

Executive Advisory Board

Agenda

Thursday, 21 July 2022
2.15 pm

Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, 18 Smith
Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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

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LGA Executive
21 July 2022

There will be a meeting of the LGA Executive at: **2.15 pm on Thursday, 21 July 2022 in Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ.**

Attendance Sheet

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

Apologies

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Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: Martha.Lauchlan@local.gov.uk
Independent:	Group Office: 020 7664 3224	email: independent.grouplga@local.gov.uk
Liberal Democrat:	Group Office: 020 7664 3235	email: libdem@local.gov.uk

Location

A map showing the location of 18 Smith Square is printed on the back cover.

LGA Contact

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Executive Advisory Board – Membership 2018/2019

Councillor and Role	Authority
Conservative 9	
Cllr James Jamieson OBE (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 David Fothergill (Board Chair)	Somerset County Council
Cllr David Renard (Board Chair)	Swindon Borough Council
Cllr Kevin Bentley (Board Chair)	Essex County Council
Labour 8	
Cllr Shaun Davies (Senior Vice-Chair)	Telford and Wrekin Council
Cllr Tudor Evans OBE (Deputy Chair)	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Michael Payne (Deputy Chair)	Gedling Borough Council
Cllr Georgia Gould (Deputy Chair)	Camden Council
Cllr Anntoinette Bramble (Deputy Chair)	Hackney London Borough Council
Cllr Nesil Caliskan (Board Chair)	Enfield Council
Cllr Andrew Western (Board Chair)	Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Mayor Marvin Rees (Board Chair)	Bristol City
Liberal Democrat 3	
Cllr Joe Harris (Vice-Chair)	Cotswold District Council
Cllr Bridget Smith (Deputy Chair)	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Board Chair)	Portsmouth City Council
Independent 3	
Cllr Marianne Overton MBE	North Kesteven District Council

(Vice-Chair)	
Cllr Hannah Dalton (Deputy Chair)	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Cllr Paul Woodhead (Balancing Member)	Cannock Chase District Council
Regional Representatives 9	
Cllr Robert Stewart	LAB WLGA
Cllr Marc Bayliss	CON West Midlands
Cllr John Hart	CON South West Councils
Cllr Peter John OBE	LAB London Councils
Cllr Graeme Miller	LAB North East of England
Cllr Nicolas Heslop	CON South East Councils
Cllr Linda Haysey	CON East of England LGA
Cllr Christopher Poulter	CON East Midlands Councils
Cllr David Baines	LAB North West Regional Leaders' Board
Named Substitutes	
Cllr Ralph Bagge	CON South East Councils

Non-voting Members of LGA Executive

Councillor	Representing	
Alderman Sir David Wootton	INDE	Local Partnerships
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	LAB	SIGOMA
Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen	CON	District Councils Network
Cllr Tim Oliver	CON	County Councils Network

Agenda

Executive Advisory Board

Thursday 21 July 2022

2.15 pm

Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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4. LGA Boards: Annual Review of the Year	11 - 104
5. Minutes of the previous meeting	<i>To follow</i>

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 15 September 2022, 2.15 pm,

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LGA Boards Annual Review of the Year

Purpose

For information and discussion.

Summary

Each LGA Board produces an annual report reviewing the work they have overseen during the previous meeting cycle and setting out their key achievements. The annual reports from the 2021/2022 meeting cycle are included as listed below for the Executive Advisory Board's consideration.

- a. Children & Young People
- b. City Regions
- c. Community Wellbeing
- d. Culture, Tourism & Sport
- e. Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport
- f. People and Places
- g. Resources
- h. Safer & Stronger Communities
- i. Improvement and Innovation

Recommendation

That the Executive Advisory Board notes the Boards' achievements on the 2021/22 meeting year.

Action

As directed by Members.

Contact officer: Ian Hughes / Sally Burlington / Dennis Skinner

Position: Directors of Policy and Director of Improvement

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Children and Young People End of Year Report 2021/22 and 2022/23 work plan

Background

1. At its meeting in September the Board considered its priorities for 2021/22 and agreed nine overarching themes:
 - 1.1. Education and SEND
 - 1.2. Children's social care
 - 1.3. Child-centred recovery
 - 1.4. Early years
 - 1.5. Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing
 - 1.6. Youth Services
 - 1.7. Youth justice
 - 1.8. Supporting disadvantaged families and children
 - 1.9. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and refugees
2. This paper provides an overview of the achievements delivered against these themes and seeks an initial steer from the Board on its priorities for 2022/23. Feedback from members on their priorities for next year will subsequently be developed into a full paper for consideration at the first meeting of the 2022/23 Board cycle in September.

Education and SEND

3. We have continued to lobby for councils to have a meaningful role in local education systems, acting as the 'middle tier' between schools and the Department for Education (DfE). The Department's Schools White paper, '[Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child](#)', in March, acknowledged that councils have an important role to play in education and that they will need additional powers to fulfil their remaining statutory duties, specifically a power to direct schools to admit 'hard to place' pupils. The White paper (and Schools Bill) includes a proposal for councils to be able to set up and lead their own Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs), something the LGA has been calling for over a number of years. Our briefings on the Schools White paper and Schools Bill are available [here](#) and [here](#).
4. LGA-commissioned research also highlighted the strong role that councils play in maintaining high educational standards. The analysis of [Ofsted inspection outcomes by school type](#) found that 92 per cent of council-maintained schools were rated outstanding or good by Ofsted as of 31 January 2022, compared to 85 per cent of academies that were graded since they converted.

5. During the last year we have continued to highlight the rising demand and funding pressures that councils are dealing with as they provide support to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We have engaged in the development of the proposals set out in the SEND Green paper, '[SEND Review: sight support, right place, right time](#)' via the SEND Review steering group, as well as regular meetings with the Minister for Children and Families. [In our response to the Green paper](#) we welcomed the acknowledgment that councils are ideally placed to act as convenors of local SEND systems, bringing together health and education partners to develop local inclusion plans, and that getting the accountabilities, accompanied by the right levers will be crucial. We also stressed the importance of parental confidence in a reformed SEND system, that it will take several years for any reforms to be implemented and that in the meantime the DfE should develop a plan that eliminates every council's Dedicated Schools Grant deficit.
6. Separately we published [research on the effectiveness of SEND dispute resolution and tribunal arrangements](#). The research found that the reforms to the SEND system introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014 have failed to prevent a significant rise in legal disputes and tribunal hearings over the support children and young people with special needs receive, highlighting the fundamental imbalances in the SEND system.

Children's Social Care

7. We have engaged throughout this year on the [Independent Review of Children's Social Care](#) and the [Competition and Markets Authority study](#) on children's social care placements, through meetings with review teams, submitting written evidence and facilitating meetings with councils. We were pleased to see that many of our long-standing calls were reflected in the recommendations made by these reviews, including in relation to investment in early help and oversight of children's social care placements providers.
8. We have been working with the Department for Education on reforms to unregulated provision for children in care and care leavers. We have continued to emphasise the importance of good quality provision for these young people while noting ongoing challenges around placement sufficiency. We have also called for more flexibility in the regulatory system to ensure that young people receive the care and support they need, when they need it.
9. In relation to placement sufficiency, we worked with Alma Economics to develop sufficiency statements for councils across the country and have published a [template sufficiency statement](#) for ongoing use by councils. This work was referenced by the Competition and Markets Authority in its [review of the children's social care placements 'market'](#) as addressing a need identified by councils and providers throughout its review.

10. Work has taken place throughout the year on support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) and children who have had to leave Afghanistan and Ukraine. We have been engaged in a wide range of discussions around issues including the National Transfer Scheme, support for UASC leaving care and the availability of suitable homes for these children, along with challenges around ensuring children receive the right support including in education and for mental wellbeing.
11. We have continued to update our work on [profit-making and financial risk in the largest children's social care placement providers](#). We have been publishing this research periodically since January 2020 so were pleased to see many of our findings and recommendations reflected in the final CMA report and independent review of children's social care.
12. 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 councils' initial response to the lockdown, adapting to the lockdown, the 'new normal' and; the return to lockdown, before identifying a number of opportunities that have arisen from the pandemic period. This research is being used to inform discussions around how children's social care and schools can best work together in the longer term.
13. Two webinars have been held specifically on children's social care. A webinar on corporate parenting for care leavers was attended by 200 councillors and officer, while nearly 300 people joined a webinar on contextual safeguarding in October.
14. To support councils to engage young people effectively in policy-making, we commissioned a [set of case studies](#) highlighting existing good practice in this area.

Early years

15. We have worked closely with a range of government departments to support the implementation of the [Best Start for Life](#) and subsequent [Family Hubs programme](#). The programme recognises the importance of joined up services and funding has prioritised half of local authorities, in the more deprived areas. We are working with government to ensure that learning from this roll-out is captured, councils are well supported, and current good practice is retained.
16. There has been an increased focus on early years and the cost to parents in recent weeks, we stress to government that the most important aspects of early years provision are ensuring good outcomes for all children, prioritising their safety and closing the disadvantage gap. We will imminently be publishing research that looks to highlight what

makes good early years provision and how best to support children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing

17. With children and young people's mental health needs growing before the pandemic, and even sharper increases as a result of the pandemic, we have continued to lobby on the importance of prioritising health and wellbeing in the recovery. We have raised the impact on councils, with an increasing number of children presenting to councils with mental health needs and called for further support to be put in place for children including early-support hubs.
18. Councils were given additional funding during the pandemic to provide support to schools to support young people, recognising the success of this model, we continue to highlight the importance of councils in their role as community facilitators. Further funding has been announced for increasing the number of [Designated Senior Leads in Schools for mental health](#), recognising our calls for an increase in speed of the implementation of the children's mental health green paper.
19. We welcomed the announcement of a [10-year cross government plan for mental health and wellbeing of all ages](#), as this will give priority to mental health and wellbeing. We have worked closely with the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) to ensure the consultation sets out the areas of most importance to local councils and their communities, including an increased priority around children and young people. The LGA consultation response will be submitted at the start of July.

Youth Services

20. We lobbied government on investment into youth services, particularly in response to the increase need to support children and young people following the pandemic. Although we welcomed the ambitions set out in the [youth review response](#), the announcement of the [youth investment fund](#) was a significant amount less than had been promised in 2019, and is targeted in only some areas. We will continue to raise the importance and profile of the youth sector, working alongside local councils.
21. We have continued discussions with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport regarding statutory guidance for youth services, highlighting the additional burden this would place on councils if it enhanced expectations regarding levels of provision. We have discussed the opportunities around an improvement support offer to councils and facilitating a programme of sharing good practice.

Youth justice

22. During the pandemic, the situation for children and young people in the youth justice system worsened with reports of limited time outside of cells, long waits for court hearings and increasing number of children on remand. With the Association for Directors of Childrens Services (ADCS) and the Association of Youth Offending Team



(YOT) Managers (AYM) we published a [position paper on youth justice](#). The paper puts forward a series of recommendations to existing policy or practice to better align the current system with Child First principles, including closer working between the police and YOTs and routinely applying rules on vulnerable witnesses to all children appearing in youth courts.

- 23. We published a [report looking at support for the youngest children](#) in the criminal justice system, following the decision made by the CYP Board that the minimum age of criminal responsibility should be increased to 14 years old. The report recognises the lack of clear, evidence-based programmes for the youngest children but still found case studies exemplifying good examples from councils.
- 24. [Further funding has been announced](#) to intervene early where children may become involved in violence and crime. We will continue to meet with the Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board to ensure that this funding is targeted at the most appropriate areas.

2021/22 Priorities

- 25. It is expected that the themes for the 2022/23 work priorities will remain broadly consistent with 2021/22, with a number of workstreams continuing into the new Board cycle.
- 26. The table below sets out some initial thinking on workstreams that will continue into the new Board cycle, subject to the Board’s views:

Priority area	Proposed activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and SEND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to lobby for councils to have the powers to fulfil their remaining education statutory duties, including via the Schools Bill. • Continue to lobby for councils to have the powers and funding to lead local SEND systems as proposals set out in the SEND Green paper are developed further. Given the length of time it will take to implement reforms to the SEND system, we will also continue to lobby the Department for Education to develop a plan that eliminates every council’s Dedicated Schools Grant deficit.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s social care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Government on the implementation plan for the recommendations arising from the independent review of children’s social care, the competition and markets authority review of the children’s social care market, and the national panel review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson • Lobby the government for additional support for councils to tackle challenges in relation to placements for children in care with complex needs, and workforce challenges



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby for appropriate funding and policy frameworks to ensure councils are able to effectively support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and refugee children • Consider ways in which support for disabled children can be improved, including through more partnership working with the NHS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to lobby for support for more disadvantaged children, whilst recognising the current cost of the system requires change. Prioritising the role of councils who know their local areas best. • Continue to work with government and councils on the implementation of family hubs, share learning and inform future planning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's mental health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to highlight the need for quicker implementation of the green paper, alongside additional resource and reform in the system, and a clear plan for embedding the proposals set out by the 10-year plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight the need for youth services, prioritise sharing good practice with councils, lobby on the potential reform to the statutory guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed the proposals set out in the position paper, share good practice, support effective implementation of the recently announced additional funding.

27. The Board's views on any other areas they would like us to focus on would be very helpful, but any new priority work areas will need to be balanced within the resources available to the Children and Young People's team.

Implications for Wales

28. Many of the issues covered by the Board, including education and children's services are devolved matters, but we work with the WLGA where appropriate.

Financial Implications

29. There are no financial implications associated with this report. The 2021/22 work priorities were delivered within existing staffing budgets and that will continue for 2022/23.

Next steps

30. The Board are asked to reflect on the work delivered this year and consider and comment on their priorities for 2022-23.

City Regions Board Annual Report

Background

1. The City Regions Board was created to provide a clear voice and resource for non-metropolitan authorities within the LGA.

Priorities and Achievements

Levelling up and devolution

2. The Government's long-awaited Levelling Up White Paper was published on 2 February 2022. The LGA published a [briefing note](#) and [full press release](#) in response to the Government's ambition to pursue 12 national missions and proposals relating to a new devolution framework, a plan to streamline growth funding, a new independent data body and the establishment of a new levelling up advisory council.
3. Following the announcement of a Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill in the Queen's Speech, the LGA on 10 May, the LGA issued a [response](#) emphasising that levelling up will only be achieved if councils have the powers and funding, they need to address interregional and intraregional inequalities, tackle deprivation, and make communities attractive places to live, work and visit. We will be working with parliamentarians and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to shape and amend this legislation to ensure it helps councils level up and delivers greater devolution.
4. The Board, along with the People and Places Board, launched an inquiry into how the Government's levelling up agenda might better strengthen local communities. The [Levelling Up Locally Inquiry](#) is part of the Board's work around levelling up and looks beyond the Levelling Up White Paper to investigate the role of local leadership in shaping a recovery that works for all.
5. The Board agreed to an independent steering group helping to shape the inquiry's development including its evidence gathering; making contributions drawing on their own experience and expertise; and formulating a set of recommendations based around each of the themes. The steering group is co-chaired by Mayor Rees and Cllr Bentley of the People and Places Board and comprises of members from business, academia, think tanks, community groups and government organisations.
6. As part of the inquiry, four roundtables are being held focussing on: funding and alignment, leadership, productivity and prosperity, and place and identity. To date, two of the four roundtables have taken place. A final set of recommendations will be published in the Autumn.
7. The Board has continued to work with the Community Wellbeing Board (CWB) on issues related to health devolution, and in particular the implications of the implementation of

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs). The Board heard from Cllr David Fothergill, Chair of the CWB at a meeting in January and Cllr Fothergill and Mayor Rees met again in March to discuss progress. The Board raised concerns in January about the exclusion of councillors from Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and were pleased that Government revised guidance to permit councillors to sit on ICBs.

8. The Board agreed to work with the CWB to develop a set of LGA policy messages. The aim of this will be to ensure that ICSs build on, enhance and support existing health devolution areas, in recognition that these only cover a minority of local authorities; do not create a barrier for any new devolution deals to include health devolution; enhance and support the role of Health and Wellbeing Boards, recognising that this will be different depending on the complexity of the ICS footprint; are locally accountable; and that their decision-making is transparent to local people and their elected representatives.

Local growth

9. The Board, alongside People and Places, have supported Business in the Community (BITC) Place Taskforce to launch a [new report](#) looking into the role of business and cross-sector partnerships in place-based regeneration. Cllr Abi Brown represented the City Regions Board on the taskforce. The report provides practical recommendations to business, local government and national government on the role business can play in delivering the 'how' of the Levelling Up White Paper, as well as the foundations that are needed to transform communities.

Urban Summit

10. The Board held its first Urban Summit on 9 March. The event, hosted by Mayor Rees, brought together a broad cross-section of academics, international experts, politicians and business representatives to explore the challenges facing cities today, and look ahead to the role for cities in delivering the Government's levelling up agenda and tackling the challenges of the future.
11. The event heard contributions from speakers including Professor Greg Clark, Chair of the Connected Places Catapult, Lord Kerslake, Chair of the UK2070 Commission, Dr Coleen Thouez, a Senior Fellow from the New School's Zolberg Institute, Dorthe Nielsen, Executive Director and Acting Secretary General of Eurocities, as well as leading councillors from Salford, Nottingham, Southwark, Lancaster, Richmond and Bradford.
12. Following the summit, officers have developed plans to build on the discussions at the Urban Summit, including an urban fringe event at LGA Conference which will launch a collection of videos and essays on the topic of "what do we want our cities to be, and how do we get there?".

Employment and skills

13. In May, we published [Work Local: Unlocking talent to level up](#), our employment and skills devolution proposals which build on the Levelling up White Paper and recommends ways Whitehall can improve its approach to employment and skills policy for all places right now and deliver a coherent devolution approach. Analysis reveals devolution could each year result in a 15 per cent increase in the number of people improving their skills or finding work in a local area.
14. Following the Government's Skills for Jobs White Paper, it launched two consultation and legislated to establish new Local Skills Improvement Plans. The LGA responded to the consultations on the [National Skills Fund](#) and the [FE Funding and Accountability System](#), and engaged parliamentarians to support the LGA position on the [Skills and Post 16 Education Bill](#) which has now been enacted.
15. We proactively brought together DfE and councils outside of devolution areas to ensure that the £270 million Multiply adult numeracy programme (funded through UKSPF) was routed via councils in non-devolution areas rather than contacted nationally through the Education and Skills Funding Agency.
16. We published a [report](#) to showcase the work of councils to support and develop education, employment and training pathways, including the wider wrap-around support for young people experiencing disadvantage.

Community Renewal Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund

17. The LGA has worked with the sector to capture learning from the UK Community Renewal Fund. Following the delay in the announcement of the successful bids, we [lobbied successfully for an extension of the fund](#), with the Chairs of the People & Places and City Regions Boards writing to the Secretary of State, outlining the sector's concerns. We have commissioned Shared Intelligence to capture the learning from the fund to help inform our wider work on growth funding
18. In April 2022, the Government published the [UKSPF prospectus and allocations](#), which [allocated £2.6 billion over three years](#), as well as [the allocations for the Multiply adult numeracy Programme](#). We launched a [UKSPF Hub](#) to support local authorities to develop their investment plans.
19. The announcement confirmed that the fund would be driven by local authorities, funding to support capacity building and the removal of competitive bidding processes. These are some of the key asks that we have been consistently lobbying on since the EU referendum.
20. We have continually engaged with councils and combined authorities to understand the implications of the prospectus, and identified some of the key concerns, including the

funding gap between the end of European Social Fund programmes and the commitment of the People & Skills priority in 2024/25, as well as the need for a longer-term funding solution. We have raised these issues through [the press](#) which was featured in the Financial Times. The Chairs of the People & Places and City Regions Boards wrote to the Secretary of State setting out the sector's concerns regarding the funding gap.

Programme of work and priorities

21. The Board will advocate for Work Local model to be a way of mechanism for enabling the sector deliver a local employment and skills offer to support the levelling up agenda.
22. The Board will also continue to work to ensure that the Government puts councils at the heart of its Levelling Up agenda, and that reforms to health systems are aligned with the principles of devolution and local leadership.
23. The Board will build on its emerging discussions around the future of cities.
24. The Board will continue to seek feedback on the UK Community Renewal Fund process to help the development of the design of the forthcoming UK Shared Prosperity Fund and ensure that councils play a key role in managing growth funding through the Levelling Up Fund and UKSPF.

Next steps

25. Officers to take forward actions as appropriate to draft a work programme for the board.

Community Wellbeing Board - End of Year Report and Priorities 2022/23

Background

1. At its meeting in October 2021 the Board considered its priorities for 2021/22 and agreed a substantive programme covering the following areas of work:
 - 1.1. Adult social care – funding and reform;
 - 1.2. Integration – the NHS Long Term Plan, the future of integration, the BCF and models of integrated planning and delivery;
 - 1.3. Public Health – funding, the role of councils as public health leaders, reducing health inequalities, evaluating the health impact of Covid-19, responding to Covid-19;
 - 1.4. Child Health Priorities – developing a child health policy position, support councils with the Healthy Child programme, reduce childhood obesity;
 - 1.5. People in vulnerable circumstances – mental health and suicide prevention, dementia, carers, learning disability and autism; loneliness and social isolation, end of life care, personalisation, housing and social care, the armed forces, and sleep-ins.
2. This paper provides an overview of the achievements delivered against these themes, as well as the work the LGA has been doing around asylum, refugees and migration (which falls within the Board's areas of responsibility). It also seeks an initial steer from the Board on its priorities for 2022/23. Members' comments will be used to inform the development of a full paper for consideration at the first meeting of the 2022/23 Board cycle.

Achievements and activity during 2021/22

3. The following are some of the key highlights of our lobbying and influencing work over the last year:

Adult social care funding and reform

4. It has been an extremely busy 12 months in the realm of adult social care funding and reform, with the Government publishing its 2021 Autumn Budget and Spending Review in October, plus two major reports setting out the Government's proposals for long-term reform; the September 'Build Back Better Plan for health and social care' and the December white paper. The passage of the Health and Social Care Act also codified some of the Government's social care reform proposals. Parliament has taken an active interest in the funding and reform debate over the last year as well, with several important select committee inquiries examining different aspects of the agenda. The period has also seen the LGA work closely with national partners on a number of issues and, as ever, we have responded to numerous national media stories. Some of the highlights of our work in this area are set out below; these should be read in conjunction

with the section of the report on 'Integration' given the crossover in some aspects of this work.

