

Improvement and Innovation Board

Agenda

Thursday, 19 May 2022
11.00 am

Hybrid meeting – Beecham Room, 18 Smith
Square and online via Zoom

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

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Improvement & Innovation Board

19 May 2022

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Labour:	Group Office: 020 7664 3263	email: labgp@lga.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

Attendance:

Your attendance, whether it be in person or virtual, will be noted by the clerk at the meeting.

LGA Contact:

Jonathan Bryant
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Improvement & Innovation Board – Membership 2021/22

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (8)	
Cllr Peter Fleming OBE (Chairman)	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Nigel Ashton	North Somerset Council
Cllr Philip Broadhead	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council
Cllr Carl Les	North Yorkshire County Council
Cllr Laura Miller	Dorset Council
Cllr Phil North	Test Valley Borough Council
Cllr Alan White	Staffordshire County Council
Lord Gary Porter CBE (Observer)	South Holland District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Derek Bastiman	Scarborough Borough Council
Cllr Kam Kaur	Warwickshire County Council
Cllr Bruce Laughton	Nottinghamshire County Council
Labour (8)	
Cllr Judi Billing MBE (Deputy Chair)	Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Alice Perry	Islington Council
Cllr Tim Roca	Westminster City Council
Cllr Asma Begum	Tower Hamlets Council
Cllr Vince Maple	Medway Council
Cllr Oliver Ryan	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Peter Mason	Ealing Council
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE (Observer)	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Anthony McKeown	High Peak Borough Council
Cllr Steve Norman	Lichfield District Council
Liberal Democrat (3)	
Cllr Liz Green (Vice-Chair)	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
Mayor Peter Taylor	Watford Borough Council
Cllr Alan Connett (Observer)	Teignbridge District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Paul Crossley	Bath & North East Somerset Council
Independent (3)	
Cllr Neil Prior (Deputy Chair)	Pembrokeshire County Council
Cllr Alex Coley	Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Cllr Mike Haines (Observer)	Teignbridge District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Jo Beavis	Braintree District Council

Non-Voting	
Philip Sellwood CBE	Independent Member
Richard Priestman	Independent Member

Agenda

Improvement & Innovation Board

Thursday 19 May 2022

11.00 am

Beecham Room and online via Zoom

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Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, 28 July 2022, 11.00 am	

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Update on the LGA's Procurement and Commissioning programme

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report updates the board on the progress of the LGA Procurement and Commissioning programme and includes detail on the new Procurement Bill outlined in the Queen's Speech on 10th May 2022.

Is this report confidential? Yes No

Recommendation

That the Improvement and Innovation Board considers the report and agrees any follow-up action.

Actions

Officers to use any feedback and comments made to inform the approach to the programme going forward

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Update on the LGA's Procurement and Commissioning Programme

1. Background

- 1.1 The LGA Procurement and Commissioning Programme supports councils to improve their procurement practices through a framework of the LGA's National Procurement Strategy for Local Government. The programme makes up a part of our sector support offer funded through the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
- 1.2 This report sets out an update on the activity that took place in 2021/2022 and the impact this had including our response to procurement challenges emerging following Russia's invasion of the Ukraine. It also provides an update following announcements made in the Queen's Speech and looks forward to the 2022/23 programme offer.

2 2021/2022 Programme Delivery

- 2.1 Our 2021/2022 Procurement and Commissioning Programme has provided extensive support for councils providing training opportunities, networking events, opportunities to meet suppliers, social value guidance and more. Some of the key highlights of the last year include the following.
- 2.2 We engaged extensively with councils through several networks on subjects including working with strategic markets and suppliers, social value, access to learning and development opportunities and input into Government's thinking on procurement policy. Our weekly update newsletter has some 5000 subscribers.
- 2.3 Our national benchmarking exercise, undertaken in October 2021, saw responses from more than 60 per cent of councils which are being used to identify areas of support for this new financial year.
- 2.4 We provided training to more than 100 officers on best practice procurement as outlined in the Cabinet Office's Sourcing Playbook (with a 90 per cent satisfaction rating) and when Crown Commercial Service offered to fund places on the Cabinet Office's Contract Management training we identified which councils would benefit most. More than 40 councils have been offered the opportunity for up to ten of their officers to undertake the training which is valued at £7k per delegate. This offer is now going to be extended to all councils.
- 2.5 We convened a group of councils to work with Department of Health and Social Care and NHS England to develop the detailed provisions of the new Provider Selection Regime (PSR) which will cover the commissioning of healthcare by the NHS, and now also the health element of social care commissioned by councils. We are continuing to work through the practical processes to be used when the PSR is implemented later this year.
- 2.6 We recently delivered, in partnership with Social Value Portal, a hybrid conference celebrating success over ten years of the Act. 300 people in total attended in person on day one with another 1500 people attending sessions online. Day two was fully online and the conference had a satisfaction rating of 85 per cent. Similarly, we

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achieved more than 90 per cent satisfaction for our annual construction conference which attracted 296 officers from local government.

