

# LGA business plan 2019-2022

## 2021 update

### Introduction

The coming year will be a huge challenge for local government as the country recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic and rebuilds lives and livelihoods. As we learn to live with the virus, it will be councils who lead their communities through every aspect of that recovery.

The LGA's aim is to provide the support and secure the resources and the powers that local government needs to deliver that crucial role. Promoting the value of local government and supporting councils in their roles as community leaders remains our central mission.

This business plan, built around seven core themes that reflect councils' own priorities, sets out how we will deliver that mission, both through lobbying to shape national policy and by providing practical improvement support for council leadership and across a whole range of service areas.

Councils will have a key role in place-building and ensuring that our local high streets, transport hubs, cultural and sporting venues and other local infrastructure bounce back from the crisis. Boosting skills and ensuring that we have the workforce for the future will be central to our economic recovery, along with a renewed focus on public health, whilst councils will continue to support the NHS and other organisations in the ongoing rollout of the vaccination programme.

Local government is also leading the way in responding to the impacts of climate change. Nine out of ten councils have declared a climate emergency and the sector is working hard to support local action across the country, promoting good practice and sharing innovative solutions in the run up to COP 26 in Glasgow in November.

We will continue to evidence councils' efficiency and effective management of taxpayers' money. A multi-year settlement in the forthcoming Spending Review, that puts local government funding on a long-term sustainable footing, would enable proper planning of local services and help reduce demand and cost pressures on other parts of the public sector.

Through our Government-funded sector support programme, we will continue to support councils to respond to issues triggered by the pandemic, providing intensive support, guidance and challenge to help shape key services. That includes intensive peer support and challenge, support for financial resilience and economic recovery, as well as political leadership training. We will provide the tools and resources to enable councils to respond to challenges and support improvement in a range of areas - from children's services and climate change to safeguarding and cyber security.

We continue to embed and promote equality, diversity and inclusion into our core values, policies and practices, and through our improvement and leadership support programmes.

Strong local leadership is key to recovery and the Levelling Up White Paper must empower councils to build back local. Our [Build Back Local](#) campaign, which will be central to our work in the coming year, demonstrates how Government and councils, working as equal partners, will level up those communities that feel left behind and transform places across the country. Enabling local people to make local decisions will create the conditions for sustainable growth, better public services and a stronger, more resilient society.

**Councillor James Jamieson**  
**Chairman**

**Mark Lloyd**  
**Chief Executive**

## Working for councils

The LGA is the national membership body for local authorities. Our core membership is made up of English councils and Welsh councils through the Welsh LGA.

We are politically led and cross-party and we work on behalf of councils to give local government a strong, credible voice with national government.

We aim to influence and set the political agenda on the issues that matter to councils so they can deliver local solutions to national problems. We fight local government's corner, supporting councils through challenging times and focusing our efforts where we can have real impact.

We also provide membership services to other organisations through our associate scheme, including fire and rescue authorities, national parks authorities, town councils, police & crime commissioners and elected mayors of combined authorities.

### Our vision for local government

*Our vision for local government is one of a vibrant local democracy, where powers from Westminster are devolved to local areas, and citizens have a meaningful vote and real reason to participate in civic and community life.*

Councils have been a trusted partner to Government to deliver throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Now local government needs to be trusted to deliver recovery locally in a way that has the greatest impact for their communities.

As we move forward, enabling local people to make local decisions will create the conditions for sustainable growth, better public services and a stronger society. It is vital that councils are backed to lead the recovery in their places.

## Our purpose and priorities

Our work on behalf of local government falls under two overarching themes

**National voice of local government** – we campaign to influence the political agenda and secure funding and powers on behalf of councils, and we promote and defend the reputation of the sector

**Supporting councils** - we support councils continuously to improve and innovate through our extensive programmes of practical peer-based support underpinned by strong local leadership, through our support for collective legal actions and through our service delivery partnerships.

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**Our business** – underpinning our work on behalf of councils is an efficient, cost effective and forward-thinking business; we are politically led, committed to equalities and diversity and we aim to operate in an environmentally and financially sustainable way.

Our three-year rolling business plan sets out our key priorities and commitments and demonstrates how our work will contribute to the delivery of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

# The national voice of local government

*We lobby and campaign to influence the political agenda and secure funding and powers on behalf of councils and we promote and defend the reputation of the sector.*

Over the next 12 months we will focus on the seven areas that councils tell us matter most to them:

## **Funding for local government**

Fair and sustainable funding enables councils to plan and deliver essential public services beyond the short term, to raise more funds locally and to promote greater collective working across local public services.

## **Adult social care, health and wellbeing**

Sustainable funding and better integration with health services enable councils to continue to support people to live safe, healthy, active, independent lives and to promote wellbeing and resilience for all ages.

## **Narrowing inequalities and protecting communities**

Councils lead and work with diverse communities and partners to address inequalities and build safe, cohesive and resilient communities, supporting the government's ambition to level up communities across the country

## **Places to live and work**

Councils lead the way in driving a resilient economic recovery which helps level up across the country and sees no community left behind, building the homes that people need and creating places they are proud to live, work and visit.

## **Children, education and schools**

Councils have the powers and resources they need to bring partners together to deliver inclusive and high-quality education, help children and young people recover from the impact of the pandemic and fulfil their potential and offer lifelong learning opportunities for all.

## **Strong local democracy, leadership and capacity**

A refocus on local democratic leadership, and a comprehensive shift in power from Whitehall to local communities, leads to greater diversity of elected representatives, high standards of conduct and strong, flexible local governance.

## **Sustainability and climate action**

Councils take the lead in driving urgent actions in their local areas to combat climate change and its impacts and to deliver zero net carbon.

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# Supporting councils

*We support councils continuously to improve and innovate through a programme of practical peer-based support underpinned by strong local leadership and through our service delivery partnerships.*

The LGA's sector-led improvement programme continues to provide a responsive and flexible offer and remains in a strong position to respond and adapt to councils' needs as circumstances evolve.

We work closely with councils to understand their current and future support needs and continue to adapt as the opportunities and challenges facing councils change.

The **core programme**, funded by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), provides councils with tools and resources to respond to present and emerging challenges and supports improvement across the sector. The programme is underpinned by the work of our regional support networks, including LGA principal advisers and member and officer peers. It delivers improvement and peer support covering financial resilience and economic recovery; safer and more sustainable communities; leadership, workforce and communications.

Our **Care and Health Improvement Programme** (CHIP) is funded by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), with some complementary NHS funding, and delivered jointly with the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services. It provides expert input to DHSC policy and prioritises support for commissioning, managing the care market, recruitment and retention and local integrated care systems. It also supports social care financial resilience and the use of technology enabled care.