The Government's reform agenda

5. We published a detailed [briefing](#) on the Build Back Better Plan (September 2021), setting out our serious concerns about the adequacy of the funding raised by the new Health and Social Care Levy ('the Levy') to deliver all of the plan's commitments. We also firmly rejected the plan's idea that existing pressures in social care can be managed simply through council tax, the social care precept and long-term efficiencies.

6. Colleagues from the LGA's Care and Health Improvement Programme (CHIP), liaising closely with the Community Wellbeing Team, are essential stakeholders in various DHSC working groups on technical elements of the Government's charging reform agenda. LGA concerns about the likely underfunding of parts of these reforms have been made loud and clear.

7. We worked with three councils on a significant proactive media story, setting out these concerns. This story had extremely high levels of coverage and engagement.

We surveyed all Lead/Cabinet members of adult social care to gauge their concerns about the Government's reform agenda. This showed that 98 per cent of respondents are not confident in the adequacy of the funding earmarked by Government for its reforms and that three quarters of respondents are not confident in their local capacity to implement the reforms. Further findings from the survey will be made public in the coming weeks.

8. We wrote privately, and in strong terms, to the Minister of State for Care regarding our concerns about the cost of, and timetable for, reform. We also wrote jointly in similar terms with partners from the provider sector.

9. We have inputted to, and submitted responses on, consultations on different aspects of the associated guidance for the Government's charging reforms. As part of this work, we held two well-attended webinars for council chief executives and directors of adult services on the Government's charging reform agenda, ahead of guidance being published so that it best reflected the concerns of the sector.

10. The LGA was a key stakeholder in all the various engagement groups the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) established to oversee drafting of the different chapters of the Government's white paper.

11. We published a further detailed [briefing](#) on the white paper (December 2021), which had high levels of online engagement. In this, we noted that the white paper's tone, language and framing mirrored much of our own work on the future of care and support. We also welcomed the Government's vision for social care, again noting that it reflected much of

our own articulation of what social care needs to be in order for people to live their best life.

12. We used the briefing to also set out our concerns about the current state of social care and the unstable foundations from which the Government's reform agenda is being taken forward, arguing for a greater share of the Levy to be immediately redirected to frontline adult social care.
13. Colleagues from the Community Wellbeing Team and CHIP have been heavily involved in the considerable work behind the scenes with DHSC, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and the Care Quality Commission to develop the framework for 'adult social care assurance', which was an important part of the Government's white paper and codified in the Health and Social Care Act. We have set out in those meetings our concerns around the assurance timetable, the baselining period, the use of ratings, the extent to which assessments will take account of significant local pressures (particularly in the context of Covid-recovery) and the importance of retaining a central role for sector-led improvement. We have also written privately to the Minister setting out some of these concerns.
14. On 11 May we ran a highly successful webinar that sought to make sense of the highly complex reform agenda across health and social care. Nearly 400 delegates joined the webinar to hear the views of senior colleagues from local government, NHS Confederation, the King's Fund and Think Local Act Personal.
15. Linked, we are in the process of developing a comprehensive timeline of the reform agenda across health and social care, so that councils can see all the various requirements of them and how different aspects of reform are linked.

Adult social care funding

16. The state of adult social care funding and the significant pressures facing the sector was a central part of our submission on last year's Spending Review and we continue to press the case for greater investment in care and support in all of our lobbying and influencing work.
17. We wrote privately to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up Housing and Communities on the serious pressures facing social care and their consequences, and the difficult contingency measures councils are having to put in place in order to manage these pressures.

Parliamentary work

18. We have submitted written evidence to, and provided oral evidence at, several key parliamentary select committee inquiries, including on adult social care funding, the care workforce and the future of care and support. As with our wider work on social care

funding, we used these to press home the perilous state of finances and their consequences, such as growing unmet and under-met need, a fragile provider market and increased strain on the care workforce and unpaid carers.

Partnership work

19. We are a founder member of a group of prominent national organisations in the social care realm, who have met regularly over the last two years to share intelligence and take forward joint work on areas of shared interest. Organisations in the group include, for example, ADASS, Skills for Care, Think Local Act Personal, the Care Provider Alliance, and the Care and Support Alliance. We have led, or supported, several key publications that the group has produced jointly, such as a letter to the Prime Minister, Chancellor and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on adult social care funding pressures, and priorities for a long-term social care workforce strategy.
20. As ever, we will continue to work closely with colleagues in our Care and Health Improvement Programme on a range of issues affecting adult social care and health, including a programme of leadership development for new adult social care portfolio holders. Key issues facing the sector will also be covered at the annual National Children and Adult Services Conference taking place between 2-4 November 2022.

Integration

21. Integration has continued to be a key priority for the LGA, government and the NHS over the past year. It is an incredibly fast-moving and increasingly complex policy agenda. In addition to the Health and Care Act, which received Royal Assent in April 2022, there is a large suite of new or revised statutory guidance due for publication throughout 2022/23 to support the commencement of the many provisions of the Act.
22. There have also been several other reviews, inquiries and policy documents on health and care system reform, including: the Messenger Review of Health and Social Care Leadership, the Fuller Stocktake of Primary Care and ICSs and a Health and social care integration: joining up care for people, places and populations (referred to in this report as the integration white paper).

Health and Care Act 2022

23. The key highlights from our lobbying and influencing work on the (now) Health and Care Act 2022 over the last year are summarised below.

Parliamentary briefings on the Health and Care Bill

24. We published briefings for parliamentarians at all key stages of the legislative process. We also published briefings for local authorities, summarising the provisions of the legislation of most relevance to local authorities and the LGA's policy positions.

Key wins on the Health and Care Bill

25. The LGA worked with parliamentarians to seek a key amendment relating to increased powers for the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to intervene earlier in NHS reconfigurations. We sought an amendment to require the Secretary of State to operate this power in consultation with the relevant local authorities and NHS bodies. While we were not successful in the main stages of the Bill, the Government conceded and tabled an amendment in the final stages of the Bill which mirrored the wording of our amendment.
26. Although not on the face of the Bill, NHS England guidance on membership of integrated care boards explicitly excluded local councillors from board membership on the basis that councillors were also excluded from the boards of clinical commissioning groups. We successfully argued that this was against the spirit of collaboration that underpinned the legislation and, as a result of our lobbying, NHS England withdrew this exemption.

Get in on the Health and Care Act 2022

27. We have published a comprehensive briefing on the provisions of the Act of most relevance to local authorities and a summary of the LGA's policy messages:
<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/get-act-health-and-care-act-2022>

Integration white paper

28. We published a comprehensive briefing for councils on the integration white paper: <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/lga-response-health-and-social-care-integration-joining-care> which gave the LGA's initial views and sought the views of councils to inform our final submission. The views we received helped the LGA ensure that our final submission to the white paper reflected the views and concerns of local authorities: <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/lga-response-health-and-social-care-integration-joining-care-0> . We continue to work with Government to ensure that the views of local authorities influence the development of this important policy agenda.

Continued work with Government and NHS England on statutory and non-statutory guidance

29. We are currently working to ensure that the views and interests of local authorities are taken on board in the development of guidance to support implementation of the Health and Care Act 2022 and other elements of the Government reform agenda for health and care. For example, we have advised DHSC and NHS England on a suite of guidance, expected to be published before the summer recess, on integrated care strategies, health and wellbeing boards, principles for working with adult social care providers, and advisory guidance (ahead of revised statutory guidance later in the year) on health overview and scrutiny.

The Local Government Health and Care Sounding Board

30. The Board was set up by the DHSC and LGA in May 2021 as an informal advisory group to ensure that local government had early influence on the development of health and care policy. It has continued to meet monthly and is valued by local government, national government and national agencies such as NHS England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to ensure that a local government perspective is central to current and future policy development.

Public Health

Covid Response

31. The past year, like the year before it, has been significant for councils and their teams as they continued to respond to the unprecedented challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
32. Throughout this period, the LGA has supported local government in its response and continued to promote their significant work to Government and the public. We have refocused our work to support councils in their role as part of the national effort to protect and support local communities. In all our discussions with Government, we have continued to highlight why councils are trusted by their local communities, making the case for them to be empowered to get on with their roles as local leaders, equipped with the right resources and funding to deliver. We built on the diverse, current and informative range of resources to help councils as they navigate this changed environment, while showcasing some of the important work being carried out by the sector. [COVID-19: good council practice | Local Government Association](#)

Health Inequalities Hub

33. In November, we launched our health inequalities hub, the Hub explores different themes in detail, shining a spotlight on case studies from councils across the country and exploring how COVID-19 exacerbated existing health inequalities. [Health inequalities hub | Local Government Association](#)

Drug Treatment – 10-year government drugs strategy

34. In December, the government published their [ten-year government drugs strategy](#) - formed in response to Dame Carol Black's independent review into drugs. The strategy includes a total of £780m of investment in drug treatment.
35. Funding will be allocated to improve access to treatment and increase the capacity of services, aiming to reverse a recent upward trend in drug use. We have been working with the Home Office and DHSC and the Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) to develop and implement a commissioning quality standard to support transparency and accountability between partners delivering services and government. The government is also working with the LGA to offer improvement support to councils in areas with poorer outcomes.

Public health in local government: Celebrating 10 years of transformation

36. In March, we published the tenth LGA public health annual report, which reflects on ten years of public health in local government and looks forward to the opportunities and challenges of the coming years.

37. The public health annual reports trace the progress of public health in local government year-on-year. They provide a valuable legacy that allows us to understand how far we have come and where we need to go. [Public health in local government: Celebrating 10 years of transformation | Local Government Association](#)

Annual Public Health Conference, March 23-24, 2022

38. The annual conference, organised by the LGA in partnership with ADPH was opened by Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer for England, who was joined by leading public health experts in a range of sessions over two days.

39. Sessions covered the very latest thinking on national policy issues, including 'Taking stock: Covid-19's long-term global impact', 'Health security: looking to the future' and 'Mind the gap: working together to reduce health inequalities. Other important topics such as climate change, Levelling Up and pregnancy, birth and early childhood were also discussed.

40. Delegates were able to put their questions and comments to those involved in shaping and implementing them at strategic and community levels, on issues such as the reform of the public health system and the impact of Covid-19 on health inequalities. They had the opportunity to participate in sessions sharing good practice from local areas and to discuss issues that mattered to them. Over 1,000 people signed up for the conference.

41. A full selection of the conference material, including the presentations, is available to [download from the LGA website](#).

LGA Webinars

42. Between November 2021 and June 2022, we ran a total of 17 webinars on different topics relevant to public health. In total, over 7,000 people attended the webinars (combined). These included webinars on health inequalities, outbreak management, addressing the leading risk factors for ill health, climate change and 'Shopping for Health.'

43. On 19 May 2022, we ran a full day conference on re-engaging with Whole Systems Approaches (WSA) to promoting healthier weight. Over 320 participants registered for the conference and seven local authorities presented their WSA approaches (Hull, Oxfordshire, Liverpool, Sandwell, North Tyneside, and Bristol).

Shopping for Health: putting health assets into the heart of local communities

44. In April, we published a report and a series of 14 [case studies](#) and hosted a corresponding webinar about how councils are working innovatively to repurpose their high streets to put health at the heart of communities. Councils regard the long-term changes needed to recover from the pandemic as an opportunity to reconnect communities with their high streets and town centres as well as meet other local priorities, such as housing, access to services and better public health.

Future health challenges: public health projections

45. We have been working with the research team to produce a set of forecasts at local authority level for the [prevalence of smoking](#) amongst adults and the [prevalence of childhood obesity](#).

46. It is hoped that these forecasts will allow local authorities to anticipate likely future levels of smoking and childhood obesity in their area, assuming that trends will continue in their current trajectories.

Influencing policy

47. We have input our views and influenced the development of several key policy papers, including the Government's response to Henry Dimbleby's National Food Strategy, the Khan Review on 'Making Smoking Obsolete', Women's Health strategy, HIV Action Plan, Sexual and Reproductive Health Plan, 10 Year Drug strategy, the Family Hubs draft programme and the upcoming Health Disparities White Paper.

48. We responded to the Khan Review and the Government's Food Strategy and continue to influence in this area. We continue to meet regularly with the Start for Life team whilst proposals are being developed.

Child Health Priorities - School Nursing

49. In April, the LGA published an [infographic](#) to highlight and define the role of a school nurse, who they are commissioned by and how they contribute to the vital health and wellbeing of children aged five to 19 years old. We will shortly be publishing several case studies on how school nurses are working to support child health.

50. We await the updated Healthy Child Programme and will continue to work with OHID to ensure they engage with councils about the updated programme prior to its release.

Start for Life: Family Hubs

51. On 2 April 2022, the government announced [the 75 local authorities eligible](#) for a share of £302 million to create new Family Hubs in their areas. Family Hubs are intended to be one-stop-shops where families can access important services such as parenting advice and breastfeeding support.

52. We continue to work with the government's joint Start for Life Team (Department of Health and Social Care and Department of Education) and local authorities to develop these proposals, ensuring they are fair on councils and do not add any new burdens.
53. The draft Programme Guide for the Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme (which we fed into) has now been shared with the 75 Local Authorities that are provisionally eligible for funding. A final programme guide will be published in August, alongside the launch of the sign-up process for councils. Local authorities will have until the end of October to confirm their participation in the programme.
54. We will continue to respond to and work closely on the plans for implementation on the Best Start for Life, including support for the first 1,001 days and Family Hubs to ensure that there is a joined up the approach between different aspects of the local system.

Key wins across Public and Child Health

55. *Drug and alcohol treatment funding:* Along with our partners we were successful in lobbying for £533m extra funding for local authorities to support drug treatment. This funding is welcome and will help councils to start to rebuild drug treatment services after cuts to the public health grant.
56. *Family Hubs:* In the 2021 autumn budget, the Government announced £300 million to develop 'Start for Life' and Family Hub services in 75 upper tier LAs across England. This includes funding to create a network of Family Hubs, provide breastfeeding support, parent-infant mental health support and parenting programs and to publish Start for Life offers in those 75 LAs
57. *Covid Outbreak Management Fund:* In March, we successfully lobbied the government to carry over funding from 2021/22 into the next financial year to provide funding to local authorities in England to help reduce the spread of coronavirus and support local public health.

People in vulnerable circumstances

Mental Health

58. The LGA has ongoing regular meetings with the DHSC to input into the development of the **Mental Health Act**. The Act was introduced as draft Bill in June 2022. It will soon enter a period of pre legislative scrutiny where there will be a further opportunity to comment on it. We will continue to highlight the statutory responsibilities of councils under the Act and push for funding of any new burdens.
59. The LGA has made a formal submission to the Government's recent consultation to inform their ten year **Mental Health and Wellbeing plan**. We have emphasised the key leadership role of local government, the need for long term funding for adult social care

and public health and the need for a long term workforce strategy. We have outlined the current pressures on the system and outlined some innovative approaches.

60. We have published a [Must Know guide for Councillors on Mental Health](#) We have also held two well attended webinars on community mental health aimed at councillors – both of these were chaired by Councillor Rosemary Sexton with a presentation by Councillor Rachel Blake. We also had a session on ‘Mentally healthy areas’ at the LGA conference 2022.

Loneliness

61. We published a [Must know guide on loneliness](#) in December 2021 on loneliness. We also produced some [case studies](#) on Loneliness in October 2021.
62. The Local Government Association (LGA) and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) developed an open data standard called the Open Referral UK Standard. The standard supports the publication of information about local services to make them easier to find. Ten organisations are currently actively using the Open Referral UK standard in their community directories. To support the adoption of the standard, a dedicated website and discussion forum have been created, along with case studies and step-by-step guidance for new adopters.
63. The LGA continues to highlight the impact of loneliness and mental health in policy and improvement work in local government.

Suicide prevention support offer

64. Along with ADPH we launched our suicide prevention support offer for councils for 2021/22, which runs through until September 2022. This has provided support in three areas: national support through a series of case studies and a national sharing event; regional support through the regional ADPH network; and local support for up local authorities and partners who self-identify as facing significant delivery challenges locally around suicide prevention.

Learning Disabilities and Autism

Down Syndrome Bill

65. The Down Syndrome Bill has been passed by parliament – there will now be a call for evidence to inform its implementation. The aim of the Bill is to ensure that certain health, education, and local authorities take account of the specific needs of people with Down syndrome when exercising their relevant functions. The LGA supports the Bill and has published a [briefing on the Bill](#). We continue to work with DHSC to inform the Bill and shape the call for evidence, and we will provide a formal Board response to it once it is published. We will also identify any potential new burdens for councils.

Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training

66. Mandatory training about learning disability and autism for health and social care provider staff was introduced as part of the new Health and Care Act. The Care Quality Commission will issue guidance on compliance with this requirement for providers prior to DHSC consulting on and publishing a Code of Practice for the sector on the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training, which is training the Government developed and trialled. The Government anticipates that the publication of the full Code of Practice may take at least 12 months. The LGA will feed into the Code of Practice and identify any new financial burdens that may result.

Autism

67. We published a [Must know guide for councillors on autism](#)

68. We published a [number of good practice case studies](#) on autism.

69. We held an [Webinar with the DHSC on the autism strategy one year on](#)

70. We continue to be members of the national Autism Strategy Group.

Older People housing

71. We held a webinar in October 2021 on the Good Home Inquiry, commissioned by the Centre for Ageing Better. The inquiry aim was to provide an evidence-based analysis of England's housing policies to determine the causes of, and solutions to, the poor quality of so many of our homes. The event outlined key issues of importance to councils. We are shortly to publish a Housing our Ageing Population report with recommendations for the sector.

Exempt Accommodation

72. We supported councils experiencing difficulties with supported exempt accommodation, and successfully lobbied for councils to have greater local levers to respond to concerns about excessively high rents and/or the adequacy of the care and support provided.

Armed Forces Covenant

73. We have worked with government around the Armed Forces Bill, which introduces a new statutory duty on specified local public authorities to have 'due regard' to the Covenant, to help ensure armed forces, personnel, veterans and their families are not disadvantaged by their service when accessing key public services. This has included developing statutory guidance which enables councils to build on existing partnerships and good practice, and allows local flexibility to deliver Covenant pledges and supports innovative approaches.

2022/23 Priorities.



74. It is expected that the themes for the 2022/23 work priorities will remain broadly consistent with 2021/22, with a number of workstreams continuing into the new Board cycle.

75. The table below sets out some initial thinking on workstreams that will continue into the new Board cycle, subject to the Board’s views:

Priority Area	Proposed activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult social care funding and reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The forthcoming year is likely to again be extremely busy as work continues at pace to prepare for implementing the range of social care reforms, all in the context of significant pressures on care and support. It is suggested that the Board’s priorities in the realm of adult social care are therefore as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to evidence the scale of pressures facing social care (and their consequences) and make those well known publicly and privately to Ministers and senior officials as part of continued calls for additional and urgent investment. ○ Continue to represent councils’ interests in the huge range of work on the care and support reform agenda, particularly charging reform and adult social care assurance. ○ Continue to work with the full range of the LGA’s national partners to identify areas of shared interest for joint lobbying and influencing. • It is difficult to predict at this stage what further work may be needed in response to potential increases in Covid numbers. Should the winter period bring a further wave of Covid, we will need to flex our capacity to ensure we are supporting the organisation’s wider work in responding to Covid. This, of course, has remained a further feature of our adult social care work over the last year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to represent local authorities in the development of ICSs – in particular advocating for local authorities to have a key role in ICBs, ICPs and place-based partnerships. • Support councils to make an effective contribution to integrated care boards, integrated care partnerships and place-based partnerships.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with government and national agencies such as NHS England and CQC to ensure that the views and concerns of local government are addressed in the developing policy agenda for integration.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local government to input into the Covid Inquiry. • Respond to ongoing Monkeypox and Covid activity and look ahead to challenges such as influenza and winter preparedness. • Support councils with information and resources so they can continue to work to improve health throughout the cost-of-living crisis. • Continue to make the case that funding and capacity are mission critical issues affecting local public health teams. • Maintain local to national connections with a strong local government voice in whole Public Health system design. • Refresh our policy lines on obesity, sexual and reproductive health, tobacco control, alcohol with a new system, cost of living, inequalities and covid recovery lens.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to represent local authorities in the development of Family Hubs. • Work with government to ensure that the views and concerns of local government are addressed in the developing policy agenda for childhood obesity, the Healthy Child Programme and any proposals identified in the Health Disparities White Paper.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People in vulnerable circumstances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to represent local authorities in the development of the Mental Health Act, Down Syndrome Bill and Autism Strategy – in particular ensuring that any new burdens are identified and funded. • Work with government and national agencies such as ADASS to ensure that the views and concerns of local government are addressed in the developing policy agenda for people in vulnerable circumstances (including people with mental health needs, learning disabilities and autism, dementia). To also share policy developments with the sector. • With the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board to ensure that councils have the right levers and funding to improve availability and choice of affordable and suitably designed older people’s housing, reflecting local need.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assist councils in implementing the new Armed Forces Covenant statutory duty.
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Implications for Wales

76. Health and adult social care are devolved matters.

Financial Implications

77. This programme of work will be delivered with existing resources.

Next steps

78. Members' comments will be used to inform the draft priorities paper brought to the first meeting of the Board in the 2022/23 cycle.

