

# Improvement and Innovation Board

## Agenda

Thursday, 20 May 2021  
11.00 am

Online via Zoom

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

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**Improvement & Innovation Board**  
20 May 2021

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There will be a meeting of the Improvement & Innovation Board at **11.00 am on Thursday, 20 May 2021** online via Zoom.

**Political Group meetings:**

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

**Apologies:**

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

|                          |                             |   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <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:labgp@local.gov.uk">labgp@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.group@lga.local.gov.uk">independent.group@lga.local.gov.uk</a> |

**LGA Contact:**

Jonathan Bryant  
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**Carers' Allowance**

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

**Social Media**

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

The twitter hashtag for this meeting is #lgaib

## Improvement & Innovation Board – Membership 2020/2021

| Councillor                           | Authority                                  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Conservative</b>                  |  |
| Cllr Peter Fleming OBE (Chairman)    | Sevenoaks District Council                 |
| Cllr Nigel Ashton                    | North Somerset Council                     |
| Cllr Philip Broadhead                | Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council |
| Cllr Carl Les                        | North Yorkshire County Council             |
| Cllr Laura Miller                    | Dorset Council                             |
| Cllr Damian White                    | Havering London Borough Council            |
| Cllr Phil North                      | Test Valley Borough Council                |
| Lord Gary Porter CBE (Observer)      | South Holland District Council             |
|                                      |  |
| <b>Substitutes</b>                   |  |
| Cllr Kelham Cooke                    | South Kesteven District Council            |
| Cllr Rory Love OBE                   | Kent County Council                        |
| Cllr Phil Murphy                     | Monmouthshire County Council               |
|                                      |  |
| <b>Labour</b>                        |  |
| Cllr Judi Billing MBE (Deputy Chair) | Hertfordshire County Council               |
| Cllr Alice Perry                     | Islington Council                          |
| Cllr Asma Begum                      | Tower Hamlets Council                      |
| Cllr Vince Maple                     | Medway Council                             |
| Cllr Oliver Ryan                     | Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council      |
| Cllr Andrew Western                  | Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council      |
| Vacancy                              | Labour Group                               |
| Sir Stephen Houghton CBE (Observer)  | Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council      |
|                                      |  |
| <b>Substitutes</b>                   |  |
| Cllr Anthony McKeown                 | High Peak Borough Council                  |
| Cllr Miranda Williams                | Royal Borough of Greenwich                 |
|                                      |  |
| <b>Liberal Democrat</b>              |  |
| Cllr Liz Green (Vice-Chair)          | Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council |
| Mayor Dave Hodgson MBE               | Bedford Borough Council                    |
| Cllr Alan Connett (Observer)         | Teignbridge District Council               |
|                                      |  |
| <b>Substitutes</b>                   |  |
| Cllr Caroline Leaver                 | North Devon Council                        |
|                                      |  |
| <b>Independent</b>                   |  |
| Cllr Neil Prior (Deputy Chair)       | Pembrokeshire County Council               |
| Cllr Wayne Davies                    | Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council         |
| Cllr Mike Haines (Observer)          | Teignbridge District Council               |
|                                      |  |

|                     |                                 |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Substitutes</b>  |                                 |
| Cllr Alex Coley     | Epsom and Ewell Borough Council |
| Cllr Jo Beavis      | Braintree District Council      |
| <b>Non-Voting</b>   |                                 |
| Philip Sellwood CBE | Independent observer            |
| Richard Priestman   | Independent observer            |

## Agenda

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### **Improvement & Innovation Board**

Thursday 20 May 2021

11.00 am

Online via Zoom

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| <b>Item</b>  | <b>Page</b>    |
|--|----------------|
| <b>1. Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest</b>                  |                |
| <b>CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS</b>  |                |
| <b>2. Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2021</b>                      | <b>1 - 12</b>  |
| <b>3. Sector led improvement in 2020/21 (End of year report)</b>           | <b>13 - 52</b> |
| <b>4. MHCLG SLI funding - Grant determination agreement</b>                |                |
| Verbal update from Dennis Skinner and Matthew Hamilton                     |                |
| <b>NON-CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION</b>                               |                |
| <b>5. Innovations arising from Covid, member highlights and discussion</b> |                |
| Discussion led by Cllr Judi Billing  |                |
| <b>6. LGA Virtual Annual Conference - improvement sessions</b>             | <b>53 - 58</b> |
| <b>7. Improvement Support to Councils - One Public Estate</b>              | <b>59 - 70</b> |
| <b>8. LGA's Sector Led Improvement Climate Change</b>                      | <b>71 - 80</b> |

**Programme**

- |            |   |                |
|------------|---|----------------|
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>LGA Boards' Improvement Activity</b> | <b>81 - 90</b> |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>Any other business</b>               |                |

**Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday, 29 July 2021, 11.00 am, venue tbc

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## **LGA Virtual Annual Conference – Improvement Sessions**

### **Purpose of report**

For decision.

### **Summary**

This report provides an update on the LGA Annual Conference and sets out the various sessions within the conference that have a focus on improvement or innovation.

### **Recommendations**

That the Board discusses the improvement elements of the LGA Annual Conference and agrees the focus for the second 'Spotlight on' Session.

### **Actions**

Following direction from the Board, officers to progress Spotlight On sessions.

|                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
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## **LGA Virtual Annual Conference – Improvement Sessions**

### **Background**

1. Given the continued nature of the pandemic the LGA Annual Conference will be held virtually 06-08 July 2021. This means that the Innovation Zone cannot be held as part of the annual conference. Instead we will hold Spotlight on sessions. A virtual conference platform has been procured to allow the conference to have its own dedicated web portal, which will be available at least one week before the live event.
2. The conference programme contains plenary and parallel sessions as usual (referred to as 'Main Programme' in this paper) as well as two Spotlight On sessions which will have with an interactive, improvement/innovation focus.
3. There was a commitment this year to ensure that SLI is threaded throughout the conference agenda in a more integrated way than has perhaps been in the past and many of sessions in the programme have either an improvement focus or an improvement element built in.

### **Main Programme Sessions**

4. The following section of the report provides an outline of where improvement is incorporated in the main programme sessions.
5. There are several sessions which have been jointly developed with Improvement and Policy colleagues working together:

#### **5.1. PLENARY: Green light services to address our planetary emergency.**

The Chair will promote a number of improvement tools, programmes, guides and case studies throughout the session including the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool, the Net Zero Innovation Programme and the Councillor's workbook on a pathway to net zero.

#### **5.2. PARALLEL SESSION: A child-centred recovery: supporting children and young people to recover from the impact of COVID-19**

The focus of this session is improving the outcomes of all children and young people who have been impacted by the pandemic, and particularly those children from disadvantaged backgrounds who have suffered the most.

