

Local Partnerships Climate Response Expertise and Improvement Support to Councils on Climate Change

Purpose:

For information.

Summary

The Board will hear from Local Partnerships, who have been supporting councils to address the issue of climate change through a varied offer. Local Partnerships has a multidisciplinary background based largely around efficiency and place-based services. They have expertise across a wide range of climate response activities. A summary of key areas is provided in the attached report **Appendix A**.

This paper also presents a summary of actions taken by the LGA to support councils in addressing climate change and sets out the future direction of travel for the LGA's improvement approach to climate emergency work. Further detail on the work undertaken by the LGA to date are set out in the report that went to the LGA Executive on 23 January 2020 as **Appendix B**.

Recommendations

That the Improvement & Innovation Board notes the update on the actions taken to address the LGA's response to Climate Emergency issues.

Contact officer: Lusi Manukyan
Position: Improvement Strategy Adviser
Phone no: 0207 187 7347
Email: lusi.manukyan@local.gov.uk

Contact officer: Sean Hanson
Position: Chief Executive, Local Partnerships
Phone no: 07771 838 817
Email: sean.hanson@local.gov.uk

Improvement Support to Councils on Climate Change

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 declaring a climate emergency.
2. While the LGA already provides support and advice relating to the environment, climate change, energy and waste, set out below, there was a recognition that further support is needed in light of recent developments. The Improvement and Innovation Board has agreed that there is a need to develop a wide-ranging sector-led improvement offer to support councils in addressing the issue of climate change. Following the Board's meeting in October 2019, it was agreed that a member-led Climate Change Improvement Working Group would be set up to guide this work.
3. The inaugural meeting of the Climate Change Improvement Working Group took place on 13 January 2020 in which progress was discussed at length and priorities were identified for 2020/21. The Group stressed the urgency of the issue and the need to develop the support offer at pace.

Existing sector-led improvement offer on Climate Change

4. As part of our sector-led improvement work, the LGA already offers a wide range of support to help councils address the issues of climate change and environmental sustainability, including:
 - 4.1. Programmes to help councils innovate and address both efficiency and climate change through our [Design in the Public Sector](#), [Behavioural insights](#), and [Digital](#) programmes.
 - 4.2. An '[Acting on climate change](#)' [councillor workbook](#) designed to help councillors think about the roles, opportunities and drivers for council-led action on changing climate.
 - 4.3. Numerous [case studies and best practice examples](#)
 - 4.4. Our [New Conversation 2.0](#) guide to engaging dialogue with residents, from consultations through to people's everyday interactions with their local authority, including on issues of climate change.
 - 4.5. Support from [Local Partnerships](#), including their [Re:fit programme](#) helping councils implement energy efficiency and local energy generation measures to their buildings

or their estate, to reduce carbon emissions and achieve savings (see separate paper).

Progress since the last board meeting

5. In November 2019, we launched a new [Leadership Essentials](#) programme on taking responsibility as a leader/portfolio holder after declaring a climate emergency. The programme was well attended and received great feedback, so new dates have been confirmed for February 2020.
6. Our new [Climate Change web hub](#), which houses all the information about our existing and developing offer, including case studies, was launched at the beginning of the year and will continue to be updated with new offers of support.
7. In addition, through our agreement with Local Partnerships, they are already providing specific and direct support to respond to declarations of climate emergency in a number of local authorities.

Developing sector-led improvement offer on Climate Change

8. Our comprehensive sector-led improvement offer on climate change will be launched in early March 2020, which, in addition to the existing offer outlined above, will also include:
 - 8.1. Publication of a **'10 Questions to ask when scrutinising services to tackle climate change'** guide produced by CfPS (see for example their publications on [services for looked-after children](#) and [domestic violence](#)). These guides are a series of medium length, practical publications setting out the policy basics of a given issue and then providing advice on key issues on which scrutiny might need to inquire in order to effectively understand and scrutinise those issues.
 - 8.2. Publication of bespoke guidance to help councils with communicating around climate change, including with residents, activist groups and national government. The guide will form part of the [LGA Comms Hub](#) – our online resource to help councils to develop and deliver more effective communications.
 - 8.3. Working with trade bodies and organisations such as the Business Services Association and the Centre for Sustainable Energy to improve processes and cultures of sustainable procurement.
 - 8.4. We will be running a series of regional workshops and events to offer the sector an opportunity to share learning.
 - 8.5. We are in discussion with councils which are due to have a Corporate Peer Challenge in the next few months to explore whether they would be interested in climate change being a focus of that challenge. We will be including a question on

climate change in the key lines of inquiry for all Corporate Peer Challenges as part of the relevant core components.

- 8.6. In addition, in conjunction with the Association of Directors of Environment, Planning and Transport (ADEPT), we are exploring the option of developing a forward-looking climate focused 'peer challenge'-style support to help councils with their action planning on climate change, subject to identifying the peers and funding needed to deliver this work.
- 8.7. Finally, we will be running a number of bespoke pilots with local authorities to test this new support offer.
9. Over the next few weeks the LGA will be engaging with key stakeholders in the sector, including member peers, chief executives and leaders, members of ADEPT and experts in the field, to ensure that the support offer we are putting in place is fit for purpose and meets the needs of local authorities.
10. Separately, the Environment, Energy, Housing and Transport board has been taking forward work on lobbying and colleagues have put forward a [number of asks from government](#).

Implications for Wales

11. We have already engaged with our WLGA colleagues and will be looking to share learning and work collaboratively on any common issues.

Financial Implications

12. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for 2019/20, which helps shape the improvement programme, has been agreed with MHCLG and does not currently include deliverables relating to climate change. We are currently in the process of agreeing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with MHCLG to shape the improvement programme for 2020/21. We have had positive conversations with the Ministry about including a deliverable on climate change in the new MoU. Once this has been agreed, we will be able to further enhance the outlined offer during 2020/21.

Next steps

13. Officers to continue developing a pilot climate change improvement offer.