Culture, Tourism and Sport Board – End of Year Report

Background

1. The LGA had continued to advocate for the critical role of culture, tourism and sport (CTS) services to communities during the pandemic, and in the recovery period.
2. In particular, the Board's push for engagement with DCMS had significantly strengthened the relationship compared to 2020, with CTS lead members meeting the Secretary of State for DCMS, Minister for arts and culture, and the Minister for sport and tourism. Regular meetings also took place with Neil Mendoza, Commissioner for Cultural Recovery, and Ian Leete, Senior Adviser, had been appointed to the Tourism Industry Council to provide a local government perspective.
3. Regular DCMS meetings at both Ministerial and officer level was in place across each part of the portfolio, helping DCMS to understand the critical importance of councils to delivering their CTS objectives. This would strengthen DCMS' ability to advocate across government for investment within services, which offered many opportunities and benefits to residents.
4. Recent announcements in the Levelling Up white paper and UK Shared Prosperity Fund prospectus gave the clearest Government recognition of this in a long time, with both funds identifying culture, sport and heritage as one of the three objectives they aimed to support. The CTS Board were working with DCMS, the arm's length funding bodies, and sector stakeholders to develop practical support for councils to develop strong bids within those areas.
5. Key government or parliamentary strategies had been published, including new strategies from Sport England and Arts Council England, as well as a House of Lords report on a National Plan for Sport and the Independent Review of Destination Management Organisations. All four publications recognised the critical role of local government to delivering their objectives and made explicit mention of the LGA's role and recommendations.
6. The LGA had also begun work to outline a strategic vision for these services, identifying challenges and opportunities for these services over the next five to ten years. The Board's first priority had been ensuring the sustainability of sporting and physical activity services, which had been particularly hit by loss of income and rising energy prices. Following on from the success in securing £100 million for the sector in 2020, the LGA had influenced the developing of the [Moving Communities Platform](#) which for the first time captured usage of facilities and placed a social value on each visit, allowing significantly more informed local and national investment decisions. In particular, the

LGA was successful in securing the capture of diversity data as part of the returns, offering better understanding of the demographic reach of services.

Alongside the strategic vision work, the joint LGA, APSE and CLOA report [“Securing the future of public sport and leisure services”](#), had been published, which was launched in parliament on 14th Sept 2021. The report findings and recommendations were based on an extensive consultation with over 260 local government representatives, leisure providers, arm’s length bodies, national governing bodies and the Local Government Physical Activity Partnership (LGPAP). The recommendations reflected what the sector had asked to be changed, in order to make public sport and leisure services sustainable, and to realise its potential to deliver on a wide range of national and local policy objectives. The LGA had also produced a [slide deck to support local conversations and raise the profile of the service](#) and highlight its unique contribution to community wellbeing. This work was being supplemented by additional sector-specific briefings on key issues such as reaching fewer active communities, diversifying funding sources and working across council boundaries. The Board had also influenced the design of new funds announced to support [public parks](#), [tennis courts](#), and [multi-sport pitches](#) so that councils could achieve a greater impact with the money available.

7. On the cultural and heritage side, the [Commission on Culture and Local Government](#) had been launched. It looked into the role locally funded culture could play in pandemic recovery and aimed to raise the profile of the work councils and their partners undertook at a local level to support a thriving cultural ecosystem. Led by Baroness Lola Young and supported by 15 commissioners from across the culture, funding and local government sectors, it would collect evidence on four key themes - inclusive economic recovery; health inequalities; education skills and social mobility; and place - over the course of 2022 and reporting in December.
8. The LGA had supported Board Members in their work with the creative industries, following on from publication of the [Creative Places](#) guide in 2020, which included commissioning a report to help combined authorities and groups of councils working at a regional level to understand their role in maximising the growth of the sector and ways of working with their constituent authorities on the agenda. The LGA regularly engaged with the Creative Industries Council in relation to the upcoming Creative Sector Vision and had been working with equivalent teams at DCMS to support their work on the Create Growth programme so that it worked for councils.
9. Other culture-related activity during 2021/22 had focused on ensuring councils were able to play a full part in the many festivals and celebrations taking place in 2022, including the [Platinum Jubilee](#) and Unboxed festival. This included briefing government and organisers on the role councils played in enabling local celebrations and running online events to help councils understand when and where they could contribute. The LGA also

ensured that council representatives had helped design the route for the Queen's Baton Relay alongside the Commonwealth Games.

10. On tourism, the LGA successfully influenced the [Independent review of destination management organisations](#), which adopted recommendations for a tiered approach, similar to Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisations. The review was currently with Government to consider the recommendations. However, the funding recommendation was not announced as part of the Spending Review 2022, so the LGA would need to continue to advocate for the effective implementation of the review. The LGA had also contributed to a DCMS policy sprint in the North East, exploring ways to turbo-charge the regional visitor economy.
11. The LGA had continued to support specific services within the Board's portfolio, such as libraries. In his role as Libraries Champion, Cllr Tom Hollis represented the LGA Culture, Tourism and Sport Board as Co-Chair of a new Councillor Sounding Board for libraries, along with ACE Director, Libraries Sue Williamson. Members of the group would be updated on progress against the Single Digital Presence programme and asked for comment on other national library programmes, which could include library accreditation and the library 'assessment strategy', reviewing what information was needed from libraries to collect to really capture their impact on communities.
12. Board members continued to play an active role in engaging with key sector stakeholders, with updates and communications provided by:
 - 12.1. London Marathon Charitable Trust – Cllr Richard Henry
 - 12.2. Tourism Alliance – Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson (-16 March '22)/Cllr Chris White (March '22-current)
 - 12.3. Coastal Special Interest Group – Cllr David Jeffels
 - 12.4. Creative Industries Council – Cllr Phil Seeva
13. Finally, the [sector-led improvement programmes for councillors and officers](#), funded by Arts Council England and Sport England continued to go from strength to strength. Both agencies had committed further funding for 2022/23 and expanding some elements.
14. A monthly e-bulletin was also produced, summarising key developments in CTS policy and practice.

Issues

15. The over-arching challenge for the sector remained to be funding, with ongoing pressure on council budgets. Both sport and cultural facilities were on average seeing a reduced footfall compared to pre-pandemic levels which was impacting on services' ability to generate earned income. For sport, it meant that the previous surplus that could be used for other public services was no longer available, impacting council budgets more generally.

16. The cost-of-living increases were expected to challenge the ability to generate income still further, whilst many council staff would themselves be affected by rising costs. The LGA had recently written to a number of secretaries of state, including for DCMS, outlining the impact of the pressures on frontline staff. It is expected that the rising cost of living would be an issue that continued over to the work of the next Board in the 2022/23 cycle.
17. Sport was also particularly affected by rising energy costs and the LGA continued to work with partners to quantify the impact and engage with Government to seek support. A short-term briefing on improving management of energy costs had been produced but a long-term change programme was needed to ensure that facilities were energy-efficient and sustainable. This was a continuation and natural expansion of existing campaign on refreshing the leisure estate.

Implications for Wales

18. The majority of work is England-focused, reflecting the devolution of all CTS policy in Wales and the existence of separate funding bodies. The CTS team met regularly with Culture and Leisure Officers Wales (CLOW) to understand the Welsh landscape, and CTS best practice publications aimed to either include Welsh examples or transferrable learning to support delivery across England and Wales.

Financial Implications

19. The Board's work had been delivered within its policy budget.

Next steps

20. Following on from Member feedback, officers would refine the programme for the Summer.

Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board – End of Year Report

Climate Change and Environment

1. **COP26.** The LGA had great success in representing UK local government on the international stage, taking a delegation of Councillors and officers with speaking platforms and events at the heart of the event, and with stalls showcasing the best of local government on climate change issues. Behind the scenes, we led the effort with international local government to successfully lobby for the inclusion of the invaluable role of local and regional governments in the final international agreement national governments around the world adopted.
2. **Towards genuine local and national government collaboration on net zero.** The LGA has long championed the need for a more collaborative working relationship with central government, and has been successful in moving this agenda forward with Government: including a chapter on local net zero in the Net Zero Strategy; committing to establish a Local Net Zero Forum bringing senior officials and politicians together across local and central government, and; agreeing principle areas of focus to be simplified funding, council capability and capacity, and clarity on roles and responsibilities. The LGA was key to moving this forward, including in bringing together a roundtable of council CEOs and cross-Whitehall Permanent Secretaries.
3. **Evidencing the impact of councils on climate action.** The LGA launched a report demonstrating the critical role of councils in decarbonising homes and buildings, transport, and energy. The report modelled how the impact of local action in these areas could deliver carbon reductions, create jobs and growth, protect health and more. The evidence was important for grounding the LGA's asks around climate change in some financial and cost benefit modelling on what can be achieved.
4. **Financing green ambition.** The LGA launched a [Financing Green Ambition](#) report looking into the options for councils to finance their climate action. Working with Local Partnerships the project involved engagement with the UK Infrastructure Bank, the UK Municipal Bonds Agency, and others, the report helps councils considers their options and exposes the need for new financing options to achieve more on climate action.
5. **Adaptation to climate change.** On 23 February 2022 the LGA ran a webinar with Defra and Local Partnerships on climate change adaptation policy. The focus was on the Government's approach to the preparation of NAP3 and the tools that Local Partnerships have developed to support councils adapting to the impacts of Climate Change. Approximately 100 delegates attended and [slides](#) are available on the LGA website.
6. **Resources and Waste Strategy.** The LGA has continued to work with the Government over the proposed reforms to waste management. We continue to press on the need for some certainty and continuity of local flexibility to meet local needs, and the implementation of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), consistency, and the

Deposit Return Scheme (DRS). The Government's response to the EPR consultation is welcome in confirming that the scheme administrator will be a public body and we will continue to press for local government's representation on this. The LGA has also responded to consultations and engaged Government on proposals to reform waste carriers and tracking.

7. **Local Nature Recovery Strategies.** The LGA responded to the [consultation](#) on [Local Nature Recovery Strategies: how to prepare and what to include](#). We welcomed the increased focus on Local Nature Recovery and reversing the decline of biodiversity, as well as the Government's intention to provide new burdens funding to adequately resource councils to carry out the new responsibilities. We have pushed Defra to develop their communications with local government and the interrelations with other key policy agendas.
8. **Biodiversity Net Gain.** The LGA has engaged Government and responded to its consultation on the design and implementation of Bio-diversity Net Gain. We have raised several issues around its implementation, and the importance of councils being resourced to ensure it operates effectively including on monitoring and enforcement. We have also raised issues around funding and the new burdens process.
9. **Nutrients and water neutrality.** The LGA is working with the Government on the impact of moratoriums on house building within river catchments experiencing high levels of nutrient pollution or low water levels. We have established a policy inquiry to bring together all partners nationally to explore this issue further with a focus on finding solutions to the underlying causes. We have also commissioned some analysis that shows around 20,000 new homes a year are not able to be built due to the bans on development.
10. **Office of Environmental Protection.** The LGA has met Dame Glenys Stacy and Chief Executive Natalie Prosser to discuss the relationship between local government and the OEP once it is formally established. The meeting was productive and a good opportunity to discuss the remit of the OEP and how it will work with local government. Following the meeting we submitted a [response](#) to the Office for Environmental Protections draft strategy and enforcement policy consultation.
11. **Ongoing climate and environment policy work.** The LGA is represented in a range of cross-Whitehall groups to make the case for local government on critical issues, including on hydrogen, green buildings, green jobs, heat and buildings decarbonisation, energy and more.

Economic Growth

12. **Creating resilient and revitalised high streets in the 'new normal'.** High streets and town centres were changing long before covid. The pandemic supercharged many pre-existing trends, creating both new challenges and opportunities. They are moving from predominantly retail and functional activities, such as accessing banking and postal services, to providing a locus for socialising and enjoyable experiences - regular trips to

the local shopping centre are no longer essential. Nowadays, high streets need to compete not just with each other but also with cyberspace to attract footfall. Councils need to understand and respond constructively to these trends to foster renewed and resilient high streets. Our [research](#) explored existing and future trends and what ingredients make high streets more resilient.

13. **Public-Private Partnerships: Driving Growth, Building Resilience.** Against a backdrop of significant uncertainty and challenge, resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and continued pressures on budgets, councils across the country are continuing to look to unlock a range of social, environmental, and economic benefits aligned to local and national priorities. This [good practice guide](#) aims to support councils to plan and establish more effective public-private partnerships, which can unlock and deliver the investment, development and services that are essential to boosting economic growth and recovery.
14. **Supporting councils with business engagement.** Relationships between councils and businesses have always been essential. The pandemic accelerated and emphasised the importance of that relationship and has become even more central to maintaining quality place-shaping and vibrant local economies – there was a rapid scaling up the interaction between private and public sector. LGA commissioned research to identify and capture the learning from councils’ extensive contact with businesses in the context of COVID-19. This [report](#) sets out how councils can engage more effectively with businesses in the future to support economic recovery.

Housing, planning and homelessness

15. **Housing Advisers Programme.** The 2021/22 programme awarded grants of up to £25,000 to 91 councils across 30 projects. This included local authorities that were identified by the LGA to receive targeted support via the programme. Project areas include homelessness, green homes, housing supply, planning and the private rented sector. An online survey of participants of the programme since its inception in 2017/18 found that:
 - 83-100% of participants indicated that the HAP had enabled them to make progress towards their key goals,
 - 97% of participants would probably, or definitely, recommend the programme if asked,
 - 97% of participants felt that HAP will have a lasting impact on their capacity to deliver housing and homelessness services, rough sleeping provision and place making,
 - 100% of participants stated that the support they received through HAP has had a positive impact.

16. **Building Safety Act 2022.** The Act aligns with the LGA's [fundamental asks](#): that the construction industry, developers, and manufacturers should pay for the cladding crisis. We continue to press the government to distinguish between local authorities and developers, and fund councils to deliver the Building Safety Regulator (BSR). We are supporting a coordinated audit of risk within medium-rise residential buildings. The Fire Safety Act commenced, with [secondary legislation](#) implementing most recommendations of the Grenfell Inquiry. Following lobbying, the Home Office published the Fire Safety Assessment Prioritisation Tool alongside the Fire Safety Act and agreed to implement the LGA's working group on PEEPs neighbour assistance. We will engage in the [new consultation on PEEPs](#) and the Emergency Evacuation Information Sharing (EEIS) proposal. The LGA has published [case studies](#) and a document on [principles of effective regulation](#), and has run several webinars and Leadership Essentials events with more being planned currently. The Joint Inspection Team has secured funding for the next two years which will see it triple in capacity by the end of this financial year.
17. **Permitted development rights.** We responded to the government's consultation on the future of two temporary permitted development rights introduced to support businesses and the high street in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. The consultation also sought views on new permitted development rights for the Ministry of Defence to modernise and develop the Defence estate.
18. **Ground Rent Bill.** We have briefed parliamentarians for second reading of the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Bill, stressing the importance for new burdens funding to enable councils to undertake the proactive work necessary to ensure compliance with the new legislation.
19. **Other Parliamentary activity.** We have also briefed for debates on: access to affordable housing and planning reform; role of developers, house-builders and management companies in new homes and insecurity in the private rental market.
20. **House of Commons, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Select Committee Inquiry into Social Housing.** In partnership with Public Affairs colleagues, we briefed Cllr Renard (as the Chair of the EEHT Board) to present oral evidence to the Committee. The Inquiry focussed on the reasons for the poor quality of some social housing; the effectiveness of the Housing Ombudsman and Regulator of Social Housing; the Government's Social Housing White Paper proposals; and the impact on the Housing Revenue Account.
21. **Planning reforms.** The government has now set out the [direction of travel](#) for planning reforms – some of which will be delivered through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and the rest through secondary legislation or policy change. The proposed reforms are a significant improvement from those proposed in the planning white paper. In particular there is a greater focus on democratic input and community engagement; measures that intend to strengthen the weight of Local Plans and reduce speculative development as well as proposals to increase planning application fees. Crucially, the proposal for development 'zones', linked to an automatic permission, have been scrapped. These are

all areas that the LGA has lobbied on. There is much to welcome in the new proposals but there are many changes and effective engagement with the sector on the detailed policy development will be key.

22. **Permitted development rights.** In a proactive [press release](#) on 9th May, Councillor David Renard raised concerns that more than 18,000 affordable houses have been lost as a result of office-to-residential conversions under permitted development. The release called for permitted development rights to be removed to ensure all conversions and new developments contribute to the delivery of desperately needed affordable homes.
23. **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)— assessing the new challenges.** The LGA is working with the Association of Retained Council Housing and the National Federation of ALMOs to jointly commission a research project to assess the recent and emerging pressures to HRAs. The overarching project objective is to understand and assess how effectively the HRA self-financing model is operating in relation to meeting expenditure needs. The supplier(s) will develop a report which will comprehensively capture the long-term challenges to the HRA; and produce a set of evidence-based policy recommendations to assist in the LGA's lobbying.
24. **Homes for Ukraine webinar.** In April, the LGA hosted a webinar for council practitioners to share the case studies and the lessons learnt from administering the Homes for Ukraine scheme. More than 270 delegates had the opportunity to hear from, and pose questions to Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The aim of the webinar was for councils to improve their local offer and ensure that new arrivals from Ukraine can access suitable accommodation that meets their needs.
25. **Social Housing Management Peer Challenge (SHMPC).** We have developed a Social Housing Management Peer Challenge that will support host councils to reflect on, receive feedback on and learn how to improve the service provided to social housing residents. It will also assess their readiness and plan for a new emerging consumer regulation regime. The peer challenge was piloted at South Holland District Council in February 2022, and we are in the process of redeveloping the guidance and scope following evaluation and feedback from the council and the peer team. South Holland District Council will give an Innovation Zone presentation on their experience of the peer challenge at the LGA Annual Conference.
26. **Out of Area Placement Guidance.** We ran a consultation exercise on the out of area protocol at the end of last year and made the decision at board to amend the protocol to guidance and release as best practice. The guidance has now been amended and sent out for further consultation with council partners and should be ready for publication in summer.
27. **Kerslake Commission.** We continue to work to implement the recommendations of the Kerslake Commission. Earlier in the year we delivered a temporary accommodation peer support programme, we are also planning a cost-of-living event in partnership with the National Housing Federation which will feature the commitment to refer. We are also

continuing to work in partnership with Homeless Link and recently ran a joint roundtable with them on the commissioning of rough sleeper services.

28. **Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel.** Mark Lloyd is a valued member of the rough sleeping advisory panel, regularly presenting on behalf of councils to share their views on what is required to end rough sleeping in line with the manifesto promise. He presented a 10-step plan at the last rough sleeping advisory panel and will next be appearing on 8th June to present the LGA rough sleeping roundtable findings.
29. **APPG for Ending Rough Sleeping.** Cllr Pippa Heylings attended an APPG for ending rough sleeping on Tuesday 24th May in Parliament. The LGA called for government to address the system drivers and levers of homelessness and reassure councils they will be supported with rising pressures relating to the cost of living crisis. We also shared difficulties around recruitment and retention of staff, data sharing and increasingly complex customers. We called for better partnerships at a central government level and asked for the new rough sleeper strategy to look at broader homelessness prevention as opposed to being focused on the crisis end of homelessness.
30. **Vagrancy Act Submission.** At the beginning of May we responded to government's vagrancy act submission. We commented that not everyone who is living a street-based lifestyle is homeless and this crossover can be difficult for councils and partners to manage. A one size fits all approach will not work and different tools are needed to respond to different types of begging. We noted that it would be helpful to have a clear view from councils and the police about what gaps could be created through the repeal of the Vagrancy Act, and which existing or new powers could be better utilised to address these complex issues. We also asked that any new reforms proposed would need to be clear and enforceable, with enforcing bodies fully resourced to apply them.
31. **Rough Sleeping Strategy Roundtables.** The LGA have participated in and facilitated workshops which will influence the new rough sleeper strategy. Over 30 councils attended the local authority roundtable hosted by LGA on 19th May, as well as representatives from across the various central government departments. The roundtable was split up into three workshops focused on what central government, local government and the third sector can do to end rough sleeping and we were assisted by valued partners from Crisis and Homeless Link. The outcome paper will be submitted to lead members for approval this week. LGA officers also attended the DLUHC hosted roundtable on homelessness prevention.
32. **Building a case for investment in homelessness prevention.** We have commissioned Local Partnerships to work with two councils (Cornwall and Leeds) to look at what savings are made across an area when councils invest in homelessness prevention. We are expecting the findings to be published in the next few weeks and they will also be presented at the LGA conference.

Transport

- 33. Moving Traffic Offences (Part 6 of Traffic Management Act 2004).** The final Parliamentary scrutiny stage for councils to be able to apply for powers to enforce against moving traffic offences has now passed meaning that highways authorities can now apply for designated powers. This is a significant win for local government and for the EEHT Board. The LGA has long called for powers that already exist in London to be made available to all local areas outside London and had provided substantial evidence in support. This will help highways authorities to deal with a range of traffic contraventions such as yellow-box junctions, banned turns and overweight vehicles on weight restricted roads. The Draft Civil Enforcement of Road Traffic Contraventions (Representations and Appeals) (England) Regulations 2022 cleared scrutiny stages through both houses and will become law from 31st May 2022.
- 34. Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy.** The Government published its [EV charging infrastructure strategy](#) which sets out a raft of measures to rapidly scale up public EV chargepoints across the country, including increasing the Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund to £450m and a further up to £50m to support local authority skills and capacity. A £10m pilot of the LEVI Fund for local authorities was also launched. The expectation is that combined authorities will take the lead on developing local EV infrastructure strategies and outside of these, that highways authorities will take the lead (in consultation with district councils in two-tier areas). The EEHT Board had long called for clarity on the role of local government and for further funding and resources to support local investment. The LGA had commissioned [research into barriers](#) that was preventing further local investment and welcomed that these were recognised in the strategy.
- 35. Funding for buses and the National Bus Strategy.** Following calls from the LGA and other organisations the Government provided emergency funding to bus operators during the pandemic to prevent them going out of business and enable them to continue providing services for those that depended on bus services. The LGA also successfully campaigned for further funding to support local services as their recovery faltered owing to the Omicron wave. However, funding in support of the National Bus Strategy (NBS) has been disappointing: less than half of places submitting Bus Service Improvement Plans receiving any funding; and the total funding envelope had reduced from an original £3 billion to £1.2 billion. The EEHT Chairman had written to Buses Minister to express councils' disappointment and also made clear the LGA's position at the Transport Committee inquiry on progress of the NBS one year on.
- 36. Fixed Penalty Notices.** Following a request from several member councils the EEHT Board has agreed for the LGA to campaign for councils to be given powers to issue fixed penalty notices for certain dangerous contraventions under the Highways Act 1980 such as unlicensed skips and wilful obstruction of the highways. Having such powers would bring councils outside London into line with boroughs in the capital. The Board has agreed to undertake further work on this, including a survey of member councils.
- 37. Road pricing.** The EEHT Board held a private session with Mott MacDonald who have been commissioned to develop the LGA's understanding of road pricing and gather

views from a range of member councils around the country. The Government have indicated that they will replace the lost income from motoring taxes as the country transitions to electric vehicles. The Transport Committee recently published a [report](#) saying that road pricing should be the Government's preferred way forward. Our work will help ensure that the LGA is better prepared to respond to further national policy developments on this issue. A [webinar](#) on 15th June and a report from Mott MacDonald capturing the findings will be shared on the LGA website.