#### **5.3. PARALLEL SESSION: Are you listening? – the importance of mental health and wellbeing in a post COVID-19 world**

During this session, Cllr Ed Davie will be offering his own perspective on how to support mental health resilience alongside the responsibilities of being Cabinet

Member during this pandemic. Cllr Davie was a key contributor toward the LGA's ["councillor's workbook on supporting mentally healthier communities"](#).

6. There are also a number of other sessions that have either an improvement focus or have an improvement element built in:

**6.1. PLENARY: Learning from COVID-19: Equalities**

This session will consider how councils can understand and address equality issues through the voice of experts, local authority leaders and of those directly affected.

**6.2. PLENARY: Local leaders, international lessons: how three leaders have transformed their areas (Devolution)**

This session will consider how councils can understand and address equality issues through the voice of experts, local authority leaders and of those directly affected.

**6.3. PARALLEL SESSION: Public Health: Living with COVID-19 – panel session**

This session has a strong connection to improvement work undertaken by the Covid Response and Co-ordination team including the lessons learned and best practice from managing local outbreaks that Councils can draw on.

**6.4. PARALLEL SESSION: Council housebuilding for a sustainable COVID-19 recovery**

This is a policy focused session, however the Chair will outline the support available to councils through the Housing Advisers Programme and Leadership Essentials.

**6.5. PARALLEL SESSION: Planning**

This is a policy focused session, however the Chair will outline the support available to councils through the Planning Advisory Service (PAS).

**6.6. PARALLEL SESSION: Civility in public life**

This session is an Improvement programme session. It will consider practical ways in which councils and councillors can deal with public intimidation and toxicity of debate.

**'Spotlight On' Sessions**

7. Planning is underway for a session on Leadership. The 2020 LGA Conference had a successful 'Spotlight on the Councillor' session, chaired by Cllr Judi Billing and featuring four councillors from across the political spectrum, talking about what motivated them to stand for election. The most frequently asked question at that session was regarding the diversity of councillors, and since July 2020 this has continued to be an important topic raised by councils. Following a similar format to the 2020 Spotlight on the Councillor session, this year's session will invite 4 councillors to speak from their own experience about the value of having a diverse and representative leadership.

8. We have two proposals for the other session for which we are seeking the Board's view on how to proceed:

**8.1. Option 1: Spotlight on Innovation - COVID-19 Innovations to take into the future**

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, councils have developed many innovative ideas and practices that made a real difference to councils and/or their local communities and can now be successfully taken into the future.

This session would showcase examples of innovation developed during the pandemic with an opportunity to hear from four or five councils. A similar session was held during the 2020 Conference and many councils expressed the desire to continue learning and particularly to explore which new practices they may want to retain into the future. Case studies can be curated from the many best practice examples already collected. Amongst other things, examples could include councils retaining remote working for their staff into the future, councils that have been using behavioural insights to encourage the take-up of the COVID-19 vaccine and councils rethinking their town centres to encourage economic growth as well as deliver better environmental outcomes.

**8.2. Option 2: Spotlight on Learning – Voice of the Sector: LGA Supporting rough sleepers at a time of national crisis**

Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, councils and their partners have pulled out all the stops to support rough sleepers within their localities. Working with central government and other partners, councils worked at exceptional pace to ensure some of the most vulnerable in society were made safe with over 37,000 people accommodated. Shared learning is vital to the ongoing success of councils' response.

As part of the LGA's Sector-led Improvement Offer (SLI), working closely with MHCLG, the LGA delivered a programme of peer support to 222 councils between December 2020 and April 2021. Groups of up to 10 councils came together (virtually) across the country to take part in 'Delivery and Impact Panels' which provided a structured framework and safe space to share and challenge learning and practice to help inform the ongoing response.

This Spotlight on Learning session will share the key themes, opportunities and challenges which emerged from these interactive sessions, including practical examples from those working on the frontline. It will provide an opportunity for members and officers from across Local Government to share their views on how the LGA's future SLI work can be shaped to support the next stage of their response, building on the Everyone In initiative to end rough sleeping.



**Implications for Wales**

9. In identifying examples of best practice during the Spotlight on sessions we will look to draw on examples in Wales in addition to England councils.

**Financial Implications**

10. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**Next steps**

11. Following direction from the Board, officers to progress Spotlight On sessions.



## **Improvement Support to Councils - One Public Estate**

### **Purpose:**

For information.

### **Summary**

The One Public Estate (OPE) programme has grown since its inception as a pilot programme in 2013 working with 12 council areas, to a large national programme now involving 97% of local authorities.

This report details the growth and progress of the programme, including the recently launched £75m Brownfield Land Release

### **Recommendation/s**

That IIB notes the progress of the One Public Estate programme.

### **Contact officer:**

Ellen Vernon

### **Position:**

Programme Director – One Public Estate

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## **Improvement Support to Councils - One Public Estate**

### **Background**

1. The One Public Estate (OPE) programme was established in 2013, and is jointly delivered by the LGA and the Cabinet Office through a blended team, part working in the LGA and part in the Office of Government Property (OGP), part of the Cabinet Office. Since 2017 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have been an additional sponsoring partner.
2. The OPE programme aims to support public bodies to identify and release surplus land, with a particular emphasis on repurposing surplus public land for housing and economic uses.
3. The programme provides practical and technical support, alongside revenue and capital funding, to public bodies. There are two types of funding offer:
  - 3.1 OPE – revenue funding to support partners to work collaboratively on joint projects exploring options to improve efficiency in the public estate, and to release or repurpose surplus public land
  - 3.2 LRF (Land Release Fund) – capital funding to bring surplus local authority land that is suitable for housing to a point of viability and delivery
4. To date the programme has administered eight rounds of funding totalling c.£57m of revenue funding (OPE) and c.£65m of capital funding (LRF).
5. The One Public Estate (OPE) programme opened the £75m Brownfield Land Release Fund for bids on April 19<sup>th</sup>.
6. The programme continues to support both OGP, and MHCLG, to understand the needs and opportunities related to public land, and to explore, develop and design intervention approaches.

### **One Public Estate Programme Structure**

7. One Public Estate operates through a structure of 72 local OPE partnerships. Local authorities act as the accountable bodies for these OPE partnerships, convening a variety of public bodies in the locality in order to collaborate on public property matters.
8. The public bodies involved alongside local authorities vary by locality, depending on property ownerships and local ambitions, but typically involve blue light bodies, health bodies, and central government departments with a local presence (DWP, MOJ, MOD et al).

9. Each OPE partnership sets a programme of work to review local public property needs collaboratively, in order to identify opportunities for co-locations, public service hubs, and other efficiencies, and with the aim of releasing surplus public land for housing and regeneration purposes. Partners benefit from capital receipts and revenue savings where surplus land can be repurposed, as well as improved public service delivery from co-locating public services. Local authorities also benefit from the ability to repurpose public land to meet local housing needs.
10. In addition, the network of OPE partnerships plays a helpful role connecting central government to local areas. Over the last year this has included:
  - 10.1 supporting response and recovery in relation to the pandemic: for example, supporting property searches for response infrastructure
  - 10.2 providing intelligence to the IPA (Infrastructure and Project Authority) about the public sector construction pipeline
  - 10.3 providing early views to MHCLG on policy direction in relation to public land.

