charges. Councils fund anywhere between 5 and 70 per cent of their gross spending through sales, fees and charges, and council tax alone is worth around half of all council spending powers. Therefore, drastic losses of this income have a significant impact.
- 17.4. Even if councils used all their unallocated reserves, this would only cover up to half of the remaining shortfall on average.
- 17.5. Different types of councils will face a different nature of pressures.
18. These are early results from a limited number of councils. Many councils will have been in the early stages of assessing the impact of COVID-19 on costs, income and cash flow. At the time of writing, MHCLG is expecting to reissue its survey in May.
19. In order to minimise burden on authorities, the LGA's research and finance teams are not planning to conduct any formal financial surveys. This has been particularly important since, at the same time, the LGA is lobbying for central government to stop data collections (which are not essential or do not support the COVID-19 response) and therefore we need to be seen not to burden the sector ourselves. We have an agreement with MHCLG that they will share the data from their survey with us (with some limitations on how it can be used), and we have also asked councils to send copies of their returns to us. We have analysed over 170 returns on that basis. For the May return, MHCLG have agreed to make it clear that responses will be shared with the LGA. In addition,

other quantitative and qualitative approaches have been, and are being, used to gather additional information, such as:

- 19.1. Informal requests for information and examples from councils;
  - 19.2. A series of in-depth case studies of 10-12 councils, to provide more detailed supporting information on the financial impact of COVID-19;
  - 19.3. Desk-based research; and
  - 19.4. Bespoke modelling exercises using national data and, where they exist, from surveys which have been run by other organisations.
20. The financial impact of the crisis on council's ability to balance their income and expenditure in the current year needs to be assessed and shortfalls addressed to prevent councils having to take drastic measure to cut in year spending. The impact also needs to be considered beyond the current financial year and into 2021/22 and there is a need to assess the longer-term financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Councils have to balance their budgets each year, and set a balanced budget for the year ahead, and need to take action on this as soon as they think they are unable to achieve this.
21. As a starting point, LGA officers will explore the potential of in-house analysis of the MHCLG survey returns, information gathered from the quantitative and qualitative approaches set out above, as well as other organisations work on financial sustainability to consider the longer-term implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. This potentially includes what any subsequent economic downturn might mean to councils' main sources of funding and cost pressures and the potential longevity of these impacts and the wider changes as a result of the pandemic. This might be supplemented by commissioned work where appropriate and subject to the availability of resources.
22. The detailed work programme is a work in progress and a member steer is welcome in terms of points of focus and approach.

### **Reviews by HM Treasury affecting longer term economic recovery**

23. In the March Budget, the Chancellor announced reviews of:
- 23.1. Business rates as a tax (covered separately on the agenda);
  - 23.2. The Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) future lending arrangements (covered elsewhere on the agenda); and
  - 23.3. The [Green Book](#), the Government guidance on how to appraise and evaluate policies, projects and programmes.
24. All of these reviews are going ahead. The PWLB and Green Book reviews are expected to report alongside the Comprehensive Spending Review, which was originally expected

in the summer, but has been delayed. The outcome of these reviews will have an impact on councils' ability to access capital and funding.

25. As part of the, so far informal, review of the Green Book, HM Treasury is seeking views from stakeholders across the whole of the public sector. The review is being described by HM Treasury as seeking to ensure the Green Book helps Government to take informed decisions to support levelling up. In the Budget, the aim of the review was described as follows "The review will enhance the strategic development and assessment of projects, consider how to assess and present local impacts and look to develop new analytical methods for transformative or place-based interventions. It will also consider how project approval decisions are being made and provide clearer guidance and support to practitioners".
26. We have engaged with the review as it commences and have been talking to experts within the sector. We will report back to members as it progresses and seek comments where relevant.

### **Next steps**

27. Members are asked to consider the planned actions, provide thoughts on other work which could be included in an LGA finance work programme on recovery and note this update.
28. Officers will proceed with the delivery of the LGA's work on the response to, and recovery from, the COVID-19 programme. This will include:
  - 28.1. gathering financial data using the MHCLG survey returns and the other approaches highlighted in this report to use in lobbying for further resources and freedoms and flexibilities;
  - 28.2. undertake case studies of individual councils to supplement information from the survey and other sources to provide further detail on the impacts of COVID-19 and to help refine the high-level messaging;
  - 28.3. in-house analysis of longer-term financial implications, potentially combined with commissioned work where appropriate and subject to the availability of resources;
  - 28.4. consideration of the implications of COVID-19 on local government finance reforms, such as the Fair Funding Review and 75 per cent business rates retention;
  - 28.5. other work on the basis of a steer from members and subject to capacity.

