

The Board's wider remit: Background paper on LGA Boards' Improvement Activity

Purpose

To note the improvement activity undertaken by the current LGA Boards, plus the two newly created Boards: the City Regions Board and the People and Places Board.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the contents of the paper as background to the discussion on the future role of the improvement and innovation board.

Action

Officers to respond as necessary to any comments.

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Children and Young People Board

1. Following the withdrawal of DfE funding in April 2013 (and subsequent consultation with local authorities), the LGA Children and Young People's Board agreed that the LGA would continue some key elements of the Children's Improvement Board led programme and continue to work in partnership with ADCS and Solace to support councils and to continue a high level dialogue on improvement and on the relationship with regulation by Ofsted.
2. The key elements of the sector-led offer are:
 - 2.1 Children's Improvement Advisers (CIAs) have been appointed by the LGA to work with our Principal Advisers (PAs) in each of the regions along with a prime associate with strategic overview to draw together learning from each of the regions and advise on the best support to councils:
 - 2.1.1 A quarterly meeting of stakeholders at a national level (comprised of representatives of the LGA, Solace and ADCS), informed and supported by intelligence and data gathered by the CIAs in conjunction with PAs, will consider the need for further challenge and support to councils;
 - 2.1.2 a leadership academy for lead members for children's services; 48 elected members attended three events during 2013-14 and three more are planned for 14-15;
 - 2.1.3 joint work on leadership in partnership with Solace and the Virtual Staff College (who provide leadership support for DCSs);
 - 2.1.4 quicker and easier access to data reports on children's services;
 - 2.2 the safeguarding peer review and shorter "diagnostics" on safeguarding and care;
 - 2.3 and up to five days immediate specialist children's services support for councils receiving an inadequate Ofsted judgement.

3. The LGA's Principal Advisers are the first point of contact for advice for councils and each region has a lead member, a chief executive and a DCS who leads on sector-led improvement, as well as the regional networks of lead members for children who receive regular updates from the LGA.

<http://www.local.gov.uk/cyp-improvement-and-support>

Community Wellbeing Board

4. The Board provides input to, and receives reports from, a number of joint

sector led improvement and implementation programmes, funded by the Department of Health, including: Health and Wellbeing System Leadership; Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care; Winterbourne View; Care Act implementation and the Better Care Fund – further details, below.

Health and Wellbeing System Leadership:

5. There is an overwhelming sense – articulated in a number of independent reports published in late 2013 – that the transfer of public health has gone well across all 152 areas, and that all HWBs have made a strong and enthusiastic start, with support from the Health and Wellbeing System Improvement Programme. The Improvement Programme is part of an integrated support offer across health and care managed by the LGA and funded by the Department of Health.
6. For 2014/15 the sector led support offer adopts a more simplified and coordinated approach. Shaped by input from HWBs, their partners and the independent evaluation of the programme, the central focus of the 2014/15 programme is to support and build the leadership capacity of HWBs to enable them to drive the transformation agenda through integration and reconfiguration of services. The programme will focus on three main priorities:
 - 6.1 to support HWB leadership;
 - 6.2 to strengthen regional partnerships; and
 - 6.3 to provide some capacity for bespoke support.

7. Programme components include residential leadership development and mentoring for chairs of HWBs; HWB peer challenges; revised self-assessment tools and regular bulletins. Further details are available here <http://www.local.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-boards>

Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care (TEASC).

8. Coordinated by the LGA and chaired by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), the Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care partnership and programme seeks to work with councils to improve their performance in adult social care.
9. Funding from the Department of Health is used to finance specific projects at a national level to:
 - 9.1 Support full engagement in applying the model of sector led improvement by all councils and local leaders;
 - 9.2 Engage in sustained and embedded sector led improvement through peer challenge and support to promote excellence in adult social care in all local authorities with social care responsibilities;
 - 9.3 Identify the key risks facing the sector, and to promote self-awareness and assessment and collective problem solving;
 - 9.4 Develop evidence of impact in order to build confidence among stakeholders.