### **One Public Estate Support**

11. The One Public Estate offer includes financial support, peer support, plus practical and technical advice and brokering from the OPE team.
12. OPE provides revenue support to early-stage property projects which involve an element of collaboration between local and central government bodies. OPE grants typically fund feasibility studies, masterplans and other technical studies, plus local authority capacity.
13. To date the programme has administered eight rounds of OPE revenue funding totalling c.£57m and supporting c.700 projects.
14. LRF provides capital support, to local authorities only, typically funding the capital works that are required to bring a local authority owned potential housing site to a point of viability, and therefore deliverability. Typical works funded include: abnormal costs related to contamination, demolition of obsolete buildings, abnormal utilities costs, highways requirements and so forth.
15. To date the programme has administered two rounds of LRF capital funding totalling c.£65m and supporting c.140 projects.

### **One Public Estate Delivery**

16. To the end of November 2020, the OPE programme has enabled the delivery of:
  - 16.1 over £456m in capital receipts

- 16.2 over £88m in revenue savings to benefit public bodies
- 16.3 the release of surplus public land for over 19,000 homes
- 16.4 the creation of over 31,500 jobs.

17. Equally as valuable have been the softer benefits. These include:

- 17.1 enabling local authorities to have some control over the supply of land for housing
- 17.2 the ability to support SME's and local supply chains
- 17.3 enabling local authorities to connect and engage with harder to reach parts of government
- 17.4 the ability to share problem solving and best practise between councils and other public bodies
- 17.5 the ability to link public property to support place agendas – for example town centre regeneration.

18. Case studies of OPE and LRF supported projects are attached at **Appendix A**.

#### **Activity in 2021/22**

19. The OPE programme launched the Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) on April 19<sup>th</sup>. The BLRF is funded by MHCLG, and comprises £75m available as follows:

- 19.1 £50m capital grant for brownfield land release
- 19.2 £25m capital grant for self and custom-build schemes

20. **Brownfield land** - £50m capital funding is available to support local authority land release for housing on brownfield land, targeting small sites with viability issues which have prevented the release of land to date. The fund design is largely similar to previous rounds of LRF, with the exceptions that:

- 20.1 there is greater scope for projects with a benefit cost ratio (BCR) threshold between 1.0 and 1.5 to be supported, where evidence can also be provided regarding non-monetised benefits (for example visual amenity benefits from developing a brownfield site). The intention is to allow a greater number of applications to come forward in areas where residential land values are lower and therefore help achieve one of the fund's strategic aims to level-up
- 20.2 the fund will be open to councils across England, apart from those Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) areas who have already benefited from the £400 million brownfield fund

21. **Self and custom-build schemes** - £25m capital funding is allocated to support local authority land release for self and custom-build projects on both greenfield and brownfield sites. Self and custom-build is a growing sector, and this funding will help address the lack of supply of serviced self and custom-build plots.

22. The OPE programme is currently holding workshops with local authorities to provide briefings on the detail of the funds, plus advice on applying. The BLRF application

window closes on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, with project assessments and funding awards occurring over the summer.

23. The LGA continues to work with OGP and MHCLG partners through the OPE programme on exploring and developing further interventions and approaches to support housing delivery and public land efficiency.

### **Issues**

24. There are no specific issues to raise in relation to the OPE programme.

### **Implications for Wales**

25. None – the OPE programme only covers English local authority areas. The OPE programme has previously engaged with Welsh Government colleagues to share experiences and learnings.

### **Equalities implications**

26. Positive –

- 26.1 the OPE programme seeks to support property projects which in general terms improve accessibility to public services for all, and which support local authorities' to best meet diverse housing needs where the market is unlikely to meet these
- 26.2 the criteria to be assessed as part of the current BLRF application round include the degree to which the Public Sector Equality Duty is met by proposed schemes (PSED is 5% of the available score)
- 26.3 the OPE programme seeks to ensure EDI aims are met operationally, for example through recruitment practises, providing subtitles on video formats and so forth.

### **Financial implications**

27. The OPE programme is delivered by the LGA in partnership with Cabinet Office via a contract. The current contract encompasses the period April 2019 through to March 2022. A contract for the period April 2022 onwards will be renegotiated with Cabinet Office during Q1/Q2 2021/22.

### **Next steps**

28. The OPE programme continues to work with OPE partnerships to support previously funded property projects through to delivery.
29. The OPE programme is exploring options to work more closely with private sector stakeholders, in particular the scope to introduce commercial income to support the programme deliver its aims.
30. The programme is also exploring other areas where public land and OPE's collaboration principles might play a role in helping resolve public policy challenges.

31. From an operational perspective, the OPE programme is in the process of expanding the OPE team to ensure the successful achievement of the BLRF aims, and future programme aims.




## APPENDIX A – ONE PUBLIC ESTATE and LAND RELEASE FUND CASE STUDIES

### One Public Estate Phases 1-7

#### The York Central Development

- Planning permission approved for the infrastructure work that will deliver 2500 homes, 6500 jobs and 1.2m sq ft commercial development space.

City of York – 2500 homes | 6500 jobs




**Region:** North East  
**Theme:** regeneration

- Construction can start at York Central after City of York Council gave planning permission for infrastructure work.
- The York Central development includes 2500 new homes; c.1.2 million sqft commercial development and improved visitor access to the National Railway Museum.
- c. 6500 new jobs are expected to be created and a £1.2 bn boost to the local economy.

#### Chatham, Medway

- The development at White Road has progressed to 20 MMC homes on site and a capital receipt of £2.8m has been reported.

Medway – 20 homes



Top Hat MMC unit being delivered at White Road, Chatham, Medway

**Region:** South East  
**Theme:** Regeneration

- Medway: White Rd **20 MMCs in place.**
- £2.8m CR reported

Wareham relocatable housing

- 18 homes have been delivered at the community-based project through a relocatable housing solution that supports affordable key worker accommodation.

Wareham Relocatable Housing – 18 homes




**Region:** South West  
**Theme:** Health and social care (in OPE), regeneration

- A phase 7 project – **18 homes delivered.**
- Community-based accommodation and supported services
- Creates continuum of accommodation and services & enables people to live as independently as possible.
- Relocatable housing solution: supports affordable and keyworker housing, accommodates care sector workforce.

Worcestershire JPV integrated public services

- 5 sites sold resulting in a capital receipt of £7m and reduced running costs of £9m.