3. Current Challenges going into 2022/23

- 3.1 In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in March 2022 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 the weekly meetings which will continue into 2022/23. We secured pro-bono support from Browne Jacobson to help with the legal aspects of potentially terminating contracts and inputted practical scenarios into DLUHC to assist them in formulating a Statutory Instrument which will, once agreed by Parliament, allow the Minister to disapply elements of the Local Government Act which states that councils cannot take 'non-commercial' considerations into account when deciding to procure (or terminate a contract).
- 3.2 So far two councils have reported that they have terminated contracts (paying termination fees) and another has said they intend to terminate on their contract's anniversary in September (and will also be liable for fees). In both cases the councils will need to move to the open market and are expecting to pay much higher prices for energy going forward. The lack of ability to make judgments in relation to value for money and the fact that Gazprom will be able to sell energy not taken by councils at a higher price appears to have deterred some councils from terminating contracts.
- 3.3 Last year we convened councils to help us to formulate a response to the *Transforming Public Procurement* green paper in December 2020 and have been in a constructive discussion with government since. We welcomed the general ethos of the green paper to simplify and make more flexible procurement processes. Improvement and Innovation Board members will recall that the original green paper outlined the abolition of the Light Touch Regime without a suitable replacement for social care; the proposal to require councils to publish every bidder's scoresheet to the world at large at the start of the standstill period; and about a very burdensome approach to transparency, which would have had major resource implications for councils. These main concerns have been resolved and this is seen as a significant win for local government.
- 3.4 The Queen's Speech on 10th May set out the proposal for a new Procurement Bill. The Bill referred to the National Procurement Policy Statement which requires councils, alongside their own strategic priorities, to be cognisant of Government's three strategic priorities. (social value, having the right policies and processes in place to manage the key stages of procurement and considering their organisational capability and capacity, with regard to procurement skills and resources). These national priorities are in line with what most councils are seeking from procurement. It is important to note that as part of 'considering their organisational capacity' councils are encouraged to benchmark their performance against other similar organisations – something councils have been doing since 2017. At the time of writing this report we have not seen the detail of the Procurement Bill. Any further concerns will be dealt with verbally at the meeting

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3.5 As set out in the DLUHC grant determination letter, the LGA will deliver an updated national procurement strategy, provide knowledge, support and access to networking and learning opportunities and convene councils to work on key themes such as social value. We will also deliver another cohort of Sourcing Playbook training. All learning, reports and results will be shared on the LGA website to ensure that councils can benefit from that knowledge.

4. Equalities implications

4.1 The programme is committed to ensuring there are no adverse implications for equality and diversity from its activity.

5. Implications for Wales

5.1 We will continue to share and learn from case studies from the Welsh LGA and Welsh councils working on procurement projects. The new procurement regime set out in the Queen's Speech will also apply to Wales.

6. Financial implications

6.1 The Procurement and Commissioning programme is delivered by the LGA with funding from the DLUHC core grant. The grant is for the period ending in March 2022.

7. Next Steps

7.1 Councils are keen that we continue to engage with Government on developing the training and capacity building aspects of the Procurement Bill, delivering the training for councils on using the Provider Selection Regime and piloting a procurement fitness check, primarily aimed at smaller councils. We also intend to update our Councillor Guide to Procurement.

7.2 In our response to the Queen's Speech we commented that we would welcome a further discussion on a potential nationally funded approach to upskilling council's procurement officers.

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LGA Children's Services Improvement Programme

Purpose of report

For information and decision

Summary

This report provides members with an update on the LGA's children's services improvement programme for 2021/22, and highlights future challenges, opportunities and programme developments.

Is this report confidential? Yes No

Recommendations

- The Improvement & Innovation Board is requested to endorse the proposed new areas of support for 2022/23 and highlight further themes of activity that would support the leadership of children's services and to comment on the work undertaken by the Children's Services Improvement Team.

Action/s

- Officers to use any feedback and comments made to inform the approach of the programme going forward.

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LGA Children's Services Improvement Programme

1. Background

- 1.1 In June 2021 the LGA secured a three-year contract (with the option to extend by a further 12 months) from the Department for Education (DfE). The budget for 2021/22 was £1.387m and this will rise to £1.751m in 2022/23. The key focus of this contract is to provide leadership support, diagnostic activity and a range of training, development and mentoring.
- 1.2 Since the start of the pandemic the DfE funded early years peer challenge programme has been paused. During this time, we have agreed with DfE to provide a range of alternative support for the early years sector. The grant for 2021/22 was £247,284.
- 1.3 This report provides an update on the activity that the DfE funding enables to support the improvement of services for children.

2. Delivery in 2021/22

- 2.1 A set of principles has been agreed with the DfE to prioritise support provided through the programme for those councils that either have:
 - A current Ofsted 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' judgement;
 - A written statement of action for SEND;
 - Concern arising from analysis of performance information and intelligence;
 - Leadership inexperience or instability;
 - A specific or challenging issue, for instance, a high court cas3
- 2.2 Using these principles and with the funding provided the LGA Children's Services Improvement Programme has delivered a broad range of significant activity in 2021/22. Highlights of the impact this activity has had are outlined below.
- 2.3 90% of councils with an inadequate or requires improvement Ofsted judgement engaged in the programme (66 out of 73 councils).
- 2.4 All delivery targets set by the DfE for 2021/22 have been exceeded, significantly so in some instances.
- 2.5 16 leadership training events and 26 regional networks have been delivered engaging with 128 lead members or children's scrutiny chairs covering topics such as SEND, corporate parenting, contextual safeguarding, championing children in new health systems.
- 2.6 94% of participants in the universal offer who provided feedback felt more confident about their role in improving CSC/SEND services after completing the course.

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- 2.7 562 days of targeted support for leaders in children's services has been provided to councils through the LGA's children's improvement advisors and using our extensive children's peer pool. This support typically included inspection preparation, diagnostic support, training/development, governance support, regional support and challenge.
- 2.8 In addition, 384 days of support has been provided through 16 peer challenge/diagnostics covering a range of themes from school improvement, youth justice, safeguarding, SEND and financial assurance/sustainability.
- 2.9 Individuals within 47 councils are currently receiving or have received mentoring support in 2021/22. This will equate to approximately 283 days of work when complete and includes support for lead members and chief executives
- 2.10 The programme has collected significant positive feedback across its work. Some examples of this are below:
- 2.11 "My mentor is inspirational, passionate and has walked the talk so I feel not only that I'm learning and being encouraged but I believe we can make the same journey as his local authority did to outstanding." Mentoring for new lead member for children's services.
- 2.12 "I found it extremely thought provoking, exposing many areas in which improvement is clearly needed. [It] has helped us articulate what we see as the position very fully, clearly and in a structured way. It has been worth the time we have spent on it and frankly shows we do have some way to go for the committee to be equipped to be as effective" Children's Scrutiny Chair involved on the pilot scrutiny development work.
- 2.13 "It has given me more confidence and the drive for more innovative approaches with the aim of creating a 'whole council' attitude to children and young people" Lead member participant at the Leadership Enhanced event.