10. Regions are also supported to provide capacity to develop strong and consistent regional offers on sector led improvement, with a focus on activity that supports self-awareness, self-assessment and engagement by councils; challenge from peers; and evidencing and measuring impact.
11. The LGA is co-delivering, with NHS England, the two-year **Winterbourne View Joint Improvement Programme (JIP)**. The programme is funded by the Department of Health.
12. In response to the terrible abuse that took place at Winterbourne View, the Joint Improvement Programme (JIP) was established to help local areas fundamentally transform health and care services for people with learning disabilities and / or autism and behaviour that challenges. The programme provides proportionate support to all local areas based on analysis of need and requests for support. In keeping with the principles of sector-led improvement, learning will be shared in order to support other areas going forward.
13. The programme aims are to:
 - 13.1 Ensure better care outcomes so that people have fulfilling and safe lives in local communities;
 - 13.2 Change and improve the quality of care and support for all people with learning disabilities or autism, who have mental health conditions or behaviour that challenges;
 - 13.3 Transform the way services are commissioned and delivered, in a sustainable manner;
 - 13.4 Support local areas to work together to commission a range of personalised support; and
 - 13.5 Allow individuals a voice and a choice in how these services are designed and delivered.
14. This should result both in a movement away from the use of long stay, large-scale hospital services and also lead to real and rapid change in the attitudes and culture around care.
<http://www.local.gov.uk/place-i-call-home>

Care and Reform Support joint programme office:

15. After a number of years lobbying for changes in care and support legislation the Care Act is now law with two significant implementation phases in 2015 and 2016. The care and support reform agenda is complex and wide-ranging. We will need to support councils by raising awareness of the agenda (both to the sector and beyond), gathering intelligence on 'ground level' issues as they emerge, and sharing best practice. We are working with ADASS and the Department of Health in a joint Programme Office to co-produce the implementation of the Act, funded by DH. This office will support the delivery and implementation of the Act and related reforms in a way which ensures that they fully reflect the views of local government.
16. The £3.8 billion **Better Care Fund** (formerly Integration Transformation Fund) was announced by the Government in the June 2013 Spending Round, to ensure a

transformation in integrated health and social care. The BCF is a single pooled budget to support health and social care services to work more closely together in local areas. This represents a significant opportunity to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our society and make savings for the public purse.

17. Each locality was asked to develop a local plan by April 2014, which would set out how the pooled funding would be used and the ways in which the national and local targets attached to the performance-related £1 billion would be met. Performance baselines are set to kick in from September 2014, in advance of the full introduction of the Fund from April 2015.
18. The BCF not only brings together NHS and local government resources, but also provides a real opportunity to improve services and value for money, protecting and improving social care services by shifting resources from acute services into community and preventative settings. http://www.local.gov.uk/health-wellbeing-and-adult-social-care/-/journal_content/56/10180/4096799/ARTICLE

Culture, Tourism and Sport (CTS) Board

19. Over the last three years, the Culture, Tourism and Sport Board has levered in over £200,000 of funding from Sport England and Arts Council England that has enabled the LGA to support over 300 portfolio holders to lead transformational change through leadership academies, one-day leadership seminars and peer challenge on priority CTS issues for councillors. The offer builds on the key components set out in "Taking the Lead".
20. Feedback from councillors has been excellent, with over 90% of leadership seminar attendees agreeing that the support was beneficial to them in carrying out their leadership functions more effectively in the future, and 100% of councils benefitting from peer challenge agreeing that their experience was good or very good. In recognition of the continued challenges facing local culture and sport, and the impressive innovation that councils are leading, the CTS Board has agreed to develop the programme further in 2014/15 and it is a 2014/15 LGA business plan priority. We are working with Sport England and the Arts Council to support around 120 portfolio holders this year, with a particular focus on new portfolio holders.

Economy and Transport Board

21. The LGA's growth offer to councils was promoted at last year's annual conference and is described in "Investing in local economic growth" – the LGA's offer of support to councils 2013/14".
http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ef1944ec-1e3c-41bb-bec6-6a3c4870a333&groupId=10180
22. Over 70 councils took part in a learning event on LEPs and local growth in September 2013.

23. A number of councils that have received a corporate peer challenge have chosen to focus the flexible element on local growth, ranging from inward investment strategies; to how open services are to business; and to overall economic strategy. A selection of case studies is being drawn together to illustrate and promote this work.