Worcestershire JPV – CR: c.£7m | RRC: c.£9m




**Region:** North West  
**Theme:** Integrated Public Services; regeneration

- **5 sites sold**, including Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Services HQ, enabled through HWFRS co-locating with West Mercia Police HQ.
- HWFRS disposed of their HQ to Worcester City Council with the Health and Care Trust as a tenant.

Hounslow Cavalry Barracks

- Development partnership with Inland Homes agreed, a key milestone for a project due to deliver in excess of 1000 new homes and £50m capital receipt.

Hounslow Cavalry Barracks - 14.85 hectares



**Region: London**  
**Theme: Housing; MOD**

- The West London OPE partnership has reached a key milestone to deliver more than 1000 new houses, including affordable housing, **agreeing a development partnership with Inland Homes.**
- Increased confidence to deliver forecast benefits c.£50m CR

## Land Release Fund Round 1

### Hertfordshire OPE Partnership - Stevenage - 30 new homes over 2 sites

- Gresley Way - 15 new homes completed. Re-named Blackwell Close, this scheme comprises 14 homes for affordable rent and 1 for private sale. Stevenage District Council has collaborated with Hertfordshire County Council to let a proportion of the properties to clients with higher support needs, with properties designed to ensure they best met the needs of this client group.
- Burwell Court - 15 new homes completed. 15 one and two bed apartments which are entirely for social rent. The scheme was built on a derelict pub site that was a hot spot for anti-social behaviour, and has transformed the local area.
- Kenilworth Close - Construction started in October 2020 for the delivery of 236 homes by January 2024.





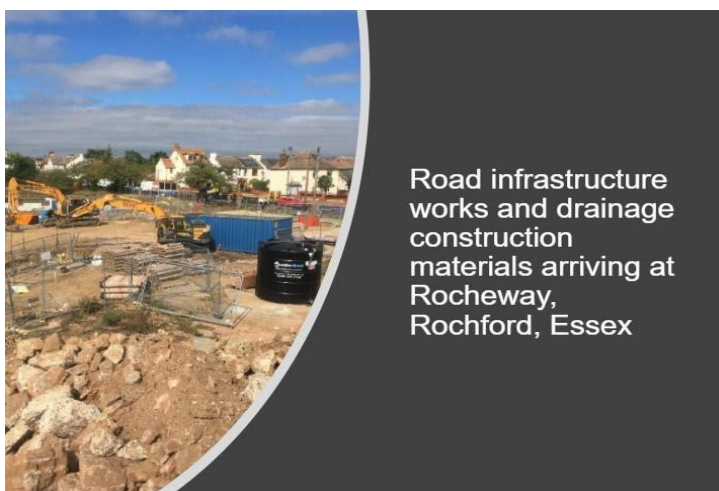
Plymouth OPE Partnership - Corporate Asset Release Project - 24 new homes

- St Budeaux Library site - 24 new homes completed. All are affordable homes, and four are wheelchair accessible. The site will eventually be part of a mixed development.



Essex OPE Partnership - Rochford - 14 homes construction start

- Rocheway and Millview sites - September saw construction start on 14 new homes in Rochford. Road infrastructure and drainage work commenced at Rocheway for the first phase of housing. This initial phase will deliver 14 homes, with a procurement exercise underway for the second phase (a further 60 homes).







## **LGA's Sector Led Improvement Climate Change Programme**

### **Purpose**

For information.

### **Summary**

Following the declaration of a climate emergency at the LGA conference in July 2019, the LGA has developed an improvement and support offer for councils to address the climate response. The aim of the LGA's Sector Led improvement Climate Change Programme is to help councils and residents to reach their local carbon reduction targets by adapting and mitigating the effects of climate change. For the period 2020/21, 90 per cent of English and Welsh councils have engaged with the LGA Sector Led improvement Climate Change Programme.

This paper covers the achievements from the 2020/21 programme and proposed plans for 2021/22. It also covers the role which the LGA will play in the run up to, and at the United Nations climate change conference COP26, being held in November 2021.

### **Recommendations**

That the Improvement and Innovation Board notes the update on the actions taken under the LGA's Sector Led improvement Climate Change Programme in 2020/21 and supports the proposals for the 2021/22 financial year.

That the Board also notes the LGA's role in the United Nations climate change conference COP26.

### **Action**

That officers will deliver the programme as agreed by Members.

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Grace Abel

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Programme Manager,  
Productivity

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## **Background**

1. In July 2019, the LGA General Assembly passed a motion calling upon the government to explore the domestic implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through funded partnership roles with local authority areas, encouraging councils to continue to link local priorities with the overall ambitions of the SDGs and the declaration of a climate emergency.
2. Following the motion, the LGA Sector Led Improvement Climate Change Programme has developed a comprehensive climate change offer for councils which meets the needs of local authorities. This includes an array of support offered across the improvement division and beyond, in sharing good practice, leadership, productivity, research and information and Local Partnerships.
3. The LGA Sector Led Improvement Climate Change Programme have developed a set of priorities to work on in 2021/22. This has been done in collaboration with the Improvement and Innovation Climate Change Member working group, officer Climate Action Group and feedback from councils through our green webinars and innovation programmes. The paper outlines further detail with regards to the focused areas.

## **Issues**

4. Table 1 (below) presents the work undertaken and results achieved by the Sector Led Improvement Climate Change team between February 2020 (when the LGA programme of support started) and March 2021.



**Table 1: LGA Sector Led Improvement Climate Change Programme: 2020/21**

| Output   | When was it delivered?          | Key Performance Indicators met: Feb-20 to Mar-21   |
|--|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>1. Communication and engagement</b>   |                                 |  |
| Stakeholder groups: Launch of the Improvement and Innovation Climate Change Member Working Group and the officer Climate Action Group. | Feb-20 and ongoing              | 6 and 3 meetings respectively.   |
| The LGA <a href="#">Climate Change Sector Led Improvement web hub</a> .  | Feb-20 and updated continuously | 21,977 views.  |
| LGA climate change <a href="#">e bulletin</a> .  | Aug-20 to Mar-21 monthly        | 8 bulletins, 1,500 subscribers.  |
| <a href="#">Climate action: council plans   Local Government Association</a> .   | Feb-21                          | Working with MySociety to collect all council climate action plans - 271 plans collected.      |
| <a href="#">Case studies</a> and notable practice.   | Feb-20 and ongoing              | 62 pieces.   |
| Climate Emergency Knowledge Hub Group.   | Feb-20 and ongoing              | 328 members.   |
| LGA Green Webinar Series.  | Jun-20 to Mar-20                | 8 webinars, 1,820 attendees. 92 per cent satisfaction rate.                                    |
| Launch of the LGA's new <a href="#">climate change communications resource</a> .   | Feb-21                          | 1,022 total webpage views.   |
| Launch of the LGA's <a href="#">behaviour change and the environment guide</a> .   | Feb-21                          | 2,779 total webpage views.   |
| <b>2. Green economy</b>  |                                 |  |
| Economic Growth Roundtable: The Green Recovery.  | Nov-20                          | 24 Economic Development and Climate Change Officers attended.                                  |
| <a href="#">Action learning sets for creating local green jobs</a> .   | Jan-21 to May-21                | 25 officers and Members.   |
| <b>3. Data</b>   |                                 |  |
| <a href="#">Climate Change Survey, February 2020   Local Government Association</a> .  | Feb-20 and closed Autumn-20     | 98 responded (29% response rate).  |
| <a href="#">Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool   Local Government Association</a> .  | Summer-20                       | Tool has been endorsed by the Climate Change Committee. 179 councils have downloaded the tool. |
| <b>4. Procurement</b>  |                                 |  |
| A guide for councils on <a href="#">achieving community benefits - Social Value   Local Government Association</a> .                   | Mar-20                          | 5,053 total webpage views.   |

