

Update on MoU activity in 2020/21

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

This report updates MoU SLI activity in 2020/21.

Recommendation

That the meeting considers the report and agrees any follow-up action.

Action

Officers to initiate any required action.

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Update on MoU activity in 2020/21

1. The following report provides a cumulative summary of Sector-Led Improvement (SLI) activity and achievements since April 2020. The tools and resources outlined include various elements of our COVID-19 refocused support offer, in addition to a range of ongoing and comprehensive improvement support in other key areas, such as climate change.
2. In the December report to the Improvement and Innovation Board, we highlighted a range of new support, which has continued to develop over subsequent months. The Housing Advisors Programme has agreed funding for 17 projects with the involvement of 43 councils; through the Rough Sleeping Peer Support programme, 192 councils have already benefited from Delivery and Impact Panels; the new Digital Inclusion Network has 42 members; and the new Advanced & Predictive Analytics Network (APAN) network has swiftly grown to a membership of 195.
3. Among other highlights for the month, the report marks a landmark for the National Graduate Development Programme, which received 7400 applications for the next cohort. This surpasses the previous record of 5000 applications in 2020.
4. The LGA's carbon accounting tool has now been downloaded more than 335 times and received endorsement by the Committee for Climate Change – a key climate body, which advises the UK and devolved governments tackling emissions and responding to climate change.
5. With the COVID-19 vaccine programme now underway, the LGA has launched a new behavioural change project to support uptake of the vaccine within the broader population. This work is informed by our Behavioural Insights programme.
6. There also continues to be broad interest and take up of remote peer support and finance offers, which support councils with their immediate responses to COVID-19 and plans for recovery and renewal.

Equalities Implications

7. Recent consultation with the sector has highlighted that equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) remain core priority areas for our member councils. The LGA continues to ensure EDI considerations underpin existing support offers, including by taking steps to diversify our pool of peers and range of applicants to programmes such as the NGDP. With a view to provide the sector with further tools and resources to enhance EDI within councils and communities, this report also highlights new EDI support under development. This includes the creation of a new EDI leadership programme for councillors and a new EDI hub, which will host support such as this and other key EDI tools and resources.

Implications for Wales

8. Although MHCLG grant funding cover England councils only the LGA continues to work closely with WLGA in relation to our positions on SLI.

Next steps

9. The LGA will continue to report directly to both the Improvement and Innovation Board and IDeA in relation to this year's MOU and shaping the future SLI offer as well as ongoing negotiations with MHCLG.