

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) - 2016 Annual Reports

Purpose

For information and decision.

Summary

All Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are required, under the LGA Constitution, to submit a full report to the LGA Leadership Board each year.

Last year, the Leadership Board asked that annual reports be structured in the form of an Executive summary, including a description of the Special Interest Groups' key activities and outcomes of any work undertaken during the past year.

Copies of the SIG Annual Reports received to date will be circulated to Members along with this agenda but in a **separate supplemental document pack**.

The LGA's Statement for Special Interest Groups is attached at **Appendix A**, along with a list of the current SIGs at **Appendix B**.

Recommendations

That the LGA Leadership Board:

- i. considers if it has any future requirements in respect of Special Interest Groups;
- ii. indicates if it wishes to invite any Special Interest Groups to a future meeting to discuss their work; and
- iii. agrees that those Special Interest Groups that do not submit annual reports be contacted with a view to removing them from the LGA's list of Special Interest Groups.

Action

Officers to take forward in accordance with the Leadership Board's views.

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Background

1. The LGA Constitution provides for member authorities with common characteristics or interests to form Special Interest Groups. A list of the current groupings, which have been approved by the LGA Leadership Board and established as Special Interest Groups since the LGA was formed in April 1997, is attached at **Appendix B**.

2016 Annual Reports

2. 17 Special Interest Groups have submitted Annual Reports this year. The remaining SIGs who have not yet submitted reports are:
 - 2.1. Affordable Loans Network;
 - 2.2. Shared Chief Executives SIG (*This SIG became dormant as of January 2016.*)
3. The Leadership Board are asked to agree that SIGs that are inactive for more than 12 months, or those that do not submit an annual report, are contacted with a view to removing them from the LGA's list of SIGs.

Financial/Resource Implications

4. Special Interest Groups are encouraged to raise their own resources from their membership and administer these resources themselves. The LGA does not pay any allowances or travel and subsistence costs to members attending SIG meetings.
5. The LGA does however offer limited administrative support and the use of certain meeting rooms, free of charge up to a certain limit.
6. The planned refreshment will have an impact on those SIGs that currently use meeting rooms at Local Government House. All SIGs have been advised of the need to make alternative arrangements for the duration of the improvement works. Given the overall reduction in meeting rooms in the refurbished building and the stronger commercial emphasis, members may wish to review the current policy of making meeting rooms available to SIGs free of charge.

Appendix A: Statement on Special Interest Groups

Introduction

1. The LGA Constitution provides for 10 or more full member authorities with common features, interests or concerns to form a Special Interest Group (SIG). Under exceptional circumstances, the LGA Leadership Board may agree for smaller groups of councils to establish a SIG.

LGA Constitution – clause 15

- 15.1 *If ten or more full member authorities with common features, interests or concerns so request by formal notice to the Chief Executive, the Association, acting through the LGA Leadership Board, may establish a Special Interest Group (SIG) for such authorities. Membership shall be open to all member authorities with such common features.*
- 15.2 *In any case of doubt as to whether an authority is eligible for membership of a SIG, the LGA Leadership Board shall determine the matter.*
- 15.3 *The Association may provide secretarial services to SIGs, having regard to the overall level of resources available to the Association, provided it is satisfied that the SIG's activities accord with the strategic direction and interests of the Association as a whole. SIGs may provide their own, or augment Association support, through resources raised from member authorities.*
- 15.4 *Special Interest Groups shall develop their own rules of procedure subject to the approval of the LGA Leadership Board. Each Special Interest Group shall report annually on its activities to the LGA Leadership Board.*

Rules of Operation of SIGs

2. If requested, and subject to the availability of resources, the LGA will provide:
 - ✓ secretarial support to Special Interest Groups for up to a maximum of 3 meetings per year in London;
 - ✓ accommodation in Local Government House, free of charge, subject to availability of rooms;
 - ✓ catering at normal LGA rates.

The LGA is a paperless organisation, therefore printing and hardcopy mailing will not be supported in line with the LGA's internal policies.
3. The LGA will not make any payments to members attending SIGs, including
 - × Attendance allowances
 - × SRAs
 - × Subsistence

These expenses remain the responsibility of member authorities.

4. SIGs are permitted to raise any resources they might need to support their activities and running costs from their member authorities.
5. SIGs are able to make representations direct to Government and elsewhere on matters arising directly from their special interest, and to obtain LGA assistance in doing so. However those representations must not conflict with or undermine LGA policy as a whole or damage the interests of other member authorities. The LGA has agreed protocols relating to local government finance and other distributional issues.
6. All SIGs are required to submit a full report at the end of April each year to the LGA Leadership Board covering such matters as their dealings with Government Departments. The Leadership Board reserves the right to invite the Chairman of a SIG to discuss an Annual Report or issues arising from it.
7. SIGs may also be required to report to the appropriate board, whose remit covers the SIG's particular area of interest.
8. The LGA will review support for SIGs annually.

Application to set up a SIG

9. Applications to establish a SIG should be made in writing and sent to

Chief Executive
LGA
Local Government House
Smith Square
London SW1P 3HZ

10. Applications should:

- 10.1. define the purpose of the SIG and the nature of the common feature or interest
- 10.2. include the names of at least 10 authorities in full membership who have committed to join the SIG
- 10.3. undertake to admit to membership all authorities who share that interest ¹

¹ In case of any dispute over whether an authority is eligible for membership of a particular SIG, the LGA Leadership Board will decide.

Appendix B: List of Special Interest Groups

No.	Special Interest Group
1.	Affordable Loans Network SIG
2.	Coastal Issues SIG
3.	Councils with ALMOs Group (CWAG)
4.	County Councils Network (CCN)
5.	Co-operative Councils Innovation Network
6.	District Councils Network (DCN)
7..	F40 Group of Education Authorities SIG
8.	Local Authority Pension Funds (LAPFF)
9.	National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA)
10.	New Nuclear Authorities
11.	City Regions Transport Authority Special Interest Group (formerly ITA SIG)
12.	NuLeaf SIG (Radioactive Waste Management & Nuclear Decommissioning)
13.	Public Transport Consortium SIG
14.	Rural Services Network SIG
15.	Special Interest Group of Metropolitan Authorities (SIGOMA)
16.	Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group (SASIG)
17.	World Heritage UK
18.	Shared Chief Executives SIG (<i>Dormant – Jan 16</i>)
19.	Key Cities SIG