

## **Local Government's role in respect of an ageing society: Proposals for a task and finish group**

### **Purpose**

For discussion and direction

### **Summary**

This paper sets out a proposal to set up a Task and Finish Group on the future role of local government in respect of an ageing society; the opportunities and challenges that an ageing society presents and how local government might prepare itself in the immediate and longer term to respond to these.

### **Recommendation/s**

That the Board agrees to:

- a. Set up a Task and Finish Group on local government's role in respect of an ageing society;
- b. The task and finish Group being made up 4-5 LGA lead members drawn from relevant LGA Boards and a small number of representatives from key external organisations; and
- c. The provisional work programme and timetable for the task and finish group, as set out in paragraphs 9-18, so that further detailed planning and early commissioning of the background materials can be taken forward.

### **Action/s**

Officers to progress as directed

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## **Local Government's role in respect of an ageing society: Proposals for a task and finish group.**

### **Background**

1. The UK population is ageing rapidly. There will, for example, be 51% more people aged 65 and over in England in 2030 compared to 2010 and 101% more people aged over 85 and over in England in 2030 compared to 2010. The potential impact of this significant growth has received considerable negative coverage; threats to economic growth and pressures on social care and health budgets being particularly newsworthy. Yet, living longer also represents important progress and could present society with real opportunities if these were positively harnessed and utilised at a local and national level.
2. There is no doubt that the changes in our population will create major challenges for individuals, for families and communities, and for local and national government over the coming years. Responding effectively and creatively to these challenges will require major shifts in our attitudes to ageing; including changes to models of employment for older people and the current cliff-edge of retirement; in current approaches to the promotion of well-being, prevention and early intervention for older people; and new ways of financing and supporting older people which better address the changing aspirations and needs of people as they live longer.
3. An ageing society presents particular challenges for local government, and especially in the context of austerity and further declining budgets, which are already having an impact on the delivery of front line and essential services.
4. There is a pressing need for local government to develop a more strategic and holistic approach towards an ageing society, that seeks to:
  - 4.1. Address how local councils can take a more pro-active approach to demographic change, so that they are better able to manage the significant changes that will take place over the next 10-20 years. This will need to include the core issues that local councils need to plan for and address and models of emerging or innovative practice that councils are already developing as part of a more strategic approach to their ageing populations;
  - 4.2. Find new ways to enable and support older people to live healthier, fulfilling lives; developing new community based and community led approaches to promoting well-being, preventing ill-health and early intervention support and new more empowering approaches to the provision of information and advice so that older people can navigate the system more effectively;
  - 4.3. Promote and develop innovative approaches to housing (and support) for older people – which might include new models of care/equity release, the provision of formal and informal support which enable older people to live within their own homes, and new models of supported accommodation and housing support which enable a more holistic approach to meeting the needs of older people as they change over time; and

- 4.4. Review how these might in turn translate into new ways of working for local government; what are the cultural, structural and leadership challenges necessary to support local government deliver a more enabling, community and asset based approach to an ageing population.
5. A number of high profile Inquiries and programmes of work have already been carried out to explore the implications of a rapidly ageing society, most notably the Filkin Commission on the UK preparedness for the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly ageing society, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's programme of work on 'A Better Life' and the recently launched Commission on the voluntary sector and ageing established by New Philanthropy Capital and the ILK-UK for example. The LGA's Ageing Well Programme, which ended in 2012, aimed to address the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population. And in 2013, the LGA held a 'Ready for Ageing' roundtable, based on the findings of Lord Filkin's report.
6. Our aims in setting up this Task and Finish Group is to build on this work and develop it further; to explore the role of local government within the context of ongoing austerity in respect of public spending and to enable the LGA to take a more proactive role within this increasingly high profile area.