### **Implications for Wales**

29. Local government funding is a devolved matter and the Welsh LGA is undertaking its own work programme on COVID-19. We are in regular contact with the Welsh LGA and the other local government bodies in the devolved nations to exchange intelligence, ideas and consider joint work.



### **Financial Implications**

30. The work related to COVID-19 has been added to the LGA's core programme of work and is therefore, budgeted for in core work programme budgets. To accommodate this significant and additional work, other areas of LGA work have been deprioritised based on where the Government has delayed or paused work.
31. The LGA will keep under review whether future work related to COVID-19 can be accommodated within the existing budget or whether further resources will be needed for this or other work.

## SETTING THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE LGA'S WORK ON RECOVERY

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### BACKGROUND

Through our work with councils during the pandemic, leading LGA members, council groupings and councils have given clear steers on the issues that they think the LGA should focus on in the coming weeks and months.

Based on those discussions, this report sets out a proposal for the immediate priorities for the LGA as lockdown is revised and we start the journey to restoring active community and business life.

It is not a finalised strategy or business plan. We recognise that, as lockdown is revised, we are starting another journey which is uncharted and will bring unexpected challenges.

The paper is offered to members for them to give a steer on where LGA focuses its work in the next few weeks and months.

### CONTENT AND TIMELINE

This paper offers

- Some general themes to guide our work
- Six tangible work areas
- How we ensure member councils lead this work

Our immediate work has been focused on responding to the pandemic and its effect during the short-term lockdown. This paper looks at the next two phases (whilst recognising that these may not be linear):

- Living with the virus in the population as lockdown is eased and where social distancing is maintained.
- Establishing a new normal for community and businesses.

### THEMES TO GUIDE OUR WORK

A later section of the report offers six tangible work areas to support councils and communities during the next weeks and months. However, in discussions with members, it was clear that there was a need for some over-arching themes to future work which would act as a foundation for our lobbying and communications.

The following have been suggested:

Hope: Communities have deep concerns and are frightened about the future. We need to develop work which offers hope. Place leadership can play a central part in giving such hope to communities, offering them the levers to shape their future.

Strong Communities: The remarkable work of our communities and businesses in the most tragic circumstances needs to be recognised. They have stepped up with extraordinary resilience to keep essential services running. Without place leadership, this will be lost. We must highlight the “community” element of recovery.

Councils have stepped up. Local government itself has become the fourth emergency service, convening place, working at speed to set up new services. We have new evidence to showcase our leadership of place.

Finance: Without stable finances for local government, national recovery is not possible.

Reconfiguring public services and place leadership: The unprecedented challenges ahead demand a speedy reconfiguring of public services which recognises place differences. We must assume that Whitehall will lead from its silos and the onus will be on councils and the LGA to make that case for a reshape of local public services through place leadership. Councils are not seeking to run everything, but they recognise that they have the democratic legitimacy to shape and lead a joint endeavour locally. We need to show tangible examples of the benefits of localism and to describe what success looks like.

### LGA priorities going forward

Based on our feedback from members and councils, we are suggesting six work areas to guide our work:

- (1) **ENSURE ADEQUATE RESOURCES.** This is clearly the top priority for members and councils. The financial sustainability of councils is critical to national recovery. The LGA will be expected to work with MHCLG and the Treasury to ensure that each place has the resources it needs to continue to deliver critical services and to meet the challenges of recovery.  
Within this work area, we will also need to consider the reforms that the Government is putting in place to ensure “levelling up of all areas”. For example, the review of HMT’s Green Book. This will now need to be considered in light of the economic impact of lockdown and the local economic stimuli that will be needed to revive the economy.
- (2) **LEAD THE PUBLIC DEBATE ON LOCALLY-LED RECOVERY:** The expectation is that the LGA leads a campaign which highlights both the extraordinary achievements of councils and their communities during this most tragic period and the need for more empowered local leadership for the work ahead. As we move to recovery, the baton of leadership will be handed from the NHS to place leaders. They will need the tools to do the job.
- (3) **EMPOWER PLACE LEADERSHIP:** We need to set out the detailed offer from councils to lead and convene local public services for a joint endeavour to recovery. Members have highlighted the need for firm evidence which includes: very clear thematic asks, the local convening role needed (who, what, etc), the speed offered

locally, what will be achieved (our success criteria) and how councils can ensure communities are on board.