Our **Public Health Improvement Programme** is funded by DHSC and supports councils' Covid-19 response and engagement with the new national public health bodies. Additional targeted programmes, funded by DHSC, Public Health England and The Health Foundation focus on child obesity, weight management, suicide prevention and wider determinants of health.

Our **Children's Improvement Programme** is funded by the Department for Education (DfE). We deliver a range of activity to support improvement including support for political leaders and intensive support for councils facing specific challenges.

Through our **communications improvement work**, we offer support to councils and help to raise the standard of public sector communications.

We also receive funding from other government departments for specific improvement activities, including:

1. [One Public Estate](#), funded by Cabinet Office and DLUHC, provides practical and technical support and funding to councils to deliver ambitious property-focused programmes in collaboration with central government and other public sector partners
2. [Cultural services and sport](#), in partnership with Arts Council England and Sport England, support councils through range of programmes and tools to help councils tackle the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities for culture, tourism and sport.
3. [Planning Advisory Service](#), funded by DLUHC, provides consultancy and peer support, learning events and online resources to help local authorities understand and respond to planning reform.
4. [Cyber-security and digital transformation programme](#), funded by the Cabinet Office, to support the improvement of digital services for councils and their residents in as secure a way as possible.
5. [Joint Inspection Team](#) funded by DLUHC, to help councils to enforce against owners of private sector blocks with combustible cladding, and make the blocks safe

We will continue to update our commitments to match councils' needs across the period of this business plan.

# 17 Goals to Transform Our World

The Sustainable Development Goals are a call for action by all countries – poor, rich and middle-income – to promote prosperity while protecting the planet.

They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection.



**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

# Funding for local government

*Fair and sustainable funding enables councils to plan and deliver essential resilient public services beyond the short term, to raise more funds locally and to promote greater collective working across local public services.*

## **CAMPAIGN - Build back local**

Councils have been a trusted partner to Government to deliver throughout the pandemic. Our Build Back Local campaign calls for local government to be trusted to deliver recovery locally in a way that has the greatest impact for their areas. With the right investment and powers, national and local government can work together to achieve a shared ambition: levelling up communities across all parts of the country

### **The benefits to the country of investing in local government are clear and understood – we will:**

- continue to highlight the pressures on all services and press for funding that reflects current and future demand, particularly for housing, homelessness, adult social care and children's services
- lobby Central Government to fully meet all costs and income losses arising from COVID-19 in 2020/21 and beyond
- continue to emphasise and evidence the impact, value and efficiency of local government services
- work with central and local government to identify a wider range of suitable and sustainable funding sources for council services in the future
- work with local and central government on a distribution mechanism for local government funding that supports long-term planning, is evidence-based, simpler and more transparent with appropriate transition mechanisms.

### **People have a meaningful local voice on a wide range of tax and spending decisions – we will:**

- press for freedoms that lead to greater local financial autonomy with a view to achieving local control over both council tax and business rates
- lobby for improvements to business rates to help tackle business rates avoidance and develop proposals to improve the system, including valuation and the appeals process
- press for legislation to allow councils to raise more funds locally including new local taxes and set fees and changes which fully recover costs.

### **Councils are able to access a range of sources of finance to encourage investment and create jobs, supported by an appropriate financial framework – we will:**

- further develop policy on capital financing and investing and contribute to national reviews in these areas so that they support and enable prudent investment and financial management
- contribute to reviews of the accounting and financial regulatory framework for councils to ensure it is appropriate, not over restrictive and balanced with local freedom and accountability
- support the United Kingdom Municipal Bonds Agency to deliver cheaper debt financing to councils, through the sale of bonds in the capital markets.

## Supporting councils

### **Fair and affordable pay awards enable councils to recruit and retain good staff – we will:**

- convene the employer side of the collective bargaining arrangements to agree equitable and affordable pay awards for more than two million local authority and related employees, including fire and rescue authorities.

- provide evidence to the schoolteachers' pay review body and Low Pay Commission in relation to the National Living Wage.

**Financial resilience within the local government sector – we will:**

- support councils to deliver robust financial leadership, governance and scrutiny to support effective decision-making
- provide a bespoke enhanced financial resilience support offer to councils facing the most significant challenges
- support councils to make the most of adult social care funding streams, such as the Better Care Fund and Infection Control Fund and provide bespoke support to the most financially challenged

## Adult social care, health and wellbeing

*Sustainable funding and better integration with health services enable councils to continue to support people to live safe, healthy, active, independent lives and to promote wellbeing and resilience for all ages,*

### SDG 3 – Good health and wellbeing

#### Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages

**CAMPAIGN - The lives we want to lead**

*We want to build a society where everyone is supported to live a healthy, fulfilled and independent life, staying at home and contributing to family and community life for as long as possible - but escalating funding pressures and increasing demand are threatening that ambition. Our campaign calls for sustainable long-term funding that gives people the care and support they need now and in the future.*

**Councils secure sufficient resources to deliver effective, integrated social care services – we will:**

- continue to lobby for the short, medium and long-term financial sustainability of adult social care and support, arguing that all options, including national taxation, should be considered
- work with government to agree a sustainable, long term funding deal for public health.
- press for a new deal for the care workforce ensuring parity of esteem with colleagues in the NHS; comprising action on pay, training and development, career progression and professionalisation, and recognition.

**Councils lead the debate on the future vision for health and social care – we will:**

- promote a clear vision of councils' role in planning and delivering integrated health and care; continue to promote health and wellbeing boards as leaders of health and care and support councils and their partners to develop and deliver place-based person-centred support and that integrated care systems ensure that decisions are taken at the most local level.
- continue to press for a long-term policy framework for the Better Care Fund (BCF), with lighter touch reporting and greater emphasis on local targets and prevention.
- Seek to ensure that local government is an equal and integral partner in the development of integrated care systems, particularly in the membership and governance of integrated care boards and integrated care partnerships

**Councils support older people, disabled people and people in vulnerable circumstances – we will:**

- support councils to tackle the challenges and exploit the opportunities of an ageing population, and to



improve dementia, supported housing and mental health and capacity services, unpaid carers' support and support for autistic people and people with learning disabilities.

- continue to lobby for councils' interests around the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

### **Councils work actively with the NHS to build health and care services around the needs of local populations – we will:**

- work with the Government, NHSEI and other national partners to ensure that councils and health and wellbeing boards, are meaningfully engaged in developing integrated care systems
- work with national partners to increase the understanding of, and commitment to, planning and delivery at place level and the leadership role of councils
- support councils to work with NHS and other partners to ensure that the plans of integrated care systems build on existing priorities to improve health and wellbeing and are subject to democratic oversight and scrutiny
- work with the NHS to learn the lessons of responding to the pandemic and promoting local accountability and closer working through the Health and Care Bill and wider work to implement the legislation.

