



Improvement & Innovation Board

Agenda

Wednesday, 15 February 2023
2.00 pm

Hybrid Meeting - Beecham Room, 18 Smith
Square and Online

There will be a meeting of the Improvement & Innovation Board at **2.00 pm on Wednesday, 15 February 2023** Hybrid Meeting - Beecham Room, 18 Smith Square and Online.

LGA Hybrid Meetings

All of our meetings are available to join in person at [18 Smith Square](#) or remotely via videoconference as part of our hybrid approach. We will ask you to confirm in advance if you will be joining each meeting in person or remotely so we can plan accordingly, if you wish to attend the meeting in person, please also remember to confirm whether you have any dietary/accessibility requirements. 18 Smith Square is a Covid-19 secure venue and measures are in place to keep you safe when you attend a meeting or visit the building in person.

[Please see guidance for Members and Visitors to 18 Smith Square here](#)

Catering and Refreshments:

If the meeting is scheduled to take place at lunchtime, a sandwich lunch will be available.

Political Group meetings and pre-meetings for Lead Members:

Please contact your political group as outlined below for further details.

Apologies:

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

Conservative:	Group Office: 020 7664 3223	email: lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk
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
jonathan.bryant@local.gov.uk - 07464652746

Carers' Allowance

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

Improvement & Innovation Board – Membership

[Click here for accessible information on membership](#)

Councillor	Authority
Conservative (8)	
Cllr Abi Brown (Chair)	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Cllr Nigel Ashton	North Somerset Council
Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District Council
Cllr Phil Twiss	Devon County Council
Cllr Laura Beddow	Dorset Council
Cllr Phil North	Test Valley Borough Council
Cllr Philip Broadhead	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council
Lord Gary Porter CBE (Observer)	South Holland District Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Gwilym Butler	Shropshire Council
Cllr Derek Bastiman	Scarborough Borough Council
Cllr Kris Wilson	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
Labour (8)	
Cllr Brigid Jones (Deputy Chair)	Birmingham City Council
Cllr Jane Mudd	Newport City Council
Cllr Dr Beccy Cooper	Worthing Borough Council
Cllr Victoria Cusworth	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Vince Maple	Medway Council
Cllr Oliver Ryan	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Mayor Damien Egan	Lewisham London Borough Council
Sir Stephen Houghton CBE (Observer)	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Substitutes	
Cllr Anthony McKeown	High Peak Borough Council
Cllr Kevin Peel	Bury Metropolitan Borough 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 Paul Hilliard	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council
Cllr Julian German	Cornwall Council

Cllr James Hakewill	North Northamptonshire Council
Independent Observers	
Philip Sellwood CBE	
Richard Priestman	

Agenda

Improvement & Innovation Board

Wednesday, 15 February 2023

2.00 pm

Hybrid Meeting - Beecham Room, 18 Smith Square and Online via Teams

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1. **Welcome, Apologies and Substitutes, Declarations of Interest**

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2. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 December 2022** 1 - 8
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6. **Peer Support Review Update** 29 - 36
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9. **Any other business**

Date of Next Meeting: Friday, 26 May 2023, 11.00 am, Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

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Meeting: Improvement and Innovation Board

Date: 15 February 2023



Peer support review progress update

Purpose of report

For information

Summary

Work to address actions arising from the peer support review is progressing, supported by discussions involving the national lead member peers and the Heads of Political Group Offices. An action plan has been updated to respond to Lead Members' direction that progress be expedited. This includes additional provision of mentoring training and work to support members to update their peer profiles.

Is this report confidential? No

Recommendation

That the Improvement and Innovation Board note progress in implementing actions arising from the peer support review.

Contact details

Contact officer: Dennis.Skinner@local.gov.uk

Position: Director of Improvement

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Peer support review progress update



Background

1. The Board received a report at its October meeting which outlined the findings of a review of the LGA's use of peers in its improvement support offers. The review found that member and officer peers make a vital contribution to these offers and are, on the whole, highly regarded. The report highlighted recommendations arising from the review which related to:
 - Recruitment of Member Peers;
 - Member Peer Mentoring;
 - Feedback on the quality of support provided by Member peers;
 - Particular challenges experienced by the Independent Group;
 - Member Peer Training and Development;
 - National and regional lead member peers;
 - Diversity of Member peers;
 - Member Peer profiles.
2. Lead Members had decided to share the lead in relation to a new Board priority of peer support.

Progress update

3. Lead Members have initiated detailed discussions involving national lead member peers, Heads of Political Group Offices and the Improvement team, to consider current practice in each Group, and the potential for common approaches in relation to:
 - i) Recruitment and retention of an appropriately experienced, skilled and diverse cohort of Member peers;
 - ii) Member peer training;
 - iii) Quality assurance.
4. In discussions to date, Lead Members have identified the following further issues to be prioritised:
 - i) Updating and rolling out mentoring training;

- ii) Working alongside the Political Group Offices to ensure we have high quality and up to date member peer profiles;
 - iii) Improving record keeping on attendance at training by member peers;
 - iv) Keeping member peers up to date (e.g. themes arising from improvement work, relevant issues in the sector).
5. These are included in the draft action plan attached.
 6. Further work to address recommendations relating to the administration of Member peer support is underway.
 7. Consideration is being given to holding a session at LGA Conference targeted to member peers: this could contribute to the aim of keeping members up to date by addressing key themes and lessons arising from the LGA's improvement work from the last year. This will be in addition to the programme for the LGA Member Peer Conference which will be expanded to include wider development opportunities for peers
 8. An action plan to address the recommendations of the peer support review appears at **Appendix 1**.

Implications for Wales

9. Improvement support is provided directly to Welsh councils by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). On occasion, the LGA has responded to requests from Welsh councils to provide peer reviews to Welsh councils, and there are some Welsh members in the LGA's peer pool. The improvements recommended in the peer support review will benefit those member peers and Welsh councils who receive LGA peer reviews in future.

Financial Implications

10. Prioritisation of activities within the peer support review action plan will ensure that work is carried out within existing resources.

Equalities implications

11. The peer support review explicitly considered equality, diversity and inclusion issues in respect of the LGA's peer support offer. Recommendations to increase the equalities data available on LGA peers (where they wish to share that information) will support the LGA to meet the needs of councils seeking peers to match the diversity of their own councillor cohort and populations, and to ensure that member peers with protected characteristics are not negatively impacted by processes for their selection for assignments and associated support.

Next steps

12. Lead Members will continue to oversee progress against priority actions, informed by capacity and financial implications. A further update on progress will be brought to the Board in May.

Appendix 1: Peer support review action plan

Theme 1: Recruitment and retention of an appropriately experienced, skilled and diverse cohort of peers	
Actions	Timescale
Ensure that the member peer pool and usage keeps pace with the national councillor census in terms of demographic profile: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate peer profiles to all members for updating with guidance for completion • Analyse updated peer profiles and decide on areas for more proactive recruitment of Member Peers 	end of September 23 end of October 23
Lead Members consider whether there should be any changes to the limit on the number of assignments (or days) any member peer should be used	11 May 23
Ensure a good, sustainable 'supply line' of member peers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Members consider feedback from programmes about gaps in member peer capacity to meet current and future demand • Lead Members identify and share best practice in peer recruitment across Groups • Improvement/ PGOs develop joint programme of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 May 23 • 11 May 23 • End September 23
Brief regional teams/ programme leads on criteria and processes for selecting member peers	End September 23
Review usage of Member peers (including by protected characteristics) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce annual report • Lead Members review annual report (prior to IIB) 	15 December 23
Consider the respective roles of the Group Office and the Improvement directorate in addressing challenges related to the supply and development of Independent member peers.	End December 23
Theme 2: Mentoring	
Actions	Timescale
Ensure coordinated development, quality assurance and promotion of the mentoring offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft proposals • Lead Members consider proposals 	13 October
Relaunch and promote the current mentoring handbook and training, updated as appropriate (interim measure)	End February 23
Offer mentoring training 4 times a year to ensure peers can access prior to commencing assignments	End May 23
Put in place a structured process for recording and monitoring member mentoring	End December 23

Theme 3: Member peer training	
Actions	Timescale
Ensure the peer conference includes the opportunity for cross-party reflection on peer practice and updates peers on themes arising from improvement work and relevant issues in the sector	End November 2023
Agree a standard approach to peer induction and include in updated peer induction pack for all peers	End September 23
Discuss and agree a protocol for the use of shadow member peers on peer challenges	End February 23
Consider approach to eligibility for assignments for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all member peers to attend the peer conference at least once every three years to be eligible for assignments some mandatory elements to training and development of peers Lead Members consider PGO response	End May 23
Agree an approach to ownership, development and commissioning of member peer development	End September 23
Theme 4: Quality assurance	
Actions	Timescale
Agree proportionate and systematic approach to feedback from regional teams/ programmes to PGOs on member peer performance/ communicate PGO approach	End May 23
Consider whether to introduce some form of Performance appraisal for member peers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise to consider potential for a more systematic approach Lead Members consider proposals 	End May 23
Consider whether to reintroduce some form of peer accreditation/ assessment process in light of associated costs and benefits	End May 23

Theme 5: Management and administration	
Actions	Timescale
Produce process notes on allocation and authorisation of days	End June 23
Ensure compliance with GDPR on all peer records	End June 23
Develop a PGO/ Improvement Support Protocol to clarify roles and mutual expectations	End December 23
Support the regular updating of member peer profiles through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agreeing common standard for frequency of updates agree a solution to automate the update process 	End May 23 End of September 23
Agree a standard timescale for PGO response to peer requests and resilience arrangements	End of May 23
Establish a consistent process for capturing and monitoring records of attendance at CPC and mentoring training	End of May 23

Meeting: Improvement and Innovation Board

Date: 15 February 2023



Workforce capacity in local government

Purpose of report

For direction.