3. Delivery in 2021/22 to support the early years sector

- 3.1 Delivery of 110 online events, workshops and action learning sets that have engaged more than 5500 colleagues who work in the early years sector to build their understanding and share learning about key topics such as workforce recruitment and retention, invisible babies and family hub development.
- 3.2 Provided intensive support for 12 councils to develop their early years strategy. We will be delivering a webinar in June, to share the learning from these areas and tools that have been developed. We are also working with councils to develop some case studies and a short report will be published shortly.
- 3.3 Worked with eight councils, undertaking mini remote peer challenges focusing on their library offer and how it supports speech and language development and fits within the Family Hub model. A final report is currently being compiled sharing the themes from the eight areas and recommendations to take forward. Fifteen case studies from this work have been published on the LGA website. A webinar is being

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delivered in May 2022 to share the report and findings and showcase some of the innovative practice identified.

4. Areas of delivery proposed for 2022/23

- 4.1 The DfE has agreed to a variation for an additional £350k per annum for the length of the contract to provide additional leadership support for SEND services. It is expected that the specifics for this support will be agreed in the next couple of weeks and some delivery will start as soon as June 2022.
- 4.2 Launch of two E-learning modules is planned for June 2022 using the LGA's existing platform for councillor e-learning. These will be focused on Corporate Parenting and Children's Services and open to all councillors as self-service interactive training.
- 4.3 An expansion of support for corporate leadership teams, specifically targeting chief executives, to build their understanding of children's services and the roll out of a corporate parenting diagnostic and children's scrutiny support package.
- 4.4 Launch of a training and development offer for children's scrutiny committees.
- 4.5 Roll out of a new corporate parenting peer challenge and support for corporate parenting boards.
- 4.6 Developing materials and resources for council Leaders to better understand and engage with children's services.
- 4.7 Refresh of existing councillor materials and resources about children's services and roll out of the new LGA induction framework for new lead members.
- 4.8 The continued development and delivery of the new Leadership Enhanced programme to provide a next step of training and development from Leadership Essentials and for more experienced lead members.
- 4.9 Continued delivery of the successful early years programme of online events, training, development and action learning sets.
- 4.10 Develop and pilot a remote Early Years peer challenge that will focus on speech, language and communication and how this fits within the Family Hub model and the support for the Home Learning Environment.
- 4.11 Working with the Best Start for Life Team and the DfE to shape and influence their vision and roll out for the Family Hub model.
- 4.12 Supporting NESTA to map early years services and interventions across the country.

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5. Challenges and opportunities in children's services

- 5.1 Recruitment, retention, churn and morale across the children's services workforce continues to be extremely challenging – a recent report from the Association of Directors of Children's Services highlighted that in the last 12 months there have been 47 changes of Director of Children's Services across the 152 councils with statutory responsibility for delivering children's services
- 5.2 The increasing demand for services for children is placing significant financial pressure on councils and in particular in the areas of placements and SEND.
- 5.3 Recent cases in Solihull and Bradford have highlighted a need to re-establish robust and effective partnerships between councils and health, police and education.
- 5.4 Turnover of lead members, and other councillors with a responsibility for children's services, following the May elections.
- 5.5 Three significant publications in 2022 (the SEND green paper, Education white paper and the social care review) provide a potential opportunity to reshape children's services in the medium term.
- 5.6 The government announcement of 75 areas invited to participate in the Family Hubs 3 year programme. Early Years will play a key part in the development and delivery of the hubs with the focus on Best Start for Life.
- 5.7 The engagement and expertise of the nine regional Chief Executive leads in helping to shape the LGA children's services improvement programme but also DfE thinking and policy.
- 5.8 The DfE is implementing a new regionally focussed staffing structure that they intend will provide councils with a more effective and coherent link into the Department.

6 Financial implications

- 6.1 All delivery is funded through DfE contracts and grants.

7 Implications for Wales

- 7.1 There are no implications for Wales.

8 Equalities Implications

- 8.1 The children's services improvement team has reviewed its delivery, systems and processes so that it is better supporting the equalities, diversity and inclusion priorities that have recently been agreed across the LGA. The team has committed to collecting all missing diversity information in peer profiles so we will be better able to deploy peers that understand the councils and their communities we are asking them to work with. We are also building an understanding of where gaps in the diversity of

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peer pool exist and developing plans to start to address these. In addition, we have worked with the LGAs Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lead and colleagues from the sector to refresh the children's peer challenge framework. This has ensured very clear EDI prompts and probes are included and these are emphasised in our peer training and guidance.

9 **Next Steps**

9.1 This report has provided a high-level overview of current children's services improvement work and proposed priorities and activities for the next 12 months. It is suggested that the Board receives periodic updates on the children's services improvement programme so that members are aware and able to inform this activity but also to ensure alignment with other improvement activity across the LGA.

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Housing Advisers Programme

Purpose of report

For information

Summary

This report provides an update on the Housing Advisers Programme (HAP) to date, including the whole programme evaluation survey conducted in November 2021 and plans for the 2022/23 programme, which will be cohort 6.

Is this report confidential? Yes No

Recommendations

Comments on the programme so far and suggestions for the programme going forward are welcomed. These will be taken into consideration by officers in developing the 2022/23 Housing Advisers Programme offer.

Action/s

Officers to progress work on the 2022/23 HAP taking into account comments from the Board.