### **Councils have a central role in promoting and protecting health and wellbeing locally – we will:**

- work to strengthen the position of councils as public health leaders.
- continue to make the case for long-term financial sustainability of public health services and support councils to understand the importance of preventative approaches.
- work with the NHS and partners to develop a system-wide approach to public health workforce planning and address urgent staffing issues in children's public health.
- lobby for long-term sustainable funding for leisure, culture and park services which play an important part in people's physical health and mental wellbeing and tackling health inequalities.
- lobby for the national policy, resources, powers and data councils need to manage the quarantine restrictions for international travel, self-isolation, vaccine roll out, and local outbreaks of COVID-19

## **Supporting Councils**

### **Councils are supported to address their social care challenges – we will**

Support councils to work with the NHS and other partners to:

- improve and sustain local care services including commissioning high-quality adult social care services, understanding and managing the local care market and co-producing services with people with lived experience.
- improve adult safeguarding practice and services for those with the greatest social care financial risks.
- improve social care practice through person-centred planning, positive risk-taking and asset and strengths-based practice planned around the family/network
- develop regional & local strategic social care workforce plans that reflect reform, increase recruitment and retention of social care workers and maximise the care contribution to local and national economies
- strengthen the role of political, clinical and managerial leadership at system, place and neighbourhood levels
- develop health and care systems and partnerships that deliver integrated provision focused on supporting people to live well and independently at home
- build the right support for people in hospital, in or at risk of admission, to live in the community or alternatives to hospital
- build and strengthen their digital leadership and confidence in the use of care technology that helps people to live the lives they want to lead

## **Councils are supported to promote population health and respond to the next phase of the pandemic – we will**

Support councils to:

- improve the health of their communities in the priority areas of weight management, substance misuse, suicide prevention and the wider determinants of health.
- through specified pilot schemes, understand the wider determinants of health and the barriers to tackle child weight management and share the learning with the wider sector.
- fulfil their varied roles in tackling current and future pandemic phases, including the rollout of vaccinations, testing and provision of care and support

## **Councils are supported to respond to the structural changes in public health and implement new policies and legislation – we will**

Support councils to:

- respond to the public health system changes as the new regional and national structures of the Office for Health Promotion and UK Health Security Agency develop
- implement government priorities and bring our expertise to inform government policy on the Better Care Fund, Enhanced Care in Care Homes, personalised budgets and Continuing Health Care reforms
- introduce the new Liberty Safeguards Protection Act

## **Narrowing inequalities and protecting communities**

*Councils lead and work with diverse communities and partners to address inequalities, promote inclusion and build safe, cohesive and resilient communities, supporting the government's ambition to level up communities across the country*

**SDG 1 – No poverty**

**End poverty in all its forms everywhere**

**SDG 10 – Reduced inequalities**

**Reduce inequalities within and among countries**

### ***CAMPAIGN: Build Back Local***

Councils have been a trusted partner to Government to deliver throughout the pandemic. Now our campaign calls for local government to be trusted to deliver recovery locally in a way that has the greatest impact for their communities.

As we move forward, enabling local people to make local decisions will create the conditions for sustainable growth, better public services and a stronger society.

### **Councils lead and work with diverse communities and partners to address inequalities and build cohesive and resilient communities – we will:**

- review and strengthen the LGA's work on reducing inequalities, promoting equality and inclusion through our policy messages and lobbying and our improvement and leadership support to councils.
- promote and support councils in developing the diversity of their candidates, elected members and senior leadership.

- underline the need for a strong commitment to tackling health inequalities and economic vulnerability and ensure that local government concerns and priorities resulting from the impact of COVID-19 on their communities are heard by government
- work to strengthen the local safety net and secure proper recognition and adequate resources for the role of local government in providing fair and effective welfare, housing and employment support.

**Councils lead the way in shaping communities where people feel safe – we will:**

- lead the debate on councils’ role in building safer and resilient communities and support them to reduce serious violence, domestic abuse, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), female genital mutilation and anti-social behaviour
- provide council input to the development of the new modern slavery strategy, as we work collaboratively with partners to raise awareness and support councils to tackle this issue
- contribute to the independent review of Prevent and the refreshed hate crime strategy, and feed in sector views on the new Protect duty
- facilitate the work of the Special Interest Group on Countering Extremism and ensure that councils are supported to build community cohesion, promote integration, tackle extremism and deliver the Prevent duty

**Councils continue to play a leading role in the design and delivery of blue light and other services that help protect local communities – we will:**

- work with the HSE and government to establish an effective, professional and fully funded system for regulating building safety
- lobby for sustainable funding for fire and rescue authorities and support them to become more inclusive and representative of their communities and to strengthen their leadership and governance.
- Support National Employers and maintain national negotiating machinery on pay and workforce issues for firefighters, brigade managers, police staff and coroners.

**Supporting Councils**

**Councils are supported to meet their statutory duties, including on supporting vulnerable residents and preventing and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping – we will:**

- support councils as they address the inequalities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, with particular regard to those groups and communities whose circumstances and life chances have been most affected by the virus and to children and young people whose development and futures will be affected by the containment measures.
- help councils tackle homelessness and rough sleeping, including those who are homeless prior to admission or after leaving hospital
- support councils to work with local partners and communities to become more resilient and better placed to respond to civil contingency risks and other challenges
- support councils to address wider building safety issues and ensure that they and Fire and Rescue Authorities are more aware of the new enforcement and duty holder responsibilities under the Building Safety Bill
- support police and crime panels and share best practice

**Councils are protecting their communities and taking a leading role in the response to COVID-19 – we will:**

- support councils to access information, support and good practice and feel supported to fulfil their varied role in tackling the COVID-19 virus
- support councils in their test, trace and outbreak management response through a sector-led

improvement support programme

- work with councils to review and share learning from COVID-19, to help strengthen community resilience and future emergency responses.

## Children, education and schools

*Councils have the powers and resources they need to bring partners together to deliver inclusive and high quality education, help children and young people to recover from the impact of the pandemic and fulfil their potential and offer lifelong learning opportunities for all.*

### SDG 3 – Quality education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

### SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

### SDG 10 – Reduced inequalities

Reduce inequalities within and among countries

#### **CAMPAIGN: Bright Futures: A Child Centred Recovery**

*Our campaign calls for children and young people to be at the centre of plans to recover from the pandemic to ensure their lives are not negatively impacted while benefiting the wider community. This includes improved join up across government to support families, investment in local safety nets and universal services, and work to prevent the attainment gap from widening.*

#### **Councils lead the way in driving up educational standards – we will:**

- set out a clear vision for councils' role in promoting high educational standards, with the resources, powers and flexibilities to give every child access to a place at a good local school
- lobby for a stronger role for councils in investing in schools - ensuring new schools are high quality, fit for and value for money - and a lead role in decisions about new free schools
- press for a stronger council role in ensuring admissions are fair for all pupils across the school system, including increased levels of inclusion in mainstream schools and other education settings.