Summary

This report summarises the LGA's policy and improvement activity to address workforce capacity challenges in local government and seeks the Board's feedback on priorities for future activity.

Is this report confidential? No

Recommendation

That the Improvement and Innovation Board feed back their views of the priority issues for future improvement activity to address workforce capacity challenges and how the LGA delivers those priorities.

Contact details

Contact officer: Naomi Cooke

Position: Head of Workforce

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Workforce capacity in local government



Executive summary

1. Councils are experiencing workforce capacity challenges across many services. To enable policy boards to consider specific challenges relating to their terms of reference in the context of the challenges affecting the sector as a whole, all the policy boards will consider substantively the same report, prior to consideration of the issue in the round by Resources Board and Executive Advisory Board.
2. This report includes evidence of recruitment and retention challenges being experienced in services across local government. Low pay is a factor in all service areas: additional factors are also identified. Section 42 summarises current support provided by the LGA to address workforce capacity challenges, and section 43 describes further potential offers, which would be dependent on the identification of funding.
3. The Board is asked to consider progress to date, support and policy offers and asks and to advise on any further improvement support which should be considered, while noting that it may be necessary to identify or reprioritise resources accordingly.

Background

4. Core government funding for councils was reduced by £15 billion in cash terms between 2010/11 and 2019/20. Overall, spending by local authorities in England has decreased by £3.4 billion (in real terms at 2020/21 prices). Most services have seen cuts in expenditure, such as planning (reduced by 35 per cent). The only exceptions were children's social care (increased by 28 per cent in real terms), and 'other services' (which in many cases is where councils accounted for the grants they received to deal with the pandemic response).
5. Against these reductions in spending, there have been increases in demand for most services. For example:
 - The number of looked after children increased by 25 per cent¹, those being assessed because they are believed to be at risk of significant harm increased by 99 per cent², and Ofsted noted that the complexity of cases has increased since the pandemic began, meaning rising workloads even where the number of children on the caseloads has remained stable³;

¹ www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-looked-after-children#looked-after-children

² https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=8915&mod-period=12&mod-area=E92000001&mod-group=AllRegions_England&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup

³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-social-care-2022-recovering-from-the-covid-19-pandemic/childrens-social-care-2022-recovering-from-the-covid-19-pandemic

- The number of requests for adult social care from new working age clients increased by 11 per cent⁴;
- The number of fly tipping incidents increased by 20 per cent⁵.

It has also been estimated that, due to demographic changes, an estimated 490,000 more people will need to be working across all providers of adult social care in England by 2035⁶.

6. As demands have increased, the size of the local government workforce has decreased. Between 2009 and 2022 the English local government staff headcount fell from 2,254,700 to 1,346,400 (full-time equivalent totals for the same periods falling from 1,584,200 to 1,022,000)⁷. This is only partly explained by academisation, as individual services have been demonstrably reduced: for example, the number of local government adult social services jobs in September 2021 was 115,100, a decrease from 159,400 in September 2011⁸.
7. The only area where staffing has clearly grown over the period is in children and families social workers, where staff levels were 25,515 in December 2011, increasing to 32,502 by September 2021⁹.
8. The picture of reducing staff numbers is worsened by problems with recruitment and retention for those posts which remain. The LGA's most recent research shows that 92 per cent of councils were experiencing recruitment difficulties in at least one occupation and 83 per cent were experiencing retention difficulties in at least one¹⁰. Recruitment problems have affected all types of authority and all types of service. Figure 1 shows, as a proportion of all councils, the most difficult to recruit occupations/roles:

⁴ <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/adult-social-care-activity-and-finance-report/2021-22>

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env24-fly-tipping-incidents-and-actions-taken-in-england

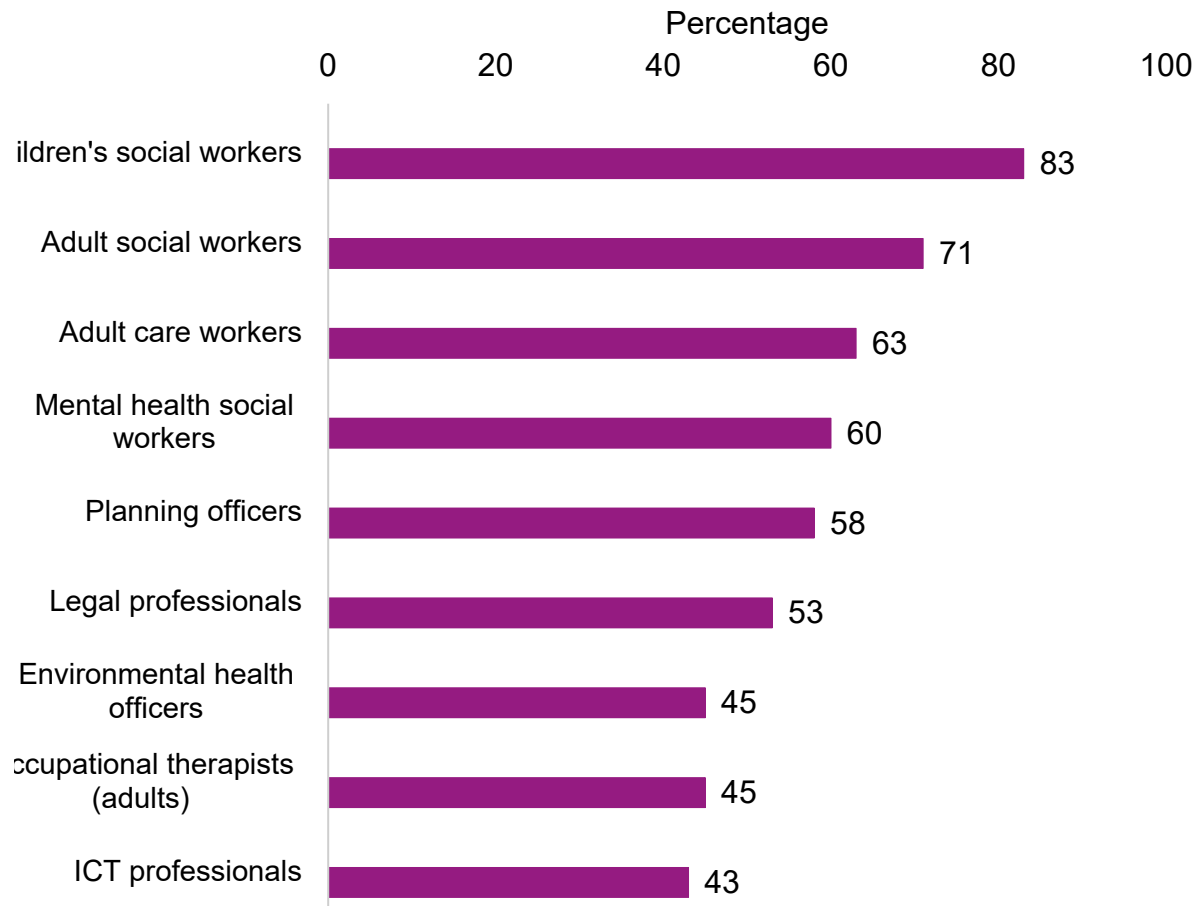
⁶ www.local.gov.uk/our-support/sector-support-offer/care-and-health-improvement/adult-social-care-workforce/asc-reform

⁷ www.local.gov.uk/publications/ons-quarterly-public-sector-employment-survey

⁸ www.skillsforcare.org.uk/adult-social-care-workforce-data/Workforce-intelligence/publications/Data-and-publications.aspx

⁹ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-s-social-work-workforce>

¹⁰ www.local.gov.uk/publications/2022-local-government-workforce-survey



Base: all councils (119 overall, but number varies by occupation/role as the results are calculated for the type of council that holds responsibility for them).