Environment and Housing Board

The Board's two main programmes are:

24. **Planning:** Supporting councils to drive improvement in planning is a priority for the Board with the aim that councils are effectively supported on priorities in planning including getting a plan in place and avoiding designation for poor performance. Experience from councils is used to inform LGA policy development and good practice. The work is undertaken through the Planning Advisory Service which is funded by DCLG.
<http://www.pas.gov.uk/home>
25. **Climate Local:** Climate Local is an LGA initiative to drive, inspire and support council action on climate change. Launched in June 2012, it supports councils to both reduce carbon emissions and increase resilience to a changing climate. Over 80 local authorities have signed up to Climate Local. Climate Local councils have committed to over 1,400 actions to tackle climate change, with added value coming from money saving and income generation for councils, energy bill savings for residents and improvements to local infrastructure. The Climate Local Network continues to expand and now has over 360 members, representing over 40% of English councils.
26. Over the coming year the programme will focus on facilitating peer to peer support across councils and support councils to join up activity and learning locally, raising the profile of Climate Local, outlining the business case for action on climate change and demonstrating the impact activity is having locally and supporting councillors to take action on climate change, making links and encouraging join up between public health, economic development and planning initiatives with carbon reduction and climate resilience.
27. In addition, on **Housing**, the Board has also published a good practice publication for councils on supporting housing investment.
http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/publications-/journal_content/56/10180/5956672/PUBLICATION

European and International Board

28. There is increasing demand for English local government to support councils in developing nations. Policy leads in the LGA Programmes Team respond to this demand provided that any projects are fully funded by external sources. An example of such work was the recent commission from the pan-African LGA to support the development of peer reviews between councils and associations in Africa.

Finance Panel (Resources Board)

29. Finance is an enabler in practically everything local authorities do, so it is very difficult to entirely separate the improvement and policy agendas in relation to finance. Both are concerned with sustainability of income and spending levels and the effective allocation of financial resources where they are going to add most value as well as questions of transparency and governance. At its most fundamental, our work to promote the financial independence of local authorities through the 'Rewiring' agenda supports improvement by seeking to give authorities more flexibility to adopt innovative local solutions to improvement.
30. Much of the improvement work of the Finance Panel so far has been concerned with financial sustainability and resilience and this has a significant overlap with our work lobbying government. Recognising this, the Finance team in the Finance & Policy Directorate has been expanded to take on more of a role supporting the improvement work of the LGA, including:
 - 29.1 Analysis of the impact of funding cuts at national and local authority level through the Future Funding Outlook;
 - 29.2 Analysis of local authorities' financial positions and communication of that back to the authorities themselves via 'spidergrams' etc;
 - 29.3 Financial input to Corporate Peer Challenges has been enhanced to reflect a growing emphasis on the issue;
 - 29.4 Advice and support to Principal Advisers in the regions, including visits to authorities; and
 - 29.5 Bespoke interventions for authorities causing particular concern.

Improvement and Innovation Board

31. The Improvement and Innovation Board has led the development of the sector's approach to sector led improvement, establishing a series of underpinning principles and core components which have provided the basis for subsequent improvement programmes in individual service areas. It has led the delivery of the "core" support offer including:
 - 30.1 Leadership training and development to more than 2,000 councillors;
 - 30.2 Delivery of more than 350 corporate peer challenges between April 2011 to March 2014; and
 - 30.3 Developed and delivered LG Inform, the sector's data analysis and benchmarking service which enables members, officers and members of the public to compare their council's performance with that of other areas.
32. In addition the Board has led the LGA's Productivity and Commissioning programme (helping councils re-design services, making savings in excess of £400 million to date), promoted innovation through the Creative Councils programme and the Innovation Zone at the LGA's Annual Conference and supported councils implementing the transparency agenda.