#### **Schools have the funding they need to deliver the best education for all pupils – we will:**

- lobby to ensure the national funding formula for schools retains an element of local flexibility to allow councils and schools to reflect local needs and priorities
- highlight the growing pressures on the high needs budget for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and lobby government to provide councils with sufficient funding and flexibility to meet rising demand and eliminate High Needs deficits

#### **Councils have sufficient powers and funding to support young people's education and training post-16 options – we will:**

- Press for sufficient powers and funding so councils can fulfil their statutory duties to support all young people, including those at risk of, or who are not in education, employment and training (NEET), those with special educational needs, care leavers, and disadvantaged groups
- Lobby for councils to have a coordinating role to plan a post-16 local offer so young people have a coherent picture of locally available options (A levels, T levels, Apprenticeships), underpinned by independent local careers advice and guidance.

## **Councils have the flexibility and resources to deliver services that meet the needs of children and young people – we will:**

- encourage councils and the Government to put children at the heart of policy making, including a cross-Whitehall strategy for children
- continue to paint a positive vision for local children’s services, calling for sustainable funding for services, that change children’s lives
- support councils to take a preventative and place-based approach to children and young people’s health, including early years, food and nutrition and support for children’s mental health
- work in partnership to improve life chances for all disadvantaged households, particularly those with children, making the case for early intervention and improved local integration of services for families.

## **Councils protect children’s wellbeing and keep them safe – we will:**

- lobby government for the resources and policies needed to protect children and young people from harm and improve outcomes for all children, in particular children in care and care leavers
- work with government and councils to support child refugees and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
- work with government and the wider sector to ensure councils have the tools and resources to tackle child exploitation including county lines and online harms.

## **Supporting Councils**

### **Improved outcomes for the most vulnerable children and their families – we will:**

- provide targeted improvement support with an initial focus on Covid-19 recovery planning
- provide diagnostics/peer review and follow-up advisory support to deliver recommendations
- facilitate action learning sets across regions for role-based cohorts and within council political groups

### **Political and corporate leaders understand and fulfil their role as corporate parents – we will:**

- support the development of effective corporate parenting arrangements, including corporate parenting resources and e-learning and tools and guidance to support self-assessment and learning

### **A whole council and partnership approach to improving social care and SEND outcomes – we will:**

- facilitate leadership roundtables on supporting children’s services and SEND and provide facilitated sessions to support whole system strategic approaches.
- facilitate regional networking and learning opportunities and provide thematic workshops to support improvement, for example Covid-19 recovery and SEND.

## **Places to live and work**

*Councils lead the way in driving a resilient economic recovery which helps level up across the country and sees no community left behind, building the homes that people need and creating places they are proud to live in, work and visit.*

**SDG1 – No poverty**

**End poverty in all its forms everywhere**

**SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth**

**Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

**SDG 9 – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation**

## **CAMPAIGN: Housing and planning**

*Local government shares the collective national ambition to tackle their local housing crisis, which will only be achieved with strong national and local leadership working together. As house builders, housing enablers, and landlords; as planners, place-shapers, and agents of growth, transport and infrastructure; as responsible guardians to the vulnerable and the homeless; and as democratically accountable to communities, our campaign calls for local government to be at the heart of the housing solution.*

### **Councils are key partners in growing inclusive and resilient local economies – we will:**

- support city regions and non-metropolitan areas to deliver effective local economic strategies
- support local innovation to deliver better digital infrastructure and continue to press for a regulatory framework that will deliver the best deal for customers
- continue to press for local government to sit at the heart of the Government's levelling up agenda working with businesses and other local stakeholders to better connect communities to the benefits of prosperity
- support councils to maximise the impact of their cultural, sporting, tourism and heritage assets to drive growth in their local economy.

### **Councils drive the increase in housing supply the nation needs – we will:**

- continue to press for additional powers for councils to increase housing supply, promote both affordable and carbon-free homes and make more effective use of surplus public sector land
- support consortia of councils to access significant housing development funds through the creation of new partnership models
- press for powers for councils to ensure the provision of homes integrated with health and care that positively support us to age well
- lobby for a well-resourced and locally responsive planning system, funded by locally set fees with the tools to ensure developers build quality homes that meet local need.

### **Councils have access to funding to create communities where people want to live, work and visit – we will:**

- continue to press for additional infrastructure funding, including a review of the rules governing developer contributions
- support councils to work with partners to maximise the value of local and national infrastructure investment, including in road, rail, broadband, culture, heritage and recreation
- influence the design of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, lobbying to ensure it is a place-based programme driven by local government and aligned to wider growth funding

### **Councils continue to drive higher safety standards across the housing sector – we will:**

- lobby for resources and tools to enable councils to shape a good quality private rented sector that meets the needs of their local communities
- work with government and councils to identify high-risk, high-rise residential buildings and lobby for support for councils to make changes and take urgent remedial action
- respond to government consultations, including on the new building safety regulatory framework.

### **Councils lead the way in ending homelessness through prevention – we will:**

- Work to ensure that councils have the resources they need to manage the impacts of national welfare policy and achieve the ambitions of the Homeless Reduction Act and Rough Sleeping strategy
- make the case for effective integration of housing, homelessness support and the benefits system and for the powers and funding that councils need to meet local needs

- with the Chief Executives' and Home Office group on asylum dispersal, inform the development, delivery and funding of support for asylum seekers and refugees and share good practice

**Councils support strong communities through risk-based business-friendly regulatory services – we will:**

- press for powers and resources where councils take on additional legal liabilities such as building safety regulation post-Grenfell and proposed new air quality requirements
- support councils to demonstrate the value of regulatory services, take steps to increase service resilience and make the case for sustainable funding mechanisms
- develop tools to support councils to strengthen local licensing processes, and lobby government to address key licensing issues including outdated taxi legislation and nationally set fees.
- lobby government to bring forward taxi licensing legislation as soon as possible
- press for greater flexibility in the licensing system, including the localisation of licensing fees.

**Councils match education, training and skills with business needs – we will:**

- continue to press for powers, funding and lead responsibility for councils to integrate and commission back to work, skills, apprenticeships and welfare support under the *Work Local* model.
- campaign for people of all ages to be supported to participate in quality skills development and training and lifelong learning with independent careers advice and guidance
- promote good employment practice that helps young people and adults secure, sustain and progress in work, including Apprenticeships.
- lobby for flexibility in use of the apprenticeship levy and work with partners to increase take up of quality apprenticeships.

## Supporting Councils

**Improved economic resilience, capacity and learning at corporate and political level – we will:**

- provide councils with tools and resources to tackle unemployment through an Economic Growth Advisers programme
- help councils address skills shortages, respond to changes on the high street and provide support for SMEs
- promote procurement and employment supply chains to restore and enhance local economies
- support councils to build capacity and commission or buy services that contribute to local outcomes through the Procurement and Commissioning Programme
- support council efficiency through providing behavioural insights and transformational change support.