Source: LGA Workforce Survey 2022

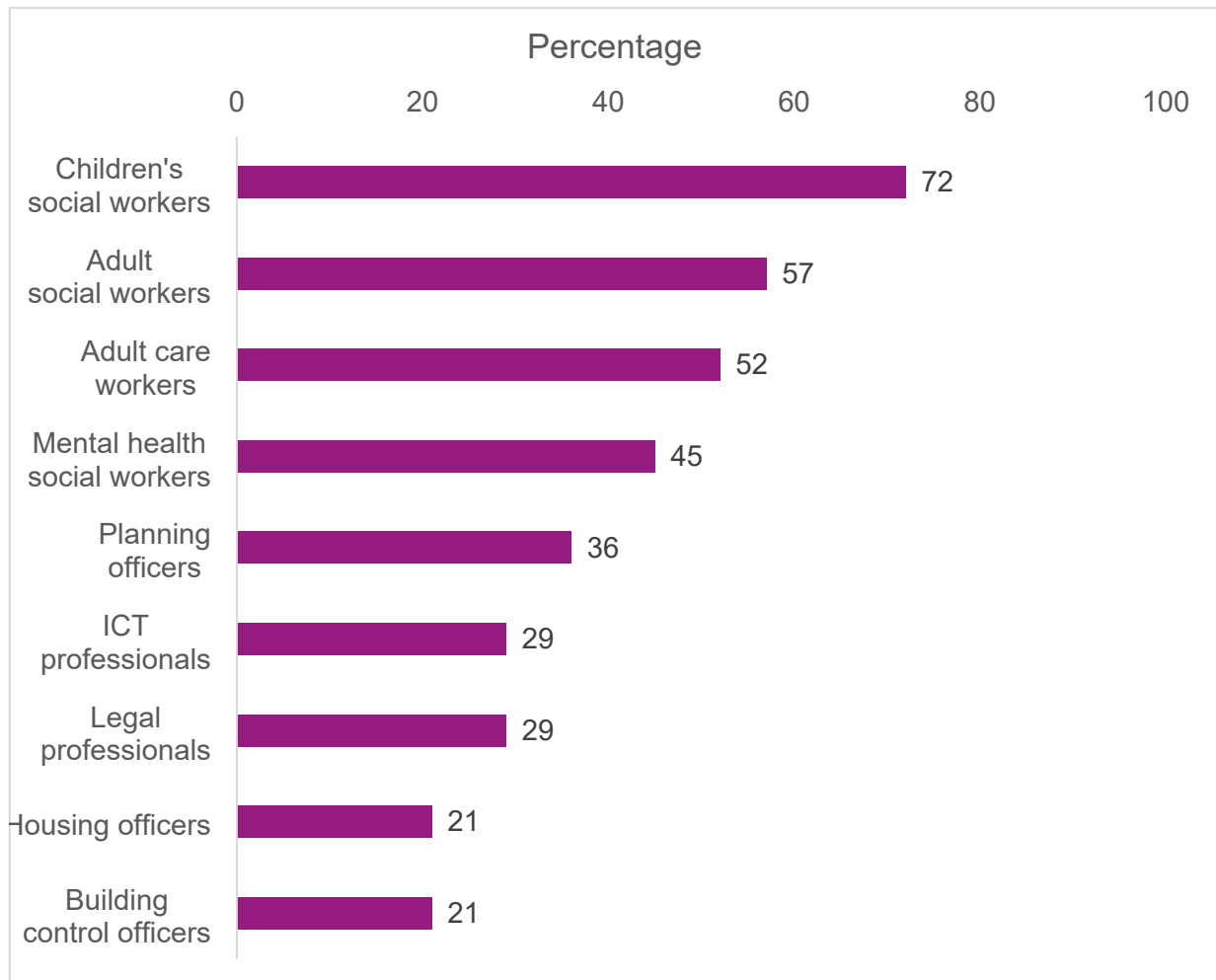
9. A further survey showed that 63 per cent of councils had experienced difficulties recruiting or retaining LGV/ HGV drivers over the past year or anticipated such difficulties¹¹. From our discussions with the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers, it is also clear that trading standards services are experiencing challenges in recruitment.
10. The vacancy rate for children and family social workers was 16.7 per cent in September 2021¹², and 94 per cent of local authorities in early 2022 found it difficult or very difficult to fill vacancies for experienced children's social workers¹³. The number of vacancies across all providers of adult social care increased by 52 per cent in 2021/22, by 55,000 to 165,000¹⁴.
11. Figure 2 shows that, as a proportion of all councils which run the service, the most difficult to retain occupations/ roles are often those which are challenging to recruit:

¹¹ www.local.gov.uk/publications/local-highways-weather-resilience-survey-2022

¹² <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-s-social-work-workforce>

¹³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1123954/Childrens_services_Survey_Wave_6_Dec22.pdf

¹⁴ www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Adult-Social-Care-Workforce-Data/Workforce-intelligence/documents/State-of-the-adult-social-care-sector/The-state-of-the-adult-social-care-sector-and-workforce-2022.pdf



Base: all councils (119 overall, but number varies by occupation/role as the results are calculated for the type of council that holds responsibility for them).

Source: LGA Workforce Survey 20/22

12. Analysis of insights and research from services experiencing capacity challenges has identified the following causes (this is not a comprehensive list):

- i) **Low pay:** this is a factor in all service areas. In some areas of the country, the affordability of housing and availability of public transport impacts on the ability of councils to recruit.
- ii) **Better hours and working conditions elsewhere:** this is a motivation for social care and public health workers, for example, who have also reported feeling burnt out and stressed. There is a perception of a lack of parity of esteem compared to the NHS workforce. Post COVID-19, planners and environmental health officers are also reported to be taking early retirement and leaving the profession and can find work in the private sector. There are also recruitment and retention challenges in housing and homelessness services where officers now have increased workloads due to Homes for Ukraine and other resettlement schemes. Some planners choose to work for agencies where they feel less personally visible in the context of politically charged decision-making and children's social workers value the flexibility provided by agency work.
- iii) **Reductions in staffing and other budgets** have led to reductions in supervision, support, learning and development as well as increased workloads. While some

measures (such as moratoriums on training and recruitment freezes) were intended to be temporary in the early years of austerity, these have become permanent with long-term consequences. These can all impact on staff retention and the ability for professionals to develop additional expertise. Similarly, pressure on manager time is sometimes seen as a disincentive to taking on apprentices or other more junior roles.

- iv) **Local government is not perceived as an attractive career.** Other sectors are perceived as providing more attractive career options in light of the above, with a perceived lack of appreciation and recognition and either low public profile or negative perceptions arising from financial challenges and service failures in the sector generally. Some planners and children's social workers are exposed to significant public criticism, including via social media, without right of reply.

13. Recruitment and retention challenges are leading to the following further impacts and consequences:

- i) Because councils are seeking to recruit from an increasingly limited pool of officers, they are **using market supplement payments** (which were not necessarily budgeted for) to support recruitment and retention. Eighty-one per cent of councils pay them for some occupations¹⁵;
- ii) Councils are increasingly **relying on agency staff** to fill gaps:
 - Sixteen per cent of children's social workers are agency staff and proportions in some councils are at 48 per cent¹⁶ (this does not include where agencies provide entire 'project teams');
 - The Planning Advisory Service has found that some planning services have up to 80 per cent of their staff provided by agencies;
 - Twenty per cent of London authorities reported routinely using agency staff to meet capacity needs in place-shaping services¹⁷.

High turnover of social workers and residential workers and reliance on agency staff can lead to a lack of stability in relationships for children and their families¹⁸. Recent analysis for the DfE estimated that the additional cost of employing agency staff means that there is a loss of over £100 million per year that could be better spent on front-line activity to support children and families¹⁹.

- iii) It can be **difficult to recruit managers** with the required skills and experience; and pay restraint is acting as a disincentive for people to seek promotion to supervisory roles. The reduction in staff numbers can lead to bigger portfolios for managers, making it difficult for them to find time to use their skills effectively.

¹⁵ www.local.gov.uk/publications/2022-local-government-workforce-survey

¹⁶ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/permalink/454afee-eb35-4226-5de6-08dad5210ff4>

¹⁷ www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/advice-and-guidance/helping-london-authorities-deliver-placeshaping-capacity-survey

¹⁸ www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-annual-report-202122-education-childrens-services-and-skills

¹⁹ <https://childrensocialcare.independent-review.uk/final-report/>

Newly qualified staff now make up a greater proportion of posts in children's social care²⁰: since newly qualified staff require more oversight and support, this places additional work on managers and may introduce risk when expertise and practical experience is needed to make effective decisions about children and their families²¹.

Ninety per cent of councils reported at least one capability gap in their management team and 83 per cent reported at least one capacity issue²².

- iv) Around 40 to 50 per cent of councils have consistently reported minor **disruption to their services** as a result of not having the right staff (in numbers or skills to meet demand) to run normal services. Around 10 to 20 per cent reported moderate or severe disruption for the same reason²³.

Disruption due to staffing issues has tended to affect key services, most notably those that require professional qualifications. The most recent research showed that the most disrupted services for single tier and county councils were:

- Directly employed adult social care (74 per cent)
- Schools (70 per cent)
- Children's services (58 per cent)
- Public health (52 per cent)

For district and single tier councils, the most disrupted services were:

- Doorstep collection of household waste (45 per cent)
- Environmental health (33 per cent)
- Planning (31 per cent)

- v) There are also **direct negative consequences** both for staff as individuals and for councils' ability to deliver services and/or introduce new operating models:
- Two-fifths of Heads of Human Resources (HR) said that there was a moderate and 11 per cent said there was a high risk that workforce capacity may negatively affect their council's ability to deliver services²⁴;

²⁰ www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-social-care-2022-recovering-from-the-covid-19-pandemic/childrens-social-care-2022-recovering-from-the-covid-19-pandemic

²¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-review-into-the-murders-of-arthur-labinjo-hughes-and-star-hobson

²² www.local.gov.uk/publications/2022-local-government-workforce-survey. A capability gap was defined as 'the council has managers, but they require additional training and development/support to close their skills gap'. A capacity gap was defined as 'the council has managers with these skills, but they have no capacity to utilise them effectively'.

²³ www.local.gov.uk/covid-19-workforce-survey-research-reports. These regular surveys were conducted fortnightly during the pandemic in 2020, then monthly until January 2022.

²⁴ www.local.gov.uk/publications/covid-19-workforce-survey-week-ending-14-january-2022

- Two-thirds of adult and children’s social workers in January 2022 said they were experiencing deteriorating mental health because of their roles²⁵;
- Ofsted has noted that children’s social care workloads are high and the demands of an already challenging job can be unsustainable. In the year leading up to September 2021, 9 per cent of all local authority children’s social workers left local authority social work, an increase from 7 per cent the previous year²⁶;
- Thirty-one per cent of Heads of Environmental Services said that some services had been stopped in their authority over the last six years, with many reducing services to the statutory minimum²⁷;
- There is a loss of specialist expertise in a number of areas of local regulatory services, with many officers now taking on generalist roles as councils are unable to carry specialist posts within their headcounts: in some places there is concern about the predominance of food work over other areas of regulation²⁸;
- Given the responses given to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health workforce survey²⁹, it may be expected that work currently underway to review housing conditions (particularly in the private rented sector) will place further pressure on already-strained capacity in environmental health, with both environmental health and trading standards facing challenges to effectively deliver their broad range of responsibilities, and concern about the future pipeline of officers in each service;
- The King’s Fund argues that COVID-19 has made enormous demands on Directors of Public Health and their (usually small) teams and many are exhausted³⁰. This has implications for the full range of public health systems and functions, including emergency planning³¹;
- Seventy per cent of local planning authorities surveyed by the Royal Town Planning Institute said that they had had difficulty recruiting enforcement officers over the past five years³²;
- Thirty-eight per cent of local planning authorities reported that they could not administer and deliver new ‘No Net Loss/ Net Gain’ and Biodiversity Offsetting policies and, of these, 62 per cent identified lack of staffing resource as the reason³³. A lack of in-house ecological expertise is cited as a major obstacle.
- Heads of library services at a Libraries Connected basecamp reported that libraries have limited ability to respond to corporate priorities such as climate

²⁵ <https://campaigncollective.org/2022/01/25/social-workers-case-loads-putting-vulnerable-at-risk/>

²⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-annual-report-202122-education-childrens-services-and-skills

²⁷ www.cieh.org/policy/campaigns/workforce-survey-england/

²⁸ Identified by a cross-government task and finish group convened by DLUHC post-pandemic looking at issues in local regulatory services

²⁹ www.cieh.org/policy/campaigns/workforce-survey-england/

³⁰ www.kingsfund.org.uk/blog/2021/08/public-health-workforce

³¹ www.fph.org.uk/media/3031/fph_systems_and_function-final-v2.pdf

³² www.rtpi.org.uk/research/2022/november/planning-enforcement-resourcing/

³³ <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/LPA-Survey-Full-Report-Aug-23-2021-FINAL.pdf>

change and the cost of living, despite councils increasingly seeing libraries as a trusted core delivery vehicle for providing community support and engagement.