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Housing Advisers Programme

1. Background

- 1.1 The Housing Advisers Programme (HAP) aims to fund local authorities in England, alone, or in partnership, to access specialist advice to address their local housing needs. This often involves an obstacle to tackling the housing crisis in their local area that they lack the skills, data or capacity to resolve. HAP has been running since 2017 and has supported 5 cohorts of participants to deliver more than 150 projects so far.
- 1.2 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has confirmed funding for the 2022/23 HAP, which will be cohort 6. A project inception meeting has been scheduled with the relevant DLUHC officers on 20th May 2022.
- 1.3 Between November and December 2021, we conducted an online survey of HAP participants from the financial year 2017/18 onwards (cohorts 1-3). The purpose of this survey was to evaluate the impact of this programme on its participants and their authorities since its inception in 2017. A total of 31 participants responded.
- 1.4 This report provides an update on the outcomes of the evaluation report, and a brief outline of the options for cohort 6 (HAP 2022/23).

2. HAP evaluation survey

- 2.1 [Responses to the HAP evaluation survey](#) indicated that HAP has historically exceeded the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) agreed with DLUHC for the 2021/22 cohort. Key findings included:
 - The vast majority of respondents (97 per cent) said that the programme had or likely will have a lasting impact on their council's ability to deliver housing and homelessness services, rough sleeping provision, and place making
 - One hundred per cent of respondents said that the programme has had a positive impact overall.
 - The vast majority of respondents (97 per cent) said that they would definitely or probably recommend the programme if asked about it.
 - The key goal which respondents' councils most often wanted to achieve through the Housing Advisers Programme was increased general housing supply, identified by 42 per cent of respondents, although a wide range of other goals were also identified. These included: reducing homelessness; improved planning services; improving housing quality and carbon reduction in homes.
 - The vast majority (ranging from 83 to 100 per cent) of respondents who selected each goal reported that the programme had helped their council to make some progress towards that goal. Increased specialist housing supply was the goal which respondents said the programme had helped them make the most progress towards.
- 2.2 The survey is supported by case studies which explore the impact of HAP in more depth and also form part of the KPI agreement with DLUHC

3. HAP cohorts 5 and 6 (2021/22 and 2022/23)

- 3.1. The HAP 2021-22 budget (cohort 5) was originally £190,000 with an additional £60,000 for homelessness projects directed through HAP. In discussion with DLUHC, it was agreed that HAP cohort 5 should have an increased focus on strategic housing projects that support councils in the direct delivery of new housing, which was reflected in the 2021-22 prospectus. In Quarter 4 we received an additional £500,000 funding for the 2021-22 programme.
- 3.2. This additional funding enabled us to support additional projects which had been unsuccessful in the first round, along with targeted projects, which were identified by the regional improvement teams.
- 3.3. DLUHC colleagues have confirmed that they are still keen for the HAP to have an increased focus on the direct delivery of new council housing for 2022/23.

We will need to balance this carefully with HAPs historic local focus, which supports councils to identify specific challenges in their local area which could benefit from external advice.

- 3.4. In the light of the survey results, DLUHC's requirements and the small number of targeted projects funded in 2021/22, we will therefore be considering different options for HAP 2022/23, including whether to increase the amount of targeted support.
- 3.5. We would therefore welcome the board's views and suggestion on the future shape of HAP in advance of the project inception meeting with DLUHC colleagues.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1. HAP is fully funded via the grant determination from DLUHC

5. Implications for Wales

- 5.1. HAP funding is only available to English Councils.

6. Equalities Implications

- 6.1. As HAP is an arms-length programme, where funding and/or support is given to councils it does not have any direct impact on groups with protected characteristics.
- 6.2. Nonetheless, the LGA is committed to ensuring the application process for HAP is fully accessible to all eligible councils

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- 6.3. Considering both targeted support as well as inviting bids may address any indirect disadvantage occasioned by the bid-process being less accessible to councils in areas of higher socio-economic disadvantage.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1. Following the project initiation meeting on 20th May 2022, officers will draft a more detailed project proposal for HAP 2022/23. This will be agreed with DLUHC colleagues and the EEHT board, and the HAP 2022/23 offer will be launched later in 2022.



LGA Innovation Zone and Wider Conference Update

Purpose of report

For information and decision

Summary

This report provides members with an update on the Innovation Zone with a high-level update on how Improvement is featuring in this year's LGA Annual Conference from 28-30 June 2022

Is this report confidential? Yes No

Recommendations

- Improvement and Innovation Board to note the progress on the Innovation Zone.
- Members encouraged to attend and promote the Innovation Zone at this year's annual conference.
- Improvement and Innovation Board to note how Improvement will feature in this year's LGA Annual Conference 2022 in Harrogate from 28-30 June 2022.

Action

- Officers to progress any comments from the Board that can either be actioned for this year's Conference, including the Innovation Zone, or to be incorporated into the planning of next year's Conference.

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LGA Innovation Zone and Wider Conference Update

1. Background

- 1.1 The LGA's Conference is set to take place on June 28th – June 30th 2022 in Harrogate Convention Centre.
- 1.2 The Innovation Zone (IZ) is a significant part of the LGA's Annual conference. The IZ offers a vibrant and creative space taking place within the wider conference – involving a series of open, walk-in, sessions highlighting exciting and innovative ideas of significance to the local government sector.
- 1.3 Sessions featured are being delivered by councils as well as public sector and private sector organisations, provided that their content links to local government.
- 1.4 For the wider conference, traditionally topics for inclusion in plenaries and workshops have been sourced from across the organisation, and finalised by the LGA Board where either policy or improvement colleagues lead on the session. As this is the first LGA in person Annual Conference for three years, it was decided to take a slightly different approach in planning sessions this year. Instead of policy or improvement led topics being put forward, suggestions for key topics or issues were sourced from across the organisation with a view for sessions to be jointly delivered by policy and improvement colleagues wherever possible.
- 1.5 This report provides a detailed update on IZ preparations and an overview on how improvement is featuring in the Conference across the workshop and plenary sessions.