| <b>5. Leadership</b>   |                               |  |
|--|-------------------------------|--|
| A guide created in collaboration with the <a href="#">Centre for Public Scrutiny – 10 questions to scrutinise climate action   Local Government Association.</a> | Sep-20                        | 1,194 total webpage views.   |
| Leadership Essentials: Climate Emergency.  | Courses from Feb-20 to Mar-21 | 5 courses, 75 attendees.   |
| <b>6. Local collaborations</b>   |                               |  |
| <a href="#">Universities and councils: partnership working towards net zero   Local Government Association.</a>  | Sep-20                        | 70 programme applications, working with 12 partnerships. Seminars and a podcast series available to all. |
| <a href="#">Design in the public sector programme   Local Government Association.</a>  | Aug-20                        | Working with 13 councils.  |

5. Table 2 (below) presents the work to be undertaken by the Sector Led Improvement Climate Change team between April 2021 and March 2022. The underlying principles of this work are:

- 5.1 Provide support and improvement to councils tackling the climate and ecological emergencies.
- 5.2 Help councils to achieve a green, just and inclusive economic recovery from the pandemic.
- 5.3 Work with local partners including education, businesses and citizens to achieve our aims.
- 5.4 Support (and learning from support where it is for an individual council) will be made available to every council through events, guides, case studies, podcasts, tools, blogs, e learning and so on.
- 5.5 Work will be connected to COP26 where appropriate to showcase UK local government as leaders in climate change work. Specifically, we will be offering support in the following COP26 themes: nature (biodiversity), green finance (green jobs) and energy. This is alongside seizing the opportunity to support councils on engaging residents on climate change as the UK prepares to host the United Nations climate change conference.
- 5.6 All work will be connected the Sustainable Development Goals where appropriate.
- 5.7 We will measure the impact of the programme through an online questionnaire. This will measure impact across all projects overtime. A full set of questions are available in **Appendix 1** of this document. Evaluation of the programme will also include a re-run of the LGA Climate Change Survey, including questions on the impact of LGA support and councils' future support needs.

**Table 2: LGA Sector Led Improvement Climate Change Programme: 2021/22**

| Output   | Timeframe   | Key Performance Indicators/targets                                    |
|--|---|---|
| <b>1. Communications and engagement</b>  |   |   |
| Stakeholder groups: The Improvement and Innovation Climate Change Member Working Group and the officer Climate Action Group.   | Ongoing   | 4 meetings each.  |
| Collect <a href="#">best practice</a> across local government and showcase it in the lead up to COP26.   | Continuous  | 30 case studies/pieces of notable practice.                           |
| Continue to send the LGA climate change <a href="#">e bulletin</a> , run the Climate Emergency Knowledge Hub Group, update the LGA support webpage with LGA resources, case studies and resources from elsewhere including council climate action plans. | Every month   | 1,800 subscribers to the ebulletin.                                   |
| Deliver a series of green webinars including the LGA conference (many based on COP26 themes). Dates can be found in Appendix 2.  | 10 webinars delivered monthly, apart from over the summer and Christmas | 1,000 attendees across all the webinars.                              |
| Deliver a national climate communications and public engagement training programme that can be tailored at a local level.  | Launch in Autumn-21   | 300 webpage views.  |
| <b>2. Data</b>   |   |   |
| Promote use of the <a href="#">LGA Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool</a> including a further scope 3 emissions guide.   | May-21  | 220 councils accessed the tool. Data returns uploaded to LGINform.    |
| <b>3. Procurement</b>  |   |   |
| Launch sustainable procurement guide.  | Launch May-21   | 300 webpage views.  |
| <b>4. Leadership</b>   |   |   |
| Launch of <i>The Local Pathway to Net Zero</i> (Don't be left in the dark) guidance for Councillors.   | Launch in Spring-21   | 300 webpage views.  |
| Continue to deliver Climate Emergency <a href="#">Leadership Programmes</a>  | Sep-21 and Jan-22   | 30 councillors attended.  |
| <b>5. Biodiversity</b>   |   |   |
| Launch learning and development on the biodiversity and ecological emergency.  | Launch in Autumn-21   | 30 officers and Members accessed the support.                         |
| <b>6. Local collaborations</b>   |   |   |
| Deliver the <a href="#">Net Zero Innovation Programme</a> which matches universities and councils together, with potential to  | Launch in Autumn-21   | Supported at least 12 partnerships, on top of training other councils |

|  |                     |  |
|--|---------------------|--|
| further expand and match businesses, universities with councils to create a zero-carbon future for their local place together. |                     | through a train the trainer model. Seminars and a podcast series available to all. |
| Support offer on retrofitting housing and green jobs   | Launch in Winter-22 | TBC  |

### **LGA role in the United Nations climate conference COP26**

- 6 The UK is hosting, for the first time, the next United Nations international climate change conference in Glasgow from 1-12 November 2021 (COP26). The conference will bring together international delegations to agree on a process to accelerate progress towards the goal of the Paris agreement (to keep the rise in global temperature to within at least 2 degrees, although 1.5 is the current ambition).
- 7 At present, the Government is planning for a physical conference to take place but remaining flexible in the planning as uncertainties of COVID-19 continue. The LGA is mindful of the options for a physical, virtual or hybrid conference in our planning.
- 8 The conference itself, and the lead up to it this year, will have five broad themes: adaption and resilience; nature; energy transition; clean road transport; and finance.
- 9 For COP26 in Glasgow, we understand that there will be a dedicated day for local and regional government, themed as 'Cities and the Built Environment'. This is most likely to take place at the end of the two-week Conference. As yet, we have little information on what the proposals are for the day, but potentially it will follow the pattern of local government days at previous COPs, with the involvement of international local government bodies.
- 10 The Conference will be delivered across two sites: the Scottish events Campus (SEC), referred to as the Blue Zone, and the Glasgow Science Centre, known as the Green Zone. The Blue Zone is managed by the United Nations and will host the negotiations. It will bring together delegations from 197 Parties and observer organisations who can hold panel discussions, exhibits and side events. The LGA has applied for observer status. We will know by August whether the LGA's application to send observers to COP26 has been successful.
- 11 The Green Zone is managed by the UK Government and is the platform for the general public, youth groups, academia, business and civil society who can host events, exhibitions, workshops, creative installations and other activities.
- 12 The Cabinet Office invited Expressions of Interest from a range of organisations, including councils, to participate in the Blue and Green Zones. The LGA submitted Expressions of Interest for both the Blue and Green Zones, and a joint submission working with our national counterparts across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The LGA pitched for an exhibition space to showcase the sector and an event space

for a thought leadership panel. The Cabinet Office expects the available space to be oversubscribed and we will hear in May as to whether we have been successful.