- The Chief Culture and Leisure Officers Association advises that leisure centres have typically covered their own running costs and generated a surplus for councils, but staff shortages, particularly for lifeguards (reported by 73 per cent of employers), are forcing them to move to shorter opening hours or close (50 per cent of employers with shortages)³⁴. This is compromising a business model that is already under pressure from reduced footfall post-COVID-19. Libraries are similarly affected: individual staff sickness now often leads to branch closures as there is no replacement pool of staff to redeploy. This is affecting public opinion of the stability and reliability of these universal and very visible council services.
- The Grenfell Tower disaster and subsequent revelations about the state of the built environment dramatically illustrated the important role of effective building control regulation. Local Authority Building Control (LABC) reports that there are very few council building control departments which have a full complement of staff. Those who do are likely to be operating a reduced establishment than in previous years because of pressure on budgets. As a result, councils regularly have to resort to agency staff: LABC estimate that 50 per cent of London Boroughs have used an agency surveyor at some point over the last twelve months³⁵. LABC and Government funding has provided training to improve competence, but the advent of the new post-Grenfell regulatory system will put additional – as yet unquantified – stress on council teams with oversight from what will in effect be a new inspectorate (HSE). HSE has noted under-resourcing of teams as a key risk to good practice, and therefore good outcomes, following research into current operation and practices of the profession³⁶.
- Revenues and Benefits services have faced considerable change and uncertainty throughout the implementation of wide-ranging welfare reforms and the administration of vital support throughout the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis – often and very short notice and with evolving funding, policy and partnership arrangements. The LGA has heard, through attendance at DWP engagement forums with Revenues and Benefits practitioners, that this has impacted on recruitment, retention, morale and capacity and placed considerable pressure on these services.

14. The cost of living crisis is increasing the scale of the challenge. Nearly all (95 per cent) of the respondents to a Homecare Association Survey said that their staff had expressed anxiety about the rising cost of living and 21 per cent reported that staff were looking for work elsewhere because they cannot afford fuel and other costs: this may impact on councils' ability to commission services from social care providers.

³⁴ Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity Employer Pulse Check 2021 (unpublished)

³⁵ Views supplied to the LGA by LABC

³⁶ www.hse.gov.uk/research/insight/building-control-pubn-summary.pdf

Increasing pay rates for tradespeople lead to consequences not only for councils' ability to let contracts for maintenance and construction work but also contracts being handed back prior to completion.

15. This in turn will put pressure on national negotiations for the annual pay awards for local government workers, compounding a pre-existing issue for the sector from a rapidly escalating National Living Wage (NLW). Last year the NLW increased by 9.7 per cent to take effect on 1 April 2023: forecasts from the Low Pay Commission (who recommend the NLW level to Government) suggest that for April 2024 the NLW could increase a further 8.8 per cent to £11.35. The high proportion of local government staff who are at or near this point means that a significant proportion of any pay award has and will continue to be consumed by legal compliance with the NLW. Without additional funding to meet this cost there will be no capacity to meet the pay-related challenges of those further up the pay scale – the specialists and professionals referenced in this paper. In fact, their pay position is likely to worsen in comparison with the wider public sector and private sector.

Progress to date

16. The LGA and our partners have had some success in highlighting the scale and nature of workforce capacity issues in the sector. For example:
 - i) The National Employers for local government took the unprecedented step in 2022 of writing to the Secretary of State for the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) when they made their final pay offer to the trade unions, highlighting the need for additional funding to meet the NLW cost. Government declined to recognise the issue and the particular position of local government within the public sector in relation to the NLW. The additional funding made available from 2023/24 may assist with the challenge of meeting the NLW cost in 2023/4 but leaves the cumulative cost highlighted in 2022 unmet: it is therefore unlikely that this will provide much support for councils in meeting their workforce capacity challenges. While the 9.2 per cent increase in local government core spending power announced in the 2023/24 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement will help councils deal with inflationary and other cost pressures, the LGA will continue to make the case for the underlying and existing pressures that remain. Many councils will also see much lower increases in Core Spending Power in the next financial year;
 - ii) In its December 2021 white paper on adult social care, the Government announced £500 million for measures to support the adult social care workforce;
 - iii) In the November 2022 Autumn Statement, the Government announced its intention to publish a comprehensive workforce plan for the NHS. In response, the LGA has stressed the need to expand the scope of the plan to include the adult social care workforce;
 - iv) In the Autumn Statement, the Government also announced it would delay the rollout of adult social care charging reform in light of concerns from the sector that underfunded reforms would have exacerbated significant ongoing financial and workforce pressures;

- v) The Government has announced its intention to consult on increases to planning fees to improve capacity in the local planning system;
 - vi) In its August 2020 'Planning for the Future' white paper the Government announced its commitment to developing a comprehensive resources and skills strategy for the sector;
 - vii) New Government strategies on libraries and sport are being developed. The Government has committed that these will include actions on workforce issues, while the LGA has been commissioned to deliver a workforce mapping survey on the library, archives, records, information and knowledge sector to inform these.
17. The experience of the regulatory services task and finish group, in 2021, however, offers some indication of the possible challenges. The LGA was successful during COVID-19 in highlighting the demands on regulatory services and implications for the future pipeline of officers, leading to the creation of the task and finish group and cross-Whitehall engagement with a proposal for a £15 million regulatory services apprenticeship fund, which achieved some support. The proposal was not subsequently approved and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has subsequently stepped back from the role it was playing on regulatory services. While the Food Standards Agency is continuing to look at this issue, there are challenges linked to the split interest in environmental health and trading standards across different Government departments.
18. The LGA continues to work with professional and regional bodies and to meet with relevant Government departments, to discuss relevant issues and possible solutions.
19. However, in comparison to significant Government investment in recruitment campaigns for professions such as teaching and defence, there has been minimal investment in local government as a 'brand'. Successive years of reductions in Government funding and significant challenges have diminished the attractiveness of the sector as an employer. Given the wide variety of professions employed in local government, the potential to make a difference to local communities and places, and the pride experienced by many working in the sector, there is potential to promote the value and benefits of a career in local government sector, with the aim of appealing both to those entering their professions and to those seeking a career change.

Policy offers and asks

20. Local government has a number of workforce capacity policy offers and asks, which are relevant to the priorities in the [LGA business plan 2022-25](#), as set out below.

A sustainable financial future – continue to highlight the cost pressures on all council services and press for longer term funding that reflects current and future demand for services.

Councils need more resources to undertake workforce planning so they can make better use of public resources and engage effectively with the skills system in the UK in the future

21. The reduction in funding to local government for over a decade has prevented long-term investment in the workforce, with funds reprioritised to solve immediate challenges. Due to high attrition rates and scarcity of skills in key occupational areas councils are now facing a perfect storm of a lack of supply (from the UK skills system) and a lack of long-term investment. Working with further and higher education sectors, learning and training routes can be built back in skill shortage areas for local government. This can only be done effectively if councils can project their workforce needs through effective workforce planning over a one to five year period.
22. As large employers covering the entire country, councils are strategically placed to create local employment opportunities where they have skills needs: targeted investment would enable councils to help level up skills gaps through their own employment and training pathways, boosting their local economy and therefore building back capacity. This starts with better workforce planning across each place, working in partnership with employers and training providers.

Councils need extra funding to enable provision of placements, supervision, apprenticeships and training for professions and service areas experiencing capacity challenges

23. In light of the challenge to recruit specialist and technical roles, many councils are looking to develop their existing staff to close their immediate skills gaps, i.e. to 'grow their own' talent. In the context of significant budget reductions, there is little funding or capacity to support this. The LGA is pressing Government to provide similar investment in training and development programmes to that provided in other parts of the public sector, to address specific skill shortages now in children's services, regulatory services and waste management.

Councils need funding for professional bursary schemes to boost capacity in skill shortage areas and to attract and retain professional talent

24. Many of the local government skill shortage areas (including those in statutory services) require graduate or professional qualifications to enter and progress in that career. Investment in bursary schemes such as [the NHS](#) and those for schools ([Teach First](#)) delivers much needed skills to those sectors. The LGA is working with the Government and professional bodies to identify the key success factors and support required and press for short term targeted funding in the system to boost supply of much needed undergraduate, postgraduate and professional bursary schemes designed specifically for local government.

Councils can improve the responsiveness of the national employment and skills system

25. [Work Local](#) is the LGA's longstanding, ambitious yet realistic vision for progressive devolution and integration of employment and skills services. The campaign sets out:
 - how a centrally driven and fragmented approach is suboptimal and costly;
 - how a place-based system, coordinated by local government has the potential to support more people into work and result in increases in residents' skills and employment outcomes at less cost.