Safer and Stronger Communities Board

33. The Board has revised the community safety improvement offer in order to better meet the changing needs of Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) in a challenging financial future and the changing strategic framework. We will continue to provide peer challenges as on-site *practitioner-led examinations of the working practices* of a CSP. However, the revised offer now assists CSPs to take a *broader strategic view* on issues scoped for challenge and address leadership issues using a community budget approach to develop their CSP transformation route map and assist political ownership of recommended actions.
34. This *bespoke improvement offer* utilises various elements of support resources by providing both member and officer peers who have specific skills and knowledge around collaborative leadership, enhanced levels of partnership working, and experience of new ways of working such as *interoperability and shared services*. They will work alongside the CSP providing inputs into its transformation route map.
35. There are two component parts of the revised offer:
 - 35.1 **Community Safety Strategic Peer Challenge:** The primary purpose of a strategic peer challenge is to inform the next phase of improvement by supporting and working with CSPs to identify economies of scale, exploring opportunities for closer working with health, supporting interoperability of blue light services and developing an innovation culture in partnership activity.
 - 35.2 **Community Safety Leadership Academy offer:** A new element in the offer around *collaborative leadership* is a programme of activity for Leaders/portfolio holders. This could include workshops, mentoring and support on an ongoing basis and be open to explore wider relationships with *Police & Crime Commissioners, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Health & Well-Being Boards plus relevant Community Groups* and how to make those relationships meaningful.

For further information please see http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/peer-challenges/-/journal_content/56/10180/3511484/ARTICLE

Fire Services Management Committee

36. There are two components to the Local Government Association and Chief Fire Officers Association improvement offer. These are:
37. **Operational Assessment and Fire Peer Challenge:** The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) and the Local Government Association (LGA) have developed an approach to peer challenge that builds on past experience and has been tested in a range of fire and rescue services. Each fire and rescue service can have a peer challenge at a time of its choosing between now and December 2014. These will be delivered at no cost to the receiving fire and rescue authority. Currently 35 English fire and rescue authorities have had a peer challenge with the remainder scheduled for 2014.

38. **Fire and Rescue Leadership Academy:** The Leadership Academy is the gateway to 'top team' development for Councillors in leadership positions. The main objectives of the fire and rescue leadership academy programme are to develop the nature of political leadership in FRAs, ensure elected members are kept up to date on the key strategic issues facing the sector, appreciate how different leadership styles can assist in organisational change and exploring tools and techniques for working with communities, partners, and the media.

Workforce Board

39. The Workforce team works with councils and other employers to support them to create a workforce able to respond to the major challenges within the public sector. Their support and specialist advice is designed to:

- 39.1 help councils develop a flexible, engaged and productive workforce;
- 39.2 ensure that pay and reward is fair, affordable and effective;
- 39.3 identify, develop and provide tailored, innovative, interventions, products or advice that address the strategic workforce challenges facing councils in areas such as recruitment, skills, employee engagement, performance management, organisational restructuring and pay and grading structures.

For example:

40. The LGA is working with Stanton Marris, a consultancy firm, to deliver the Decision Making Accountability (DMA) approach to organisation design in local government. The approach identifies the maximum number of management layers required for any organisation and the optimum design of accountability level. Its key aim is to protect front line services and ensure that these are supported by an efficient and accountable management structure. The use of DMA techniques has been found to create typical financial savings of between 5 - 20 per cent of management costs.
41. The workforce team produced "Pay policy and practice in local authorities: a guide for councillors" that provides elected members with a clear understanding of what a pay policy should contain and how best to scrutinise its application. The workforce team has also produced advice and information on establishing social enterprises/mutuals etc and captured examples of good and innovative practice from across the sector.
42. The team also continues to support a number of local authorities to resolve complex employee relations cases relating to senior managers.
<http://www.local.gov.uk/workforce>

City Regions Board

43. This new Board was established in May 2014 and its first meeting in April established lobbying and policy priorities to support developing city regions in England.

44. There is demand from new combined authorities, groupings of urban councils and city regions for improvement and innovation support. There will be an early discussion at Chief Executive level to look at how existing LGA improvement tools (such as peer reviews, leadership days and productivity products) could be commissioned by and adapted to groupings of councils. There is also a demand for the LGA to lead in the documentation and dissemination of the learning from the development of combined authorities in England. In the first instance, it is proposed that we discuss these demands with city leaders and develop a proposal which can address their needs within the current improvement and innovation programme.

People and Places Board

45. This new Board was established in February 2014 and held its first meeting in April, at which it discussed its lobbying and policy priorities to support the non-metropolitan areas of England. The Board's priorities are:
 - 45.1 housing
 - 45.2 planning and infrastructure
 - 45.3 employment, skills and economic growth
 - 45.4 public service transformation.
46. Lead officers from each area will be in touch with improvement colleagues in the near future to discuss any improvement and support needs arising from the Board's work programme.