38. **Last Mile Deliveries.** We published a [report](#) and ran a webinar exploring the local view on the growth of last mile deliveries and the potential role of councils and what changes need to be considered for councils to play a more effective role, building on DfT's Transport Decarbonisation Plan. This work had been led by University of West of England and has involved workshops with councils as well as a workshop with elected members (across EEHT, P&P and City Region boards). The findings have now been captured in a report which can be found here. This work and the findings will be used as a basis for engagement with DfT officials working on freight/ last mile deliveries to influence emerging national policy.
39. **Highways Maintenance funding.** The Board has continued to support the case to Government of the importance of funding for highways maintenance of local roads, calling on the Government to restore funding to 2020/21 levels as since then funding has declined by over £500 million per year. [Experts](#) have said that continued funding at this level will lead to a slow deterioration of local roads. The annual ALARM survey [reported](#) the current backlog of road repairs has risen to £12 billion.

Looking Forward

40. A draft work programme for 2022/23 will be presented at the Board's September meeting. A number of factors will be taken into account in proposing the future work programme. These will include the LGA's overarching business plan; the ongoing work that the Board is engaged in; and the Governments policy and legislative agenda.
41. The LGA is currently developing its business plan for the three years from September 2022. At this stage it is not expected that the high-level priorities will change significantly. The Boards themes, including housing, climate change, economic recovery and transport and infrastructure, are significant priorities in the current business-plan.
42. Much of the Government's domestic policy and legislative agenda is in areas that come under the remit of the EEHT Board:
- 42.1. **Planning:** The Levelling up and Regeneration Bill was published on 19 May 2022. It contains the Government's proposed legislative reforms to the planning system.

- 42.2. **Housing:** The Government's legislative proposals also include the Renters Reform Bill to strengthen protections for private renters and abolish 'no-fault evictions,' and proposals to strengthen both the role of the Housing Ombudsman and the Regulator in the Social Housing Regulation Bill.
- 42.3. **Transport and Energy:** In addition, the Queen's Speech anticipates a Transport Bill and an Energy Security Bill.
43. Details of the Government's legislative programme and the LGA views on the individual elements of the programme can be found in the [on-the-day briefing](#).
44. Much of the work of the Board in 2021/22 carries on:
- 44.1. **Economic growth** runs as a theme through much of the work of the Board. The cost of living concerns, the transition to a green economy, the economic case for investing in council housing and investment in infrastructure (including the role of the UKIB) are factors that will influence the work of the Board
- 44.2. **Climate change** is now a top priority for communities, councils and Government. The LGA will continue to work through the Board and the Climate Change Task Group to influence policy. This will be achieved through engagement in the national/local climate change forum; work on decarbonisation of heat and buildings; work on hyper-local climate change action; and through the engagement of Government Ministers and senior officials.
- 44.3. **The Environment Act 2021** will have a significant influence on the work of the Board. The nature elements of the Act create new strands of work for councils and we will continue to work with the Government and councils on the details of this work.
- 44.4. **Waste reforms**, a framework for which are set out in the Environment Act, have been the subject of consultations and we await the government response on consistency. These reforms will continue to influence the work of the Board as councils adapt to the new systems and as the scale of the new Burdens are established.
- 44.5. **Housing and Homelessness:** council housebuilding, the sustainability of housing revenue accounts, the regulation of social housing and the continuing pressure of homelessness services continue to be significant issues for the councils.
- 44.6. **Building Safety Act** – We will engage with HSE's programme to establish the new building safety regulator and raise awareness amongst councils of

their responsibilities as regulators and duty holders under the new building safety regime. As part of this, we will continue to lobby for the funding of new burdens and a proportionate approach to transition to the new regime and new FSO responsibilities. We will continue to support councils in taking enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004 through hosting the Joint Inspection Team and to monitor the impact of the continuing competitive environment in building control regulation for buildings under 18m.

- 44.7. **Transport**, including the effectiveness of the public transport system; the future of transport related taxes, infrastructure and the continuing growth of EV, will continue to an important aspect of the Board's work.

Implications for Wales

45. We will continue to work with the Welsh LGA to share good practice and information.

Financial Implications

46. **There are no immediate financial implications**

Next steps

47. A draft work programme for 2022/23 will be brought to the Board in September and this will reflect any comments made by Members at the Board meeting.

People and Places Board Annual Report

Background

1. The People and Places Board was created to provide a clear voice and resource for non-metropolitan authorities within the LGA. This year the Board had a particular focus on the importance of 'rural proofing' Government policies, particularly in relation to levelling up and access to services for rural and coastal communities. It developed its work on employment and skills to encompass the rising need for green skills, including on retrofitting, and continued to highlight the importance of digital connectivity and ensuring the resilience of rural infrastructure.
2. Members are asked to consider the achievements of the board over the last year against the use of allocated resources and to reflect on whether the board is continuing to meet its original purpose in response to the emerging priorities of non-metropolitan areas.

Priorities and Achievements

Levelling up and devolution

3. The Government's long-awaited Levelling Up White Paper was published on 2 February 2022. The LGA published a [briefing note](#) and [full press release](#) in response to the Government's ambition to pursue 12 national missions and proposals relating to a new devolution framework, a plan to streamline growth funding, a new independent data body and the establishment of a new levelling up advisory council.
4. Following the announcement of a Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill in the Queen's Speech, on 10 May, the LGA issued a [response](#) emphasising that levelling up will only be achieved if councils have the powers and funding they need to address interregional and intraregional inequalities, tackle deprivation, and make communities attractive places to live, work and visit. We will be working with parliamentarians and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to shape and amend this legislation to ensure it helps councils level up and delivers greater devolution.
5. The Board, with the City Regions Board launched an inquiry into how the Government's levelling up agenda might better strengthen local communities. The [Levelling Up Locally Inquiry](#) looks beyond the Levelling Up White Paper to investigate the role of local leadership in shaping a recovery that works for all.
6. The Board agreed to an independent steering group helping to shape the inquiry's development including its evidence gathering; making contributions drawing on their own experience and expertise; and formulating a set of recommendations based around each of the themes. The steering group is co-chaired by Cllr Bentley and Mayor Rees and



comprises members from business, academia, think tanks, community groups and government organisations.

7. As part of the inquiry, four roundtables are being held on: funding and alignment, leadership, productivity and prosperity, and place and identity. To date, two of the four roundtables have taken place. A final set of recommendations will be published in the Autumn.

Local growth

8. The Board, with the City Regions Board, has supported Business in the Community (BITC) Place Taskforce to launch a [new report](#) looking into the role of business and cross-sector partnerships in place-based regeneration. Cllr Simon Henig represented the People and Places Board on the Taskforce. The report provides practical recommendations to business, local government and national government on the role business can play in delivering the 'how' of the Levelling Up White Paper, as well as the foundations that are needed to transform communities.

Employment and skills

9. In May, we published [Work Local: Unlocking talent to level up](#), our employment and skills devolution proposals which build on the Levelling up White Paper and recommend ways Whitehall can improve its approach to employment and skills policy for all places right now and deliver a coherent devolution approach. Analysis reveals devolution could result in a 15 per cent increase in the number of people improving their skills or finding work in a local area each year.
10. Following the Government's Skills for Jobs White Paper, it launched two consultation and legislated to establish new Local Skills Improvement Plans. The LGA responded to the consultations on the [National Skills Fund](#) and the [FE Funding and Accountability System](#), and engaged parliamentarians to support the LGA position on the [Skills and Post 16 Education Bill](#) which has now been enacted.
11. We proactively brought together DfE and councils outside of devolution areas to ensure that the £270 million Multiply adult numeracy programme (funded through UKSPF) was routed via councils in non-devolution areas rather than contacted nationally through the Education and Skills Funding Agency.
12. We published a [report](#) to showcase the work of councils to support and develop education, employment and training pathways, including the wider wrap-around support for young people experiencing disadvantage.

Community Renewal Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund

13. In April 2022, the Government published the [UKSPF prospectus and allocations](#), which [allocated £2.6 billion over three years](#), as well as [the allocations for the Multiply adult numeracy Programme](#). We launched a [UKSPF Hub](#) to support local authorities to develop their investment plans.
14. The announcement confirmed that the fund would be driven by local authorities, funding to support capacity building and the removal of competitive bidding processes. These are some of the key asks that we have been consistently lobbying on since the EU referendum.
15. We have continually engaged with councils and combined authorities to understand the implications of the prospectus, and identified some of the key concerns, including the funding gap between the end of European Social Fund programmes and the commitment of the People & Skills priority in 2024/25, as well as the need for a longer-term funding solution. We have raised these issues through [the press](#) which was featured in the Financial Times. The Chairs of the People & Places and City Regions Boards wrote to the Secretary of State setting out the sector's concerns regarding the funding gap.
16. The LGA has worked with the sector to capture learning from the UK Community Renewal Fund. Following the delay in the announcement of the successful bids, we [lobbied successfully for an extension of the fund](#), with the Chairs of the People and Places and City Regions Boards writing to the Secretary of State, outlining the sector's concerns. We have commissioned Shared Intelligence to capture the learning from the fund to help inform our wider work on growth funding.

Digital connectivity

17. We have [responded](#) to a Westminster Hall Debate on digital inclusion, responded to the National Infrastructure Commission's baseline report call for evidence, submitted evidence and subsequently [responded](#) to a Public Accounts Committee report into Project Gigabit which had [wide coverage from news outlets including the BBC](#), briefed for a Westminster Hall debate on ultrafast broadband in Devon and Somerset, and Cllr Bentley met with the head of regional tech policy at DCMS.
18. We also [responded](#) to the Levelling Up White Paper target for the UK to have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage by 2030 and our response was picked up by [national outlets](#). We shared a [press response](#) to the Government's announcement of eight pilot areas to speed up 5G rollout and Cllr Hawthorne, the LGA's digital connectivity champion, gave an interview at the end of February to the BBC about the gigabit capable broadband rollout. We also issued a [press release](#) in response to the Government's announcement of a change in the planning laws to increase the use of permitted development rights in relation to the size of mobile masts.

19. The retirement of the public switched telephone network (PSTN) for new digital technologies continues to be cause for concern impacting on both council infrastructure as well as services for residents and we have launched a working group to share good practice and discuss challenges and a [digital switchover hub](#) on the LGA website to disseminate useful resources.

20. The Board has long called for further funding from Government for digital connectivity champions to help co-ordinate delivery locally. Mobile UK now echoes these calls having recently published research calling on Government to [fund local authority digital champions](#). In May Cllr Hawthorne met with digital policy leads at District Councils Network and County Councils Network to discuss the role of digital connectivity champions, how we can refine our call on Government and gather further support. Officers have been raising these conversations in monthly meetings with DCMS and the Barrier Busting Taskforce.

Programme of work and priorities

21. The Board will advocate for Work Local model to be a way of mechanism for enabling the sector deliver a local employment and skills offer to support the levelling up agenda.

22. The Board will also continue to work to ensure that the Government puts councils at the heart of its Levelling Up agenda.

23. The Board will continue to seek feedback on the UK Community Renewal Fund process to help the development of the design of the forthcoming UK Shared Prosperity Fund and ensure that councils play a key role in managing growth funding through the Levelling Up Fund and UKSPF.

24. The Board is now well established as an important voice on digital connectivity, but as the policy agenda is currently in a largely technical phase. The Board will now play a defining role in the increasingly high-profile area of digital exclusion following a session on 'digital levelling up' at the LGA's annual conference.

Next steps

25. Officers to take forward actions as appropriate to draft a work programme for the board.

Resources Board – End of Year Report 2021/22

Background and Context

1. The LGA's Resources Board shapes and develops the Association's policies and programmes in relation to Local Government Finance; Support for Low Income Households; Workforce and Pension issues.
2. Members are asked to consider the achievements of the Board over the last year against the priorities that were set at its meeting September 2021 and consider possible areas of work for 2022/23.

Achievements against priorities for 2021/22: Local Government Finance

Council funding

3. The LGA's lobbying ahead of the 2021 Spending Review, including a [Spending Review submission](#). [The LGA secured nearly £2 billion](#) of additional grant funding in 2022/23 in addition to council tax flexibilities.
4. We [responded](#) to the [2022/23 provisional local government finance settlement](#) and raised key concerns with the Local Government Finance minister during a meeting on the settlement. As a result, the minister offered the LGA regular cross-party meetings on local government finance which have been taking place. We [briefed parliamentarians](#) in advance of the debate on the final local government settlement.
5. An update to the LGAs cost pressures was published on 30 June. Work will continue to influence the Government and achieve further financial assistance in light of sharp inflationary pressures and to press for certainty and clarity on local government finance reform.
6. The LGA annual conference on local government finance was a success and received positive feedback from delegates.

Local taxation

7. HM Treasury acknowledged the role of the tax as an important part of the local government finance system as part of the [Fundamental Review of Business Rates](#) and announced positive changes, such as a move to more frequent revaluations and time limits for appeals. We responded to a number of consultations, such as a [technical consultation on business rates](#) and a consultation on an [online sales levy](#).
8. A Non-Domestic Rating Bill was announced in the [Queen's Speech](#) and is expected to be introduced before the summer recess. This is expected to contain measures including those concerned with the implementation of revaluations every three years including new duties for ratepayers to give information to the Valuation Office Agency. The duty to

report information on changes in ratepayer circumstances is something we have been calling for.

9. New rules tightening up the criteria for self-contained accommodation qualifying for business rates as opposed to council tax will be introduced on 1 April 2023; this is something we had [called for](#).
10. The LGA has also been involved in discussions on technical changes to business rates including digitalisation, compliance and on reliefs.
11. A report on options for the future financing of local government commissioned from WPI Economics was published on 13 January to coincide with the LGA's Finance Conference.

Capital and audit

12. We have continued to make the case for the capital financing framework to be enabling, and for the audit framework to be appropriate to the sector.
13. We have responded to and influenced the outcome to the following consultations on changes to the capital framework and we were able to make a successful case for mitigation to proposed changes to several aspects that could have had negative unintended consequences for the sector.
 - 13.1. [Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes](#).
 - 13.2. [Prudential Code for Capital Finance in local authorities](#).
 - 13.3. [Changes to the capital framework: Minimum Revenue Provision](#).
14. Local audit continues to experience significant complex problems and we continue to work with the Government and other relevant bodies to address this and to work with them on setting up a new framework that is appropriate for the sector. This year we have responded to the following consultations:
 - 14.1. [Local Audit Framework technical consultation \(ARGA as system leader\)](#).
 - 14.2. [Emergency consultation on temporary changes to the accounting code 2021/22 and 2022/23](#).
 - 14.3. [Urgent consultation on temporary changes to the accounting code \(infrastructure assets\)](#).
15. In November we submitted [written evidence to the Public Accounts Committee inquiry into the Local Government Finance system](#) which covered commercial investments and local audit, as well the overall sustainability of local government finance.

Local Government Finance Priorities for 2022/23

Council funding

16. Continue to work on estimating the pressures on all services and press for funding that reflects current and future demand, particularly for housing, homelessness, adult social care and children's services, lobbying Government to provide sustainable funding to meet these needs.
17. Work with local and central government on a system of local government funding that supports long-term planning, is evidence-based, simpler and more transparent with appropriate transition mechanisms.

Locally raised resources

18. Press for freedoms that lead to greater local financial autonomy with a view to achieving local control over both council tax and business rates.
19. Lobby for improvements to business rates to help tackle business rates avoidance and develop proposals to improve the system, including valuation and the appeals process.
20. Consider potential work on new local taxes, reform of existing local taxes and control over fees and changes to fully recover costs.

Capital investment

21. Further develop policy on capital financing and investing and contribute to national reviews in these areas so that they support and enable prudent investment and financial management.
22. Contribute to reviews of the accounting and financial regulatory framework for councils to ensure it is appropriate, not over restrictive and balanced with local freedom and accountability.

Pensions

23. We will continue to support councils in their role as LGPS administering authorities to meet new statutory requirements on climate change risk and reporting, with regard to the investment strategy of the pension fund and considering integration of those strategies with local climate policies.
24. We will work to amend the Boycotts, Disinvestment and Sanctions Bill, once introduced, to maintain the ability of councils to make unfettered investment decisions.
25. We will continue to work with CIPFA to support councils in their role as LGPS administering authorities to find ways to ease delays signing off full council accounts which impact on and delay the publication of otherwise finalised pension fund accounts.

Achievements against priorities for 2021/22: Workforce

Collective Bargaining Issues

26. Pay negotiations for the local government workforces concluded on 28 February 2022 when the Trade Union Side accepted the National Employers offer of 2.75 per cent pay offer for staff on NJC pay point 1 and 1.75 per cent on all other pay points. Agreements had previously been reached with chief officers and chief executives to accept the National Employers offer of 1.5 per cent.
27. A 1.5 per cent pay deal was agreed for employees covered by the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services (ranging from fire fighters to middle managers). A separate agreement was also reached on a 1.5 per cent pay award for senior managers in fire and rescue services. This agreement covers all who fall within the scope of the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services.
28. We also act as the Secretariat for the Employers' Side of the Police Staff Council. A pay agreement was reached for police staff in May 2022 that includes a 2.1 per cent pay increase with effect from 1 April 2022 and a £250 pay increase for those earning under £24,000 effective from 1 September 2021. The next pay review date will be 1 September 2023.
29. In Schools, the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) 2021 sets out teachers' pay and was published on 1 October. The National Employers Organisation for School Teachers (NEOST) submitted evidence in response to the government's consultation on teachers' pay 2021. As a direct result of the feedback included in this submission from councils, additional wording was included in the final STPCD to clarify the criteria relating to an allowance for tutoring under the catch-up program. All qualified teachers were included in the public sector pay freeze policy in 2021 apart from a relatively small number of qualified teachers who earned below £24k attracting a £250 consolidated uplift.
30. The National Employers and the Staff Associations on the Soulbury Committee reached a pay agreement for a 1.75 per cent increase for all officers within scope of the Soulbury Committee. The pay award is applicable from 1 September 2021. Soulbury Officers are Education Improvement Professionals, Educational Psychologists and Young People's Community Service Managers.
31. An agreement was reached in September within the Joint Negotiating Committee for Coroners to increase salaries and pay rates by 1.5 per cent, with effect from 1 April 2021.
32. Pay agreements for 2021 have not yet been reached for either the Craft or Youth and Community bargaining groups.
33. Pay negotiation activity in local government bargaining groups has commenced for 2022-23, with the National Employers consulting with local authorities in March ahead of receiving the trade unions' claim in June 2022. A further round of regional consultations with employers took place in June/July. National Employers are considering their response, and negotiations will continue over the coming months.

34. We have submitted written evidence to the Low Pay Commission as part of both their 2022 and 2023 consultation processes on the level of the National Living Wage. Due to the significant challenges local government will face now that the projected rate for the NLW on 1 April 2023 and 1 April 2024 has hit its highest level yet, we have also written to six government departments to highlight the impact this will have for service provision that fall under their responsibilities.

Fire

35. Following the Government's decision to create an additional bank holiday for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the NJC agreed to award the bank holiday and for it to be treated in the same way as other such holidays in the Grey Book for leave and pay purposes (there was no automatic entitlement under the conditions of the Grey book).

36. Agreement was reached between the LGA and the Fire Brigades Union on a memorandum of Understanding and Framework in respect of pension Immediate Detriment issues related to the Sargeant/McCloud legal judgment.

Schools

37. We held several webinars this year in place of our annual schools' workforce conference. Topics included school-based pay, employment law and flexible working and were delivered in partnership with DfE in June and July 2021.

Targeted Workforce Support

38. We provided targeted workforce support throughout the year to 75 local authorities throughout England (achieved by end of March 2022).

39. In addition, Croydon Council has throughout this year, and including this quarter, received detailed support from the Workforce programme as they respond to their financial and organisational challenges.

40. We delivered three hybrid working roundtable workshops attracting 135 councils to participate in a research project to understand and share good practice and lessons learned on new ways of working arising out of COVID19 restrictions.

41. We also ran a webinar in March 2022 on 'Harnessing young talent and producing the workforce of the future' to support our work on apprenticeships, T Levels and routes into local government for younger people.

Apprenticeships Programme

42. Our apprenticeships programme continued to provide councils with a support offer that was a mixture of encouragement, guidance and practical support designed to help councils increase their apprenticeship numbers and maximise their levy investment.

43. Across our apprenticeships programme in 2021-22, we have:

- 43.1. Delivered 12 Apprenticeship MOT Health checks to councils in England
- 43.2. Held 23 expert surgeries for councils
- 43.3. Supported our apprenticeship network of practitioners across local government, growing the network from 500 to 640 officers at councils and combined authorities.
- 43.4. Issued 7 apprenticeship newsletters and a further 3 updates
- 43.5. Held 8 webinars on key topics of interest for councils
- 43.6. Completed an action learning programme for 32 local authorities
- 43.7. Revised and updated our Apprenticeships in Schools Toolkit
- 43.8. Delivered the 2023 Apprentice of the Year event with partners East of England LGA and South West Councils
- 43.9. Completed our annual apprenticeship survey

Combined Authorities' HR Network

44. We supported Combined Authorities with an HR leads network, improving capacity and capability of Combined Authorities to deliver on their devolution deal objectives. A special report on hybrid working in the pandemic recovery phase has been commissioned for the group, with a particular emphasis on equalities issues and value for money.