2. The Innovation Zone Format and IZ Sessions

- 2.1 The IZ design is still being finalised but will feature 3 stands from which presentations can take place, as well as a coffee area and seating area. Stands will include headphones to minimise noise disruptions when multiple presentations occur at the same time. The IZ will be located next to the campaigns area which provides further seating. Together the 2 areas form the LGA Hub.
- 2.2 The IZ has confirmed Newton Europe as its official sponsor who will supply a number of sessions on the programme as well as a professionally prepared coffee.
- 2.3 This year's IZ theme is 'Resilience and Renewal' which can capture a broad range of ideas across the main ambitions and challenges impacting the sector, linking to topics including:
 - Adults and Children's Services
 - Boosting living standards
 - Climate/environment
 - Cyber/digital
 - Economic recovery and renewal
 - Equalities, diversity and inclusion
 - Place Leadership
 - Public health
 - Workforce

- 2.4 A draft programme for the IZ has now been produced and will be shared publicly in the next few weeks. The programme will include over 30 IZ sessions representing councils across all regions and political alignments. A selection of confirmed IZ sessions can be seen in **Annex A**.
- 2.5 IZ sessions will run for 30-40 mins and will focus on sharing learning from a specific innovative project or solution and will form the main part of the IZ programme. The sessions will see presentations on up to 3 projects running concurrently, with delegates able to 'drop in' to any session that interests them.

3. Spotlight On.... Sessions

- 3.1 The IZ will also feature "Spotlight on...." Sessions which are a new addition to the IZ programme. Unlike IZ sessions, these will stand alone when presented. These will run approx. 30 mins, follow a TEDx format and are focused on big ideas and challenging and inspiring councils to think differently.
- 3.2 In total we have 7 Spotlight on... talks arranged across the 3 days. Some of these sessions include:
- A session delivered by Karl Lokko, a former gang leader turned activist, poet, influencer, public speaker and adventurer as organised by Innovation Zone Sponsor, Newton Europe.
 - A session from ActEarly City Collaboratories in Bradford Metropolitan District Council and Tower Hamlets Borough Council to deliver a session on their preventative approach to community health issues, through uniting research expertise with local government, local partners and communities.
 - A session from Exeter Council delivered, by their CEO Karime Hassan, on utilising partnership working as a vehicle for delivering place leadership outcomes.
 - Spotlight on Climate Change Panel' - to focus on the environmental challenge facing councils and to share innovative examples of the actions that have been put into place.
- 3.3 Preparations for the IZ will continue at pace, with one more meeting of the IZ Members Working Group planned to give final comment on the plans for the overall approach.

4. Wider Conference - Workshop and parallel plenary sessions

- 4.1 There are a total of 22 workshops sessions planned across the first two days of Conference and 6 parallel plenary sessions planned across the last two days. Workshops and parallel plenaries are between 45-50 minutes long and cover a range of topics and issues which are live to the sector and local government.
- 4.2 The Conference content has been planned to include a wide range of councils from across the country with a geographical, EDI and political party spread. (see **annex B** for full detail)

- 4.3 Following agreement of the shortlisted sessions at SMT, a Conference Working Group was set up including colleagues from the communications team, policy and improvement to ensure all areas of the LGA are represented at Conference. Policy and improvement colleagues have worked together to develop featured sessions, either providing content or suggesting speakers. A table of the key topics with an improvement focus where content has been confirmed are listed in Annex B.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1. All planned conference sessions will be met from existing budgets.

6. Implications for Wales

- 6.1 The Innovation Zone has a session from Pembrokeshire Council as part of its commitment to showcasing new ideas and approaches from across a diverse range of organisations from a variety of backgrounds. The conference programme has been designed to be relevant across the whole of local government.

7. Equalities Implications

- 7.1 The LGA is committed to increasing diversity at all levels of local government and ensure there are opportunities to include those from underrepresented groups, within the conference programme.

8. Next Steps

- 8.1 This report has provided an overview of the Innovation Zone and a high-level update on the wider conference. At this stage much of the content has been firmed up and published, with details being worked up into the app. Officers are to feed any recommendations into the current conference planning process where possible. Other comments will be captured and fed into the cycle of planning for next year.

Annex A

A selection of the IZ sessions on the programme are listed below:

- Liverpool City Council are the first council to commit to the protection of every park as part of their covid recovery plans and as a demonstration of their focus on local climate action. They are working in partnership with Fields in Trust to protect their entire parks portfolio in perpetuity.
- Starship Technologies are world leaders in autonomous last mile delivery. They work with local government and businesses to deliver groceries, food and drink via a network of autonomous robots in order to ensure greater efficiencies and sustainability for their communities. The firm will present with a council to showcase their technology and the benefits of their approach.
- Bradford Metropolitan District Council are collaborating with Citizen Coin to become the UK's first social coin city. Citizen Coin provides community members with greater access to social, civic, training and environmental activities through a virtual currency, offered in exchange for services.
- Nottinghamshire County Council have undertaken pioneering work to pair Sherwood Forest with digital innovations. The council has been leading to introduce the world's first 5G Connected Forest to deliver augmented reality technology in rural areas in order to boost tourism and raise awareness on environment protection work. Speakers will be joined by a robot dog used to collect data across inaccessible areas.
- Cheshire East Council have implemented a behavioural insights and co-production-based approach to explore how they can tackle the increasing rates of male suicide. Taking this approach, they were able to identify barriers to engagement not yet prevalently discussed in the mental health sphere, alongside opportunities to improve the support for men's wellbeing.