Councils need flexibilities in implementing apprenticeships

26. Councils employ approximately 27,000 apprentices across all levels of the workforce from new starters to individuals on graduate apprentice schemes into skill shortage areas. The apprenticeship route offers councils the ability to create development and training pathways into roles at all levels but more flexibility is needed in how the apprenticeship levy can be spent. Since the introduction of the levy in 2019 (£150 million per annum for councils in England), councils have transferred £3.25 million per month unspent to HMRC and this figure is increasing. The LGA has operated an apprenticeship support programme to help councils maximise their levy spend, transfer their levy to other employers and build capacity to grow more apprentice schemes and create more apprentice standards that are needed by councils.
27. The LGA is seeking increased flexibilities in how the apprenticeship levy can be spent: currently the levy can only be used to pay for training. Councils report they would use levy to fund extra capacity in their council to better manage the levy process and to backfill wages when staff on apprenticeships attend training.
28. Council-maintained schools have been disproportionately affected by the levy as they were unable to spend it effectively since the relevant standards did not exist. The LGA has supported the development of apprenticeship standards in schools but much more needs to be done to use the levy to create new apprenticeship routes for higher teaching assistants, teachers and SEND roles.

Councils need investment to support economic development

29. Councils' economic development (ED) teams promote prosperity amongst communities, residents, and businesses, and have latterly been entrusted as 'lead authority' to work with Government to determine how multiple economic growth-related funding streams, are targeted in local areas. The Chief Economic Development Officers Society (CEDOS) published a report³⁷ earlier this year which identified recruitment challenges and skills gaps in light of changing demands on the service.
30. The LGA has commissioned Shared Intelligence (Si) to build on CEDOS' research and engage different parts of local government through our partner organisations. Si's report, due in March 2023, will capture skills and capacity challenges ED teams face in delivering local and national priorities and suggestions for further support to enable ED teams to deliver more. Interim findings will be presented to the City Regions and People and Places Boards in January, and we will explore links with the EEHT Board. Based on the outcome of this project, more detailed support may be required.

We are currently also planning to commission research into capacity and priorities, and to develop recommendations for the future of revenues and benefits services, to ensure the right support and safety net underpins inclusive local economies.

³⁷ www.cedos.org/future-of-economic-development-research/

Putting people first – the reform of adult social care gives councils the resources to address their funding pressures.

Councils need a ten-year workforce strategy for health and adult social care

31. The Autumn Statement included a commitment for the publication of a comprehensive workforce plan for the NHS in 2023, including independently verified forecasts for categories of professionals required. In response, we have called for this plan to be extended to include the non-NHS health workforce commissioned or directly employed by councils, the adult social care workforce and those in the community and voluntary sector without whose support the NHS would not be able to operate. We are willing to work with the Government to achieve this, alongside ADASS and other representatives of care and support service users, employers, workers, inspectors and commissioners. This plan should include investment in training, qualifications and support; career pathways and development; effective workforce planning across the whole social care workforce and staff recognition, value and reward. This would enable a holistic view of the needs of the whole workforce, for example enabling social care workers to access resources to aid retention such as NHS Wellbeing Hubs.

Councils need an independent review of care worker pay

32. The social care workforce must be developed in a manner equivalent to the NHS as part of a stable, sustainable solution to long-term funding problems. This must involve 'parity of esteem' for social care staff with their NHS colleagues. Research and deliberation is needed on the coordination of terms and conditions and the introduction of an effective mechanism for implementation and uprating pay. To achieve those aims with a reasonable degree of consensus across the sector, we continue to urge Government to commission an independent review to promptly review the existing pay levels in the sector and the mechanism for ensuring they support the recruitment and retention of the high-quality workforce the public requires.

Councils need financial support to address significant challenges in adult social care recruitment and retention

33. The LGA argues that, although additional funding for adult social care announced in the Autumn Statement is welcome, it falls significantly short of the £13 billion we have called for to address the severity of the pressure facing the service: this includes £3 billion towards tackling significant recruitment and retention problems by increasing care worker pay. While we have produced [guidance to support social care providers to maximise opportunities from overseas recruitment](#), financial support is also required to meet additional costs associated with this route (approximately £6,000 per person).

Councils need a knowledge and skills framework for adult social care

34. The LGA welcomed the commitment in 'People at the Heart of Care', the adult social care reform white paper, to a knowledge and skills framework to support career structure and progression and now calls for its implementation. This framework should be across health and care to enable people to maximise opportunities and build knowledge and understanding of different roles (subject to the current pay differential

between health and care being addressed so that the current one-way flow of staff from social care to health is ceased).

Councils need the removal of barriers to swift ‘onboarding’ of new staff

35. Capacity gaps in adult social care are being exacerbated by lengthy Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) processes and a lack of portability of existing checks. It is proposed to seek the support of DLUHC to convene relevant Government departments and professional bodies to consider revisions to processes to reduce lengthy recruitment periods and additional costs.

Putting people first – councils have the powers and funding to meet the needs of all local children and people.

Councils can support Government to review national rules on agency usage in children’s social care

36. We are already supporting councils to reduce the use of agency social work, which is costly and works against providing stable professional relationships for children and families. We are recommending that Government takes consistent action to control the agency market and malpractice, particularly in relation to the growing prevalence of managed teams in the market which is leading to concerns about a lack of vetting assurance associated with these teams, and a reduction in the availability of agency social workers for ‘standard’ appointments.

Councils need a holistic workforce strategy for children and family services

37. The scale of the challenge, and the interrelationships across all elements of children and family services, requires a holistic strategy. We are calling on the Department for Education, in consultation with the sector, to develop a shared 10-year workforce strategy and a sustainable approach to pay with clear actions at national, system, place and provider level. This will help the sector plan for and attract the right people we need to meet demand, create new entry routes into social work, focus on prevention rather than crisis, enable us to reward people appropriately and set out explicit skills and competency frameworks.

Championing climate change and local environments – deliver a waste and resource system that meets local needs

Councils need long-term policy and funding certainty to invest in climate change response and a national technical assistance strategy

38. Councils have some influence over 80 per cent of local greenhouse gas emissions, through housing, transport and energy solutions. All private and public sector partners are learning and growing experience around climate change mitigation and adaptation. Councils are no different, but messy and uncertain funding and policy environment can make it difficult for councils to invest in the technical, financial and managerial experience to lead the local long-term effort, and support from Local Net Zero Hubs is patchy at best. Councils need clarity so they can invest in their capacity,

and a strategy to pool to technical assistance locally, sub-nationally and nationally which councils can draw on.

Councils need a resources and skills strategy for planning and place-making

39. The LGA welcomes the commitment in 'Planning for the Future', the planning white paper, to a comprehensive resource and skills strategy for the planning sector and now calls for its urgent implementation. As outlined earlier in this report there is considerable concern from councils about their already stretched capacity and recruitment and retention challenges. Councils will need the necessary resources to upskill officers to implement reforms to the planning system to ensure they are equipped to create great communities through community engagement and proactive place-making.

Councils want to work with government and industry to grow the environmental skills to deliver the Environment Act

40. Public concern with environmental quality will grow and the Environment Act introduces a range of ambitious policy reforms that councils want to help succeed. Councils are encountering real challenges in finding and recruiting the skills in preparing for their duties around Bio-Diversity Net Gain, the development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies, wider nature recovery, and wider waste and recycling policy reforms. In particular, the government, industry and councils should work together grow the number of ecologists across all partners and ensure that local government is an attractive to new ecologists.

Councils need the removal of barriers to recruitment and retention of HGV drivers

41. Forty-one per cent of councils state that allowing renewal of the certificate of professional competence (CPC) at no cost to drivers would help to alleviate HGV driver shortages³⁸. We therefore propose to call on the Department for Transport to remove CPC renewal costs to aid recruitment and retention of workers in the sector.

Improvement and support offers

42. The LGA currently provides the following advice and support to councils which can assist with recruitment and retention challenges:
- i) Resources to help local government employers to address recruitment and retention challenges, accessed via the [LGA website](#).
 - ii) Information and best practice sharing (including new ways of working) with local authorities' HR professionals;
 - iii) Targeted 'employee healthcheck' surveys for qualified social workers, occupational therapists and non-registered social care practitioners supporting the delivery of social care to inform workforce planning and support;

³⁸ www.local.gov.uk/publications/covid-19-workforce-survey-week-ending-14-january-2022

- iv) Tools and consultancy to support councils to make efficient use of staffing resources and workforce planning;
 - v) Training to support new managers and aspiring leaders in arts, culture, libraries, sport and physical activity, funded on a rolling basis by Arts Council England and Sport England.
43. The LGA has identified a number of additional support offers that it could provide to councils, subject to the identification of funding. These could include:
- i) developing a recruitment campaign for local government
 - ii) research into career pathways to inform planning of qualifications and training provision
 - iii) development of apprenticeship pathways into skills shortage areas
 - iv) development of returners programmes and support for early careers
 - vi) further collation and promotion of best practice to the sector.

LGA political governance

44. The Resources Board has the overall lead for workforce support as well as the policy lead for financial sustainability in the sector and the capacity and capability of the finance workforce. Each LGA policy board considers workforce issues as relevant to their terms of reference and in particular:
- Children and Young People Board: children's social care;
 - Community Wellbeing Board: adult social care;
 - Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board: waste, climate change, housing, planning;
 - Safer and Stronger Communities: regulatory services such as environmental health and trading standards (these services also support the objectives of other boards);
 - Culture, Tourism and Sport: Libraries, leisure centres and parks;
 - City Regions Board: economic development, employment and skills;
 - People and Places Board: economic development, employment and skills.

