

LGA's Sector Led Improvement Climate Change Programme

Purpose

For information.

Summary

Following the declaration of a climate emergency at the LGA conference in July 2019, the LGA has developed an improvement and support offer for councils to address the climate response. The aim of the LGA's Sector Led improvement Climate Change Programme is to help councils and residents to reach their local carbon reduction targets by adapting and mitigating the effects of climate change. For the period 2020/21, 90 per cent of English and Welsh councils have engaged with the LGA Sector Led improvement Climate Change Programme.

This paper covers the achievements from the 2020/21 programme and proposed plans for 2021/22. It also covers the role which the LGA will play in the run up to, and at the United Nations climate change conference COP26, being held in November 2021.

Recommendations

That the Improvement and Innovation Board notes the update on the actions taken under the LGA's Sector Led improvement Climate Change Programme in 2020/21 and supports the proposals for the 2021/22 financial year.

That the Board also notes the LGA's role in the United Nations climate change conference COP26.

Action

That officers will deliver the programme as agreed by Members.

Contact officer:	Grace Abel
Position:	Programme Manager, Productivity
Phone no:	07825 726273
Email:	grace.abel@local.gov.uk

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 the declaration of a climate emergency.
2. Following the motion, the LGA Sector Led Improvement Climate Change Programme has developed a comprehensive climate change offer for councils which meets the needs of local authorities. This includes an array of support offered across the improvement division and beyond, in sharing good practice, leadership, productivity, research and information and Local Partnerships.
3. The LGA Sector Led Improvement Climate Change Programme have developed a set of priorities to work on in 2021/22. This has been done in collaboration with the Improvement and Innovation Climate Change Member working group, officer Climate Action Group and feedback from councils through our green webinars and innovation programmes. The paper outlines further detail with regards to the focused areas.

Issues

4. Table 1 (below) presents the work undertaken and results achieved by the Sector Led Improvement Climate Change team between February 2020 (when the LGA programme of support started) and March 2021.

Table 1: LGA Sector Led Improvement Climate Change Programme: 2020/21

Output	When was it delivered?	Key Performance Indicators met: Feb-20 to Mar-21
1. Communication and engagement		
Stakeholder groups: Launch of the Improvement and Innovation Climate Change Member Working Group and the officer Climate Action Group.	Feb-20 and ongoing	6 and 3 meetings respectively.
The LGA Climate Change Sector Led Improvement web hub .	Feb-20 and updated continuously	21,977 views.
LGA climate change e bulletin .	Aug-20 to Mar-21 monthly	8 bulletins, 1,500 subscribers.
Climate action: council plans Local Government Association .	Feb-21	Working with MySociety to collect all council climate action plans - 271 plans collected.
Case studies and notable practice.	Feb-20 and ongoing	62 pieces.
Climate Emergency Knowledge Hub Group.	Feb-20 and ongoing	328 members.
LGA Green Webinar Series.	Jun-20 to Mar-20	8 webinars, 1,820 attendees. 92 per cent satisfaction rate.
Launch of the LGA's new climate change communications resource .	Feb-21	1,022 total webpage views.
Launch of the LGA's behaviour change and the environment guide .	Feb-21	2,779 total webpage views.
2. Green economy		
Economic Growth Roundtable: The Green Recovery.	Nov-20	24 Economic Development and Climate Change Officers attended.
Action learning sets for creating local green jobs .	Jan-21 to May-21	25 officers and Members.
3. Data		
Climate Change Survey, February 2020 Local Government Association .	Feb-20 and closed Autumn-20	98 responded (29% response rate).
Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool Local Government Association .	Summer-20	Tool has been endorsed by the Climate Change Committee. 179 councils have downloaded the tool.
4. Procurement		
A guide for councils on achieving community benefits - Social Value Local Government Association .	Mar-20	5,053 total webpage views.

5. Leadership		
A guide created in collaboration with the Centre for Public Scrutiny – 10 questions to scrutinise climate action Local Government Association.	Sep-20	1,194 total webpage views.
Leadership Essentials: Climate Emergency.	Courses from Feb-20 to Mar-21	5 courses, 75 attendees.
6. Local collaborations		
Universities and councils: partnership working towards net zero Local Government Association.	Sep-20	70 programme applications, working with 12 partnerships. Seminars and a podcast series available to all.
Design in the public sector programme Local Government Association.	Aug-20	Working with 13 councils.