- 13 Local government is already tackling the challenge of climate change. The [examples](#) that the LGA has gathered demonstrate the breadth and depth of that work. The run up to COP26 provides an opportunity to showcase and build on that work. This includes webinars on key themes, a series of think pieces from stakeholders, partners and think tanks, 'talking heads' with industry experts and case study videos showcasing good practice by councils.

**Other LGA work relating to climate change includes:**

- 14 Work undertaken for the LGA Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board.
- 15 On 11 March 2021, the Leadership Board established of an open-ended Climate Change Task Group to steer the strategic engagement with Government on climate change matters in this COP26 year and beyond.
- 16 Local Partnerships provides services in key climate response areas including energy efficiency, waste, housing, regeneration and growth, air quality, energy, finance, infrastructure, digital transformation and health and social care. Further information can be found [Climate Response - Local Partnerships](#).

**Equality, diversity and inclusion considerations**

- 17 An initial analysis of potential EDI considerations affecting the environment area has been carried out. People with the following protected characteristics have been identified as disproportionately impacted.
  - 17.1 **Age** – both the very young, the very old and people with underlying health issues are more vulnerable to the ill-effects of extreme heat or cold caused by climate change; older people are more susceptible to the social isolation which can result from poor local environment quality.
  - 17.2 **Disability** – those with restricted mobility may find multi stream recycling inhibitive; accessible ground floor dwellings are more susceptible to flooding; lack of access to green space can exacerbate mental ill health.
  - 17.3 **Pregnancy and Maternity** – pregnant people are more susceptible to the ill-effects of extreme heat caused by climate change; parents of young children may be negatively impacted by a lack of access to green space.
  - 17.4 **Race** – Gypsies and Travellers can struggle to access public services, including waste and recycling and running water.
  - 17.5 **Economic disadvantage** – those on lower incomes are more likely to live in poorly insulated housing, with more expensive metered heating tariffs, which can lead to fuel poverty; they are more likely to experience a lack of access to green infrastructure which can contribute to health inequalities; social housing of high-rise construction and/or with poorly engineered communal heating systems can be more severely impacted by extreme weather events.

### **Environmental considerations**

- 18 All procurement activity will be sustainable.
- 19 Meetings and events will be held virtually, where possible, to avoid greenhouse gas emissions from travel.

### **Implications for Wales**

- 20 We are engaging with our Wales Local Government Association colleagues, are sharing learning and work collaboratively on common issues.

### **Financial Implications**

- 21 The support offer is funded through our Improvement Grant from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

### **Next steps**

- 22 Officers to continue delivering the LGA Climate Change Improvement and Support Programme.

## Appendix 1

### Measuring impact questions

1. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this support offer on the LGA Climate Change Improvement and Support Programme?
2. How has this support offer added value to your council's response to climate change?
3. How, if at all, could the LGA Climate Change Improvement and Support Programme be more effective?
4. How likely would you be to recommend the LGA Climate Change and Support Programme?

## Appendix 2

### Green webinar series – save the dates

| Webinar topic   | Date              |
|---|-------------------|
| Greenhouse gas accounting tool and scope 3 guidance for social care | May 13 2021       |
| Biodiversity (COP26 theme)  | May 28 2021       |
| Energy (COP theme)  | June 15 2021      |
| LGA conference (COP26 focus)  | July 7 2021       |
| Procurement   | July 16 2021      |
| Green jobs and housing retrofit (COP26 theme)                       | September 15 2021 |
| Climate action plans  | October 6 2021    |
| Partnering with businesses  | November 9 2021   |

Two more webinars are to be confirmed in 2022.





## **LGA Boards' improvement activity**

### **Purpose of report**

For information.

### **Summary**

This is a progress report on improvement activity undertaken by other LGA Boards.

#### **Recommendation**

That Members note the report.

#### **Actions**

Subject to members' comments, officers will develop the LGA's improvement offer as part of its on-going work.

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
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## **LGA Boards' improvement activity**

## **LGA Boards' Improvement Activity**

### **Background**

1. Members have agreed that it is important for this Board to retain a strategic or “overarching” perspective on the improvement activity currently undertaken across LGA Boards. This helps ensure consistency with the key principles underpinning the approach to sector-led improvement and helps avoid any potential duplication.
2. To achieve this:
  - officers coordinate the flow of business through the Boards so that the Improvement and Innovation Board can be invited to express strategic views about any significant improvement issues put before other Boards
  - during the year the Improvement and Innovation Board receives suitably timed progress reports on the major improvement programmes
  - as far as possible, the Improvement and Innovation Board meets towards the end of each cycle of meetings so it can consider any significant issues put before other Boards and then report back to Boards at their next meeting.
3. Significant improvement activity led by other LGA Boards since this was last reported in December 2020 is set out below.

### **Community Wellbeing Board, including the Care and Health Improvement Programme (CHIP)**

4. The [Care and Health Improvement Programme](#) (CHIP) is the sector-led improvement programme for adult social care funded by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).
5. **Home First approach to discharge from hospital:** We have published [Top tips for implementing a collaborative approach to Home First](#). These tips will help health and care systems to identify what they need to commission to enable people to remain living independently at home, avoiding unnecessary admissions to hospital and enabling a safe and timely discharge home after a hospital stay.
6. **Commissioning social care:** We are working with DHSC to agree the areas of focus for supporting commissioned care in 2021/22. The four areas are expected to be: strategic commissioning, market intelligence, partnership working and market management. The approaches to providing support to councils will vary and include support created and delivered at a national level, work with regions that have developed best practice and bringing together LA's with shared challenges and objectives.
7. **Supporting adults with learning disabilities to have better lives:** The [outcomes and improvement framework](#) was commissioned by CHIP and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services to help directors of adult social services work with partners to

identify how they can support adults with learning disabilities and/or autistic people and how they can be assured that the care and support in their area is good value for money.