Day/ Time	Topic	Improvement involvement	Published Conference Description	Confirmed Speakers
Tues 3.20- 4.10	The impact of 'cost of living' pressures and how councils can respond	Improvement to help source councils from the regions who can participate in the panel discussion Improvement will also provide briefing notes for speakers	Join speakers from the Poverty Truth Network to learn about local responses to rising living costs, fuel costs and inflation and hear how setting up a poverty truth commission, working with partners from different sectors can help councils to develop a locally tailored response to these challenges.	Andrew Grinnell , Co-Director, Poverty Truth Network Session will also include people with 'lived experience' identified by PTN
Tues 3.20- 4.10	Delivering a low carbon economy - the role of retrofit skills and jobs policy and productivity	Productivity sourced speakers and will write the speaker briefing around LGA retrofit skills in action.	This session will focus on showing retrofit skills in action in order to deliver a low carbon economy. Starting with the planning and analysis undertaken by a council and combined authority, speakers will share what they have learnt and provide advice and guidance. It will also look at current skills and employment pipelines, including what support is in place to local government and the private sector. We will also hear from an employee who has been supported to gain the skills and knowledge needed to work in local government.	David Pierpoint , Chief Executive, Retrofit Academy Jane Vivian , People and Skills Programme Manager, West of England Combined Authority Cllr Laura Miller , LGA Improvement and Innovation Board
Tues 3.20- 4.10	Two sides of the low traffic neighbourhood coin!	Improvement will provide briefing notes for speakers where relevant.	Join this session to learn about the pros and cons from areas that have introduced low traffic neighbourhoods and how you can make them work in your area. Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) are known for their improvements to local air quality and reductions in carbon emissions as well as in reducing car use, increasing physical activity by walking, and cycling and improving road safety. However, there is opposition to LTNs with concerns that they can increase congestion and pollution on arterial roads, concerns that emergency services are	Matt Winfield , England Director, Sustrans Cllr Liz Leffman , Leader, Oxfordshire County Council Cllr Waseem Zaffar OBE , Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, Birmingham City Council <i>Chairperson/facilitator tbc</i>

			<p>slowed down and that they disadvantage people who are disabled. LTNs are controversial and politically, they are challenging. This session will explore lessons and strategies in making LTNs work, managing conflicting views and making tough decisions.</p>	
<p>Tues 3.20- 4.10</p>	<p>Supporting Ukrainian families - councils' role in supporting arrivals from Ukraine</p>	<p>Improvement to provide briefing notes for speakers where relevant.</p>	<p>Councils support and deliver many programmes for refugees and asylum seekers that allow new arrivals to build new lives in the UK. This session will explore councils' key role in supporting both Ukrainian families and the local areas that support them. Councils want to work with central government to find sustainable solutions that minimise the pressures and risks on councils, their local partners and communities, and on vulnerable individuals themselves across all the schemes This session will include an update from government, with plenty of chances to ask questions and share practice.</p>	<p>Lord Richard Harrington, Minister for Refugees, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Home Office Chair: Cllr Izzi Seccombe or Cllr James Jamieson, Other speakers to be announced.</p>
	<p>From hospital to care - achieving the best possible outcomes for people.</p>	<p>Care and Health Improvement team leading on this session – sourced speakers and will provide speaker briefings</p>	<p>In this session you will hear how Wakefield and Kirklees Councils work together with their care sector partners to achieve the best possible outcomes for people being discharged from hospital. Good collaboration, friendly challenges and regular communication has led to a way of working together which has improved the quality and speed of safe and timely discharges, improved understanding of different pressures and needs in the system and how to resolve the very difficult challenges the system has faced recently.</p>	<p>Nikki Prankett, Registered Manager, Meadow Lodge Home Care Sara Fieldhouse, Director, Fieldhouse Care Ltd Nichola Esmond, Service Director, Adult Social Care, Older People and Commissioning, Wakefield Council Amanda Evans, Service Director, Kirklees Council James Creegan, Chair, Kirklees Care Association Karen Pogson, Chair,</p>

				Kirklees Registered Managers Network Facilitator: Sarah Mitchell, Care and Health Improvement Adviser, Local Government Association
Tues 3.20- 4.10	“These are our children” – a whole council approach to corporate parenting	Children’s Improvement team has worked closely with polityc colleagues on developing this session. They have built on the learning from some of the member development sessions delivered in the last 12 months which has helped inform content and speakers. Improvement will provide content for briefings	Every officer and councillor is a corporate parent to children in care and care leavers – but how can everyone play their part in helping those children and young people to thrive? This session, led by The Care Leaders , draws on the expertise of those with care-experience and work with councils across the country to help you find ways to embed corporate parenting across your council and give your children in care and care leavers the opportunities and experiences they deserve.	Luke Rodgers BEM, Director – Strategy, The Care Leaders Further speakers and a Facilitator TBC Inviting care leavers to talk directly about their experiences - what good and bad corporate parenting looks like. The team have experience of doing this before. This is a very practical workshop about what councillors and councils should be doing.

Tues 4.45- 5.35	Amplifying the local government voice within integrated care systems	Care and Health Improvement team leading on this session – sourced speakers and will provide speaker briefings	Senior leaders from the NHS and local government will discuss the opportunities and risks for local government leaders in the development of integrated care systems (ICSs). They will give their insights on the extent to which local authority and NHS leaders are working effectively to ensure that the ICS is a partnership of equals, with a shared vision and accountability for improving population health outcomes and reducing health inequalities.	Cllr David Fothergill , Chairman, LGA Community Wellbeing Board Mark Cubbin , Chief Delivery Officer, NHS England Lord Victor Adebowale CBE , Chair, NHS Confederation Facilitator: David Brindle , Health and Social Care Commentator
Tues 4.45- 5.35	Tackling modern slavery	Improvement to provide briefing notes for speakers where relevant.	To coincide with the launch of updated LGA guidance on tackling modern slavery, this session will explore the crucial role councils play in identifying slavery and supporting victims. It will also be an opportunity to hear about current good practice across local government.	Chair and speakers tbc
Tues 4.45- 5.35	Sustainable homes, sustainable places: the role of planning	PAS worked with policy from the outset helping to structure the session and make speaker recommendation including Cornwall Council who were one of the first councils to commission an SPD on the	Both housebuilding and protecting the environment are areas of significant ambition and focus nationwide. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government’s policy for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and to supplement this policy, the Biodiversity Net Gain consultation seeks to introduce proposals to ensure added environmental value is at the heart of housing developments. Planning garners a lot of media attention and LPAs hope that the eagerly awaited planning reforms will enable them to meet annual targets for housing completions at pace. This session will consider the challenges and solutions to delivering the homes the country needs while protecting and improving the environment.	Cllr Oily Monk , Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, Cornwall Council Dr Wei Yang , Immediate Past President, Royal Town Planning Institute Cllr Emily Smith , Leader, Vale of White Horse Representatives from Natural England and DLUHC have been invited. Facilitator: Martin Hilditch,