**Councils address housing, homelessness and local transformation in their roles as leaders of place – we will:**

- work with councils to boost their capacity to address housing supply, directly deliver housing and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.
- support areas with existing devolution deals to have capacity and capability to deliver their objectives and ensure areas currently negotiating a devolution deal are better placed to do so.

## Strong local democracy, leadership and capacity

*A refocus on local democratic leadership and a shift in power to local communities post Brexit leads to greater diversity of elected representatives, high standards of conduct and strong, flexible local governance.*

## SDG 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions

### **CAMPAIGN: Debate Not Hate**

There are growing concerns about the impact of toxic debate is having on our local democracy. Our campaign aims to challenge abuse in political debate and set out our ambition for respectful political discourse, both in person and online.

#### **Councils as leaders of good conduct in public and political discourse and debate – we will:**

- clearly articulate the standards expected for anyone engaging in public and political discourse and debate and what is needed to achieve those standards, underlining that intimidation and abuse of those in public office is unacceptable
- review the member model code of conduct and relevant guidance annually
- continue to work with the devolved nations in line with the UK Local Government Association Joint Statement on Civility in Public Life to promote civility and positive debate, including a public campaign.

#### **Councils as leaders of local democracy and representative of their local communities – we will:**

- work with councils to ensure that all local residents and communities are able to have their voices heard and can engage with local elections and decisions that affect their lives
- support councils to ensure that local political representation is reflective of the communities they serve and support people from diverse background to enter public life
- support to councils to explore ways of engaging with their local community and voluntary sector in local service delivery, enhancing places and local decision making.

#### **Elected members and officers are empowered to tackle incidents of public intimidation – we will:**

- explore the practicalities and support the adoption of an informal 'duty of care' for councillors
- seek to better understand the scale and impact of the intimidation and abuse our membership is experiencing and promote a new offence for intimidation against a person in public office
- engage with police forces and associated agencies to ensure the impact and seriousness of the public intimidation of local councillors and employees is understood and acted upon.

#### **EU exit and constitutional reform – we will:**

- interact with Whitehall on all EU Exit negotiations, articulating councils' needs and concerns and taking advantage of the opportunity to entrench local government within our new constitutional settlement
- seek to ensure that repatriated laws and regulations are not centralised in Whitehall, working on a revised legal framework for those services currently based on EU laws such as air pollution, energy, waste and procurement and redefining regional aid and state-aid rules.

#### **Continued devolution of powers and funding to local areas drive strong and responsive local democracy and greater engagement with communities – we will:**

- refresh the case to demonstrate to government how devolution leads to more inclusive and sustainable growth, better public services and levels up outcomes for residents
- work with councils and combined authorities to secure the best possible outcomes for their communities in a new round of devolution deals.



- work with government, business and others to give communities in England and Wales greater responsibility to make decisions on the issues of importance to them.

## Supporting Councils

**Councils deliver improved functions and services through the provision of regional support teams, underpinned by key comparative performance data – we will:**

- Deliver our regional support offer to provide bespoke support to councils, including:
  - ✓ change of control support
  - ✓ peer challenges including finance, health and wellbeing, housing, planning and equality; either in person or remotely; and
  - ✓ Corporate Peer Challenges.

**Improved council leadership and communications and enhanced workforce resilience and capacity – we will:**

- support councils to improve leadership capacity and governance through range of training and development programmes, including work to attract new and diverse talent.
- support to councils to improve communications providing councils with tools and resources to communicate messages effectively to residents,
- support councils to resolve issues between political and managerial leadership
- maintain national negotiating machinery on pay and workforce issues
- deliver comprehensive practical support to help councils provide apprenticeships and maximise their levy investment
- support councils to transform their workforces and modernise the way they are managed
- support councils to promote wellbeing, diversity and inclusion in the workplace through information, guidance and bespoke support and work with them to address issues around gender pay gap, representation and recruitment challenges
- work with councils and central government to improve local government workforce capacity and resilience

## Sustainability and climate action

*Councils take the lead in driving urgent actions in their local areas to combat the negative impacts of climate change and to deliver net zero carbon*

**SDG 13 – Climate action**

**Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts**

### **CAMPAIGN: A local path to net zero**

Councils have a significant role to play in tackling the climate emergency. Our campaign calls for government to work in partnership with local government to support and advance the UK's net zero target. Councils are well placed to translate national climate ambitions into transformative action.

**Councils have the powers and resources they need to lead the way in combatting the effects of climate change – we will:**

- lobby for a joint taskforce with relevant Whitehall departments including Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), DLUHC and DeFRA to consider the most appropriate actions, funding, coordination and collaboration
- press government for the funding and policy changes needed to deliver zero net carbon
- work with government to address the need for greater energy efficiency in the built environment and how this can be achieved through planning practice and changes to Building Regulations
- work with government, as it implements the Waste and Resources Strategy to identify ways to reduce waste and levels of unrecyclable waste and the investment priorities for waste disposal and processing of recyclates.

**Councils lead the way in decarbonising local transport networks – we will:**

- work with government to deliver the Transport Decarbonisation Plan and secure the resources councils - including long-term certainty and flexibility over funding, shared tools, modelling and data - to enable councils to deliver Local Transport Plans that integrate local bus improvement and active travel strategies with new decarbonisation targets.
- continue to push for further tools to assist councils in their network management duty responsibilities
- lobby for meaningful support and access to expertise, so that councils can more effectively partner with business and government in the transition to zero-emission vehicles and the EV charging infrastructure, especially for those without off-street parking.

**Councils work with partners and stakeholders to implement short-, medium- and long-term strategies to reduce carbon emissions in their areas – we will:**

- work with local, national and international partners to run two campaigns in the year of COP26 to seek a positive environmental legacy for local government.
- secure local government representation at the United Nations conference and promote the contribution of councils in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- drawing on international experience, develop an evidence base and framework to understand the main carbon sources and the impact of councils' activity
- identify the opportunities of a shift to a low carbon economy as a basis for immediate and effective action

## Supporting Councils

**Help councils reach their local carbon reduction and biodiversity targets by adapting and mitigating the effects of climate change – we will:**

- support long term action-planning and setting strategic objectives, including through webinars, sharing good practice, tools and bespoke projects
- bring together local authorities, universities and other stakeholders to address climate challenges at the local level
- incorporate climate change issues into core leadership programmes for councillors and officers
- develop a package of communications support including how to engage with local communities in the year of COP26
- help councils build the capability to effectively respond to climate change challenges, including support around biodiversity, procurement and housing retrofit

# Our Business

*The pandemic has changed the way that organisations across the world and across all sectors work. We are committed to providing the best and most cost-effective services to councils and councillors in England and Wales. We are politically led, committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and we aim to operate in an environmentally and financially sustainable way.*

## **The national membership body for local government – we will:**

- maintain membership levels amongst local authorities in England and Wales by continuing to offer membership benefits that meet councils' changing needs and expectations.
- deliver first class communications that are highly valued and respected by our member councils and that influence the issues that matter to them, their residents and their communities.
- offer a range of flexible options for councils to participate actively in our work, including through an extensive programme of virtual and hybrid events and meetings
- seek to improve and extend our support offer to councils in the priority areas they find most helpful through partnership arrangements and funding opportunities
- use the full potential of our CRM system to enhance the delivery of integrated and targeted services to our member councils.
- launch a new online membership resource, setting out the benefits of membership with councils and councillors.
- support council legal teams on strategic governance and constitutional issues.
- pursue additional sources of funding that are consistent with our priorities to enhance our support to councils.