For the short term, work areas can include:

- The flexibilities, freedoms and speed needed from existing Government funding schemes to help economy and places re-open.
- Continued flex on procurement and state aid.
- Secure funding for public transport.
- The continued support needed by local business (esp for SMEs).
- Skill and employment reform.
- The changes needed in the public realm after lockdown, coordination needed between multiple agencies and the convening power needed by councils.

For the longer term, we need a reshaped proposal for enhanced place leadership. Members have highlighted that much of this work has already been developed (for example, through devo deals and the work of the LGA's Boards), but the work now needs to be refreshed to deal with the impact of the lockdown and the pandemic. The following areas for work have been suggested:

- Support for communities leaving lockdown and a new local offer on mental health and domestic abuse.
- Kick starting construction through council house building.
- Local incentives for new commercial sectors- green economy.
- Restarting public transport and promoting cycling/walking.
- Councils acting as "agents of change" to develop a new local consensus on climate change and air pollution actions.
- Merger of national funding pots into a local funds for speed and flex (plus speed for UKSPF).
- Unemployment and skills reform to address local impact of the recession.
- NHS and social care inter-dependency.
- Local recovery deals (to succeed city deals) for infrastructure investment
- Regenerating tourist towns.

There was also a clear steer that we must detail the new duties of councils: former duties to stop, emergency provision to continue/stop, new areas to take on board and legal liabilities to be considered (from areas deprioritised).

- (4) **KEEP PUBLIC SERVICE WORKING:** As we emerge from lockdown, the LGA must ensure that the new reality at the front-line provides the evidence base for Whitehall's new policy making and budget setting. The onus will be on the sector to provide the evidence and policy solutions.

The examples below illustrate some of the challenges ahead:

- The huge demands on councils to ensure our communities are safe from covid infection will remain. We have created new services such as community hubs

from scratch and our communities will expect these to continue in addition to existing services.

- There will be new challenges for well-established council services:
  - The pressures from a reshaped NHS will continue to create new demands on our local social care services.
  - We do not yet understand the impact of lockdown on our supply chains. Customised local intervention may be required and councils may have to create new markets.
  - How and when public transport is used will need to re-defined. We will need to rethink timetabling and work with our communities to redesign when and how we commute.
  - Children's services will face new challenges. Safeguarding referrals fell during lockdown and we anticipate a surge in demand for support once schools start to return. As schools reopen, the challenges will include catching up on lost educational progress and attainment, supporting pupils' wider personal and social development and possibly higher levels of absenteeism. There is also a concern about the finance stability of some nurseries which may affect return to work for some.
  - Lockdown pressures prevented councils from fulfilling some statutory duties and robust support from Government on legal liabilities and the usefulness of some duties will now be needed.
  - Our non-statutory services may be more important than some legal duties. Our support to business and for local economic development are discretionary powers.

The granular detail of services will need to be understood and this is where the LGA Boards will play a leading role. The next series of LGA Board meetings will be discussing the immediate and longer-term impact of covid and lockdown in their specific areas. This will ensure a wider debate and a longer-term view. Given the speed at which this work needs to be developed, lead members are able to make decisions between full Board meetings to progress urgent issues.

- (5) **UNDERSTAND CHANGING PUBLIC NEED:** Members have been clear that we need to build on the new community spirit that is found in every place. Members have also fed back that long-established public perception may change, for example, how and where we want to live. We need to understand these in order to plan services and understand changing places. We will also need to examine the lessons from and practice in other nations.
- (6) **RE-FOCUS OUR IMPROVEMENT OFFER:** The support needed by our councils has changed. Since the start of the pandemic, we have re-orientated most of our direct support to councils to work on covid. As we move to recovery, councils will face new challenges and our support offers will need to be refreshed in the coming months.