Wellbeing, Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

45. We launched 'Diverse by Design', a comprehensive EDI guide for supporting improved workforce diversity and more inclusive practices and behaviours in councils.
46. New mental health resources were published on the website and advice was provided to councils on managing long-covid as part of ongoing programme of support to councils on good management of wellbeing post-COVID
47. Delivered an Inclusive Leadership expert surgery/coaching interactive event in September 2021 that was attended by over 100 different councils (174 delegates in total).
48. Delivered 5 equality-themed webinars in partnership with ACAS between July and December 2021. Each webinar focused on different equality characteristics to help employers understand and support the different needs of their staff to aid recruitment, retention and productivity. Over 1,000 delegates booked to attend the series and feedback showed that 95% of delegates were satisfied or very satisfied with the webinars.
49. We ran a menopause workshop on 26 January for 100 delegates, 95 per cent of whom told us they were satisfied or very satisfied with the content and delivery of the workshop.

50. The Employment Relations Unit have also developed a set of FAQs that cover some key wellbeing issues including managing clinically extremely vulnerable staff as restrictions are eased, managing self-isolating staff and managing staff who have long covid.

Social Work Health Check

51. We completed our annual Social Work Health Check report on the national Standards for Employers of Social Workers, which supports councils with the effective delivery of social work. In total 137 councils took part and these councils have received their individual performance reports on how their employment and management of social workers compares to the national standards.

Employment Law Advice

52. We continued to provide individual support to councils on a wide range of subjects dealing with all aspects of workforce transformation and improvement, including employment law support on contractual issues, advising on redundancy and reorganisations, hybrid working implications and workforce planning.
53. Our popular annual employment law conference took place on 10 March with over 200 delegates attending to hear the latest news on case law and HR policy for local government
54. Our employment law team worked with a selection of councils to submit a response on behalf of our sector representing our views on the Government's consultation on statutory disability workforce reporting.

T Levels

55. Working in partnership with the Gatsby Foundation and the Department for Education we are providing support to help councils host T Level Industry placements. We are working with 38 councils so far and have capacity to support 75. General advice and guidance on T Levels is being provided to all councils who have also been given access to an employer T Level Toolkit.

Workforce Planning

56. We have been running a support network for 70 council workforce planners throughout 2021-22. Since April 2022 this network has been open to all councils to join, with meetings focussing on a range of workforce planning issues, driven by council needs.
57. We have launched a workforce planning support programme for 2022 to provide support to Principal Social Workers to undertake workforce planning. Funded through the DLUHC improvement grant, Adult Social Care teams will be able to access on-line workshops to analyse their workforce needs. Funding is available to work with ten councils.

Commercial Activity

58. During 2021/22 we undertook a series of commercial projects for more than 16 councils, which together with other linked employers within the local government sector brought in around £150,000 in income. This sum was generated by work including DMA, pay benchmarking, employee engagement surveys, job evaluation, workforce planning, HR service reviews, and other bespoke projects.

Workforce Priorities for 2022/23

59. Some of the workforce priorities stem from the DLUHC Grant Determination Letter, others relate to direct grant programmes undertaken with government departments. Workforce also has some income generation objectives and provides additional support to the LGA's policy agenda.

60. The workforce offer set out in the DLUHC Grant Letter will involve management of national pay negotiations on behalf of all relevant employers relating to the 2022 pay award and taking forward 2023 negotiations, with joint circulars on relevant issues agreed with Unions.

61. This offer will also support councils to build skills, enhance capacity, address challenges, including issues relating to retention, recruitment and new ways of working, including workforce planning. All councils will be able to benefit from individual support and advice on mediation, investigation, employment law issues and HR matters.

62. The 2022-23 programme consists of three parts. The 'Supporting Workforce' offer will deliver:

62.1. Apprenticeship Support, including a programme of general advice and guidance, a webinar programme, updates and expansions of the LGA guidance notes and toolkits.

62.2. Targeted workforce support or advice, including bespoke support around workforce planning, provided to at least 50 councils (including intensive support for 10) receiving positive satisfaction ratings.

62.3. Work to support the development of local government workforce capacity, including on recruitment and retention issues and employee engagement.

62.4. Specialist HR and employment law advice, as well as mediation and investigation support, carried out as part of the Joint Negotiating Committee procedure; and promoting, researching and supporting councils' internal equalities, diversity and inclusion work.

62.5. Provision of key workforce information, including FAQs, guides, workforce bulletins to deliver guidance and information regarding key local government workforce developments.

63. The 'National Collective Bargaining and Industrial Relations' offer will deliver:

- 63.1. The LGA continuing to manage collective bargaining on behalf of the local government sector.
- 63.2. The LGA will continue to provide the secretariat and officer function (providing advice, research and stakeholder management) for National Employers in the various collective bargaining units within the local government workforce (local government services, LG chief officers, LG chief executives, craft workers, firefighters, fire brigade managers, police staff, coroners, Soulbury, youth and community staff).
- 63.3. Additionally, activity will involve renegotiating the core National Joint Council pay spine to ensure compliance with the National Living Wage and provide consequential implementation support to councils impacted by the changes.
64. The 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' offer will deliver:
- 64.1. Targeted and updated resources, information guides, webinars and additional support to develop the knowledge base and the application of equalities duties among councils. This support will include an expanded EDI hub, guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty, equality action plans and service design that embeds equalities.
- 64.2. Action learning sets for councils around the co-design of policies and services, including how they substantially integrate equalities considerations within these processes.
65. We will continue to support councils in the implementation of the McCloud age discrimination remedy into public service pension schemes.
66. We will continue to engage with HMT and DLUHC to ensure that the return of exit cap legislation provides the appropriate flexibility for employers in workforce reorganisations.

Achievements against priorities for 2021/22: Support for Low Income Households

67. We have continued to provide support to the sector, and collaborated with Government and partners on the funding, design and delivery of the Household Support Fund, including a series of Action Learning sessions with Shared Service Architects during 2022
68. We are in discussion with DLUHC on the development of an 'Early Help' peer review in partnership with the Supporting Families programme
69. We have collaborated with Cabinet Office and partners on the development of a debt vulnerability toolkit. We have also identified and shared good practice on a single customer view of debt; engaged with set-up of the new Enforcement Conduct Board and engaged with the sector and partners to set out the framework for a debt maturity model
70. We have strengthened collaboration across the LGA on approaches to financial resilience and developed a new cross-cutting web resource on cost-of-living pressures

71. We have worked closely with colleagues in Housing and Adult Services to secure an improved approach to cost management and quality of Supported Housing, which includes consideration of the integration of support costs with Housing Benefit

Support for Low Income Households Priorities for 2022/23

Cost of Living Pressures

72. Support collaboration across the LGA, Government, councils and the wider sector to help councils to deliver fair, efficient and effective support for households affected by the significant rise in the cost of living
73. Engage with other LGA Boards to develop a cross-cutting approach to financial resilience and wellbeing beyond the welfare system and financial services / support. Examples include: fuel efficiency and retrofitting; housing affordability; local economic strategies and recovery; devolution of employment and skills; health disparities; children's wellbeing and attainment; money and mental health; access to healthy affordable food - local food partnerships and environmental sustainability
74. Member collaboration and advice to link to delivery of improvement support on key areas including local welfare delivery and debt management / recovery
75. Strengthen the collection, use and sharing of data to understand and address impacts on particular groups
76. Integrate with wider LGA work on integrating 'lived experience' into service design and delivery, for example through the use of poverty truth commissions or similar

Welfare delivery

77. Ensure councils can collaborate effectively and share views with the Department for Work and Pensions on the continued implementation of Universal Credit, in particular the move of long-standing legacy claimants via 'Move to UC'
78. Continue to press for long-term, flexible and adequate funding for local welfare support, with an emphasis on building resilience to reduce demand for crisis support in the longer-term

Fair and effective debt management

79. Development of a 'debt maturity model' to enable councils to benchmark and identify areas for development, collaboration and improvement, with a particular emphasis on supporting households impacted by the pandemic and the rising cost of living

Implications for Wales

80. We will continue to work with the Welsh LGA to share good practice and information.

Implications for Equalities

81. There are equalities issues arising from the policies and work presented in this paper.
These are considered in more detail in the separate papers to Resources Board.

Financial Implications

82. There are no immediate financial implications

Next steps

83. A draft work programme for 2022/23 will be brought to the Board in September and this will reflect any comments made by Members at the Board meeting.



Safer and Stronger Communities End of Year Report 2021/22 and 2022/23 work plan

Purpose of report

For direction.

Summary

This paper sets out the Safer and Stronger Communities end of year report, including initial proposals for the 2022/23 work plan.

Recommendations

That members of the Executive Advisory Board note the end of year report and consider the Board's work priorities for 2022/23.

Actions

Officers to prepare a paper setting out the proposed work plan for 2022/23 in line with the Board's feedback, for consideration at the September meeting of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board.

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Safer and Stronger Communities End of Year Report 2021/22 and 2022/23 work plan

Background

1. At its meeting in June the Safer and Stronger Communities Board reviewed the work overseen by the Board during the course of 2021/22, in line with the six overarching priorities for 2021/22 agreed in September 2021:
 - 1.1. Community safety
 - 1.2. Prevent, counter extremism and cohesion
 - 1.3. Regulatory services and licensing
 - 1.4. Blue light services and civil resilience
 - 1.5. Crematoria, funerals, coroners and registrars
 - 1.6. Building safety.
2. The Board also provided an initial steer on its priorities for 2022/23. The Executive Advisory Board are also invited to provide a view on the draft priorities outlined. Feedback from members on their priorities for next year will subsequently be developed into a full paper for consideration at the first meeting of the 2022/23 Board cycle in September.

Prevent, counter extremism and cohesion

3. Throughout the year we have continued to raise concerns with Government about the impact of extremism on communities and the challenges this presents for councils, and of the need to retain national investment in measures to build resilience and tackle division and polarisation.
4. We have again provided significant support to councils to respond to ongoing extremism and cohesion issues through our work with the [Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism](#) (SIGCE), which the LGA has continued to support both financially and operationally. The SIGCE's lead facilitator attended the Board earlier this year to highlight some of the evolving challenges.
5. The SIGCE's work programme for this year has included delivering eight roundtables and webinars covering a range of emerging issues, including incels, extremism and education, the evolution of conspiracy theories since COVID-19, and the Ukraine conflict, and a bespoke session with government officials to feed in sector views on hate crime policy. A further six roundtables have taken place focussing on the intimidation and harassment of asylum seekers and refugees. We have also continued to provide regular

guidance and updates to over 300 members of the SIGCE's online Knowledge Hub, which has also been revamped during the year.

6. Two thematic leads were appointed to provide bespoke support and advice to councils tackling far-right extremism and faith-claimed "Islamist" extremism respectively, and have continued to support the SIGCE's two working groups in these areas. This has included organising an in-person workshop and simulation exercise to help inform a toolkit for councils on responding to anti-minority extremism; and completed our community dialogue pilot in one local authority area to explore how to improve local engagement. We have also concluded research and a series of local focus group sessions on the impact of "Islamist" terminology on communities.
7. Beyond the SIGCE, we have also provided bespoke communications training to a council facing significant far-right activity, and have continued to support two regional elected member networks on Prevent and counter-extremism. We also recently published a series of [case studies and guidance note on partnership working to counter extremism and tackle hate crime](#).
8. Over last summer we [submitted a response](#) to the [Government's consultation on a new Protect duty](#), aimed at helping to prevent terrorist attacks. In our response we called for terrorism risks to be assessed alongside a range of other health and safety issues, and that a risk-based approach to determining which venues/events should fall within scope of the duty would be preferable to the capacity model proposed. We also highlighted the importance of a proportionate approach to introducing new measures and raised concerns about how the duty would operate in practice, and the significant resource and capacity that would be needed for successful implementation. A new Protect duty Bill featured in the Queen's Speech in May and we will continue to ensure that sector views are fed in to Government as the legislation is drafted.
9. We recently submitted a response to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Community's (DLUHC) call for evidence on social cohesion and resilience. In our response we set out concerns about the abuse and harassment of elected members, and highlighted the important role of local authorities in countering extremism and building resilience alongside partners. We also set out a number of challenges including tackling sensitive issues, national policy uncertainties, the need for a long-term approach that addresses underlying cohesion issues, and limited resources and capacity available for this work.
10. In April we responded to DLUHC's consultation on proposals for amending the legislation around changing street names. In our response we argued that the proposals were

unnecessary and undermined the fundamental principles of local democracy, and raised a number of concerns that the proposals would be unworkable in practice.

11. Across the year we have fed into the LGA's wider policy work on the Online Safety Bill and will continue to provide input as the Bill completes its passage through the parliamentary process.

Community safety

Domestic abuse

12. Following Royal Assent of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the LGA continues to support councils with the implementation of their statutory duty to deliver domestic abuse accommodation-based support and services.
13. Throughout the course of the year, the LGA has hosted and supported 15 workshops for local authorities to share best practice and identify and respond to challenges associated with the duty. The LGA continues to engage with DLUHC on the future funding for the statutory duty, following the [announcement](#) of an additional £125 million for councils in this financial year (2022/2023). We will be calling for the third year of the funding allocation (2023/2024) to be made known to councils before the end of this financial year, to help with longer-term strategic planning.
14. In October 2021, the Minister with responsibility for homelessness and domestic abuse and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner convened the first meeting of the National Expert Steering Group on Domestic Abuse. The purpose of the group has been to monitor the progress of the new statutory duty (Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act) and to help improve the overall response to domestic abuse. The Board's Chair Cllr Nesil Caliskan, and Cllr Lois Samuel, the Board's Domestic Abuse Champion, continue to attend the group meetings on behalf of the LGA and our membership. Updates from these meetings will continue to be provided to members via our Board update paper.
15. The LGA is also a representative of the Strategic Reference Group on Domestic Abuse Perpetrators. The group has been convened by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales to improve the response to tackling domestic abuse perpetrators and help inform and respond to the Government's [Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan](#).
16. As part of this work, the LGA has supported a number of workshops and events on tackling domestic abuse perpetrators, including a joint session with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC). The workshops have been well-attended, with over 280 delegates joining our most recent LGA webinar on tackling domestic abuse

perpetrators, with presentations from the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, the Home Office, and wider speakers.

17. To help share best practice, the LGA, in partnership with Social Finance, launched a guidance document on '[tackling domestic abuse – innovative approaches by councils and partner organisations](#)'. The guidance document includes a series of case studies from councils on how they tackled domestic abuse before and during the pandemic. The ambition for these case studies is to share and disseminate best practice from across local government nationally to support locally led solutions.
18. In addition to our wider press work, the [LGA joined forces with Women's Aid and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner Nicole Jacobs to urge people to look out for common signs of domestic abuse over Christmas](#). As well as a community effort to spot the signs of domestic abuse and report concerns, we called for greater investment in early intervention and prevention schemes that helps stop it from occurring in the first place. This built on our successful campaigning with Women's Aid and partners to raise awareness of domestic abuse during the [football World Cup period](#).

Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)

19. Ahead of the publication of Government's [updated Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) Strategy](#) in June 2021, the LGA responded to the [Government's consultation](#) and [subsequently responded](#) to the publication of the Strategy. The LGA also submitted [written evidence](#) to the Home Affairs Committee [inquiry](#) on tackling VAWG.
20. In addition to the publication of the Government's Strategy, the Home Office outlined several measures to protect women and girls from abuse and violence. This included introducing a National Policing lead for VAWG, as well as a new [Safety of Women at Night Fund](#), which was open to bids from local authorities, Police and Crime Commissioners, the British Transport Police and civil society organisations. The LGA worked with the APCC and the Home Office to circulate details of the fund to councils and PCCs. We intend to hold a best practice event to share the findings from the fund, once the schemes have been evaluated in Autumn 2022.
21. In November 2021, Deputy Chief Constable Maggie Blyth, the newly appointed National Policing Lead for VAWG spoke at the Safer and Stronger Communities Board. DCC Blyth updated the Board on plans for a [National Policing Framework to prioritise tackling VAWG issues](#) and outlined the importance of working in partnership with local authorities to proactively change the culture and response on VAWG.

22. DCC Blyth and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner spoke at our LGA Annual Conference workshop session on tackling Violence against Women and Girls in July 2022, chaired by our Domestic Abuse Champion Cllr Lois Samuel.

Serious violent crime

23. In April 2022, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act, received Royal Assent. During the Bill's passage through Parliament, Cllr Nesil Caliskan gave [oral evidence](#) to the House of Commons Public Bill Committee. She emphasised the importance of taking a public health approach to tackling serious violent crime, investing in prevention and early intervention, as well as identifying the risk factors and drivers of youth violence. The LGA will be publishing a Get-in-on-the-Act explainer in the coming weeks to provide further details about how the provisions in the Act will have an impact on local government.

24. The LGA has held a series of workshops with the Home Office serious violence team to discuss the forthcoming serious violence duty, and the proposed Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews. We will continue to hold best practice sessions and support councils with the implementation of the forthcoming duty.

Serious and organised crime

25. The LGA, the APCC and the Home Office continue to meet regularly to discuss the Home Office's forward plan for tackling serious and organised crime (SOC). In January 2022, the LGA held a webinar on tackling SOC, which reached over 190 delegates. We will continue to hold best practice sessions throughout the year and engage with the Home Office on this important issue.

Drug strategy

26. In December 2021, the Government announced an investment of £780 million in drug treatment to break the cycle of addiction as part of a [10-year drugs strategy](#). The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) said that all local authorities in England will receive new money for drug treatment and recovery over the next three years.
27. Cllr Joanne Harding, the LGA's substance misuse lead, gave evidence to the House of Commons [Home Affairs Committee inquiry on drugs](#). Cllr Harding welcomed the 10-Year Drug Strategy and the additional funding it has brought. However, she stressed that it must be backed by measures and funding for the wider preventative services that are needed to tackle the socio-economic drivers of problem drug use. The LGA will continue to liaise with the Government on the introduction of drug partnership arrangements, and implementation of the Drug Strategy.

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Review / Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs)

28. Cllr Caliskan and Cllr Mohan Iyengar both gave evidence to the Home Office's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Part 2 Review. LGA officers also submitted a formal response on behalf of local government. The purpose of the two-part review was to consider how the role of police and crime commissioners (PCCs), can be sharpened and expanded.
29. The Government also announced it would undertake a full review of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) to initially improve their transparency, accountability, and effectiveness, before assessing their position within the wider landscape of local partnerships across England and Wales. Through the review of CSPs, the Government said it would consider introducing a new duty for CSPs to report on local ASB strategy and delivery to PCCs and legislating to set out the PCC role in the ASB Community Trigger process.
30. To help inform our work, the LGA held a series of introductory sessions with local government officers to discuss the forthcoming Community Safety Partnership Review. We will continue to hold sessions with elected members, officers and wider CSP partners to help inform the LGA's response to the Government review.
31. Following discussions at the Safer and Stronger Communities Board we responded to the Policing Protocol Consultation. This was one of the recommendations from Part one of the PCC Review, to clarify the responsibilities of and relationship between PCCs, Chief Constables, the Panel and the Home Secretary and better reflect the current policing landscape.
- Anti-social behaviour*
32. In July 2021, the LGA supported the UK's first-ever ASB Awareness Week, bringing together housing associations, councils, police forces, charities and other agencies – along with government departments – to take a stand and work together to make communities safer. Organised by Resolve, ASB Awareness Week is backed by the Home Office, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Local Government Association (LGA), National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC).
33. The LGA continues to contribute to Government strategic discussions on tackling antisocial behaviour and regularly attends the Home Office-led Anti-Social Behaviour Advisory Board. We have hosted a well-attended webinar on tackling anti-social behaviour and continue to share best practice with councils and partners on this issue.
34. In April 2022, Safer and Stronger Communities Board lead members attended a roundtable discussion with Association of Police and Crime Commissioner leads to

discuss tackling anti-social behaviour and wider community safety issues. LGA officers will continue to work with the APCC on a joint webinar to raise awareness of the community trigger, and support ASB Awareness Week in July 2022.

35. In June 2022, the LGA has responded to the Government's consultation on an effective replacement for the Vagrancy Act. Our full response is available [here](#). We will continue to work with the Government on this issue as it progresses.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Communities

36. In May 2022, DLUHC launched £10 million of capital funding for 2022/23 to support local authorities in building new transit and permanent traveller sites, to refurbish existing permanent traveller and transit sites and provide temporary stopping places and facilities for travellers. The LGA hosted a [webinar](#) with the department to provide further information about the [Travellers Site Fund](#), which reached over 100 delegates.

37. Prior to this, we held a best-practice webinar on unauthorised encampments, with presentations from DLUHC and the National Liaison Group for GRT Communities.

Modern Slavery

38. On modern slavery, we held a series of webinars to share learning and promote best practice on the following issues: an introduction to modern slavery; making quality NRM referrals; partnership working; and housing/homelessness services and modern slavery.
39. Our housing/homelessness services and modern slavery webinar was accompanied by the launch of [guidance](#) and case studies aimed specifically at these services. As highlighted by the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner in her remarks to the Board in January, the provision of housing for victims of modern slavery has been a challenging issue and frequent pinch point that is often the source of tension between councils and organisations working with victims of slavery. Our guidance has been welcomed as an important tool in increasing awareness and understanding of the role services can play; we have also been working with The Salvation Army, which provides support under the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC), to build relationships between councils and MSVCC sub contractor organisations.
40. We undertook a [survey](#) of councils' work and progress on modern slavery issues to help inform a refresh of our modern slavery guidance for councils. A full draft of the revised guidance is almost completed, and we will be working with sector experts to refine this in the coming weeks, supported by the development of a maturity matrix for councils' work on this issue. We expect the final documents to be complete by the end of summer.

41. In recent months, we have also been involved in connecting our contacts in the anti-trafficking sector with the wider VCS/humanitarian sector in relation to the work on the Ukraine refugee schemes.