5. Table 2 (below) presents the work to be undertaken by the Sector Led Improvement Climate Change team between April 2021 and March 2022. The underlying principles of this work are:

- 5.1 Provide support and improvement to councils tackling the climate and ecological emergencies.
- 5.2 Help councils to achieve a green, just and inclusive economic recovery from the pandemic.
- 5.3 Work with local partners including education, businesses and citizens to achieve our aims.
- 5.4 Support (and learning from support where it is for an individual council) will be made available to every council through events, guides, case studies, podcasts, tools, blogs, e learning and so on.
- 5.5 Work will be connected to COP26 where appropriate to showcase UK local government as leaders in climate change work. Specifically, we will be offering support in the following COP26 themes: nature (biodiversity), green finance (green jobs) and energy. This is alongside seizing the opportunity to support councils on engaging residents on climate change as the UK prepares to host the United Nations climate change conference.
- 5.6 All work will be connected the Sustainable Development Goals where appropriate.
- 5.7 We will measure the impact of the programme through an online questionnaire. This will measure impact across all projects overtime. A full set of questions are available in **Appendix 1** of this document. Evaluation of the programme will also include a re-run of the LGA Climate Change Survey, including questions on the impact of LGA support and councils' future support needs.

Table 2: LGA Sector Led Improvement Climate Change Programme: 2021/22

Output	Timeframe	Key Performance Indicators/targets
1. Communications and engagement		
Stakeholder groups: The Improvement and Innovation Climate Change Member Working Group and the officer Climate Action Group.	Ongoing	4 meetings each.
Collect best practice across local government and showcase it in the lead up to COP26.	Continuous	30 case studies/pieces of notable practice.
Continue to send the LGA climate change e bulletin , run the Climate Emergency Knowledge Hub Group, update the LGA support webpage with LGA resources, case studies and resources from elsewhere including council climate action plans.	Every month	1,800 subscribers to the ebulletin.
Deliver a series of green webinars including the LGA conference (many based on COP26 themes). Dates can be found in Appendix 2.	10 webinars delivered monthly, apart from over the summer and Christmas	1,000 attendees across all the webinars.
Deliver a national climate communications and public engagement training programme that can be tailored at a local level.	Launch in Autumn-21	300 webpage views.
2. Data		
Promote use of the LGA Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool including a further scope 3 emissions guide.	May-21	220 councils accessed the tool. Data returns uploaded to LGInform.
3. Procurement		
Launch sustainable procurement guide.	Launch May-21	300 webpage views.
4. Leadership		
Launch of <i>The Local Pathway to Net Zero</i> (Don't be left in the dark) guidance for Councillors.	Launch in Spring-21	300 webpage views.
Continue to deliver Climate Emergency Leadership Programmes	Sep-21 and Jan-22	30 councillors attended.
5. Biodiversity		
Launch learning and development on the biodiversity and ecological emergency.	Launch in Autumn-21	30 officers and Members accessed the support.
6. Local collaborations		
Deliver the Net Zero Innovation Programme which matches universities and councils together, with potential to	Launch in Autumn-21	Supported at least 12 partnerships, on top of training other councils

further expand and match businesses, universities with councils to create a zero-carbon future for their local place together.		through a train the trainer model. Seminars and a podcast series available to all.
Support offer on retrofitting housing and green jobs	Launch in Winter-22	TBC

LGA role in the United Nations climate conference COP26

- 6 The UK is hosting, for the first time, the next United Nations international climate change conference in Glasgow from 1-12 November 2021 (COP26). The conference will bring together international delegations to agree on a process to accelerate progress towards the goal of the Paris agreement (to keep the rise in global temperature to within at least 2 degrees, although 1.5 is the current ambition).
- 7 At present, the Government is planning for a physical conference to take place but remaining flexible in the planning as uncertainties of COVID-19 continue. The LGA is mindful of the options for a physical, virtual or hybrid conference in our planning.
- 8 The conference itself, and the lead up to it this year, will have five broad themes: adaption and resilience; nature; energy transition; clean road transport; and finance.
- 9 For COP26 in Glasgow, we understand that there will be a dedicated day for local and regional government, themed as 'Cities and the Built Environment'. This is most likely to take place at the end of the two-week Conference. As yet, we have little information on what the proposals are for the day, but potentially it will follow the pattern of local government days at previous COPs, with the involvement of international local government bodies.
- 10 The Conference will be delivered across two sites: the Scottish events Campus (SEC), referred to as the Blue Zone, and the Glasgow Science Centre, known as the Green Zone. The Blue Zone is managed by the United Nations and will host the negotiations. It will bring together delegations from 197 Parties and observer organisations who can hold panel discussions, exhibits and side events. The LGA has applied for observer status. We will know by August whether the LGA's application to send observers to COP26 has been successful.
- 11 The Green Zone is managed by the UK Government and is the platform for the general public, youth groups, academia, business and civil society who can host events, exhibitions, workshops, creative installations and other activities.
- 12 The Cabinet Office invited Expressions of Interest from a range of organisations, including councils, to participate in the Blue and Green Zones. The LGA submitted Expressions of Interest for both the Blue and Green Zones, and a joint submission working with our national counterparts across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The LGA pitched for an exhibition space to showcase the sector and an event space