### MOVING THE DEBATE FORWARD

LGA's work during the pandemic has been led and directed by the evidence and urgent steers from our member councils. The scale of the challenges ahead requires the same level of engagement and evidence. In the LGA, we have established new ways of working





and new systems to ensure that this emerging evidence is captured. Such work will be vital as we move forward.

In refreshing our work on place leadership, we are starting a debate on the future role of local government. This debate needs the voices and suggestions of our member councils. There is some concern that the speed of Government work has meant that councils have not been actively involved in decision-making. We are currently refreshing our immediate communications work, which will involve listening to councils across our membership to ensure we bring the innovative ideas from councils into the centre of the debate, so that we can influence Government thinking and help co-design future policy. We are looking at a range of ways to engage councils, including through our lead members and Political Groups, our virtual events programme and our Principal Advisors.

#### WALES

We have been working closely with WLGA, COSLA and NILGA in recent weeks – particularly in aligning our work on councils' financial needs. Where appropriate, we are seeking to make representations as a UK-wide local government family.



## Note of last Executive Advisory Board meeting

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<b>Title:</b>	Executive Advisory Board
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday 12 March 2020
<b>Venue:</b>	Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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### Attendance

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

### Item Decisions and actions

#### 1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr James Jamieson (Con), Cllr John Hart (Con), Cllr David Finch (Con), Cllr Nicholas Rushton (Con), Cllr Judith Blake CBE (Lab), Cllr Richard Watts (Lab), Sir Stephen Houghton CBE (Lab), Cllr Shabir Pandor (Lab), and Cllr Howard Sykes MBE (Lib Dem).

Cllr Nick Forbes CBE (Senior Vice Chair) chaired the meeting.

Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE (Con), Cllr Tudor Evans OBE (Lab) and Cllr Georgia Gould (Lab) were welcomed to their first meeting of the Executive Advisory Board as Deputy Chairs of the LGA.

#### 2 Business Rates Retention and Fair Funding Review Update

Nicola Morton, Head of Local Government Finance, introduced the report which provided a summary of progress on the Review of Relative Needs and Resources (commonly called the Fair Funding Review) and Business Rates Retention work programmes since the previous meeting of the Executive Advisory Board.

Members noted that the LGA had published illustrations of the impact of the proposed new adult social care relative needs formulas which were being considered by the Government for implementation in April 2021. The illustrations were not LGA policy but aimed to provide information to member councils that would help to gauge the likely impact of the Fair Funding Review on the relative distribution of adult social care funding.

Regarding business rates, it was highlighted that officer groups had discussed an alternative model of business rates retention which removed the risk of appeals. The Task and Finish Group would meet later in the day to consider this issue. A further report on LGA policy issues around business rates retention would be brought back to the Executive Advisory Board at a future meeting.

**Item Decisions and actions**

**Decision**

The Executive Advisory Board **noted** the update.

**Actions**

Officers to proceed with the delivery of the LGA work programme on Further Business Artes Retention and the Fair Funding Review and continue to engage with MHCLG and local government through the Steering Group and other Working Groups.

**3 2020 March Budget and 2020 Spending Review update**

Sarah Pickup, Deputy Chief Executive, introduced the report which provided an update on the LGA's activity on the 2020 March Budget and activity ahead of the 2020 Spending Review. Members also discussed announcements in the Chancellor's Budget in response to the spread of Coronavirus.

Members noted the various Budget announcements in relation to local government including additional funding for flooding, potholes, regeneration, rough sleeping, and removal of cladding from high-rise buildings. The Spending Review would take place in July, subject to events, and submissions would be required by 20 May. Further updates would be provided to the Board at future meetings, including the draft submission to the Spending Review and a review of the LGA's funding gap analysis.

In the discussion which followed Members raised the following points:

- Regarding additional the funding announcements for social care, it was confirmed that work would continue with providers and the Department for Health and Social Care.
- Detail around flood relief funding had not yet been released but would be circulated to members in due course.
- It was anticipated that the UK Municipal Bonds Agency would allow councils to diversify their borrowing options as an alternative to the Public Works Loan Board. A consultation on Pubic Works Loan Board lending had also been announced.
- Members raised concern that Public Health grant funding had not been announced in the Budget, but this was expected shortly.