Blue light services and civil resilience

Fire Reform White Paper

42. On 18 May the Government published its White Paper on reforming the Fire and Rescue Service. Following an initial discussion at the Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) and the Fire Commission the LGA will be submitting a response when the consultation closes at the end of July. The paper contains a wide range of proposals around governance of the fire and rescue sector, and the Government's preferred model of having a single, elected – preferably directly elected – person governing fire and rescue services. There are proposals around operational independence for chief fire officers as well as questions on changes to promotion and entry requirements, ethics and the negotiating machinery for pay and terms and conditions.

Fit for the Future

43. Fit for the Future is a joint piece of work being undertaken by the LGA, the National Fire Chiefs Council and the National Employers (England) on the future of the fire and rescue service, and how we will seek to enhance and improve the service going forwards. A revised version of Fit for the Future will be published soon.

Equality and diversity

44. The LGA has continued to support the Fire Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Member Champions Network. We have held sessions on different issues including case studies from London Fire Brigade, councillors, women in the fire service and had input from the inspectorate. The Network provides a forum for discussion of EDI issues and support for members and is chaired by the Equalities Advocate for the FSMC, Dr Fiona Twycross, Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience in London.

Training

45. We have undertaken a range of support and training activities for members on fire and rescue authorities. We held three training sessions on governance and leadership in September, October and November. We have also continued with our Fire Leadership Essentials Programme to support leading members on FRAs.

Civil Contingencies and Resilience

46. We contributed to two reviews (one Government led, one independent) looking at the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and national resilience strategy, convening two roundtables to provide member input to these. The findings of the both the post-implementation

review of the CCA and the independent review recognised the need for the Act to formally reflect the role of democratically elected local politicians within resilience structures, and agreed that there should be a stronger framework of assurance for Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) and resilience activities. We expect more detail in the national resilience strategy, which is expected later in summer.

47. In support of the objective of strengthening democratic input to resilience work, we will shortly be commissioning a series of case studies showcasing effective member engagement and oversight of resilience work.
48. We have been participating in the work of the National Consortium for Societal Resilience, which brings together LRFs, the voluntary and charity sector and other partners to consider how to build the foundations for a whole of society approach to resilience. We plan to work with the National Preparedness Commission over the summer to promote case studies they have commissioned on community resilience activities during the pandemic.

Water safety

49. We have published a water safety toolkit to support councils to ensure that both locals and visitors are able to enjoy the natural environment safely whether on the coast or inland. This includes guidance for councils as well as some examples of best practice.
50. We also responded to a Department for Transport consultation on personal watercraft and supported world drowning prevention day.

Licensing and regulation

51. We have worked with officials at DLUHC on the temporary pavement licensing regime introduced by the Business and Planning Act 2020. Our lobbying was instrumental to securing new burdens funding for licensing authorities for year one and two of the temporary regime. We also successfully lobbied for changes to DLUHC's proposals for a permanent regime, and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill now contains provisions for a higher fee cap, longer consultation and determination period, and improved enforcement powers for licensing authorities.
52. We delivered a second licensing leadership essentials course in March and have another planned for October. This course received excellent feedback. We also ran our annual licensing conference in February, which was a paid for event that generated significant income for the LGA and received positive feedback. We have also progressed work on developing virtual training resources for members of licensing committees (an updated e-learning module and scenario videos) and hope to have that work completed

in the coming weeks.

53. On taxis, the LGA worked closely with the Department for Transport on the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act as it progressed through Parliament. The Act will mandate the use of the LGA developed and funded NR3 database and increase public safety, which is welcome. We also developed a guidance note for licensing authorities on home to school transport contracts and will be submitting evidence to the Department's best practice consultation in the coming days.
54. Cllr Jeanie Bell, one of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board Licensing Champions, provided evidence to two select committees: first, to the Home Affairs Committee on spiking and second, to the Lords Liaison Committee on the Licensing Act. Cllr Bell showcased the important work of councils to keep communities safe and highlighted our key lobbying asks, such as localised licensing fees.
55. Following the pandemic, there has been a renewed interest in the idea of health as a licensing objective. We have been working with public health colleagues to make the case for health considerations in licensing, including liaising with DLUHC colleagues on this issue.
56. We have continued to work with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport ahead of the publication of the Gambling Act Review and the Lead Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board have written to the Minister to reiterate our priorities for the review.
57. On wider regulatory services, in the early part of the Board year officers continued to work with the DLUHC Covid division and Department of Health and Social Care as the Government developed plans for Covid passes, which were subsequently introduced following the rise of the Omicron variant. We hosted a webinar for compliance leads to discuss the application of the covid pass requirements and reinstated face mask requirements in early January.
58. Disappointingly, the work of the DLUHC regulatory services task and finish group has not been progressed by Government. As in 2020, the LGA developed a spending review submission covering regulatory services, calling for investment in apprenticeships in environmental health and trading standards: despite this being supported by DLUHC officials this was not ultimately included within the DLUHC departmental bid. We are engaging with our workforce colleagues to ensure that the shortages in these professions are considered as part of wider LGA-DLUHC work on workforce challenges.
59. We continue to work with partners in the professional bodies and Office for Product Safety and Standards to support the professions where possible. We developed a series of case studies of senior officers with regulatory services backgrounds to accompany the launch of a regulatory services leadership development course, and will shortly finalise a

councillor handbook on public protection services to highlight best practice. We also developed guidance for government departments on issues to consider when developing new enforcement duties that councils are expected to enforce. Finally, we have been supporting the development of the new Association of Chief Environmental Health Officers to provide additional professional capacity and input to central policy making.

Crematoria, registrars, coroners and medical examiners

60. We have continued to provide support to member authorities on issues related to coroners and registrars, as well as responding to media enquiries. Media enquiries have concerned the impact of the pandemic on registration services, as well as other issues facing the sector. We have continued to provide input into the Ministry of Justice Coroner Services Committee and the Coroner Services Managers Panel.

Building safety

61. Over the last year our focus has been on the passage of the Building Safety Bill through parliament and working to ensure it aligns with the LGA's [fundamental asks](#): that the construction industry, developers, and manufacturers should pay for the cladding crisis. We have continued to press the government to distinguish between local authorities and developers, and fund councils to deliver the Building Safety Regulator (BSR). We have supported a coordinated audit of risk within medium-rise residential buildings.

62. We have also lobbied for the commencement of the Fire Safety Act, which has now taken place with [secondary legislation](#) implementing most of the recommendations of the Grenfell Inquiry. Following our lobbying with other bodies, the Home Office published the Fire Safety Assessment Prioritisation Tool alongside the Fire Safety Act and agreed to implement the LGA's working group on Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) neighbour assistance. We will engage in the [new consultation on PEEPs](#) and the Emergency Evacuation Information Sharing (EEIS) proposal.

63. The LGA has published [case studies](#) and a document on [principles of effective regulation](#), and has run several webinars and Leadership Essentials events with more being planned currently. The Joint Inspection Team has secured funding for the next two years which will see it triple in capacity by the end of this financial year.

2022/23 Priorities

64. It is expected that the themes for the 2022/23 work priorities will remain broadly consistent with 2021/22, with a number of workstreams continuing into the new Board cycle.



Executive Advisory Board

21 July 2022

65. The table below sets out some initial thinking on workstreams that will continue into the new Board cycle, subject to members' views:

Priority area	Proposed activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevent, counter-extremism and cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to lobby Government on the importance of retaining investment in measures to prevent extremism and build resilience Deliver a programme of support to councils on tackling extremism through the Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A series of roundtables and webinars for practitioners to share emerging challenges and facilitate support Case studies and guidance to capture good practice Facilitating academic support to councils on tackling extremism Provide training for elected members on delivering the Prevent duty, tackling extremism and building cohesion Lobby around the Online Safety and draft Protect Duty Bills to ensure they reflect sector views.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a further round of awareness raising events on modern slavery Continue to support councils on the implementation of their domestic abuse duty (outlined in Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021) Lobby on the draft Victims Bill during pre-legislative scrutiny stages, and when the Bill passes through Parliament. Support councils with the implementation of the forthcoming serious violence duty and Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews, outlined in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act. Continue to hold best practice sessions on tackling anti-social behaviour, and support 2022 ASB Awareness Week. Provide good practice case studies on community safety issues, such as VAWG, domestic abuse, serious violence – to help support councils with the forthcoming duties. Engage with the Home Office and partners on tackling serious and organised crime – continue working with the APCC on any joint work related to the Government's SOC strategy.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the Government’s forthcoming Community Safety Partnership review and ensure local government views are fed-in throughout each stage of the process. • Work with the Department for Health and Social Care on the implementation of the 10 year Drug Strategy, and provide support on the implementation of proposed drug partnership arrangements. • Continue engaging with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on the Travellers Site Fund – making the case for increased funding to help councils improve current transit sites.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue light services and civil resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Services Management Committee will be considering its priorities at its July meeting, and these are likely to focus on responding to the Fire Reform White Paper and the outcome of inquiries such as those into the Grenfell Tower fire and the attack at Manchester Arena. • Respond to the publication of the national resilience strategy and help shape future pilots and activities on local resilience • Support members and officers to strengthen council activity on resilience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensing and regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the LGA’s guidance on gambling harms, working with the APCC on joint local work on this issue. • Continue to make the case for localisation of alcohol licence fees. • Work with the Department for Transport on taxi licensing reform and with DLUHC on pavement licensing provisions in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. • Make the case for dedicated support to increase expert capacity and future pipeline in regulatory services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage with HSE’s programme to establish the new building safety regulator and raise awareness amongst councils of their responsibilities as regulators and duty holders under the new building safety regime. As part of this, we will continue to lobby for the funding of new burdens and a proportionate approach to transition to the new regime and new FSO responsibilities. • We will continue to support councils in taking enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004



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	<p>through hosting the Joint Inspection Team and to monitor the impact of the continuing competitive environment in building control regulation for buildings under 18m. We will continue to support a coordinated approach to regulation between fire services and councils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have an improvement programme to support councils and FRSs in tehri enhanced regulatory role and to support councils as landlords. • We will consider any developments around the Grenfell Tower inquiry, including the recommendations of its Phase Two report and respond. • We will continue to lobby around Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans and improved building regulations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crematoria, coroners and registrars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We anticipate that there will continue to be continuing press and related media work related to the death management processes including crematoria and registrars' service.

66. The Board's views on any other areas they would like us to focus on would be very helpful.

Implications for Wales

67. We will work with colleagues at the Welsh LGA to identify areas where our work will be applicable to Wales, and where WLGA may wish to use our work as a basis for Welsh specific work of its own.

Financial Implications

68. None. The work priorities identified for 2022/23 will be delivered within the planned staffing budget and grant funding available from the LGA's DLUHC grant (which supports dedicated posts on building safety and counter extremism/cohesion).

Next steps

69. The Board are asked to reflect on the work delivered this year and consider and comment on their priorities for 2022/23.

Supporting council improvement – annual report 2021/22



This report provides an overview and summary of highlights from our 2021/22 council improvement support programme.

Sector-led improvement
28 Jun 2022

Introduction

Councillor Peter Fleming OBE, Chair, LGA Improvement and Innovation Board:

"Now, more than ever, it is critical for local government to look to new solutions to continue to offer, and innovate, the vital services it provides to communities. In the last financial year, our sector improvement support programme has supported councils to deliver against some of the biggest challenges the local government sector has ever faced – including helping councils to manage the massive impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and to divert resources to help those most vulnerable. As Chair of the LGA Improvement and Innovation Board, it has been a privilege to help coordinate our sector improvement support programme and ensure that the voices of councils are represented across our programmes.

"Working on the Improvement and Innovation Board, my colleagues and I have witnessed the excellent work that the LGA does to support councils of all types across England and Wales with the particular issues they are facing.

"Our **peer support programme** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/council-improvement-and-peer-support/peer-challenge-and-remote-peer-support>] – which provides support, constructive challenges and recommendations to councils from our peers and others leading and working in the sector – continues to be at the heart of our unique offer to local authorities, backed up by successes over many years. The **peer challenge process** helps councils to understand 'where they are' and develop plans for challenges ahead, empowering them to achieve improvement across their services. We have seen our peer support programme go from strength to strength in offering councils the support they tell us they need most. This support takes many forms – from extensive financial guidance, to training on priority challenges such as climate change and efficient procurement, to our work developing leaders of the local government sector, to the critical support we provide to help councils tackle exceptional circumstances such as the **COVID-19 pandemic** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/coronavirus-council-information-and-support>] and the **issues emerging from the tragedy in Ukraine** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/communities/refugees-and-asylum-seekers/ukraine-council-information>].



Seeing councils utilising our support to improve their service delivery and offer better outcomes for residents illustrates the value of our sector support programme and the impact it can have.

"This report outlines what the LGA has achieved through our sector improvement support programme over the past year. Below are some key achievements I want to highlight:

- Councils continued to reap significant benefits from engaging with our improvement support. 99 per cent of **chief executives**, 96 per cent of **directors** and 91 per cent of **council leaders** stated that our improvement support had resulted in **positive impacts for their local authorities**.
- We engaged more than 2,000 councillors in our **training and development opportunities**.

- 97 per cent of officers, and 90 per cent of senior councillors, stated that our improvement support (including peer support, training and mentoring) had been useful to them.
- We delivered 134 **peer challenges** or **remote peer support programmes** to councils across all regions, helping those councils to drive improvements and address challenges across a range of work areas including corporate capacity, finance, leadership and governance.
- We provided support to every council that experienced a **change of political leadership** following the May 2021 local elections. Feedback about this support was extremely positive, with 95 per cent of respondents saying that our post-election support helped their council.
- 100 per cent of councils stated that support provided through our **financial resilience programme** had a positive impact on them.
- Over 4,000 graduates applied to take part in our **National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP)** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/national-graduate-development-programme>], with 177 of those being placed in councils across all regions in England and Wales.
- 98.5 per cent of councils have now engaged with our **Climate Change Programme** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change-hub>]. 95 per cent of the councils who responded to our survey indicated that the programme has had a positive impact on their council.
- 97 per cent of respondents said that our **Housing Advisers Programme (HAP)** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/safer-and-more-sustainable-communities/housing-advisers-programme>] either had, or likely will have, a lasting positive impact on their council's capacity to deliver housing and homelessness services, rough sleeping provision, and place-making; and 100 per cent of respondents said that the programme had a positive impact overall.

"I could not sign off without stating how much of a pleasure it has been to serve as Chair of the LGA Innovation and Improvement Board and to see, first-hand, how the LGA helps the local government sector. It has been a privileged position that continues to teach me so much about the excellent work local government is doing and the new ideas that will drive it forward. As my time as Chair comes to an end, I will continue to work with the LGA to help support its ambition to improve services across all councils. I am delighted, therefore, to present this annual report illustrating the highlights of our sector improvement support programme in 2021/22."

Background

Throughout the 2021/22 financial year, our sector improvement support programme provided councils with essential tools and resources – supporting them to respond to opportunities, address complex challenges, and facilitate continuous improvement within local government. This report provides a summary of our sector improvement support activity that was funded by the 2021/22 improvement grant we received from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). It outlines what was delivered – and evidences the significant positive impacts made across the local government sector – during the 2021/22 financial year.

Our sector improvement support programme is guided by a 'sector-led improvement' (SLI) approach, which recognises that the responsibility of local government improvement should remain with councils. Our sector-led improvement approach is underpinned by the key principles that:

- councils are responsible for their own performance
- councils are accountable locally, not nationally
- councils have a sense of collective responsibility for the performance of the local government sector
- the role of the Local Government Association is to provide effective tools and support to councils to enable them to drive improvement, and to maintain an overview of the performance of the sector.

We fulfil our role of supporting councils by offering a suite of improvement opportunities which we know deliver impactful outcomes for local authorities. In 2021/22, we delivered valuable programmes supporting councils to improve, develop leadership capacity, make data-informed decisions, and build capacity and capability – which included the sharing of good practice. This enabled councils to address the live and emerging issues which faced the sector, including challenges linked to **COVID-19**, **climate change**, and **refugee resettlement**.

Our sector improvement support programme was:

- shaped through direct engagement with councils to ensure that they had the support they most needed to improve and respond to a wide range of issues and opportunities
- developed with an understanding of central Government goals, to ensure it empowers councils to 'level up' communities across all areas.

To find out about our **2022/23 sector support offer for councils** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/sector-support-offer-2022-23>], please contact the **principal adviser** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/lga-principal-advisers>] for your region.

In addition to the programmes funded by the DLUHC improvement grant covered in this report, we offer further improvement support through our **children's services improvement** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/sector-support-offer/childrens-services-improvement>] programme and **Care and Health Improvement Programme (CHIP)** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/sector-support-offer/care-and-health-improvement>] (adult social care and public health), funded by other Government departments, alongside other improvement programmes including our **cyber security, digital and technology** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/digital/cyber-security>] and **One Public Estate (OPE)** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/onepublicestate>] programmes and our **Planning Advisory Service (PAS)** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/planning-advisory-service>].

Programme delivery outline

This report illustrates the considerable impact delivered through our sector improvement support programme in 2021/22. For the purposes of this report, we have categorised our support activity into the following four core themes:

Council improvement and peer support

Our **peer challenge and remote peer support** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/council-improvement-and-peer-support/peer-challenge-and-remote-peer-support>] programmes provided councils with essential tools and resources to facilitate improvement. We provided 'post local election' support to councils as well as bespoke and targeted support for councils who were facing unique or enhanced challenges or **changes in political leadership** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/sector-support-offer/changes-political-leadership>]. Our **research and data** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/research-and-data>] programme, including our free **data benchmarking platform LG Inform** [<https://lginform.local.gov.uk/>], equipped councils with tools to increase their service delivery capabilities and champion data-informed decision-making.

Leadership, workforce and communications

We delivered an extensive array of **leadership development opportunities** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/highlighting-political-leadership>] for both councillors and council officers. Our programmes supporting councils with **workforce challenges** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/workforce-and-hr-support>], and **communications strategy** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/comms-hub-communications-support>], enabled local leaders to maximise their capacity and reach to achieve positive outcomes for their communities.

Financial resilience and economic recovery

Local authorities have faced additional challenges in recent years from several high-profile issues, including the COVID-19 pandemic. Our programmes covering **financial support** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/finance-improvement>], **procurement and commissioning** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/procurement>], cyber, digital and technology (including our **LGA Cyber 360** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/lga-cyber-360>] and **digital inclusion resources** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/digital/four-essential-steps-digital-inclusion>]); and **behavioural insights** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/behavioural-insights>] supported councils to manage the impacts of these challenges, handle increased demand on services, and continue to drive improvement. We continued to offer bespoke support for those councils who were most in need.

Safer and more sustainable communities

Councils play a vital role as community leaders. They ensure that communities are safe and that council services are sustainable and meet the needs of residents. The support we provided through our **Climate Change Programme** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change-hub>], and our **Housing Advisers Programme (HAP)** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/safer-and-more-sustainable-communities/housing-advisers-programme>], enabled councils to adapt their approaches to achieve local targets. We also provided support, resources and tools relating to **devolution** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/safer-and-more-sustainable-communities/devolution-hub>], **equality, diversity and**

inclusion [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/lga-consultancy/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-hub>]; and **rough sleeping** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/rough-sleeping-peer-support>]; which helped councils to develop and improve impactful approaches to benefit their local communities.

Council improvement and peer support

Highlights

- We delivered **134 peer challenges or programmes of remote peer support** to councils across all regions of England and Wales.
- **100 per cent** of councils participating in an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge said the process had a positive impact on their councils.
- **95 per cent** of all respondents receiving post-election support said the support helped their council.

Our **council improvement and peer support** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/council-improvement-and-peer-support>] programme allowed councils to harness their potential and respond to key challenges. We provided access to a wide range of peer challenges, as well as bespoke and remote peer support options, delivered by peers and our **expert regional teams** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/lga-principal-advisers>]. The range of on-site and remote options we offered in 2021/22 meant that support remained flexible, adaptable and tailored to meet individual councils' needs. Our **research and data** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/research-and-data>] programme complemented this support by giving councils increased capability to measure their impact and take a data-orientated approach to service delivery.

Peer challenge and remote peer support

Our **peer challenge and remote peer support** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/council-improvement-and-peer-support/peer-challenge-and-remote-peer-support>] programme provided councils with a unique opportunity to engage with chief executive, and councillor, peers with current or previous experience in the sector. Peers provide challenge, support and guidance through peer-led reviews of specific areas or issues such as finance, governance, communications and equalities.

“ Peer challenges play a valuable role in supporting councils to continuously improve their services. They are undertaken in a collaborative and constructive way that enables the sharing of learning and best practice. We have benefited from peer challenges on planning, and legal and governance, and would highly recommend the process.

– Birmingham City Council

Our peer challenges and remote peer support were highly utilised in 2021/22, helping councils to drive improvements and address challenges across areas including corporate capacity, finance, leadership and governance. We delivered 134 peer challenges and programmes of remote peer support to councils across all regions of England and Wales, including through our **Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC)** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/peer-challenges/peer-challenges-we-offer/corporate-peer-challenges>] programme.

CPCs are a highly valued and effective tool of support and a cornerstone of our sector support offer. They take place on-site and support councils to improve across areas including local priorities and outcomes, organisational and place leadership governance and culture, financial planning and management, and capacity for improvement. From 2021/22, all CPCs included follow-up reviews, providing councils with a further opportunity to reflect and take stock of their progress.

Case study: LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

Cambridgeshire County Council [<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/>] was one of the first councils to undertake an **LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC)** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/peer-challenges/peer-challenges-we-offer/corporate-peer-challenges>] in the 2021/22 financial year. The initial CPC reviewed previous recommendations, and developed further recommendations, across areas including: finance, governance arrangements, capacity and capability, and ensuring greater clarity about shared services arrangements. The council had its progress review in March 2022. A thematic approach was taken on three of the most strategically important and impactful areas: finance and budget strategy, shared services, and place-shaping with partners.

The process allowed time and space for the council to reflect on progress, associated impacts, and next steps. Peers asked questions to help them understand impacts and offer feedback, and made suggestions to drive progress.

The progress review highlighted that the initial CPC had prompted the following impacts:

- the appointment of a dedicated chief executive for the county council
- a focus on financial planning and budget setting by the joint administration of the council
- provision of greater direction to staff around the future delivery of shared services
- consideration of future place-shaping governance
- a review of the council's political management arrangements and committee system.