		environment and climate change.		
Tues 4.45- 5.35	What's the future of high streets?	Improvement to provide briefing notes for speakers where relevant.	With the fortune of high streets already under pressure from changing shopping habits, the pandemic and associated restrictions on society have caused further turmoil to town centre businesses. Further disruption is also expected from the increases in cost of living, So how are town centres responding? What role should councils play in making town centres more resilient and relevant to modern society? Is partnership working with the private sector and communities the key to success? Each town centre is different, but can we learn from other places? This session will pull together experts and councils who will discuss these challenging questions.	Cathy Parker , Retail and Marketing Enterprise at Manchester Metropolitan University and Research Lead, Government's High Streets Task Force Mike Greene , Chief Executive Scarborough Borough Council
Wed 11.30- 12.15	Levelling up – the role for digital	Improvement have worked closely with policy on the development of this session Including sourcing Helen Milner from the Good Things Foundation, Selaine Saxby MP Currently finalising the problem statement for the speakers to answer and provoke discussion.	The COVID-19 pandemic has brought our reliance on digital infrastructure into sharp focus with increasing numbers of services becoming digital by default. However, research shows digital exclusion is more likely to be faced by those on low incomes, people over 65 and people with disabilities. This session explores the role local government and its partners can play in improving local infrastructure, removing barriers to getting online and helping people improve their digital skills to address social and economic inequalities and level up every community.	Helen Milner OE , Chief Exec, Good Things Foundation Selaine Saxby MP confirmed for 30 virtually. Chair - Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE Digital Champion, LGA and Leader, Gloucestershire County Council

<p>Wed 11.30- 12.15</p>	<p>Rebuilding Pride in council housing communities with high quality homes and high quality places</p>	<p>Improvement have worked closely with policy colleagues suggesting speakers and will provide briefing content for speakers including what potential funding opportunities are live especially in areas with low land values/needing levelling up</p>	<p>The Social Housing White Paper proposed measures to support the delivery of good quality, decent homes, and neighbourhoods, including access to green space, as well as tenants to have their by heard by their landlord. It also recognised the link between good quality homes and places and health and wellbeing. This session will consider the value of and challenges in delivering good quality social housing for tenants with a focus on the need for more council homes to be built and to better standards.</p>	<p>Cllr Siriol Hugh-Jones, Brighton & Hove City Council Chair Cllr Hannah Dalton (independent – on LGA Board</p>
<p>Wed 11.30- 12.15</p>	<p>Going wild - A helping hand for nature</p>	<p>Productivity will signpost to the biodiversity eLearning produced last year.</p>	<p>Delegates will engage with the energy for protecting and growing nature and biodiversity. It will demonstrate the power of England's diverse and remarkable natural assets, inspire through looking at successful efforts to restore nature and its impact, and reflect on councils' role in a fast-moving policy environment.</p>	<p>Gitty Korsuize, City Advisor on Green and Nature, City of Utrecht (virtual) Rachael Bice, Chief Executive Officer, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Chair: Liz Newton, Director, National Operations, Natural England</p>
<p>Wed 11.30- 12.15</p>	<p>Changing behaviour to improve our health and wellbeing</p>	<p>Care and Health Improvement team leading on this session – sourced speakers and will</p>	<p>What can behavioural and social sciences contribute to public health? This session explores how behavioural and social sciences are the future of public health practice. Behavioural insights have been used across public services (particularly during COVID-19) to generate low-cost interventions, improve</p>	<p>Professor Jim McManus, Director of Public Health, Hertfordshire County Council Professor Susan Michie,</p>

		provide speaker briefings	service outcomes, and encourage people to make better choices for themselves and society. In this session, experts from local authorities and academia discuss how to harness the potential of behavioural science to promote health, prevent disease, and reduce health inequalities in our communities.	Professor of Health Psychology, University College London Julie Webster , Director of Public Health, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council Chair: Cllr Louise Gittins, LGA Community Wellbeing Board and Leader, Cheshire West and Chester Council
<i>Wed</i> 11.30-12.15	Tackling the Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) epidemic	Improvement to provide briefing notes for speakers where relevant.	Councils are committed to tackling Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) in our local communities, and work alongside the police, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), health and education partners, and the voluntary and community sector to make sure we do all we can to protect women and girls from all forms of abuse. A whole society response is needed to give women and girls confidence that there is not just the will but also the power to improve things through cultural change. This session will explore best practice of what's working well and the challenges for local government and partners in tackling this important issue.	Nicole Jacobs , Domestic Abuse Commissioner Deputy Chief Constable Maggie Blyth , NPCC Lead for Violence against Women and Girls Speaker and Chair: Cllr Lois Samuel , West Devon Borough Council and Domestic Abuse Champion, LGA Safer and Stronger Communities Board
<i>Wed</i> 11.30-12.15	Levelling up councils	Improvement to provide briefing notes for speakers where relevant.	Description to be confirmed. Essex, Birmingham and Cornwall to be featured	Essex, Birmingham and Cornwall to be featured Aruj Haider , Westminster Kevin Bentley to chair.