## **A politically-led organisation – we will:**

- ensure our political governance arrangements continue to reflect and respond to the priorities and the expectations of our membership.
- provide the members who sit on our boards, committees, working groups and forums with the training, briefings and information they need to deliver their roles on behalf of local government.
- offer political support to individual councillors and council administrations through our political group offices.
- provide briefings and advice on local government issues to our President and parliamentary Vice-Presidents.
- engage with parliamentary proceedings to ensure that local government's priorities are recognised in debates and committee reports.

## **Financially sustainable – we will:**

- continue to develop existing and new income-generation opportunities in order to diversify our sources of funding and support our long-term financial sustainability.
- complete the refurbishment of Layden House in Farringdon to increase its capital value and maximise our income from commercial letting of the office floors and retail units.
- review options to maximise income from 18 Smith Square and rebuild the commercial venue programme through a combination of active marketing, targeted communications and excellent, responsive customer service.
- keep under review patterns of use of 18 Smith Square in the light of increased flexible and hybrid working and other changes to determine our optimum long term office requirements.
- deliver cost effective back-office support services such as HR, payroll, finance and secretariat support to our joint ventures and third-party organisations, including the UK Municipal Bonds Agency.

- invest responsibly and seek to ensure that our contractors, joint ventures and pension funds have in place investment policies that further our objectives and values.
- complete the transfer of IDeA pensions administration from Camden to Merseyside scheme.

#### **Efficient business management – we will:**

- continue to streamline our company structures to deliver a solid and tax-efficient base from which to run our business, including the transfer of 18 Smith Square to the LGA and the winding up of LGA (Properties).
- drive best value from our major contracts in the light of post-Covid ways of working, including the re-procurement of our Total Facilities Management and room bookings contracts and renegotiation of the catering contract.
- implement our new finance, HR and payroll systems to include greater levels of self-service
- continue to develop our ICT in partnership with our providers, Brent/Shared Technology Services to deliver continuous improvements in efficiency, flexibility and cyber security.
- maximise the use of the improved videoconferencing capability in all 18 Smith Square meeting rooms to increase their commercial potential and support a culture of flexible and hybrid working for employees and members.

#### **Supportive people management – we will:**

- develop and launch a people plan/strategy.
- embed equality, diversity and inclusion into our core values, our policies and our practices, supporting and developing our staff networks to ensure that the lived experience of our staff helps shape our organisation and the work we deliver for our members.
- re-frame our leadership development offer for current and aspiring managers as part of our wider commitment to develop our staff, including virtual and hybrid options to allow everyone to participate.
- refresh our values and behaviours and ensure that they are central to the way that we do things.
- evolve and deliver our staff health and wellbeing strategy, monitoring feedback through our regular “temperature check” surveys.
- develop policies that support LGA staff to deliver their best and reflect our new more flexible working practices.
- review and redefine the role of our corporate leadership team.

#### **Collective legal action – we will:**

- support groups of councils to mount collective legal actions or fight actions against them where we believe that they have a strong case, commissioning expert legal advice and sources of funding where appropriate
- collate and prepare responses and New Burdens submissions on behalf of the sector where new policies, legislation or regulations result in additional duties or costs to councils.
- provide legal advice on strategic issues with sector wide implications, including commissioning expert legal advice where appropriate.

#### **Committed to a sustainable future – we will**

- in line with the motions passed by the 2019 and 2021 General Assemblies, keep action to tackle climate change at the heart of the way that we manage our business, modelling best practice, reducing carbon emissions under our direct control and influencing partner organisations to do the same.
- keep our policies and practices under review to ensure that they contribute to combatting the adverse effects of climate change.
- calculate our own greenhouse gas emissions through our greenhouse gas accounting tool to

- inform our area of focus for the next business plan.
- encourage sustainable travel practices through our enhanced flexible working policy and practices, staff and members' expenses policies and continued participation in national sustainable travel initiatives including the Cycle to Work scheme.
- minimise the environmental impact of our two central London buildings and the way that we use and manage those buildings, including ensuring that our facilities management and catering contractors have environmentally sustainable policies and practices.

## Our service delivery partnerships

### Local Partnerships

Local Partnerships is a joint venture between the LGA and HM Treasury, formed in 2009 to help the public sector deliver local services and infrastructure. It offers support to local authorities in the following areas:

- developing and reviewing strategic business cases and business plans
- service transformation and change
- modelling and legal frameworks for alternative service delivery models
- options appraisal and assurance of chosen approaches or options
- forming effective partnerships (inter-agency brokerage)
- sourcing and commissioning, contract negotiation and management
- economic development and planning
- delivering infrastructure.

### GeoPlace

GeoPlace LLP is a joint venture between the LGA and Ordnance Survey and the central source for UK addresses and streets data. Working in close collaboration with the 339 councils in England and Wales, GeoPlace cleanses and validates the data they produce and creates and maintains national registers, called gazeteers - a central hub of 42.8 million addresses and 1.3 million streets.

The result is a single, unified source for all addressing and street data, which helps to keep public services running smoothly, join services together, and find new efficiencies. Its uses range from next-day deliveries of online shopping, to street works, blue light services, meter readings, taxi journeys and policy-making.

The data is distributed commercially by Ordnance Survey through the AddressBase range of products.

### Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA)

PSAA is an independent company limited by guarantee incorporated by the LGA in August 2014. The Secretary of State for DLUHC has specified PSAA as an appointing person under the provisions of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. PSAA appoints an auditor to relevant local government bodies that opt into its national scheme and sets a scale of fees for the work which auditors undertake.

### UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc (UKMBA)

The LGA is a major shareholder in the local government-owned UKMBA, which delivers cheaper debt financing to councils, through the sale of bonds in the capital markets. We support and provide client side services to the Agency, as it works through its managed service provider to aggregate borrowing requirements and issue bonds.