The process was seen as valuable both by councillors and senior officers.

“ We were really delighted with the effectiveness of the Corporate Peer Challenge. The experience and expertise which the peers brought into our council was amazing, and the opportunity to work with them has been enormously valuable. The benefit of having an outside view of our council across a wide area has been very thought-provoking, and the ongoing engagement with the LGA has also been great.

– Cambridgeshire County Council Leader, Councillor Julie Nethsinga

Although COVID-19 restrictions meant that we were not able to provide face-to-face support until July 2021, more than half of all the peer challenges we carried out were CPCs.

As indicated by comments below, feedback from councils participating in our Corporate Peer Challenge programme has been highly positive. A survey of councils undergoing CPCs highlighted that 100 per cent of councils said that the process of preparing for and participating in a CPC had positively impacted their council.

Senior officer and councillor peers involved in peer challenges and other bespoke and remote support also reported high levels of satisfaction in participating in the programme – as highlighted by the following comments:

Reflections from councils on the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge programme:

“The insightful, balanced and objective feedback and recommendations for services and approaches for us to work on that the CPC team provided us with have genuinely helped us to make our services better, our systems more efficient and our councillor / officer working relationships more effective. For me, one of the key strengths of the LGA's Corporate Peer Challenge process is that it is undertaken by councillors who are current members of the 'local government family' who truly understand the sector we operate in and who bring a real depth of experience, knowledge and skills with them... I would thoroughly recommend to any council that has either never undertaken a CPC, or has not undertaken one recently, arranges one in the near future.”

– Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

“The peers brought us valuable challenge which highlighted the strengths we have as an organisation, but also provided constructive feedback on some areas where there is still room for us to improve. The process was very well managed with excellent support throughout. It's been a valuable exercise for all of us and one I would recommend to other authorities.”

– Lancashire County Council

“These Corporate Peer Challenges play an important role for our sector – sharing knowledge, learning and best practice to drive improvement and innovation through the local government family. This is so important if the sector is to remain best-placed to support our communities and deliver effectively as leaders of place.”

– Telford & Wrekin Council

“Two things [about LGA CPCs] stand out for me. Firstly, how well the peer team – which is drawn from all corners of the country – comes together to share knowledge, experience and insight during an intense period. The second is that despite us all sharing the same statutory framework, how different each authority is by virtue of the people, place, and priorities. [CPCs provide] a rare opportunity to inquire and to challenge in a constructive way but also to reflect and to learn.

– East Devon District Council

We are committed to ensuring that officer and member peers bring diverse and varied voices to our support offer. We continue to identify ways to ensure diversity among peers. In 2021/22, 300 peers supported the delivery of our Corporate Peer Challenge programme. We encourage those working in senior leadership roles across local government to find out more about **becoming a peer** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/become-a-peer>].

Peer reflections

“The CPC acts as a critical friend while, at the same time, allowing peers to develop their own learning about other local authorities. The learning and good practice enables the local government sector to continuously improve – this is possible through the non-threatening and collaborative manner in which the CPCs are carried out.”

– Kirklees Council

“By taking part in the review, I learned skills that I could take back to my own authority... The Corporate Peer Challenge process teaches you to give things a shake and see what falls out – and what does is really interesting.”

– Eastleigh Borough Council

“Being a peer is a fantastic opportunity to learn from other authorities, expand your knowledge, and also enable to time to reflect on best practice. I feel that anyone can be a peer – we all have different skills and experience to bring to the table. I found it to be an extremely rewarding, challenging and, yet, fun process to be part of and would highly recommend it.

– Elmbridge Borough Council

“The privilege of being invited into another authority and learning how they tackle and challenge many of the same issues that your own authority faces cannot be underestimated. The shared learning and constructive challenge really enables you and the host authority to see the different approaches and opens your eyes to the possibility that doing things differently really can work well.”

– Breckland Council

“Being a peer is a great privilege as it involves being welcomed into a council to hold up a mirror to them and play back their strengths as well as to highlight the challenges and areas for improvement they should consider. It is an opportunity not only to contribute and share learning, but also to take away examples of great practice. The chance to work with colleagues from the LGA and councils across the country just adds to the richness of the experience.”

– Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Post-election support

We provide councils with access to support following local elections. We offer targeted support to councils experiencing changes in political control or political leadership. In 2021/22, all councils that experienced a change in political control were offered post-election support, with 29 councils (82 per cent) taking up support such as top team development sessions, mentoring and officer and / or member development sessions including induction events for new members, and other forms of post-election support. Feedback was extremely positive, with 95 per cent of all respondents receiving post-election support saying that it helped their council.

We supported councils through these transition periods and beyond by promoting the range of resources and opportunities we offer on our new **changes in political leadership hub** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/sector-support-offer/changes-political-leadership>]. More than 30 councils experiencing a change of leader and / or portfolio holder without any change in political control also benefited from our post-election support and mentoring.

A councillor reflects on our post-election support

“I am delighted to say that [the support] has been both extensive and very beneficial. As a new cabinet with a considerable number of first-time councillors, we have all benefited from signing up to a myriad of courses... We were given invaluable support and guidance by the LGA, and the LGA councillor lead, around key issues as well as the brokering of relationships with other councils with a shared experience. This was most enlightening... I would urge all councils and councillors to make full use of the LGA and the expertise it possesses. I feel confident in saying our local authority will become more effective, and individual councillors better informed, as a result of developing our relationship with the LGA.”

– Councillor Bryan Jones, Cannock Chase District Council

Research and data

Being able to access and analyse research and data on council performance, demographics, and live trends and issues, is critical to ensuring high quality services and informed decision-making in local government. In 2021/22, we supported councils to access the tools and resources they needed to achieve this through our research and data programme, which includes our **free data benchmarking platform – LG Inform** [<https://lginform.local.gov.uk/>] – and our analytics-focused training and development opportunities.

COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT AND PEER SUPPORT



927,000

Our free **data benchmarking platform**
LG Inform received over **927,000 page views**

Highlights

- **LG Inform** received ‘**Highly Commended**’ awards at both the Local Area Research and Intelligence Association (LARIA) Awards and the Analysis in Government Awards – in its 10th anniversary year (2021).
- **LG Inform** received more than **927,000 page views** and reached the milestone of **four million total views** since 2013.

LG Inform – our free data benchmarking platform

LG Inform uniquely integrates thousands of local-level data items in a single system and is free for councils and fire and rescue services to access.

In 2021/22, LG Inform continued to provide current performance data relating to councils and local areas, and we launched new **LG Inform themed data reports** [<https://lginform.local.gov.uk/themed-reports>] in response to live issues. New reports visualised data on Ukrainian settlement in England, greenhouse gas accounting, homelessness, childhood immunisations, local digital skills, and on Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman annual statistics on complaints, decisions, uphold rates, and remedy and compliance outcomes.

We also updated LG Inform themed data reports on key financial indicators, children in need and care, special educational needs and disability (SEND), children's health and wellbeing, and police-recorded crime – helping to ensure that councils had access to the current data they needed.

In recognition of its continued valuable contribution to the local government sector, in 2021 – its tenth anniversary year – LG Inform received a 'Highly Commended' award in both the **Local Area Research and Intelligence Association (LARIA) Awards** [<https://www.laria.org.uk/professional-development/awards/>] and the **Analysis in Government Awards** [<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/analysis-in-government-awards-2021-shortlist>].

LG Inform was widely utilised by the sector in 2021/22, achieving more than 927,000 views during this financial year alone.

Spotlight on: COVID-19 workforce data

Our workforce data supported service delivery in councils throughout the pandemic. Our monthly COVID-19 workforce data collection provided the single national source on how the sector responded during the pandemic. The data, collected directly from heads of human resources across local government, provided timely, reliable, and comprehensive information on staffing numbers, reasons for staff absences, capacity to run services, and contingency and mitigation methods. Councils were able to access regular COVID-19 workforce survey research reports, and **interactive and comparative charts, tables and trend data on LG Inform** [<https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/view/lga-research/covid-19-case-tracker>].

Advanced and Predictive Analytics Network (APAN) for local government data practitioners

With councils moving to adopt more intelligent data systems, we established the **Advanced and Predictive Analytics Network (APAN) and online hub** [<https://khub.net/web/lg-apan#:~:text=The%20Advanced%20%26%20Predictive%20Analytics%20Network,analytics%20in%20local%20government%2>]. In 2021/22, the hub provided a forum for data analysts and data scientists in local government to meet, share and learn from each other, focusing on the rapidly changing techniques for collecting and analysing data to inform council decision-making. Data practitioners reported that support offered through the hub helped them to gain "clear insight into some of the practicalities and impact of undertaking this work" and provided a "comprehensive and inspiring look at what is possible, particularly around access and sharing of data".

Leadership, workforce and communications



Our Leadership, Workforce, and Communications, programmes offered extensive support and empowered local government leaders to develop new skills, increase their capacity and maximise their impact.

Leadership development

Highlights

- 99 per cent of councillors who participated in our **Leadership Essentials** programme thought it would help them carry out their role.
- 177 graduates were placed in councils as part of our **National Graduate Development Programme**.
- We offered bespoke support to underrepresented groups to support their development as leaders including hosting events for **BAME and LGTBQ+ councillors**, and providing coaching for disabled councillors.
- 100 per cent of all councillors who took part in the **Next Generation** programme and responded to our survey learned practical skills they could use in their role – 97 per cent of these councillors said the programme would help them carry out their role.

Effective leadership in local government is critical to delivering the vital services and plans necessary to drive improvement in communities. The LGA takes an active role in identifying and developing a diverse range of talent to empower them to deliver their visions as leaders of place and increase leadership capacity across all councils. In the last year, we have provided extensive

support to councillors and council officers to help them meet their leadership and management potential.

“ What a difference you are making to councils of all flavours across the country – I can’t help but feel awed by that as an achievement. The six days have made a real difference to my confidence in leading.

– Councillor reflecting on our Leadership Academy

Political leadership and councillor support

Our political leadership and councillor support programmes provided comprehensive support to councillors, and aspiring councillors, in 2021/22. Our **Leadership Academy** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/highlighting-political-leadership/leadership-academy>] – our flagship development programme for councillors who are already in leadership positions – was delivered to 76 senior councillors who each undertook three modules covering subjects including relationship-building, complex change, and communication. A survey of Leadership Academy participants indicated that the programme had helped them to improve the way they carry out their role. Among many positive reflections, one participant noted it had helped them “to better understand how I work, how to refine my ideas and to think more strategically about longer term career options”, while also giving them “confidence that I belong in [my council] and can make a change.”

Our **Leadership Essentials** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/highlighting-political-leadership/leadership-essentials>] programme comprised a series of events and workshops designed as themed learning opportunities for councillors, each focused on different portfolio areas including children’s services, finance, and climate change. A survey of over 100 participants who took part in the Leadership Essentials programme in 2021/22 indicated that 99 per cent of them felt that the programme had helped them to improve the way they carry out their role.

“ It has given me a palpable sense of a national network of people involved in similar challenges. I've learned from the experience of others and have proactively sought out follow-up learning as a result, including through an LGA mentor with whom I've recently established contact.

– Leadership Essentials participant

These programmes were supplemented with the launch of new **e-learning modules** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/councillor-development/councillor-e-learning>] on topics including biodiversity, economic growth, data protection, equality, diversity and inclusion, and the Councillor Code of Conduct.

We have committed ourselves to ensure ensuring greater inclusivity within our Leadership programme to benefit individuals with diverse backgrounds and experiences. We are proud to say that the proportion of councillors from BAME backgrounds participating in our senior level programmes has increased to 15 per cent and that, for the first time ever, our **Leadership Academy** programme was attended by more women (52 per cent) than men.

“ Can I thank you for a really great, interesting, inspiring course? I am a new councillor and this was my first LGA event – I can’t imagine how difficult it was to work out how to present through zoom but you did it spot on.

– Councillor reflecting on our Leadership Essentials programme

We continued to promote the vital role of councillors through our **Be a Councillor campaign** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/be-councillor>], identifying diverse and talented individuals and encouraging them to become councillors to make a difference in their local communities. Our **Focus on Leadership events** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/highlighting-political-leadership>] provided councillors with a series of networking opportunities to build valuable relationships with peers from across the country. 2021/2022 events included a BAME Councillor Weekender, Effective

Opposition for Opposition Leaders and Deputy Leaders, and an LGBTQ+ Councilor Weekend. We introduced focused support for disabled councillors in their role as community leaders and confirmed coaching agreements between disabled councillors (including experienced councillors) and professional coaches, with plans in place to expand this offer significantly in 2022/23.

Our **Next Generation** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/highlighting-political-leadership/next-generation>] programme offered ambitious and talented councillors an unparalleled political development opportunity to further their political careers as champions of local government. Our 2021/22 programme provided support and training to a select group of talented and ambitious councillors across the political spectrum. Modules focused on three key areas including personal leadership, political leadership and communication and media skills. Next Generation is a highly valued and impactful programme, with all those who participated this year indicating they learned practical skills they could utilise and 97 per cent stating it would help them carry out their role. Contributing to the success of this programme is that it is uniquely developed within party political traditions, with support from party political experts and the LGA Independent Group.

“ I couldn't recommend the Next Generation programme more. I learned lots of things that I can put into practice immediately to help me be a better councillor – from public speaking to shaping policy.

– Councillor's feedback on our Next Generation programme

Managerial Leadership Development Programme for council officers

Our Managerial Leadership Development Programme has continued to promote and enhance talent in local government from graduate to chief executive level. In 2021/22, through our work in partnership with **Solace** [<https://solace.org.uk/>], our networking events, and our graduate programme, we empowered council officers to further their careers, improve their capabilities and operate more confidently.

LEADERSHIP, WORKFORCE AND COMMUNICATIONS



The infographic features a large, stylized number '177' in a bold, pink font. To the left of the number is a decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, semi-transparent pink and white geometric shapes, including triangles and squares, arranged in a pattern that suggests movement or growth. The background of the infographic is a solid pink color.

We placed **177 graduates** into councils as part of our **National Graduate Development Programme**.

We continued to run the **National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP)** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/national-graduate-development-programme>] – our highly competitive flagship management development programme, which attracts and identifies the brightest and best graduates and adds capacity to the sector by placing them in councils across the country. In 2021/22, over 4,000 candidates applied to be a part of the programme with 177 graduates being placed in councils. The LGA is committed to ensuring that future leaders reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. 30 per cent of those who reached the interview stage from the most recent cohort were from a BAME background.

We partnered with Solace to create a pipeline of talented managerial leaders for the sector and to help individuals achieve their potential. This was achieved through our successful **IGNITE** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/officer-development/ignite-solace-leadership-programme-chief-executives>] programme which supports chief executives to further develop their understanding of an increasingly complex environment. We received extremely positive feedback about this programme from chief executives with 100 per cent of those who were surveyed last year indicating they felt more confident in their ability to carry out their role having participated in our IGNITE programme. In addition, we collaborated with Solace to offer **Total Leadership** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/officer-development/lga-and-solace-group>], a programme for senior executive staff aspiring to become chief executives, from a range of backgrounds, to further develop

their leadership approach. We also offered **Springboard** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/officer-development/lga-and-solace-group>], our fast-track programme for head-of-service level managers identified as rising stars in the public sector and who are seeking to move upwards.

“ From beginning to end the programme was excellent, enabling me through coaching, formal sessions, networking and meeting public leaders, to determine the next steps in my public leadership journey.

– Total Leadership participant

Workforce and HR support

Highlights

- We launched our **'Diverse by Design' guide to equality, diversity and inclusion** and hosted a series of accompanying webinars which were attended by over **1,000 delegates with 95 per cent satisfied or very satisfied** with the webinars.
- Key support to councils offered around **apprenticeships** including health checks to assess where they are on their apprenticeship journey and expert surgeries to provide specialist guidance.
- We provided **bespoke workforce support to 55 councils** to aid their approach to talent management, recruitment and retention, and addressing skills gaps.

Our Workforce programme continued to provide critical support and guidance to local authorities to ensure they had the workforce and corporate capacity and capability to deliver for their communities. Our activity in this area included providing support to address recruitment and retention issues, sharing of good practice, and providing targeted support for organisations who were facing enhanced challenges.

During, and emerging from, the pandemic, we provided timely information and resources to councils and shared good practice and advice on key considerations and ways they could approach returning to 'a new business as usual' and navigating the world of 'hybrid' working. We ran a series of hybrid working roundtables which engaged 135 councils, sharing lessons learned to help revise policy, practice and procedures. We launched an organisational development practitioner network with councils – and 140 individuals – who participated in a series of online network sessions to help embed this practice.

Our **apprenticeships programme** [<https://local.gov.uk/apprenticeship-support-programme>] went from strength to strength in 2021/22. We carried out apprenticeship health checks, providing reviews for councils to assess where they are on their apprenticeship journey and how they can improve their approach to achieve greater results. We also held expert surgeries, which provide councils with the opportunity to discuss their approach with our apprenticeships adviser on any aspect of their programme.

We launched **'Diverse by Design'** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/diverse-design>], our comprehensive guide to equality, diversity and inclusion, to support improved workforce diversity and more inclusive practices and behaviours within councils. This work was supported by a series of webinars run jointly with the **Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas)** [<https://www.acas.org.uk/>], covering inclusive leadership, carers in the workplace, creating gender equal workplaces, the menopause, and disability at work. Over 1,000 delegates booked to attend the series and feedback showed that 95 per cent of delegates were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the webinars.

“ I cannot praise highly enough the support that the LGA Workforce team has provided to Torbay Council in the last two years. They have worked closely with our senior managers and HR team. Their support, challenges, knowledge, and sharing of best practice, has been fundamental in getting the council’s senior leaders and managers to really think about what workforce planning is, and how it can help the council move forward and plan effectively for the future.

– Anne-Marie Bond, Chief Executive of Torbay Council

Our support on employment law continued with our monthly publication of our Employment Law Advisory Bulletin. We provided bespoke support to councils on topics including COVID-19 guidance in the workplace and exit pay reform. Over 200 delegates joined our annual Employment Law Conference in March.


Our Workforce Planning programme continued to grow during 2021/22. We supported 55 councils to consider their approach to talent management, recruitment and retention, and addressing skills gaps.

Communications and community engagement

Highlights

- **100 per cent** of councils undertaking a communications health check said that the support they received through this process had a positive impact on their council.
- By the end of 2021/22, our **Crisis Communications Cohort** – our network supporting fellow communications teams during times of crisis – had grown to **87 councillors**.
- **95 per cent** of attendees at our communications webinars said that these events have provided them with information that they will make use of within their authority.

LEADERSHIP, WORKFORCE AND COMMUNICATIONS



100%

100 per cent of councils undertaking a **communications health check** said that the support had a positive impact on their councils

Whether it’s to encourage greater self-service or promote understanding of local priorities, effective communication has the power to engage communities, challenge misconceptions and support councils to achieve their objectives. Our Communications and Community Engagement programme supports councils to lead more successfully by providing them with tools, knowledge and resources to enable them to engage and communicate more effectively with their communities..

In 2021/22, we delivered a range of **communications support** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/comms-hub-communications-support>] including media training, support in developing place and brand narratives, and bespoke remote communications support. Our communications peer challenges and communications health checks provided councils the opportunity to receive a peer-reviewed check of their communications strategy and function, with 100 per cent of participating councils stating that their communications health check had resulted in a positive impact.

Our communications support also helped to support greater resilience for councils with the establishment of a Crisis Communications cohort – bringing together council communications teams, including 87 communications leaders, who are prepared to provide support to fellow communications teams during times of crisis.

Further support and resources were provided through our webinar programme. We hosted a range of events topics of importance to councils and their communications teams throughout the year, with feedback showing that at least 95 per cent of participants saying that these webinars have provided them with information that they will use their authority. Our **e-bulletins** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/e-bulletins>] and updated guidance provided councils with another key source of information. **New Conversations 2.0** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/new-conversations-20-lga-guide-engagement>], our refreshed guide to community engagement, provided councils with a particularly important tool covering good practice in community engagement, how councillors can communicate with communities more effectively, engaging with different groups, using different platforms for communications, and other topics.

Financial resilience and economic recovery



Our **financial resilience** [<https://local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/finance-improvement>] and **economic recovery** [<https://local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/economic-growth-support-hub>] programmes helped local authorities to manage enhanced challenges facing the sector, and to continue to drive improvement.

Finance support programme

Highlights

- A recent survey of councils accessing our finance support programme showed that **100 per cent of respondents** said that the support they received through the programme had helped their council.
- We established **new forums for audit committee chairs** in eight of our nine regions and provided further support to the existing London forum.

Increased demand for services and mounting economic pressures has meant that councils have faced heightened financial pressures in recent years. Effective financial leadership and sustainable financial management are more critical than ever. Our 2021/22 finance support programme has, therefore, focused on providing councils with support and cultivating their skills to respond to financial challenges. We provided targeted support for those councils most in need.

FINANCIAL RESILIENCE AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY



100%

100 per cent of councils responding to our survey after accessing our **Finance Support Programme** said it had assisted their council

Financial resilience programme

In 2021/22, more than 50 councils received direct support through our financial resilience programme. For example, we worked with a number of councils to achieve capitalisation directions and provide emergency financial support. A core element of our support was provided by our financial improvement and sustainability advisors (FISAs) – former local authority chief finance officers who provide advice and insight to councils, in particular, to those councils who are facing enhanced financial challenges. In 2021/22, FISAs provided valuable support to more than 40 councils, with 100 per cent of respondents stating the support had helped their council. Feedback from councils that have drawn on this support underlines the value of our FISA support offer. One Chief Financial Officer commented that LGA FISAs had “provided the right balance of support and challenge, providing valuable information and advice, and a solid sounding board for the issues faced and how we can approach these as a council.”

Our wider financial resilience programme, supported by expert regional teams, helped councils to deliver a range of improvements. A review of our 2021/22 support shows that support from and advice from regional teams and FISAs has enabled councils to build greater financial resilience through mechanisms including financial scenario planning, mentoring, and capacity building exercises. In this way, we supported councils to improve their financial circumstances, including through budget-setting and management of reserves.

