

Resources Board – Report from Cllr Sharon Taylor OBE (Chair)

Local Government Finance

Spending Review

1. Details on the 2021 Spending Review, including how many years it will cover and the date it will be published, have not yet been announced.
2. The LGA has begun preparatory work on a Spending Review representation, including engaging with key stakeholders and work to refresh the financial pressures facing the sector.

Business Rates

3. On 29 June the Government [published](#) a consultation document on more frequent revaluations proposing moving to three-year revaluations and certain reforms to the system for informing the Valuation Office Agency and councils about ratepayer circumstances as well as streamlining the appeals system. Many of the proposals are changes we have lobbied for. The closing date for the consultation is 24 August.
4. Following [legislation](#) to rule out claims for material change of circumstance due to COVID-19 and associated measures, a [£1.5 billion relief](#) will be distributed once the legislation has Royal Assent – expected in Autumn 2021. We have issued a [briefing for MPs](#) supporting the Bill and [the LGA's deputy Chief Executive gave evidence](#) to the Bill Committee on 6 July.

COVID-19

5. The LGA continues to receive access to data from the monthly returns submitted to MHCLG, which track the ongoing financial challenges arising from COVID-19. Based on the latest data from May, councils project £2.8 billion of in-year pressures for the first half of 2021/22 (cost pressures and non-tax income losses). There is a further £0.7 billion of local tax income losses projected for the first half of 2021/22, impacting budgets in 2022/23. This is prior to considering mitigating factors and Government support provided so far.
6. Councils have continued to distribute grants to businesses affected by COVID-19 measures. To date councils have now paid out getting on for £21 billion to businesses for all grants.

Audit Issues

7. Lead Members cleared [a response](#) to the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy's [consultation on proposals for a major overhaul of the UK audit regime](#). In our response we highlighted the need for the proposals to include a higher profile of the problems faced by local audit and the need to resolve them.

LGA Annual Conference

8. At the LGA annual virtual conference we held a session on the [2021 Spending Review and local government](#). The Chair of the Resources Board spoke at the session, which was chaired by the CCLA, and also had speakers from the Institute for Fiscal Studies.

Workforce

Youth and community workers: pay 2021

9. The Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) Youth and Community Staff Side has submitted its [pay and conditions claim for 2021](#). The headline element is for a ten per cent increase. The National Employers will shortly undertake a consultation on this.

Teachers' Pay 2021 (England)

10. The LGA will consult councils on the draft School Teachers Pay and Conditions (STPCD) and the School Teachers' Review Body's (STRB) report as soon as it is published.
11. We held a webinar on 13 July for the sector on school staff pay with contributions from LGA officers and the Department for Education (DfE) pay lead. All relevant information is available via our [National Employers Organisation for School Teachers \(NEOST\) webpage](#)

NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services

12. The National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services covers uniformed employees ranging from firefighters to middle managers across the UK. The 2021 pay award for this group has now been agreed. An increase of 1.5 per cent will be applied to [all pay rates](#) and [continual professional development payments](#) with effect from 1 July.

NJC for Brigade Managers

13. This UK-wide negotiating body covers senior fire service managers such as chief fire officers, deputy chief fire officers and assistant chief fire officers. The 2021 pay award for this group has now been agreed. [An increase of 1.5 per cent will be applied to basic pay rates](#)

Queen's Platinum Jubilee – additional bank holiday (Fire)

14. Following Government decisions, an additional bank holiday on Friday 3 June 2022 to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee was announced across the UK. There's no automatic entitlement to such a bank holiday on this day under the terms of the NJC Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book). At its most recent meeting, the [NJC agreed to award the bank holiday](#) and that it be treated in the same way as other such holidays in the Grey Book for leave and pay purposes.

Gender pay gap – LGA research summary report

15. Gender Pay Gap Service data for English and Welsh authorities has been updated. LG Inform allows you to download tailored reports for benchmarking and compare authorities. Councils have been given an extension until 5 October for 2020/21 gender pay submissions, after which it will be revised. [LGA Research Summary Report – Gender Pay Gap | LG Inform \(local.gov.uk\)](#)

Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

16. We have launched "[Diverse by Design](#)", a comprehensive EDI guide advising on key practical steps to assist councils to remove barriers to workforce diversity and embed inclusive practices and behaviours. This is a core element of our new workforce EDI web hub and will be supported by existing and planned resources and projects across the LGA, e.g. gender pay gap reporting analysis for the sector with LGA Research, EDI focussed webinars in partnership with ACAS etc.

Workforce Wellbeing

17. We developed and published new resources on our website as part of our ongoing programme of work to provide information and advice to councils to support the good management of wellbeing and mental health of staff, especially where wellbeing issues connect with equality issues.

18. We have also provided advice to councils on managing long-COVID as part of ongoing programme of support to councils on good management of wellbeing post-COVID.
19. The LGA Workforce Team continue to be part of the National Strategic Wellbeing Group for Social Care co-ordinated by Skills for Care and DHSC, meeting every second month. As part of the group we are working with CHiP workforce colleagues to raise awareness of key wellbeing resources and share workforce wellbeing good practice, through good practice stories, practical guidance, and ideas.

Workforce Transformation Support – hybrid working

20. We delivered 3 hybrid working roundtable workshops during April and May, attracting 135 councils to participate in a research project to understand and share good practice and lessons learned on new ways of working arising out of COVID19 restrictions. We are developing future work and support for councils arising from this research.
21. You can find out more about hybrid working as well as an overview of some of the key considerations of developing a hybrid working organisation [on the LGA's website](#). Head of Workforce Naomi Cooke has [written a blog post on the future of Hybrid working](#), while there was also an [editorial on hybrid working](#) in May's edition of First magazine.

Contact officer: Sarah Pickup
Position: Deputy Chief Executive
Phone no: 02076643109
Email: sarah.pickup@local.gov.uk