The Improvement and Innovation Board also has a role in overseeing the delivery of workforce improvement support activity funded by DLUHC.

45. All of the above boards are therefore asked to consider this report and provide feedback on priority issues related to this theme. Following the Resources Board discussion, the expectation is that Executive Advisory Board will then be asked to consider the LGA's work on the theme in the round.

Implications for Wales

46. Wales faces very similar issues with workforce capacity as are evident in England. Through the workforce team's regular engagement the WLGA feeds into discussions and the sharing of good practice and experience. The working assumption used is that any steps to improve capacity in England would also be applicable in Wales, taking note of relevant responsibility devolution.

Financial implications

47. The LGA activities listed at paragraph 42 will be implemented within existing budgets. Improvement and support proposals references at paragraph 43 are subject to negotiation with DLUHC as part of the 2023/4 sector support programme.

Equalities implications

48. Capacity gaps in councils' workforce have the potential to have negative impacts on people with protected characteristics: for example, an inability to meet demand for adult social care can impact older people and people with disabilities.
49. Addressing equalities considerations is a crucial part of work to maximise the potential pool of local government workers and aid retention: support to councils to consider equalities good practice is an important part of the workforce provided by the LGA.
50. By working with councils and with relevant professional bodies, the LGA will target its policy and improvement work to address workforce capacity challenges towards those service areas where it is most needed, with particular consideration of impacts on people with protected characteristics.

Next steps

51. A report incorporating feedback from policy boards will be brought to Executive Advisory Board for consideration on 9 March 2023.

Meeting: Improvement and Innovation Board

Date: Wednesday 15 February 2023



LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme

Purpose

To note the progress of work undertaken so far, and to support proposals for the 2023/24 programme.

Summary

The aim of the LGA's Climate Change Sector Support Programme is to help councils to reach their local carbon reduction and adaptation targets. We produce tools, case studies, roundtables, podcasts, webinars, action learning sets and projects to help build councils' capability and capacity in sustainability and the environment.

Since April 2022, 98 per cent of English councils have engaged with the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme. The LGA climate change 2021 survey found that 95 per cent of respondents reported that the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme has had a positive impact on their council. And in the 2022/23 programme, 96 per cent of councils who have received support have been satisfied.

This report covers the achievements from April 2022 to the end of December 2022, as well as the planned activities for the 2023/24 financial year. Appendix 1 provides an overview of work undertaken prior to April 2022. Appendix 2 provides an overview of the work undertaken with the LGA Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board.

Recommendations

1. That the Improvement and Innovation Board notes the update on the actions taken under the LGA's Climate Change Sector Support Programme in 2022/23 and supports the forthcoming activity to take place from April 2023.
2. That the Improvement and Innovation Board note the significant demand for the support by councils and the ever-increasing demand for this work.
3. Continue to feed in priorities for councils in the area of environment and sustainability.

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Chairman: Councillor James Jamieson OBE **Chief Executive:** Mark Lloyd CBE **President:** Baroness Grey-Thompson

Background

1. In July 2019, the LGA General Assembly passed a motion calling upon the government to explore the domestic implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through funded partnership roles with local authority areas, encouraging councils to continue to link local priorities with the overall ambitions of the SDGs and the declaration of a climate emergency.
2. Following the motion, the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme has been developed and is a comprehensive offer for councils which meets the needs of local authorities. This includes an array of support offered across the improvement division and beyond, in sharing good practice, leadership, productivity, research and information.
3. The LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme developed a set of priorities to work on in both 2022/23 and 2023/24. This was done in collaboration with the Improvement and Innovation Board Climate Change Member working group and the officer Climate Action Group, alongside feedback from the LGA 2021 climate change survey of councils.
4. The underlying principles of the programme are to:
 - Provide support and improvement to councils tackling the climate and ecological emergencies.
 - Help councils to achieve a green, just and inclusive economic recovery from the pandemic.
 - Work with local partners including education, businesses and citizens to achieve our aims.
 - Ensure support (and learning from support where it is for an individual council) will be made available to every council through events, case studies, podcasts, tools, blogs, e learning and so on.
 - Ensure all work is connected to the Sustainable Development Goals where appropriate.

Table 1: LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme: 2022/23

Since April 2022, 98 per cent of English councils have engaged with the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme.

We asked councils who have engaged in direct support from us during September-December 2022, the following questions:

- ❖ 'Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the support offered through the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme?' 173/181 councils answered very or somewhat satisfied (96 per cent).
- ❖ 'To what extent, if at all, will your council look to the LGA for support on climate change and adaptation matters in the future?' 162/181 councils answered yes (90 per cent). Nineteen people said 'don't know'.

The following projects were undertaken between April 2022-December 2022. The updates are based on how many engagements have taken place since the launch of the project.

Theme	Project/work area	Update
Communication and engagement	Climate Change web hub The webpage is the place to go for local government on climate change. It houses LGA resources, case studies and resources from elsewhere.	Webpage views: 44,327
	Monthly LGA climate change e-bulletin The monthly edition summarises all the support which the LGA offers to councils including anything which has been recently released or up and coming support that month.	E bulletin subscribers: 6,660
	COP27 Pass the Planet case studies Our Pass the Planet campaign promotes the notable practice happening in councils across England, with every region spotlighted. The campaign aims to support universal learning and share innovative solutions which councils can scale up or replicate.	Case studies: 211
	Climate emergency network knowledge hub The Hub is the place where councils who have declared a climate emergency or made any other type of commitment to reduce carbon and improve the environment, can share information and experiences.	Knowledge hub members: 552
	LGA Green Webinar Series Webinars cover a range of topics from housing retrofit and decarbonising transport to community engagement. Speakers are from councils sharing their good practice, and experts on the topic. Blogs from each webinar are available on the website.	8 webinars/conference sessions delivered so far with 1,136 attendees in total.
Data	The Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool The tool measures councils' own emissions, and supports a single	281 unique authorities have downloaded the tool so far (including councils and a few

	<p>approach for councils to measure them. It produces summary tables and charts to help local authorities understand their most significant sources of emissions, which can then be used to prioritise actions to reduce carbon emissions. It is free to use and has been endorsed by the Climate Change Committee.</p>	<p>parks and fire authorities).</p> <p>We launched a new waste calculator in January 2023 as part of a suite of LGA GHG tools.</p>
	<p>Scope 3 reporting guidance</p> <p>The document supports the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool and aims to assist local authorities with understanding the scale of scope 3 reporting, what to report and how to set an action plan for future reporting.</p>	2,194 views
Local collaboration	<p>The Net Zero Innovation Programme</p> <p>Delivered through a collaboration between the Local Government Association (LGA) and University College London (UCL), the Net Zero Innovation Programme brings together councils, universities and other stakeholders to address climate and sustainability challenges at the local level and seeks routes to achieve council's net zero, adaptation and biodiversity commitments.</p>	12 more councils on 2022/23 programme currently
Leadership	<p>Leadership Essentials: climate emergency including carbon literacy for Councillors</p> <p>This programme helped Councillors, across all services, to explore their crucial local leadership role in responding to the climate emergency. Councillors were offered the opportunity to be carbon literacy accredited.</p>	35 Councillors completed training
	<p>Leadership Essentials: climate emergency including carbon literacy for officers</p> <p>This programme helped senior council officers, across all services, to explore their crucial local leadership role in responding to the climate emergency. Officers were offered the opportunity to be carbon literacy accredited and to be trained to train others.</p>	<p>214 senior officers completed training</p> <p>141 officers completed the train the trainer sessions.</p>
	<p>Roundtable series for councils to develop climate action plans</p> <p>The LGA supported councils in their creation and development of climate action plans by organising a set of roundtables to bring councils together to discuss and share learning through facilitated peer support. These roundtables were open to all councils at any stage in their development or implementation of the climate action plans. The sessions were guided by councils, with facilitation and guest speakers contributing. Summaries of what was discussed can be found on the LGA website.</p>	51 councils supported

	<p>Sustainability in Council Services</p> <p>The LGA has commissioned the Zero Carbon Britain team at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) to undertake an exciting project to develop draft routemaps for councils across England to understand how to embed sustainability across some council service areas. We ran a series of workshops that brought together voices from across councils to contribute expertise in how service areas and operations work in reality. A webinar in March will explore what was discussed, provide space for feedback and questions, as well as explaining what the next steps for the project are.</p>	<p>Sign up to the Show and Tell Webinar on March 16 2023.</p> <p>We are very much welcoming feedback about the first draft so please do come along to the webinar.</p>
Heat and buildings	<p>Regional Retrofit Action Plan Training</p> <p>This brought together officers of all levels to support them with developing the tools, skills, opportunities and capabilities required to help grow the retrofit sector in their region. The briefings and blogs for each session can be found on our website for all to view.</p>	109 council officers have received support to develop their capability in this area
Transport	<p>Action learning sets for Councillors and officers</p> <p>The Decarbonising Transport Action Learning Sets have brought together Councillors and officers to help each other in addressing the challenges of decarbonising transport and local transport planning. Summaries of each set can be found on the webpages.</p>	Underway with 30 Councillors and officers