Developing financial skills

Our finance support continued to be shaped in consultation with the sector, including via input from a newly established **sounding board** of chief financial officers that has served to take the pulse of the sector and ensure that the support we provide is in line with councils’ needs.

Our training and development programmes strengthened councils’ skills and capabilities. We hosted a series of webinars and workshops on issues relating to finance and audit. For example, we ran budget setting workshops to support cabinet members to understand budgetary issues and how to develop financial plans that respond to them. We continued to deliver our **Leadership Essentials** programme for leaders and finance portfolio holders, and its sister programme for audit committee chairs. We created a new programme for non-finance portfolio holders and established eight new regional forums for audit committee chairs (while also providing support to the existing forum in London) to ensure full coverage across England. These forums provided opportunities for audit committee chairs to discuss wider audit issues and share learning and best practice, and they will continue to be supported to identify effective audit measures into the future.

Economic growth

Highlights

- All respondents said that the **Economic Growth Advisers Programme** provided their council with skills to increase its capacity to address local economic challenges.
- We published **53 economic growth cases studies** to share good practice and learning across the sector.

Economic recovery and renewal has remained a pressing concern for local authorities, in particular, following the impact of COVID-19. In 2021/22, our **economic growth improvement offer** focused on building the capacity, skills and confidence – of councillors and officers – to aid their role in rebuilding local economies post-pandemic.

FINANCIAL RESILIENCE AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY



53

We published **53 economic growth case studies** to share good practice and learning across the local government sector

In 2021/22, we delivered two **Economic Growth Leadership Essentials** programmes to support councillors in their economic development role. We also designed and published our 'Introduction to economic development' e-learning module for councillors and officers. Our **Economic Growth Design skills programme** supported councils to apply 'design-thinking' to their local economic challenges. All participating officers who were surveyed stated that the tools from this programme that they had used, had made a positive impact on their work.

“ The community insight gained through the Economic Growth Design Skills programme has enabled us to work up our business case for a green skills academy that has attracted £500,000 of funding.

– Economic Growth Design Skills programme participant

Our **Economic Growth Advisers (EGA) Programme** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/economic-growth-support-hub/advisers-programme>] delivered support and additional capacity to councils to tackle local economic growth challenges. The EGA programme offered specialist bespoke advice and support to local authorities, to help them deliver economic growth in their area. Highlights of this work included supporting councils to:

- promote local creative industries
- help young people start up their own businesses
- make better use of the visitor economy.

All respondents to our impact survey said that the programme provided their council with skills to increase its capacity to address local economic challenges.

To share learning across councils, we published **53 case studies** relating to economic growth on our **economic growth support hub** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/economic-growth-support-hub>]. We delivered webinars and roundtables on the topics of:

- public and private partnerships post-pandemic
- the long-term resilience of our high streets
- lessons learned from business engagement during the pandemic
- green recovery
- upskilling young people
- the visitor economy.

Procurement and commissioning programme

Highlights

- We provided over 100 officers with training on **The Sourcing Playbook** – outlining good practice for local authorities in relation to sourcing goods and services.
- We provided urgent support to councils relating to the **approach to Russian suppliers** following the invasion of Ukraine.
- Our **National Social Value Conference** was attended by more than 1,400 people from around the world.

Effective procurement and commissioning has never been more important to councils. Increased demand for public services, heightened costs of delivery, and reduced resources, mean that local authorities must look at innovative solutions to improve their efficiency to continue to deliver for their communities. Our **Procurement and Commissioning Programme** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/procurement>] offered a wide range of support to councils in 2021/22 to enable them to improve their practices in the face of rising costs and demand.

In 2021/22, the programme facilitated networks of procurement and commissioning officers to share good practice and develop solutions to shared challenges collaboratively. Our **Construction** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/construction-procurement-hub>], **Adults'** and **Children's** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/council-improvement-and-peer-support/childrens-services-improvement>] networks continued to thrive via their quarterly meetings. In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, we quickly

set up a network of those councils procuring energy from Gazprom to help them to network and support each other on calls for the public sector to exit contracts with Russian entities. 54 councils have been involved in these weekly meetings, which will continue into 2022/23.

We were heavily involved in organising national conferences and learning opportunities, which we promoted across our procurement networks. The 2021 online **Local Government Procurement Expo** was attended by 114 council officers. Our **LGA Construction Conference** attracted 296 officers, with over 90 per cent stating they were satisfied with the event. The 2021 online **National Social Value** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/procurement/achieving-community-benefits>]. **Conference** drew attendees from across the world, with 290 people attending in person and 1,175 attending online.

The Sourcing Playbook is Government guidance outlining good practice in relation to sourcing goods and services. We offered training which outlined the main Government recommendations for the local government context. Sourcing Playbook training was delivered to over 100 officers with 90 per cent of these stating they were satisfied with the course.

As a direct response to the Climate Emergency – which has been announced by almost every council in England and Wales – we published a practical **Sustainable Procurement Toolkit** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/sustainable-procurement-delivering-local-economic-social-and-environmental-priorities>] for commissioners, procurement practitioners and contract managers to help them address some of the key socio-economic and environmental issues that they face, as they strive collectively towards achieving net zero. The toolkit was accessed more than 1,000 times between its launch in October 2021 and the end of the 2021/22 financial year.

We continued to build relationships with key local government suppliers in adults', children's, and construction services, enabling us to organise regular opportunities throughout the year for councils to meet with these key suppliers.

Digital connectivity and inclusion

Highlights

- We launched our **Digital Inclusion Learner Checklist** to enable councils to develop, deliver, and evaluate, their digital inclusion support for residents.
- Over **100 councils** participated in our digital programmes.

Our **Cyber, Digital and Technology** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/sector-support-offer/supporting-financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/digital>] programme supported councils – sharing tools and resources with them – to increase their service efficiencies and work towards achieving their digital transformation ambitions.

Working with **Socitm Advisory** [<https://www.advisory.socitm.net/>], we developed a **Digital Inclusion Learner Checklist** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/digital/four-essential-steps-digital-inclusion>] and a suite of accompanying resources to guide councils through the steps necessary to diagnose, develop, deliver and evaluate digital inclusion support for residents. This guidance is underpinned by a dynamic spreadsheet tool that can assess residents' need and monitor their progress towards digital maturity. The tool provides councils with a standardised baseline of quantitative data that can assist officers to demonstrate the impact of initiatives.

Our programme put council engagement, networking, and collaboration, at the centre of its activity. Across our priority areas we coordinated several stakeholder groups that helped councils come together and share best practice with one another. The Local Government Digital Committee is a group for chief executives and senior digital directors, **supporting 74 councils**. Our Digital Inclusion Network hosts digital inclusion practitioners from across the country and is made up of more than 187 council officers. Our Cyber Policy Group coordinates national cyber security developments **with 34 leading councils**. Finally, our newly launched Transformation Network, which focuses on the delivery of change programmes in councils, has grown to include 31 councils.

Behavioural Insights Programme

Highlights

- We published the tenth episode of our **Nudges for Social Good podcast** – episodes of which received more than **2,000 listens** during 2021/22.
- Our annual **Behavioural Insights Conference** was attended by **570 delegates** and shared good practice on key challenges including climate change, health inequalities, and sustainable travel.

Our **Behavioural Insights (BI) programme** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/behavioural-insights>] supports councils to encourage behaviour change among local communities to improve outcomes and reduce demand on public services. In 2021/22, the programme focused on using behavioural insights to confront complex issues facing local government including improving public health and responding to the pandemic.

“ The difference between 18 months ago when we applied, and now, is like night and day. Back then we didn't know what behaviour change was – now we are setting up a behaviour change unit at the council and all of our community engagement activity is run using behavioural insights (BI) tools and techniques.

– Behavioural Insights programme participant

As part of a new approach, we supported two groups of neighbouring councils to work as consortia to address local behavioural challenges. We facilitated these two groups to collaborate to deliver joint projects which could be scaled up to maximise their impact across the sector. The north-east London consortium focused on reducing local health inequalities by increasing the take-up of NHS health checks amongst those local communities who had not previously accessed them. The Yorkshire consortium worked together to increase active travel in urban and rural localities. In total, we supported 22 councils through our **Behavioural Insights programme** in 2021/22. We supported councils with specific behavioural challenges, including increasing COVID-19 vaccine uptake, increasing physical activity, reducing male suicide, and reducing school exclusions. 100 per cent of councils involved in the programme during 2021/22 said that their council gained knowledge and skills to undertake their own behaviour change interventions as a result.

We shared the learning from councils through our podcast series and our annual Behavioural Insights conference. The conference, held in February 2022, spotlighted examples of behavioural insights work delivered by councils to address the challenges of climate change, sustainable travel, and health inequalities. The conference was attended by more than 570 delegates and 92 per cent of attendees reported that the event met their requirements. We launched the tenth episode of our **Nudges for Social Good podcast** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/financial-resilience-and-economic-recovery/behavioural-insights/nudges-for-social-good>], which shares behavioural insights best practice. Episodes of the podcast received more than **2,000 listens** during 2021/22.

Case study – Making use of behavioural insights in Cheshire East

Three in four suicides in the UK are male. In 2021/22, in collaboration with **Cheshire East Council** [<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/home.aspx>] and **ICE Creates** [<https://icecreates.com/>], we finalised a behavioural insight trial designed to encourage and empower men to improve their mental health early on, before they lose the ability to cope. Our ambition was to intervene before men's mental health worsened and the risk of suicide increased. In partnership, we co-created and trialled a behaviour change intervention (as part of efforts to prevent male suicides) in line with local strategic aims outlined by the **Champs Public Health Collaborative** [<https://www.champspublichealth.com/>].

The intervention focused on prompting men to recognise how they are feeling and encouraging and empowering them to improve their wellbeing. In total, the intervention recruited 90 men to take part in a six-week wellbeing challenge. We measured their wellbeing upon starting the trial and regularly engaged with them by sharing behavioural messages and images. A control group was also organised to measure against the outcomes achieved.

The outcome of the trial was that men in the intervention group scored significantly higher on the wellbeing measure than those who were not in the intervention group. In addition, one in two men in the intervention group accessed support or information, including self-care, to better their situation – compared to one in three men from the control group who did so. Many of the men who took part shared success stories on how their lives improved following the trial, such as through improved sleeping schedules, increased physical exercise, weight loss, and taking more breaks in their daily lives.

We provided support, tools and resources to enable councils to deliver their ambitions as local leaders of their communities. This included support for local authorities to achieve climate change targets, to care for the most vulnerable residents, and to deliver services in response to local needs.

Climate Change Programme

Highlights

- Our Climate Change Programme provided support to 98.5 per cent of all councils in **England and Wales**.
- Our **Net Zero Innovation Programme** (delivered alongside University College London) supported 14 partnerships between councils, universities, and other partners to address climate issues.
- We gained international recognition as a finalist in the Climate Challenge Cup at the **COP26 UN Climate Change Conference**.

SAFER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES



98%

Our **Climate Change Programme** provided support to **98.5 per cent** of all councils in England and Wales

In recent years, councils and wider society have become increasingly conscious of climate change and the severe issues it poses to all. Our **Climate Change Programme** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change-hub>], established in February 2020, was developed to respond to the increased ambitions of councils to respond to climate issues. The programme seeks to help councils by enabling them to reach their targets of lowering local carbon emissions, and achieving adaptation, by building councils' capacity and capability in sustainability and the environment. In 2021/22, the programme had a significant impact across the sector, with 98.5 per cent of councils engaging in the **LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme**, and 95 per cent of those surveyed stating that the programme had a positive impact on their council.

SAFER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES



14

Our **Net Zero Innovation Programme** (delivered with University College London) supported **14 new partnerships** between councils, universities and others to work towards net zero

Our **Net Zero Innovation Programme (NZIP)** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change-hub/net-zero-innovation-programme>] continued to bring together local authorities, universities and other stakeholders to address climate challenge at the local level and explore ways for councils to meet their net zero objectives. The programme supported partnerships to address issues including the decarbonising of transport, improving air quality and improving the wellbeing of green spaces. All participants stated that their individual NZIP project was helping their council to address its climate emergency action plan. The programme gained international recognition at the COP26 UN Climate Change Conference by reaching the final of the Climate Challenge Cup.

“ It's been a real pleasure to be a part of this and I've learned a huge amount and made some useful connections through it already. This programme was a key part in kick-starting our joint work on retrofit and decarbonisation.

– Net Zero Innovation Programme participant

To increase the capacity and capability of councils, our Climate Change Programme hosted several successful events to share excellent practice and key learning. These included dedicated carbon literacy training events both for officers (with 63 officers completing the training) and councillors (with 50 councillors completing the training) enabling them to be accredited as 'carbon literate' and able to train others to achieve the same accreditation. The programme also held a series of climate change roundtables for councils, designed to give officers who were working directly on climate and environmental issues a space to share innovative ideas and challenges and establish networks that could tackle complex issues together.

We supplemented this activity by sharing tools and guides, webinars, podcasts and e-learning modules with all councils. Our **LGA Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool** [<https://localpartnerships.org.uk/greenhouse-gas-accounting-tool/>] has been accessed by 262 different councils. The tool provides a template for councils to accurately record their emissions to monitor their climate performance and allow for effective benchmarking. We published 150 case studies via our **Pass the Planet campaign** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change-hub/pass-planet>] to showcase new ideas and approaches. The Climate Change Programme has also had a crucial role in raising awareness of climate change issues and responses via our website, our **Climate Change e-bulletin** and by providing local government presence at COP26.

Case study – leading housing retrofitting with action learning sets

One of the aims of our Climate Change Programme in 2021/22 was to support councils to achieve a net zero housing stock by 2050. To do this, we wanted to promote awareness of, and provide guidance on, the retrofitting of houses and, in doing so, to create jobs and skills across communities.

Our action learning sets [<https://local.gov.uk/lga-building-housing-retrofit-skills-leadership-and-learning-programme-march-2022>] brought together councils from across the country to focus on achieving this – to look at the core problems and then identify alternative solutions. Sets were open to both councillors and officers, recognising that climate change is an issue that affects everyone and requires collaboration across the entire sector.

In total, 24 officers and councillors took part to explore, unpick and address the challenges of retrofitting domestic properties. The sets had a significant positive impact on those that took part. Significant outcomes from the programme included:

- developing a challenge map
- identifying key enablers
- establishing a community of practice for officers working in this area to share knowledge and seek support.

“ I found it very useful to have that peer-to-peer support – to find out about other sources of information that I might be able to access that I may not have come across before but that other people have because they work in different areas of councils, or different areas of the UK. This support is something that I’ve never come across before.

– Housing Retrofit Action Learning Set participant

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Highlights

- Our **Equality, diversity and inclusion hub** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/lga-consultancy/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-hub>] received more than 7,500 page views.
- More than 25 case studies were added to the hub, providing councils with learning across topics including community cohesion, community engagement, workforce, health inequalities and other topics.

In April 2021, we launched our **Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) hub** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/lga-consultancy/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-hub>], which brings together the range of support and resources we offer in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. The hub has been impactful by sharing learning from others who are taking positive action, including through our publication of a range of case studies on approaches to community cohesion and good EDI practice. We published a webpage dedicated to case studies about health inequalities, which were exacerbated by COVID-19, and another dedicated to case studies about councils that have commissioned services to develop independence and communication skills among people with learning disabilities.

If your council is doing good work in equality, diversity and inclusion, please consider **submitting your own case study** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies>] to let us know.

Wider equality, diversity and inclusion support

Equality, diversity and inclusion considerations were factored in to all our programme areas, complemented by staff training, member advocacy and several working groups. Examples of cross-cutting support to councils in relation to EDI included our delivery of equalities peer challenges which review and provide recommendations around performance on EDI, and our redevelopment of our **equalities framework for local government** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/guidance-and-resources/equality-frameworks/equality-framework-local-government>] which supports councils to meet their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duties).

We have also delivered EDI-focused webinars and roundtables on a range of topics including the household support fund, local welfare, health inequalities, mental health, and deprivation and poverty – and shared learning and materials from these sessions on our website.

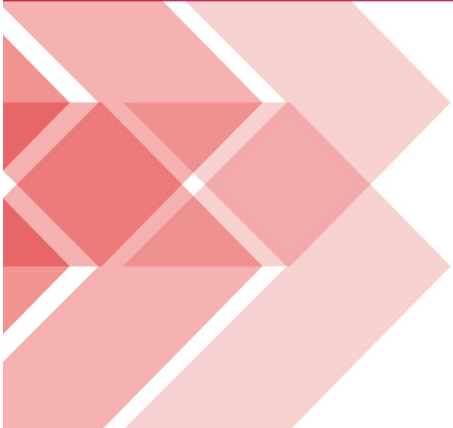
Housing and homelessness support

Highlights

- **97 per cent** of respondents said that our **housing and homelessness support programme** had, or likely will have, a lasting impact on their council’s capacity to deliver housing and homelessness services, rough sleeping provision, and place-making.
- **100 per cent** of respondents said that the programme has had a positive impact on their council overall.

Challenges relating to housing and homelessness remain central areas of concern for local government. As democratically accountable leaders and place-shapers for the communities they serve, councils are at the forefront of responding to these issues. Our 2021/22 housing and homelessness support programme focused on providing councils with the tools and resources they needed to respond to these issues.

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT



100%

100 per cent of responding councils who accessed our **housing and homelessness support** said it positively affected their council

Rough sleeping support

The local and central government response to rough sleeping during the COVID-19 pandemic brought into sharp focus what can be accomplished when the two work together towards a shared goal. In 2021/22, our programme of **delivery and impact panels** to support councils in that response (established in 2020) continued to provide councils with a framework and process to consider and test their rough sleeping plans in line with the **Next Steps Accommodation programme** – in particular, to identify specific challenges, systemic drivers of homelessness, and opportunities for change. Our panels also provided opportunities to share and learn from best practice examples on topics including accessing the private rented sector, how to commission and project manage accommodation for people with complex needs, and the use of innovative temporary accommodation solutions such as micro-pods.

A further 100 councils benefited from the learning from these panels by attending our ‘Supporting rough sleepers in a time of crisis’ webinar, which highlighted lessons learned from the panels. Feedback showed that councils found our panels to be “extremely helpful”, with many councils stating that what they learned through the sharing of practical solutions was valuable.

Housing Advisers Programme

Our **Housing Advisers Programme (HAP)** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/safer-and-more-sustainable-communities/housing-advisers-programme>] is designed to support councils seeking to:

- innovate and respond to the housing crisis
- create sustainable solutions to meeting housing needs.

In 2021/22 the programme supported more than 90 councils across England to deliver housing objectives through 30 projects, aiming to deliver affordable homes, embed sustainable technologies, deliver affordable housing, and design solutions for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

We also conducted a survey of previous HAP participants, which highlighted the significant impact of this programme. Headlines included that 97 per cent of respondents said that the programme had, or likely will have, a lasting impact on their council’s capacity to deliver housing and homelessness services, rough sleeping provision, and place-making; and 100 per cent of respondents said that the programme resulted in a positive impact overall.

A central pillar of this programme is that projects are scalable, and that learning should be shared so that the wider sector can benefit. To this end, part of the activity we undertook in 2021/22 was to expand our online **library of Housing Advisers Programme case studies** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/safer-and-more-sustainable-communities/lga-housing-advisers-programme/housing-advisers>], including with a case study detailing the example below.

Housing Advisers Programme (HAP) case study – Working with councils to develop a net zero carbon toolkit

Cotswold District Council secured funding from our Housing Advisers Programme to collaborate with West Oxfordshire District Council and Forest of Dean District Council to fill a perceived gap in the market for advice on how to deliver net zero housing. The solution identified was to create a practical guide on this subject that could be used by all authorities to support small developers, architects, self builders and householders.

A toolkit was successfully developed, for both new-build and retrofit housing, with input from climate officers from the three councils and a consortium of leading experts from Etude, Elementa, Passivhaus Trust and Levitt Bernstein. The toolkit has since provided development planning teams in the three partner councils with a key resource to ensuring new housing and retrofits adopt and achieve the highest possible standards of energy efficiency, low carbon and net zero building design.

The toolkit was published under a Creative Commons licence, enabling all councils to adapt and share the resource, and, therefore, maximising its reach across the local government sector.

[Access the full case study \[https://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies/cotswold-district-council-co-production-net-zero-carbon-toolkit\]](https://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies/cotswold-district-council-co-production-net-zero-carbon-toolkit)

Devolution support

Devolution, the transfer of powers and funding from national to local government, ensures that decisions are made closer to the local people, communities and businesses they affect. We created our **devolution support offer** to support councils preparing for, and taking forward, devolution deals so that they can be in the best position to deliver their devolution objectives, for example, through more targeted public services, greater growth, and stronger partnerships, in local areas.

In 2021/22, we offered bespoke support to councils undergoing devolution deals and shared important updates on news, parliamentary activity, and publications, through our **devolution hub** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/safer-and-more-sustainable-communities/devolution-hub>] and devolution e-bulletin. This included a **publication on combined authority fiscal freedoms and financial devolution** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/combined-authorities-financial-freedoms-and-fiscal-devolution>] along with resources to help councils understand the contents of the Levelling Up White paper and what it might mean for devolution in their area.

We also continued to provide support to the Combined Authorities' Networks throughout the financial year. Feedback from members highlighted the value of the networks in terms of sharing information and good practice and 77 per cent of member respondents reported that the support provided had improved the capacity and capability of their authority to deliver their devolution deal objectives. This included communicating about devolution deals to their residents.

Accessing our support

To find out more about our refreshed **sector support offer for councils in 2022/23** [<https://local.gov.uk/publications/sector-support-offer-2022-23>], please contact the **LGA principal adviser** [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/lga-principal-advisers>] for your region.

Our principal advisers and expert regional teams are the focal point for our discussions with councils about their improvement needs and the support we have available. Each principal adviser is responsible for one or more regions. Principal advisers have extensive experience of working at senior levels in local government and the wider local public sector. Engaging with your principal adviser will enable them to coordinate our available support to maximise its positive impact on the work of your council and enable you to achieve better outcomes.