8. **System Transformation Peer Support Programme:** In partnership with NHS Providers, NHS Confed, NHS Clinical Commissioners and the ICS Network, we have secured funding to [deliver bespoke, peer-led support](#) to care and health system partners to develop a culture of collaboration, achieve effective partnership working at system, place and locality level and to navigate the implications of the White Paper proposals. Expert peers from across health and care will act as critical friends to help all partners reflect and learn, align their priorities and agree their collective next step. All support is free of charge.
9. **Workforce:** We have created a new [adult social care workforce webpage](#) where we will regularly be adding news and information relating to our five workforce priority areas:
  - strategic workforce planning
  - growing and developing the workforce
  - enhancing the use of technology
  - supporting wellbeing and positive mental health
  - building and enhancing social justice, equality, diversity and inclusion in the workforce.

The page will provide essential information ranging from practical guidance, like [details surrounding current grant funding and conditions](#), to support, such as [wellbeing resources for frontline staff](#).

10. **Better Security, Better Care Programme:** We are **one of 29** local support partners across the country helping care providers to understand the importance of data and cyber security. In collaboration with IPC, we have created [guidance](#) for commissioners of adult social care services to improve data and cyber security measures.
11. **Closure of NHS Digital Social Care Programme:** We ran the [Social Care Digital Innovation Programme \(SCDIP\) and Accelerator \(SCDIA\) programmes](#) that ended in March 2021. Through this programme we delivered funding and support to 49 projects involving 69 councils to develop and share new digital approaches and technologies in adult social care. Case studies are available from [www.local.gov.uk/scdip](http://www.local.gov.uk/scdip).
12. **Covid Response and Coordination team (CRCT):** previously known as Test Trace and Outbreak Management (TTOM), the CRCT team works to support the LGA's work around all issues arising from COVID-19 including vaccinations, variants of concern, testing and more, ensuring the voice of local government is heard. Support to the sector in the last 6 months has included:
  - A range of webinars and workshops to provide opportunities for Councils to hear national policy updates, raise challenges, and discuss issues. Over [70 Covid-19 related webinars](#) have been held with over 20 of them in the last 6 months,
  - The development of a new LGA COVID-19 Learning Exchange, due for launch by the end of May, to bring together resources across the sector and elevate best practice and shared learning. Transferring from the existing [Knowledge hub](#) which holds over 100 resources,

- Representing interests of members alongside national strategic partners, contributing a valuable, and valued, local government perspective on a broad and diverse range of Government policy initiatives.

**13. Armed Forces:** Following the publication of the Armed Forces Bill, we are working with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to develop the statutory guidance that will accompany the new statutory duty on public authorities, including councils, to have 'due regard' to the Armed Forces Covenant. We are also calling for MOD to undertake a full review of additional costs incurred by councils after the first year of implementation, pending publication of the New Burdens assessment.

### **City Regions and People and Places Boards**

**14. The People and Places and City Regions Boards** continue to focus on support around devolution, jobs and skills, growth and the SDGs. Moving forward work will also start to focus more on economic recovery.

**15. Export Toolkit:** Developed an Export Project to support councils who want to take a greater role in supporting export businesses. This includes a number of best practice examples, including developing export pathways to encouraging diaspora links and cultural exchange. We are currently working with the Department of International Trade to finalise publication arrangements following strong departmental interest.

**16. Devolution deal to delivery:** This project has carried out research with politicians, officers and external stakeholders in each combined authority area, looking at the process they had been on to secure a devolution deal, and what has worked well in the process of establishing a combined authority. It has extracted learning from this process about the ways that each of the combined authorities function, what questions councils exploring becoming a combined authority could consider, and what other options there are for collaboration if councils decide not to go down the route of a combined authority. The project is currently finalising a series of deep dives into selected combined authorities to look in more detail at specific contrasts around geography, governance and structures.

**17. Town and parish council devolution** framework project sets out a framework to guide principal authorities who are interested in supporting town and parish councils in their areas. We have engaged well with NALC and across the Town and Parish sector to deliver this support and will be proceeding with publication following elections.

**18. Tech Skills:** We have been conducting area-based skills forecasts of high-tech industries out to 2030, backed by case studies of good practice from local areas. The project is now complete and data is being integrated into LG Inform with case studies uploaded to economic recovery portal. Press work is in development following elections.

- 19. Youth employment:** Young people's life chances have been severely affected by the economic implications of the COVID-19 crisis. Local government has statutory responsibilities for young people and those who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). We know that it is a challenging time for the sector, therefore, we commissioned York Consulting to undertake an action learning project that focussed on developing a better understanding of the barriers and challenges for councils in fulfilling their statutory duties for young people. The project supported eleven areas and delivered two workshops, sharing best practice. The project completed at the end of March 2021. A final report with a range of case studies and recommendation on improving the offer for young people is ready for publication.
- 20. Local government's role in jobs and skills recovery:** Local government continues to be at the forefront of efforts to coordinate jobs and training offers for residents and businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic and as we move towards recovery. To share learning and ideas across the sector we commissioned two online resources to be launched on 20 May at an LGA webinar. These include: 1) *Top tips on five themes to boost a local jobs and skills recovery* setting out what local government can do to: deal with economic shocks and opportunities, improve basic skills and capabilities, retrain the local population, addressing long-term unemployment and youth unemployment. 2) A range of case studies demonstrating local government's role to support jobs and skills during the crisis and looking ahead to recovery. This is accompanied by a report capturing learning for the wider sector and LGA.
- 21. Mapping national employment and skills provision:** Most employment and skills provision is commissioned and procured nationally by Government departments or their agencies on different geographic boundaries. This makes it challenging for local government employment and skills teams to know what support is available and when. This project maps provision out and will help improve conversations between local and national government on how to collaborate on existing provision by geography and any future opportunity. This will be available in the summer.

## **Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport (EEHT) Board**

- 22. Economic recovery:** Three good practice guides were published by the LGA to support councils in their work on local economic recovery. These include guides on:
- [Local Economic Recovery Planning](#) (A playbook for action);
  - Microbusinesses ([How well do you know your Microbusinesses](#)) and
  - [Dealing with Empty Shops](#).
- 23. Housing Advisers Programme:** [The 2020/21 Housing Advisers Programme \(HAP\)](#) closed for applications on 7th January 2021. There were 41 applications for funding and 17 councils were awarded grants of up to £20,000 for projects ranging from delivery carbon neutral homes to redesigning homelessness prevention services to address the

impacts of COVID-19. The list of successful applicants is as follows: Isle of Wight Council; Sunderland City Council; Wokingham Borough Council; West of England Combined Authority; Oxford City Council; Hertsmere Borough Council; Castle Point Borough Council; South Gloucestershire Council; Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames; King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council; Hertfordshire County Council, as lead partner of the Hertfordshire Property Partnership (HPP); Cornwall Council; Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea; East Riding of Yorkshire Council; Mid Devon District Council; Bristol City Council; Council of the Isles of Scilly.