In response to Budget announcements on the spread of coronavirus, Members discussed the possibility of delay or postponement of local elections in May 2020. Concerns were expressed around availability of election staff, social distancing in terms of canvassing and polling stations, budget referenda, and by-elections. Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive, highlighted that new advice from the Government on elections was expected within the coming days, and the LGA would feed back concerns from Members regarding the elections to assist with Government planning.

**Item Decisions and actions**

**Decision**

The Executive Advisory Board **noted** the update.

**Action**

Officers to proceed with the LGA's work programme on the 2020 Spending Review.

**4 First draft revised model member code of conduct**

Abigail Gallop, Senior Adviser, presented the report which set out the key themes that have emerged to date from the pre-drafting research and consultation and included the first consultation draft of the member model code of conduct for comment.

Members noted the conclusions which had arisen from the LGA-led regional meetings and workshops on the model code of conduct, the model code of conduct itself, and the proposed timetable for consultation and finalisation of the code.

In the discussion which followed Members raised the following points:

- It was highlighted that the view of LGA Group Leaders was that the model member code of conduct should be for all councils within the scope of LGA membership. This would mean that town and parish councils would not fall under the scope of the model code of conduct, but a separate code of conduct or nuances in the code could be developed for these councils.
- The response to the consultation would be reviewed at a future meeting, but Members broadly agreed that there could be a role for NALC in monitoring the code of conduct of town and parish councils.
- Members agreed with the recommend 10-week consultation process. Should the situation around the spread of coronavirus escalate then this timescale should be amended.
- Members agreed there should be clear rules and guidelines in the code on the use of social media. The question of sufficient reference to social media was included in the consultation proposals.

**Decision**

The Executive Advisory Board **approved** the draft for the member model code of conduct, subject to their comments, and the consultation timetable and process.

**Actions**

The consultation draft of the member model code of conduct would be revised in response to comments from Members. Views from Members would be incorporated into the consultation programme.

**Item Decisions and actions**

**5 Confidential note of last LGA Executive meeting**

**Decision**

The Executive Advisory Board **agreed** the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2020.

**Appendix A -Attendance**

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
	Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE (Vice Chairman)	Warwickshire County Council
	Cllr Marianne Overton MBE (Vice-Chair)	Lincolnshire County Council
	Cllr John Fuller OBE	South Norfolk District Council
	Cllr Robert Alden	Birmingham City Council
	Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE	Bexley Council
	Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District Council
	Cllr Ian Hudspeth	Oxfordshire County Council
	Cllr David Renard	Swindon Borough Council
	Cllr Kevin Bentley	Essex County Council
	Cllr Nick Forbes CBE	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
	Cllr Michael Payne	Gedling Borough Council
	Cllr Anntoinette Bramble	Hackney London Borough Council
	Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Plymouth City Council
	Cllr Georgia Gould	Camden Council
	Cllr Simon Blackburn	Blackpool Council
	Sir Richard Leese CBE	Manchester City Council and City Regions Board
	Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE	Sutton London Borough Council
	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE	Portsmouth City Council
	Cllr Anita Lower	Newcastle upon Tyne City Council
	Cllr Clive Woodbridge	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
	Cllr Paul Woodhead	Cannock Chase District Council
	Cllr Rosemarie Harris	Powys County Council
	Cllr Robert Stewart	Swansea City and County Council
	Cllr Marc Bayliss	Worcester City Council
	Cllr Simon Henig CBE	Association of North East Councils
	Cllr Peter John OBE	Southwark Council
	Cllr Roy Perry	Hampshire County Council
	Cllr David Williams	County Councils Network (CCN)
Apologies:	Cllr James Jamieson	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Cllr Richard Watts	Islington Council
	Cllr Judith Blake CBE	Leeds City Council

**Item Decisions and actions**

Cllr Howard Sykes MBE  
Cllr Bridget Smith  
Cllr David Finch  
Cllr John Hart  
Cllr Shabir Pandor  
Cllr Nicholas Rushton  
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE  
Alderman Sir David Wootton

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council  
South Cambridgeshire District Council  
Essex County Council  
South West Councils  
Kirklees Metropolitan Council  
East Midlands Councils  
SIGOMA  
Local Partnerships





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