## Minimising the impacts of climate change

The LGA is committed to minimising the environmental impacts of its activities, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing biodiversity and adapting to climate change in order to contribute to a healthy future for all. These are some of the ways that we deliver on that commitment.

### Flexible working

Our flexible working policy allows staff to balance working from home with time spent in the office, subject to the needs of the business. This means less journeys to work, a better work-life balance for our staff and their families and less dependence on valuable central London office space.

Our ICT is designed to support flexible working without compromising data security, enabling staff safely to log into their LGA accounts from home, from other locations or when they are on the move.

### 18 Smith Square

Since its refurbishment in 2017/18, 18 Smith Square has received an energy rating B under the government's energy performance scheme for non-domestic buildings. This compares with an average D rating for other comparable buildings and is a significant achievement for a heritage building in a conservation area.

All lights in the building are energy efficient LEDs, with motion sensors that ensure they are switched off when not needed. Windows on the south and west of the building which are not part of the conservation area are double glazed to reduce energy loss. Recycling bins are provided on every floor.

Secure cycle facilities and showers are provided in the basement of 18 Smith Square for those who prefer to cycle or run to work.

### Meetings

All meeting rooms at 18 Smith Square have access to video conferencing facilities which support virtual and hybrid meetings and events of all sizes. This enables members and staff to join and participate in meetings remotely, reducing the need for lengthy journeys to Westminster.

### Travel

Our expenses policy encourages staff to use public transport wherever practicable to help reduce the impact of the LGA's business travel arrangements on the environment. The Members' Scheme of Allowance stresses that wherever possible, councillors are expected to travel by public transport when on LGA business.

### Procurement

The LGA has a robust, paper free procurement policy and process, which underpin the importance of all our contractors being able to demonstrate a commitment to sustainability and combatting climate change. Our procurement documentation states

"In adhering to our commitments, the contractor should have systems in place to account for and minimise environmental impacts in all areas of contract delivery".

### Investments

The LGA's Treasury Policy was updated in March 2021 to include the fundamental principle that, as long as the security of our funds is maintained and that counterparties have sufficient credit ratings, where possible and available our investments should support Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance initiatives.

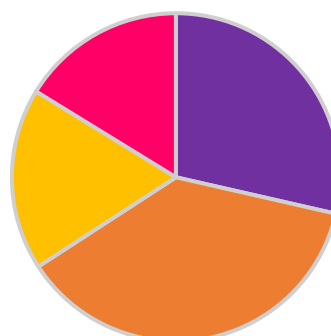
# Our budget 2021/22

## Funding sources and forecast expenditure

### (Budget) (£'000)

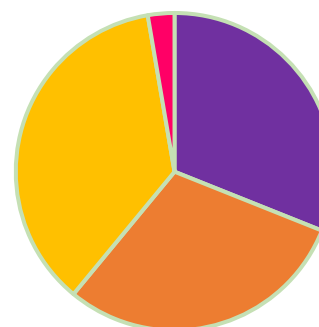
#### <sup>1</sup>Income LG Group 2021/22

- DLUHC Sector Support, £17,300 (28.6%)
- Other grants and contracts, £22,568 (37.3%)
- Other income, £10,852 (17.9%)
- Subscriptions, £9,833 (16.28%)



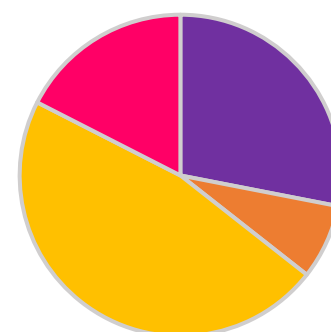
#### Other income LG Group 2021/22

- Dividends, royalties and interest, £3,370 (31.1%)
- Rental Income and external room hire, £3,248 (29.9%)
- Services, consultancy and other subscriptions, £3,941 (36.3%)
- Conferences, events and sponsors, £293 (2.7%)



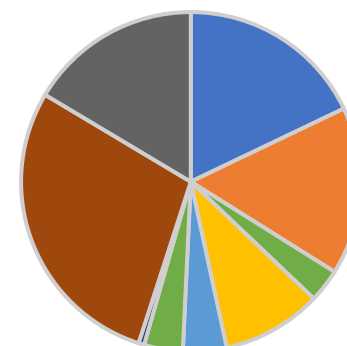
#### Grant and contract income (including DLUHC) LG Group 2021/22

- Adult social care, health and wellbeing, £11,188 (28.1%)
- Children, education and schools £3,005 (7.5%)
- Supporting councils, £18,702 (46.9%)
- Places to live and work, £6,973 (17.5%)



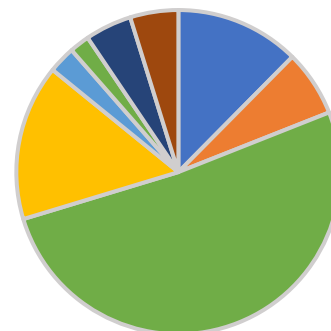
#### Expenditure LG Group by business plan theme 2021/22

- Funding for local government, £10,747 (17.9%)
- Adult social care, health and wellbeing, £9,605 (16.0%)
- Narrowing inequalities and protecting communities £1,911 (3.2%)
- Places to live and work, £5,704 (9.5%)
- Children, education and schools, £2,494 (4.2%)
- Strong local democracy, £2,215 (3.7%)
- Sustainability and climate action, £323 (0.5%)
- Supporting councils, £17,158 (28.6%)
- Internal & property costs, £9,863 (16.4%)



## Expenditure LG Group by service group 2021/22

- Business support, £7,451 (12.4%)
- Communications, £3,953 (6.6%)
- Governance and project support, £30,801 (51.3%)
- Finance and policy, £9,330 (15.5%)
- Political groups, £1,196 (2.0%)
- Member services, £1,615 (2.7%)
- Property costs, £2,792 (4.7%)
- Workforce, £2,882 (4.8%)



## Our governance

The LGA is an unlimited company whose Board of Directors – the LGA Board – is elected annually by the General Assembly. The General Assembly comprises representatives of every council in full membership of the LGA, or in corporate membership through the Welsh LGA. Further information on the company and the way it operates can be found in our Articles of Association and our Governance Framework.