Spotlight on: The Net Zero Innovation Programme

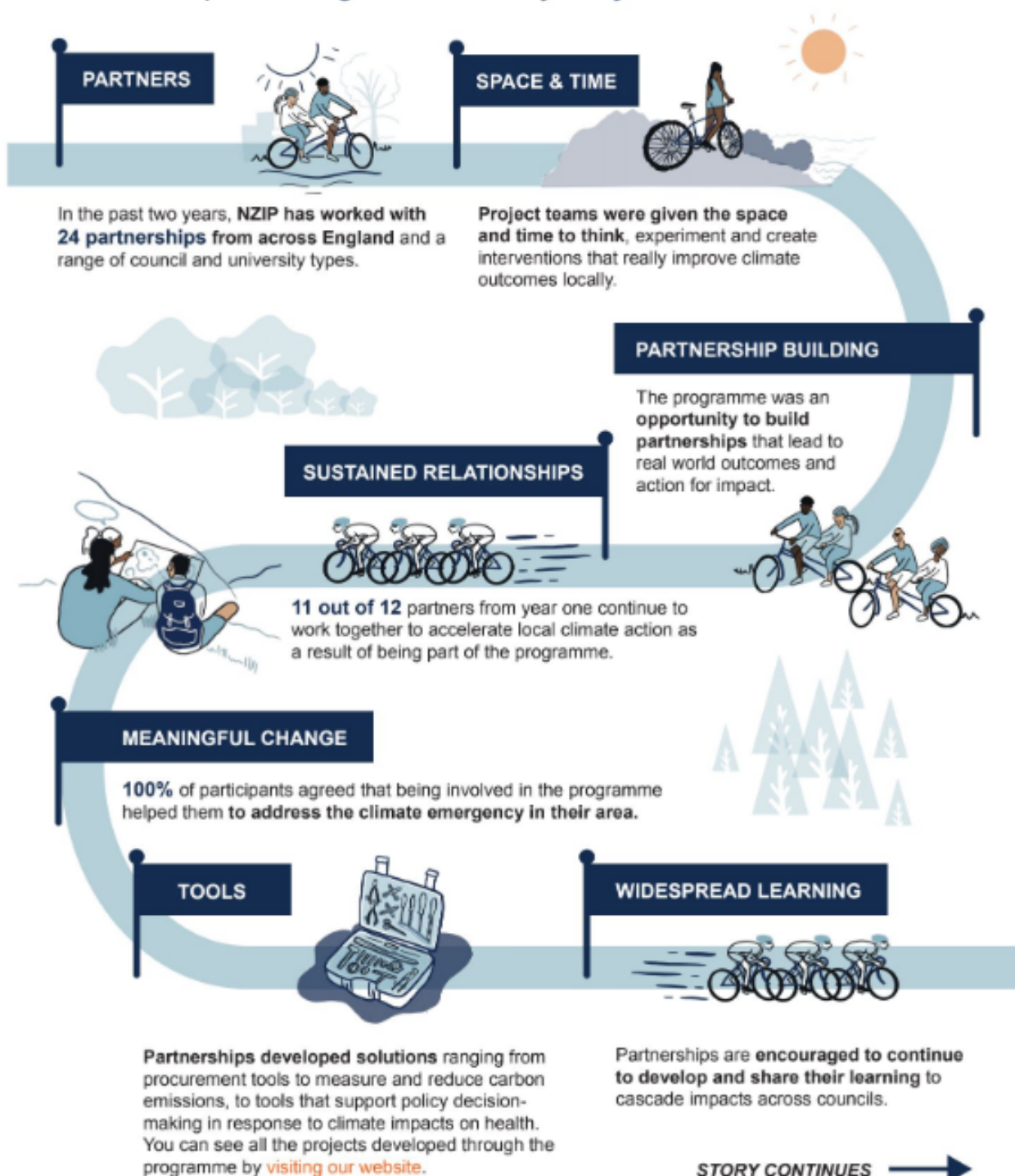
5. The Net Zero Innovation Programme (NZIP) develops partnerships of researchers and council officers across all English regions and supports them in tackling the climate emergency.
6. You can watch a video which summaries the challenge, our solution and impact: [Net Zero Innovation Programme | Local Government Association](#)
7. The NZIP creates universal learning and products for all councils. A lot of this learning can be accessed via the case studies.
8. As an example, whilst on the LGA Net Zero Innovation Programme, Cambridgeshire County Council and UCL created a [carbon calculator](#) to improve accounting and reporting of a waste disposal and/or waste collection authority's scope 3 emissions from the management and treatment of waste.
9. On January 17 2023, we were really pleased to launch the [waste emissions calculator](#). This will aid councils in reducing scope 3 emissions, provide transparency of council expectations of suppliers, and enable council staff to understand and reduce environmental implications of their procurements and services. The tool is now part of the [LGA Greenhouse Gas Tool Accounting Suite](#).

10. The NZIP undertook and evaluation with the participants in the 2021/22 programme. The results can be found:

- ❖ Have you increased your skills and capacity to work on climate change/net zero projects? Yes - 100%
- ❖ How likely would you be to recommend NZIP to your peers? – Definitely/likely - 90%
- ❖ When you needed help with your project, were the NZIP team able to help effectively? – Yes – 91% Somewhat – 4%

LGA-UCL Net Zero Innovation Programme

The Net Zero Innovation programme partners councils and academics to solve local climate problems together. Here's our journey so far...



NZIP EXPLAINED

Councils are declaring climate emergencies. According to the United Nations, the world is warming faster than at any point in recorded history. [See the animation for more.](#)

Local councils want to find **solutions** to making areas carbon net zero by 2050.

How do councils:



Deliver on carbon reduction targets?



Create and execute Climate Action Plans?



Source funding, capacity and capability for change?

Universities also want to take action, and find evidence-based solutions.

Yet, local policy engagement efforts are disjointed and poorly supported beyond the hyper-local. **How can universities help?**



Immediate, medium and long-term support is needed to connect councils and universities and scale-up solutions across local authorities.

The Programme

This is where the LGA-UCL Net Zero Innovation Programme comes in. The programme works with councils and academics to solve local climate problems together. It does this by:

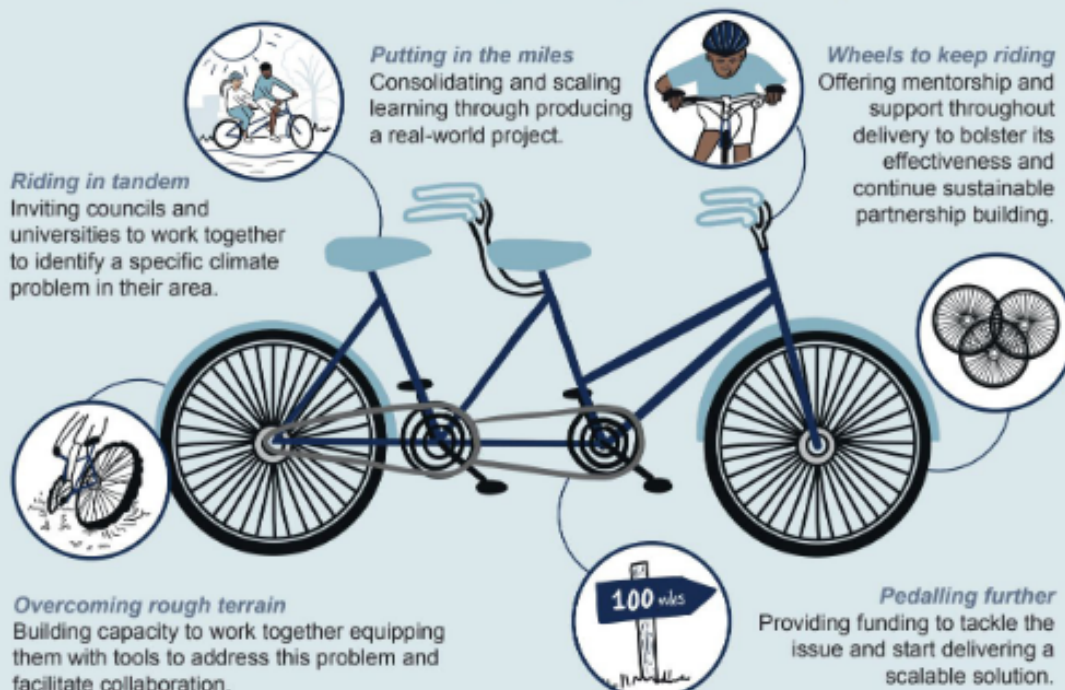


Table 2: LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme: 2023/24

Table 2 (below) presents the draft work to be undertaken by the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme between April 2023 and March 2024. This is dependent on funding negotiations with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Core activity	KPIs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage ongoing widescale use of reporting tools across the local government sector. Maintain and update tools including adding further measurements for scope 3 emissions, a universal challenge for the sector. Support for innovative approaches to enable councils to deliver net zero ambitions. Delivery of a series of webinars, training and guidance on net zero, adaptation, and green finance. Topics include carbon and adaptation literacy, green finance and housing retrofit. Display learning for all English councils on the LGA climate change hub, including but not limited to action plans. Widely share resources and best practice, including through the LGA Climate Change e-bulletin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and maintain a suite of reporting tools including the Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool and the Waste Emissions Calculator. Updates will include further measurement of scope 3 emissions – by end of December 2023. Engage over 200 councils through a variety of activities, including supporting the development of practical responses to local-level net zero challenges, training, webinars and best practice – by end of March 2024. At least 80 per cent of respondents in councils that have received direct support from the Climate Change Sector Support Programme report that it provided them with knowledge and/or skills to address local climate challenges – by end of March 2024. 7,000 subscribers to the LGA Climate Change E-Bulletin – by end of March 2024.

Other LGA work relating to climate change includes:

11. The LGA is developing a range of activity to provide detailed propositions for how local and central government can work together to deliver decarbonisation. The LGA Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board leads this work, together with the LGA Climate Change Task Group.
12. The table in Appendix 2 beneath introduces some of the priority policy work packages either recently completed, underway, or in planning.

Equality, diversity and inclusion considerations

13. An initial analysis of potential EDI considerations affecting the environment area has been carried out. People with the following protected characteristics have been identified as disproportionately impacted.

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

Environmental considerations

14. All procurement activity for the programme will be sustainable.

15. Meetings and events will be held virtually, where possible, to avoid greenhouse gas emissions from travel.

Implications for Wales

16. We are engaging with our Wales Local Government Association colleagues, are sharing learning and work collaboratively on common issues. We are doing this alongside the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and Northern Ireland LGA. For example, they are looking in to using our [Behaviour Change and Environment toolkit](#) and Wales LGA participated in the Pass the Planet campaign.