<p>Wed. 12.25- 1.10</p>	<p>Supporting mentally healthier council areas</p>	<p>Improvement to provide briefing notes for speakers where relevant.</p>	<p>The COVID-19 pandemic is being accompanied by a huge rise in demand for NHS mental health services. Of course, those clinical services are important, but they only account for about 20% of health outcomes. About 80% of the factors contributing to health outcomes are social, environmental and behavioural determinants that can be influenced by local government. This expert-led workshop will explore how councils can maximise their influence to support mentally and physically healthier residents who can better fulfil their potential and thrive.</p>	<p>Facilitator: Ed Davie, MPH, Previously London Borough of Lambeth Cabinet Member for children and young people, LGA Children and Young People Panel and Expert Peer, Policy and Public Affairs Lead, Centre for Mental Health- Showing video</p>
<p>Wed 12.25- 1.10</p>	<p>Improving outcomes for children with special needs</p>	<p>Children's Improvement have worked closely with Policy taking the learning from the member development sessions delivered in the last 12 months.</p>	<p>The Government's SEND Green Paper has proposed major reforms to the system that provides support to children and young people with SEND and to the role of councils and their partners in that system. This session provides an opportunity to discuss those proposals and whether they will improve outcomes for children and young people with special needs and disabilities.</p>	<p>Mrunal Sisodia OBE, Co-Chair, National Network of Parent-Carer Forums Edwina Grant OBE, Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, Lancashire County Council, and Chair, ADCS Health, Care and Additional Needs Committee Chair: tbc</p>
	<p>What do residents think of local government</p>	<p>Research colleagues to provide briefing notes for speakers where relevant.</p>	<p>Every day councils are delivering an enormous range of services for the public. But what is the public's current perception of local government? How much is it influenced by events happening in Westminster and what can we learn about what the public expect from their councils? The LGA carries out regular resident satisfaction polling. Come along to find out how the views of residents have changed over the last few years and what this might mean for the services councils deliver in the future.</p>	<p>Speaker to be confirmed</p>

<p>Wed 12.25- 1.10</p>	<p>The workforce capacity challenge</p>	<p>Workforce colleagues have developed the session and will develop briefing notes for speakers where relevant.</p>	<p>As councils up and down the country consider how to recruit and retain staff, particularly in those hard-to-reach skills areas, we discuss what works, how apprenticeships can be part of the solution, and explore what more can be done.</p>	<p>Naomi Cooke, Head of Workforce, Local Government Association Matt Prosser, Chief Executive, Dorset Council, and Leadership and Learning Spokesperson, SOLACE Cllr Bridget Smith, Leader, South Cambridgeshire District Council Chair: Ian Thomas CBE, Chief Executive, Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames Council</p>
<p>Wed 12.25- 1.10</p>	<p>Heritage and the visitor economy (with walking tour) - incorporating high street renewal</p>	<p>Productivity have been involved in suggesting speakers and will provide briefing notes for speakers where relevant</p>	<p>The heritage of an area connects its past to its future and can play an important role in shaping local identity. Heritage has been acknowledged as a key driver of recovery in the Government's Levelling Up strategy in supporting regeneration and pride of place. But what does that mean for local councils seeking to promote local economic growth and opportunity for their communities? In this facilitated conversation, we will explore how investment in both built and intangible local heritage can support a sustainable and thriving visitor economy and drive footfall to town centres and struggling high streets. We will hear from local leaders who have used heritage to engage local people, grow tourism, drive inward investment, and promote thriving areas in which people want to live and work.</p>	<p>Adele Poppleton, Service Director for Culture and Visitor Economy, Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council Cllr Barry Lewis, Leader, Derbyshire County Council Chair: Cllr Gerald Vernon Jackson CBE, Chair, LGA Culture, Tourism and Sport Board</p>

Wed 12.25- 1.10	Preventing homelessness – building an investment and social case	Improvement to provide briefing notes for speakers where relevant.	Local Partnerships have been working closely with two councils to develop a clearer understanding of successful homelessness prevention. With the aim of ensuring better outcomes for people, this work explores the cost associated with prevention work as well as details on avoidance. In this session you will hear about the methodology, findings and impact of this work.	Jenny Coombs , Project Director, Local Partnerships Peter Shovlin , Head of Leeds Housing Options, Leeds City Council
Wed 4.25- 5.10	Equalities – in conversation with Professor Lord Kamlesh Patel OBE	Improvement to provide briefing notes for speakers where relevant.	Interview with Lord Patel on his new role at Yorkshire CCC and his previous work in social care, as well as in the Lords - with a focus on his approach to equalities and what changes he has witnessed/been part of. A focus on his approach to creating a more accountable and inclusive culture at YCCC, what learnings he can share about addressing inequality in an institution that would be relevant to local govt etc.	Professor Lord Kamlesh Patel OBE , Chairman, Yorkshire County Cricket Club Other speakers and Chair TBC
Wed 4.25- 5.10	Local Government finance - the past and the future	Finance Improvement to provide briefing notes for speakers	A conversation with leading local government finance expert Tony Travers reflecting on past research into local government finance and what the future now holds	Tony Travers, Visiting Professor , Department of Government, LSE and Director, LSE London; Chair: Kelly Watson , Local Government Relationship Manager, CCLA
Wed 4.25- 5.10	Empowering local action on climate change	Improvement have sourced speakers and written speaker briefings. The chair will highlight the LGA	Since 2019, the majority of councils have declared a climate emergency and have worked incredibly hard to create and implement their local climate action plans. Local government has and will play a key role in decarbonising our world. This session will focus on inspiring local leaders in their critical role of adapting and mitigating against climate change. It will leave	Ella and Amy Meek , Co-Founders, Kids Against Plastic (virtual) Polly Billington , Chief Executive, UK 100 international perspective tbc

		<p>climate change improvement programme and associated offers.</p>	<p>delegates feeling inspired with a positive 'can do' attitude when tackling climate change locally and globally. They will hear from a climate leader on what is taking place internationally, a national adviser and a community advocate. This is our chance for local places to recover greener and to shape the 21st-century economy in ways that are clean, green, healthy, just, safe, and more resilient.</p>	<p>Louise Marix Evans, Author, Climate Change Committee's Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget publication, Quantum Strategy & Technology</p>
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