#### **The role and composition of the Task and Finish Group**

7. This is an agenda which spans the whole of local government; adult social care, culture, sport, planning, housing, the environment – and as such it requires a cross Board and cross party response from the LGA.
8. We are therefore proposing that the Task and Finish group is made up of 4-5 LGA members drawn from relevant LGA Boards (Community Well-Being; Culture, tourism, and sport; Environment, economy, housing and transport; City Regions and People and Places) working alongside a small number of co-opted representatives from key representative organisations (Age UK, JRF, ILC-UK, ). (Invitations will be sought when membership of the Boards is finalised in September).
9. The role of the task and finish group will be to:
  - 9.1. Oversee and steer the work on ageing;
  - 9.2. Review emerging themes and messages from the work;
  - 9.3. Provide a core support and challenge role as the project develops;
  - 9.4. Provide a clear link between the project and the work of relevant LGA's Boards – so that members are fully engaged in the work as it develops;
  - 9.5. Oversee and steer the delivery of the final report and its recommendations; and
  - 9.6. Work with other colleagues within LGA - principally Communications, Current affairs and Campaigns to agree the overall communications strategy in respect of the project and its final report in particular.

10. We would aim for the Task and Finish group to carry out its work over the summer and autumn 2014, so that a series of clear policy proposals and ideas for next steps can be developed and presented in early 2015, for consideration by an incoming government. A draft timetable has been set out at para 19.

**Round-table discussions.**

11. The centrepiece of the Task and Finish Group will be a small number of round-table discussions/evidence sessions on key themes. Experts will be invited to present 'think pieces' and commissioned papers, and engage in a question and answer session, with the 'task and finish' group. The discussions from these would help the group to formulate their recommendations. These will be supplemented by the information gained through a commissioned literature review and call for evidence, set out below.
12. The themes for the round-table discussions will include the core areas set out at para 4 above. These are:
  - 12.1. Taking a more strategic approach to demographic change;
  - 12.2. Harnessing and supporting individuals and communities to live healthier, fulfilling lives within their communities;
  - 12.3. Innovative approaches to housing (and support) for older people; and
  - 12.4. Understanding how these might translate into new ways of working - what are the cultural, structural, and leadership challenges necessary to support such new ways of working within local councils.
13. Do you agree that these are key themes/issues to be covered? Are there other areas, which in your view it would be helpful for the commission to address?

**Commissioned literature review and call for evidence.**

14. We are proposing to build on the research review on local government and the demography of ageing, currently being carried out as part of the 'need to know' review series, to ensure that this sets out clearly the implications of the evidence on ageing for local government.
15. We are also proposing to carry out a call for evidence – which would be distributed widely to all those with an interest in an ageing society. The aim of this would be to understand what is currently working well (draw together examples of emerging innovative practice) in respect of the 4 areas set out above in para 14.
16. We would aim to carry out this call for evidence in September – October through the following networks:
  - 16.1. The CWB Bulletin;
  - 16.2. DWP Action on Ageing network;
  - 16.3. Age UK/ADASS bulletins; and
  - 16.4. The LGA website, twitter etc.

**Outputs from the Task and Finish Group.**

17. The main output from the Task and Finish Group will be a report. This would potentially include:
  - 17.1. Background analysis and evidence gained from the literature review and Call for Evidence;
  - 17.2. Summary of the key themes discussed by the group and the conclusions gained from these, in respect of local government's role vis a vis an ageing society; and
  - 17.3. Recommendations for local and national government emerging from this work.
18. This could be launched at a small seminar to review the findings from the commission, its implications for local government and key messages for an incoming Government in respect of an ageing society.

**Timing for the Task and Finish Group.**

19. We have set out a provisional draft timetable for the task and finish group below.

<b>September 2014</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Task and Finish Group meeting.
<b>October 2014:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Task and Finish Group – round-table discussions 1 and 2.
<b>November 2014</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Task and Finish Group – round-table discussions 3 and 4.
<b>Mid Dec 2014</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> draft of report produced.
<b>Mid Jan 2015</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Task and Finish Group meeting:
<b>Mid Jan – mid Feb 2015</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> draft of report produced:
<b>Early March 2015</b>	Final Report published.

**Next steps**

20. Members are invited to take part in the task and finish group and hold the first meeting of this in September, when the membership of the LGA Boards has been finalised.
21. Work up the detailed programme of evidence sessions and commission external 'experts' and organisations to develop papers and present evidence at these sessions.

**Financial Implications**

22. The Finance & Policy Directorate budget will fund this work. The level of funding to be attached to the project will be determined at a post-LGA Conference budget review. The availability of funding will obviously affect whether this work is conducted largely

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in-house or whether elements of it, such as the writing of the final report, can be commissioned externally.