Financial Implications

17. The support offer is funded through our Improvement Grant Determination letter from the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities.

Next steps

18. Officers will continue delivering the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme.

Appendix 1

The following work has been undertaken by the LGA Climate Change Sector Support Programme between February 2020 and March 2022.

Theme	Project/work area	Update
Data	<p>Scope 3 reporting guidance for social care</p> <p>This helps local authorities to measure and manage scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions. This set specific guidance for social care services scope three greenhouse gas emissions, covers all the main aspects of social care spend, and is applicable to both outsourced and in-sourced services.</p>	676 views
	<p>Climate adaptation toolkit and risk generator</p> <p>The Adaptation Toolkit is a 5-step process to help you prepare for the impacts the current and future climate could have on your authority, your residents, and the services you provide.</p>	91 unique authorities have downloaded the tool so far
	<p>LGA climate change survey 2021</p> <p>In October 2021 the LGA conducted a survey of the climate change officers of all councils in England. The purposes of the survey were to assess what actions local authorities are taking to combat climate change, to assess their future needs for support in this area, and to evaluate the climate change sector support offer provided by the LGA. A total of 178 responded – a response rate of 53 per cent.</p>	53 per cent of councils responded
Local collaboration	Net Zero Innovation Programme	24 councils supported. Case studies and podcast series available to all.
Leadership	Leadership Essentials: climate emergency including carbon literacy for Councillors	105 Councillors trained.
	Leadership Essentials: climate emergency including carbon literacy for officers	63 officers trained.
	<p>Councillors' workbook on the local path to net zero</p> <p>This workbook has been designed as a distance learning aid for local councillors. It is intended to provide councillors with insight and assistance with the key skills which will help you to be most effective in your role. Some of the content may be of most use to more newly elected councillors, but nonetheless if you have been a councillor for some time, the workbook should serve as a useful reminder of some of the key skills, approaches and tactics that make for an effective ward councillor. It may even challenge you to reconsider how you have approached aspects of the role to date.</p>	4,262 views
	<p>Scrutiny guide</p> <p>This publication covers 10 questions, and several supplementary follow ups, to ask if you are scrutinising climate action in your council. It lays out key issues on which local scrutineers (councillors sitting on scrutiny committees and the officers who support them) can pose questions to those with decision-making responsibility.</p>	2,502 views

Heat and buildings	<p>Action learning sets: building housing retrofit skills</p> <p>Over six months in 2021 and 2022, 24 officers and councillors from local authorities across England were invited to explore, unpick and address the challenges of retrofitting domestic properties. The focus was on developing the skills required inside and outside the councils to manage and implement retrofit programmes, including co-ordinating internal and external stakeholders, generating demand from householders, and upskilling suppliers.</p>	24 councils supported
Green economy	<p>Action learning sets for creating green jobs</p> <p>Following the successful completion of the action learning sets, the report seeks to capture the learnings across all of the individual authorities involved, the process and the outputs from the Action Learning Sets (ALS) and the output from the final symposium. The report includes key individual and collective learnings, key sector-wide learnings and conclusions and recommendations for the LGA to pursue.</p>	30 councils supported
	<p>Sustainable procurement toolkit</p> <p>This is a toolkit for commissioners, procurement practitioners and contract managers to help councils deliver on local economic, social and environment priorities.</p>	6,089 views
Community engagement	<p>Behavioural insights toolkit</p> <p>This resource takes a Councillor or officer through six steps of undertaking a behavioural change project. It then takes the user through a variety of green behaviours, applied to the six steps. These include behaviours in your own home, in the community and whilst on the move.</p>	4,211 views
	<p>Local Action for our Environment podcast</p> <p>The LGA released a podcast series to provide good practice for council officers and Members looking to engage their local communities on climate change.</p>	2,039 listens
Environment	<p>Biodiversity e-learning</p> <p>The LGA produced an e-learning module on biodiversity aimed at council officers and Members. This module will provide an introduction to the subject, as well as providing tips and guidance on how councils can take action to protect their natural habitats.</p>	8 councils completed the training

Appendix 2

The table beneath highlights the priority LGA policy work either recently completed, underway, or in planning.

Theme	Work package	Update
Whole Place	Local Net Zero Forum – a cross-Whitehall and local government group of Directors reviewing local and national government collaboration, funding, capacity, and data on net zero. LGA also successful in supporting creation of political tier of the Forum	First political meeting of the Forum in February 2023. Director tier has met three times and commissioned work through task groups.
Mission Zero – Net Zero Review	LGA engaged with Chris Skidmore review into delivering net zero, including holding a session with members and Chris Skidmore, engagement with officials on the review team, and submitting evidence. The review referenced the LGA on many occasions and was positive in recognising role of councils, and reinforcing some of the sector's concerns and asks. The LGA does not agree with everything in the review, however, and felt it could have gone further in some areas. The LGA will engage with government on next steps.	Review complete, letter on its conclusions sent in to government
Adaptation to climate change	Project to investigate, capture, and present what councils can offer and need from the next National Adaptation Programme 2023, and wider local / national collaboration on closing the adaptation gap.	Due to complete in March 2023
A plan for decarbonising all homes and buildings up to 2050	Heat and buildings decarbonisation – designing a single framework approach for how councils and government can work together to retrofit and decarbonise all homes and buildings up to 2050. Working with the Energy Systems Catapult. Includes detailed propositions on retrofit, grid capacity, signals on technological solutions, direct investment, market enabling, community engagement, landlords, green skills etc.	Project completed, to launch shortly.
Cost of living / energy efficiency	Research into the financial and social benefit case for energy efficiency advice and accelerating local interventions to insulate homes and reduce the demand for energy, while contributing to the reduction to emissions and positive health. Also engaging BEIS to shape and share learning of council role in ECO 4	Project complete, research will be updated in line with rising energy costs.
Street by street decarbonisation	Green streets, lessons for whole-place decarbonisation from street/neighbourhood projects	Project completed
Social housing	Research with National Housing Federation exploring the readiness of social housing for decarbonisation, and the	Project completed

	challenges to overcome. It found over 90% of social homes were not hard to decarbonise and made case for bringing forward investment.	
Electrification and grid	<p>Engagement of national grid and DNOs on the future relationship between councils and the electricity system for net zero, growth and resilience, for instance thinking about Local Area Energy Planning.</p> <p>Submission and engagement with Ofgem and BEIS on the local institutional governance role in shaping grid capacity, storage, flexibility etc for electrification</p>	<p>Planning events for councils and electricity system for early 2023</p> <p>Ofgem likely to publish consultation on next steps in Spring 2023</p>
Funding	Report into the green finance opportunities available to councils and the barriers and challenges created by a fragmented funding landscape on net zero. Continuous engagement with government on specific grant funding programmes and how to maximise their impact locally	Published and ongoing engagement
Heat and buildings	Representation on Government's Heat and Buildings Council	Ongoing.
Electric vehicle charging infrastructure	EV charging infrastructure – influencing national policy, strategy and resources in support of local government's role. Taking forward OZEV's EV infrastructure strategy recognise barriers facing councils and how to address them; includes £500m commitment for councils to fund on-street infrastructure including up to £50m revenue support.	Ongoing.
Buses	Engage DfT on the National Bus Strategy and support for Bus Service Improvement Plans	Ongoing.
Highways and active travel	Working with Government and Active Travel England to ensuring adequate resources for roads maintenance, especially in support of promoting greater cycling and walking.	Ongoing.
National road pricing	Research to understand local government's view on the potential future of national road pricing published. We will use this to continue our call for Government to make a decision on the future of motoring taxes as we transition to EVs and to involve local government in the development of options.	Ongoing
Last mile freight	Project commissioned on the opportunities and challenges presented by growth of last mile freight.	Project completed and published
Shared micromobility and car clubs	Two projects commissioned to raise awareness of the benefits and issues relating to shared micromobility (including e-scooters) and car clubs.	Reports planned to be published by end of 2022/ early 2023
Skills	Bringing stakeholders and the sector together to influence government policy through the BEIS led Green Jobs	Ongoing

	Delivery Group and local capacity and capability workstream. The focus has so far been primarily on retrofit skills but over the next year will be expanded to explore other green jobs, including in the zero carbon, land management, farming and sustainable tourism sectors.	
Waste	Influencing the future of the waste reforms, including on consistency (inc. garden waste, food waste), EPR, and deposit return scheme, and new consultations on reforming HWRC DIY waste charging, waste tracking and carriers	Awaiting Govts response to consistency consultation
Waste	Developed position on proposals to extend Emissions Trading Scheme to waste services, engaging with BEIS and Defra on next steps.	Awaiting Govts formal response
Bio-diversity	Engaging with Government on Bio-diversity Net Gain proposals, including the detail of policy and the staffing and resource concerns	Expected to be mandatory in 2023
Planning policy	Building case for how National Planning Policy Framework can work with local ambitions to achieve net zero and adaptation, and the opportunities for a more ambitious Future Homes Standard	In development
Nature recovery	Engaging with reforms to protect and grow the role of nature, including Local Nature Recovery Strategies and the Nature Recovery Network, linked to the issues of nutrient neutrality, and making wider case for coherent strategy to the nature recovery	More details on LNRS regulations and advice expected shortly
Responding to extreme weather events	Work to look at the impact the wildfires over the summer had on fire and rescue services' capacity and capability in conjunction with the National Fire Chiefs Council	Underway.
Other reactive policy issues	Responding to a range of Government led initiatives and policy change – for instance: on reaching all communities with energy payments; on proposed duties around energy standards for non-domestic buildings; Energy transition for buildings off the gas grid; development of hydrogen villages and towns and hydrogen regulation.	Continuous.