24. **Leadership Essentials Course – Housing:** This was due to run from 4th- 5th February 2021. Due to a combination of a lack of registrations and the limitations of lockdown the course has been postponed until 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> September 2021.
25. **Leading the Homelessness Sector – a councillor's guide:** The LGA has published a written [guide](#) for elected members which will support them to effectively perform their role in shaping and scrutinising the local response to homelessness. The guide was launched at a training event on the 11 May 2021.
26. **Joint event with the National Housing Federation (NHF):** We ran a joint workshop with the NHF on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 on partnership working around homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on identifying lessons learned and actions for the future. The outputs from the workshop will be fed into the [Kerslake Commission on Homelessness and Rough Sleeping](#), of which our Chairman is a member.

## **Children and Young People Board**

27. **Youth Services:** We held an online conference on 24<sup>th</sup> February to bring together youth service leads and councillors to hear from a young person, other local areas and experts in the sector about how they have coped during Covid-19.
28. **Early Years:** We have continued to share information with early years teams throughout Covid-19, supporting them to interpret guidance and acting as an intermediary between them and central government. We continue to receive very positive feedback from early years local authority teams.
29. **CAMHS:** For children's mental health week we collated a series of good practice examples, showcasing the work that councils have been doing to support children and young people's mental health throughout periods of lockdown.
30. We also ran a webinar on whole household approaches to mental health, showcasing work commissioned by the LGA into how councils and partners can come together to implement a joined-up model of support for families. This was undertaken jointly with the Community Wellbeing Board.

31. **Education and social care:** We have published [research looking at the response of local education and children's services departments to the Covid-19 pandemic](#). The research looked at council's initial response to the lockdown, adapting to the lockdown, the 'new normal' and; the return to lockdown, before identifying a number opportunities that have arisen from the pandemic period.

## **Safer and Stronger Communities Board**

32. **Counter Extremism:** we have ran two successful training courses for a total of 50 practitioners on strategies for effective communications and engagement with communities to tackle far-right extremism. In partnership with the Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism (SIGCE), we also hosted two well-attended webinars on COVID-19 and conspiracy theories, and on approaches to online community tension monitoring. A further three practitioner roundtables also took place to explore emerging extremism and cohesion issues.
33. We ran some bespoke training sessions for elected members at a council facing significant issues around far-right extremism, and also held a joint event with the SIGCE and EELGA for elected members and senior officers in the East of England region about extremism challenges throughout the pandemic.
34. We have continued to work with the SIGCE's Faith Based Extremism Working Group, which brings together councils working on issues relating to "Islamist" extremism, and which has commissioned research into the impact of terminology on effective engagement and delivery of counter-extremism and Prevent work. We also continued to meet with the SIGCE's Far Right Working Group, working to proactively respond to far-right activism and providing dedicated support to affected local authorities.
35. **Domestic Abuse Act workshops:** The LGA has held a series of workshops with local government domestic abuse leads to discuss the new measures in the Domestic Abuse Act and the new statutory duty on local authorities. Over 300 delegates joined the workshop sessions, and an informal peer network has been established. We will continue to hold future sessions over the coming months, to help share best practice and learning.
36. **COVID compliance and enforcement activity:** We have continued our work to support councils with their COVID-19 compliance and enforcement activity, with several hundred officers attending our regular webinars to hear councils' experience on planning for different stages of the roadmap and the reopening of hospitality.



## **Resources Board**

37. **Social Work Health Check:** The National Social Work Health Check Report was launched at an LGA webinar on 17 February attended by 161 social work professionals and chaired by the Chief Social Worker for Adults. The report is based on over 9,000 responses from social workers across 133 councils and is now available on our website.
38. **Returners Programmes:** The Returners Programmes span Social Work, Legal, Planning and ICT. Returners have now completed their training programmes and graduation ceremonies took place at the end of April. 66 councils and over 300 candidates are now in contact with one another.
39. **Environmental Health and Social Work Together Programmes:** Councils are using our Together Programmes more and extensions have been agreed until the Autumn. The Environmental Health talent platform went live in October 2020 and has attracted 224 qualified Environmental Health Officers, with 122 councils subscribed. The Social Work Together talent pool registered over 1,000 qualified social workers, with 108 councils subscribed. Councils can use both of these resources free-of-charge to help support their Environmental Health and Social Work teams and avoid agency costs by employing directly.
40. **Apprenticeships:** The second iteration of our Apprenticeships Action Learning Programme for councils was launched in January 2021 and is supporting officers from 40 councils in five groups. Each group is helping councils work through challenges on issues like workforce development, leadership and culture and engagement, based on the LGA's Apprenticeships Maturity Model.
41. In total across our apprenticeships programme in 2020/21 we have:
- Reached officers from 163 councils at least once through our webinar programme;
  - Signed up 40 councils for the second phase of our Action Learning Programme;
  - Completed four apprenticeship MOT health checks;
  - Supported more than 40 councils via the LGA-funded End Point Assessment service provided by South West Councils (SWC), with over 100 apprentices certified;
  - Provided Levy Transfer policy development support to councils including Barnsley, Shropshire and Islington
42. **Workforce Planning:** The LGA Workforce Team provided two days funded bespoke workforce planning support to 36 local authorities, focusing on strategy and skills development, senior management development sessions and a benchmarking service that includes recommendations for improvement. The LGA also facilitates a national workforce planning network bringing together participating councils to share practice and learning, focusing on workforce planning during the pandemic. Between November and



March, we launched the Workforce Planning Workshops with 23 councils participating and receiving support through to the end of the 20/21 financial year.

43. **Workforce Guidance Publications and Bulletins:** Following the decision by Government to scrap the £95k cap on exit payments we issued a series of guidance notes to local government on implications on exit payments already made. By January 2021 we had also provided direct consultancy services to 14 local government employers on a range of strategic and operational HR issues, including senior employee relations issues, organisational design proposals and job evaluation.
44. **Schools:** Between January and March, as well as conducting the national consultation on teachers' pay on behalf of NEOST we also hosted two webinars on understanding and applying teachers' pay, attended by up to 500 delegates.
45. **Wellbeing, Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI):** Promoted wellbeing resources to councils between January and March 2021 via campaign days (e.g. Time to Talk with Dudley MBC councillors video). Hosted a webinar with over 500 delegates in partnership with the charity Our Frontline. Also contributed to the Government's paper on resources for local government employees, and social care in particular, on mental health support for the prevention of suicide. Workforce and Improvement Teams held a joint webinar on workforce and organisational EDI good practice with around 300 delegates, chaired by Cllr Paulette Hamilton with speakers from the London Borough of Haringey and the NHS.

## **Equalities Implications**

46. Officers continue to seek to ensure that issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion are factored in decision making processes and work undertaken with councils. This includes support to protect vulnerable people, enhance community cohesion and increase diversity within councils and the local government workforce.

## **Implications for Wales**

47. We are working closely with colleagues in WLGA to ensure that we share learning and best practice based from our work.

## **Financial Implications**

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

## **Next steps**

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