for a thought leadership panel. The Cabinet Office expects the available space to be oversubscribed and we will hear in May as to whether we have been successful.

- 13 Local government is already tackling the challenge of climate change. The [examples](#) that the LGA has gathered demonstrate the breadth and depth of that work. The run up to COP26 provides an opportunity to showcase and build on that work. This includes webinars on key themes, a series of think pieces from stakeholders, partners and think tanks, 'talking heads' with industry experts and case study videos showcasing good practice by councils.

Other LGA work relating to climate change includes:

- 14 Work undertaken for the LGA Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board.
- 15 On 11 March 2021, the Leadership Board established of an open-ended Climate Change Task Group to steer the strategic engagement with Government on climate change matters in this COP26 year and beyond.
- 16 Local Partnerships provides services in key climate response areas including energy efficiency, waste, housing, regeneration and growth, air quality, energy, finance, infrastructure, digital transformation and health and social care. Further information can be found [Climate Response - Local Partnerships](#).

Equality, diversity and inclusion considerations

- 17 An initial analysis of potential EDI considerations affecting the environment area has been carried out. People with the following protected characteristics have been identified as disproportionately impacted.
- 17.1 **Age** – both the very young, the very old and people with underlying health issues are more vulnerable to the ill-effects of extreme heat or cold caused by climate change; older people are more susceptible to the social isolation which can result from poor local environment quality.
- 17.2 **Disability** – those with restricted mobility may find multi stream recycling inhibitive; accessible ground floor dwellings are more susceptible to flooding; lack of access to green space can exacerbate mental ill health.
- 17.3 **Pregnancy and Maternity** – pregnant people are more susceptible to the ill-effects of extreme heat caused by climate change; parents of young children may be negatively impacted by a lack of access to green space.
- 17.4 **Race** – Gypsies and Travellers can struggle to access public services, including waste and recycling and running water.
- 17.5 **Economic disadvantage** – those on lower incomes are more likely to live in poorly insulated housing, with more expensive metered heating tariffs, which can lead to fuel poverty; they are more likely to experience a lack of access to green infrastructure which can contribute to health inequalities; social housing of high-rise construction and/or with poorly engineered communal heating systems can be more severely impacted by extreme weather events.

Environmental considerations

- 18 All procurement activity will be sustainable.
- 19 Meetings and events will be held virtually, where possible, to avoid greenhouse gas emissions from travel.

Implications for Wales

- 20 We are engaging with our Wales Local Government Association colleagues, are sharing learning and work collaboratively on common issues.

Financial Implications

- 21 The support offer is funded through our Improvement Grant from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Next steps

- 22 Officers to continue delivering the LGA Climate Change Improvement and Support Programme.

Appendix 1

Measuring impact questions

1. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this support offer on the LGA Climate Change Improvement and Support Programme?
2. How has this support offer added value to your council's response to climate change?
3. How, if at all, could the LGA Climate Change Improvement and Support Programme be more effective?
4. How likely would you be to recommend the LGA Climate Change and Support Programme?

Appendix 2

Green webinar series – save the dates

Webinar topic	Date
Greenhouse gas accounting tool and scope 3 guidance for social care	May 13 2021
Biodiversity (COP26 theme)	May 28 2021
Energy (COP theme)	June 15 2021
LGA conference (COP26 focus)	July 7 2021
Procurement	July 16 2021
Green jobs and housing retrofit (COP26 theme)	September 15 2021
Climate action plans	October 6 2021
Partnering with businesses	November 9 2021

Two more webinars are to be confirmed in 2022.