The LGA Board is supported by nine policy boards who together are responsible for developing our policies and campaigns, and for overseeing our extensive programme of sector-led improvement services, across every area of local government activity. The Fire Commission and Fire Services Management Board look after the interests of fire and rescue authorities,

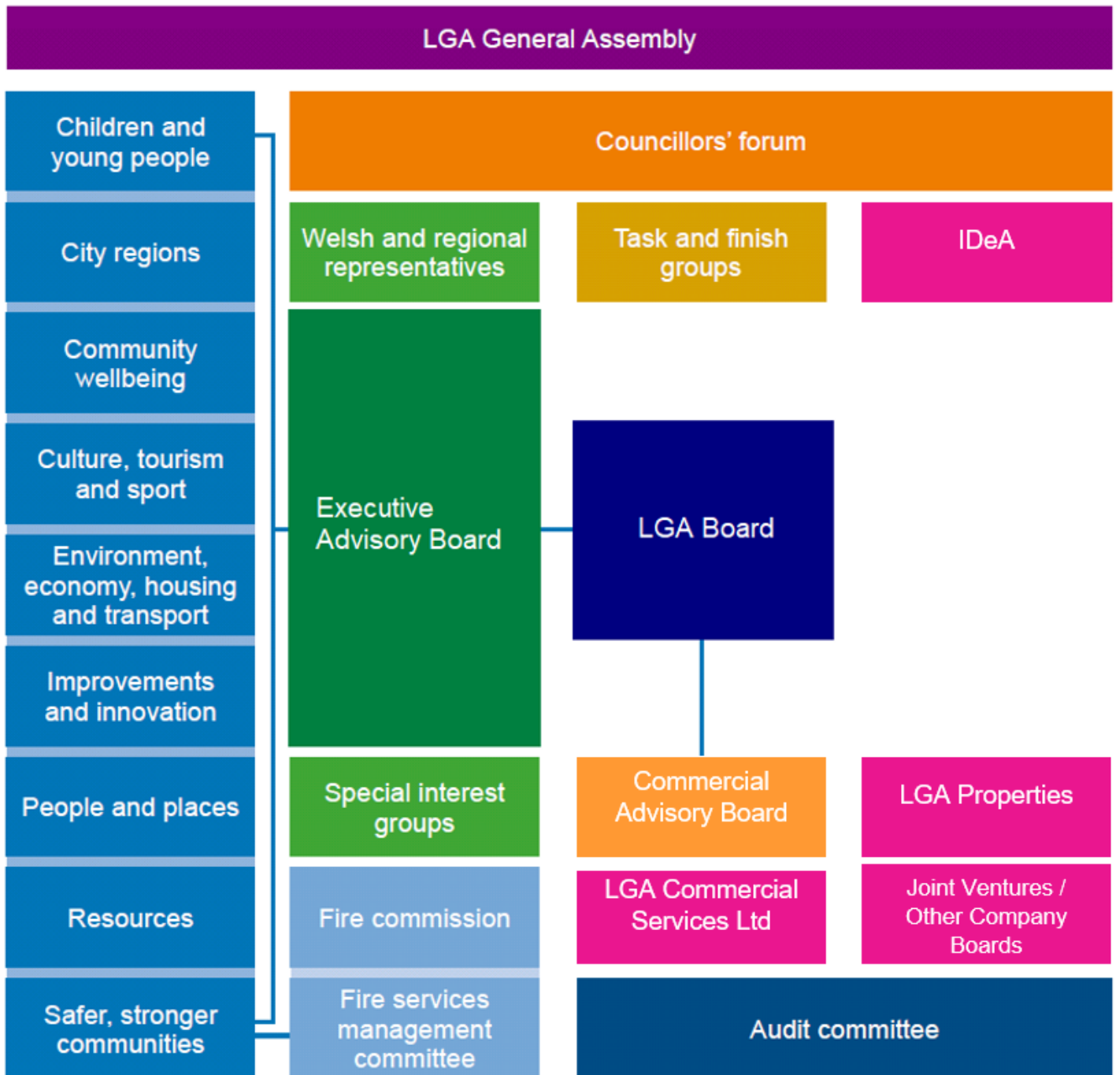
The LGA Board and the chairs of the policy boards meet every six weeks as the Executive Advisory Board and are joined by representatives from Wales and the eight English regions and from three of our special interest groups – the County Councils' Network, District Councils' Network and Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities.

In 2020, ownership of Layden House in Farringdon, the former headquarters of the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) transferred to the LGA from The Local Government Management Board (LGMB). LGMB has now been wound up. Ownership of 18 Smith Square, our Westminster HQ, is in the process of being transferred to the LGA from LGA (Properties).

The Commercial Advisory Board is responsible for overseeing the LGA's income-generating activities to make us financially sustainable now and in the future. That will include overseeing the management and operation of 18 Smith Square and Layden House and reporting back to the LGA Board.



# Our governance arrangements



# Our major contracts

## Catering – Bartlett Mitchell

Bartlett Mitchell (BM) provide all catering services at 18 Smith Square.

BM have been named Sustainable Caterer of the Year for three years in succession. Their policy is to source ingredients locally, regionally and seasonally from farmers who produce food to high environmental standards, reducing the impact of climate change and helping to protect the landscape and our farming heritage. BM use high-welfare meat, poultry, eggs, cheese, and dairy produce and sustainable seafood.

Overseas produce is sourced from ethical suppliers, including coffee from the Soppexcca co-op in Nicaragua which supports women farmers in the region. BM use the 'Free Wheeling' initiative to reduce the number of deliveries to their kitchens.

## Total Facilities Management – Bouygues

Bouygues environmental policy recognises that the company's activities and services have the potential to impact on the environment. The policy sets out Bouygues' commitment to minimising the environmental impact of its operations in every way it can and is supported by 'live' environmental improvement plans at all levels.

The company is triple certificated to ISO9001, ISO14001 and OHSAS18001 and the environmental management standard ISO 14001 is fully integrated into its everyday activities.

Bouygues' Facilities Management business was the first in the UK to achieve Energy Management Standard ISO50001. They are currently focusing on reducing carbon impact, minimising waste, diverting waste from landfill and reducing energy.

## Pensions – Merseyside Pension Fund and Camden Pension Fund

The LGA's main LGPS pension administrator, Merseyside Pension Fund, has a policy of responsible investment. The policy has three components: exercise of voting rights; engagement with companies on environmental, social and governance issues & collaboration with like-minded investors. The Fund is active in the work of the Local Authority Pension Fund Forum whose work covers a range of corporate governance and corporate social responsibility issues, and the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change.

Employees with IDeA contracts of employment previously belonged to an LGPS administered by the London Borough of Camden, who like all pensions funds, are bound by the law relating to Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) policy. As of 1 April 2021, administration of the IDeA LGPS has been transferred to the Merseyside Pension Fund, although the two funds have not been merged.

## ICT – Shared Technology Services

Our ICT services are delivered through LGA Digital Services, a company set up under regulation 12 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, which allows Brent Council to contract with the LGA. Shared Technology Services is a collaboration between Brent, Lewisham and Southwark Councils to provide ICT services across the three councils as well as the LGA. Brent Civic Centre which was opened in 2013 won BREEAM sustainable building award making it the greenest public building in the UK in 2015.

With a user base of 10,000+ users, the LGA benefits from the economies of scale in their ICT provision as well as supporting some of our member councils.

The LGA has achieved Cyber Essentials accreditation for their ICT provision.