

LGA Plan 2022-25 and the priorities of other LGA Boards

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

At the September Board meeting, Board members requested information on the priorities of the LGA's other policy Boards, as well as the LGA's business plan, to help understand how the proposed SSCB priorities align with wider organisational priorities. This paper provides an overview of these priorities, drawing out areas of joint interest with the SSCB.

Recommendations

That the Safer Stronger Communities Board 1) reviews the LGA Plan and considers any changes to its workplan to reflect the overall LGA direction and priorities and 2) notes the proposed priorities of other LGA Boards and areas of joint interest/potential overlap.

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LGA Plan 2022-25

Background

1. At the September Board meeting, Board members requested information on the priorities of the LGA's other policy Boards, as well as the LGA's business plan, to help understand how the proposed SSCB priorities (reattached at the end of this paper) align with wider organisational priorities. This paper provides an overview of these priorities, drawing out areas of joint interest with the SSCB.
2. The LGA's new 3-year business plan – [LGA Plan 2022-2025](#) – was signed off by the LGA Board on 19 October. The document sets the direction for the LGA as a whole and includes the organisation's policy and campaigning priorities for the period. Development of the plan was led by a joint officer/member task and finish group, who considered feedback from consultations and discussions with member councils, lead members, group executives and staff. A copy of the Plan is attached at Appendix 1.
3. As with the SSCB, other policy Boards have been working through the process of agreeing their priorities and work plans at their first meetings of the year. A high level summary of each Board's priorities is included in the table in the next section, with supporting commentary outlining areas of possible overlap or joint interest.

LGA Plan

4. The LGA Plan is in three parts:

Part 1:

- Sets out the LGA's overarching vision and the golden thread that runs through the plan - to be the voice of local government.
- Sets out our purpose - to promote, improve and support local government. These form the three pillars of all our external facing work, including the work of the eight policy boards and the Improvement and Innovation Board.
- Emphasises our commitment to work more collaboratively across the whole of local government to strengthen our voice on behalf of the sector.

Part 2:

- Promoting local government sets four policy and campaigning priorities
 - ✓ A sustainable financial future
 - ✓ Stronger local economies, thriving local democracy
 - ✓ Putting people first
 - ✓ Championing climate change and local environments.
- Improving local government sets out our main grant-funded commitments.
- Supporting local government highlights the excellent technical and professional support and services we deliver to councils in fields such as workforce, pensions, legal, communications and procurement and a range of place-based services.

Part 3:

- Our business – sets out our internal organisational priorities, including actions to support our political leadership and enhance our membership, increase our financial resilience and our commitment to Net Zero.

Delivering the LGA Plan

5. The SSCB's work programme cuts across the LGA's purpose to promote and improve local government, with our planned activity a mixture of highlighting the good work of councils in relevant policy areas, securing desirable changes to key policies and legislation and helping councils improve their work in our policy areas.
6. The work of the SSCB falls within scope of the theme to champion climate change and local environments, which is summarised by the statement:
 - Everyone wants to live in a green and safe local environment. Councils are actively working to address climate change while continuing to consider the broader environmental factors which help to make more sustainable communities.
7. Two specific priorities within the overall remit of SSCB are highlighted in the plan:
 - Councils have the powers, resources and support to work with local partners to tackle crime and prevent people being drawn into criminal behaviour.
 - The Government's fire reform agenda is shaped to ensure fire and rescue authorities have the resources to address their challenges, including those from climate change (this priority is overseen by the Fire Services Management Committee).
8. Other organisational themes and activities highlighted in the plan are also relevant to other aspects of work included within the SSCB work plan. For example, the workforce element of the LGA's support for local government includes a priority to promote national programmes that enhance and support the local government workforce and respond to significant skills shortages; this includes public protection professions such as environmental health and trading standards.
9. Similarly, the stronger local economies, thriving democracy theme includes an ambition that councils engage in healthy and positive debate and display the highest standards of conduct, and that abuse and intimidation of councillors is taken seriously by all agencies and appropriate steps to prevent and respond to it when it occurs. This work has overlaps with intimidation linked to extremism, and therefore links to the programme of activity within the Board's remit.
10. The LGA Plan will remain a flexible document that will be reviewed and updated annually, and with the agreement of the LGA Board, may be updated to reflect changing circumstances.
11. As the business plan is an intentionally shorter and more focused document than previous iterations, there are fewer policy priorities identified and a more limited number that are explicitly link with the remit of the SSCB. This provides the Board with significant scope for flexibility about the areas it wishes to prioritise.

12. Officers therefore believe that the work programme agreed by the Board in September is consistent with the LGA Plan, but members are invited to review the document and discuss any amendments of additions to the Board’s work programme to align with the LGA’s priorities.

Priorities of other Boards

13. During the September Board meeting, Board members requested an overview of the priorities of other LGA Boards to ensure there was no duplication of work and to identify areas where joint work may be possible.

14. In general, we would typically expect the Community Wellbeing and Children and Young People’s Boards to have the main linkages with SSCB work, due to overlaps on public health issues (such as drugs, alcohol and gambling) and the intersection between children engaging with children’s services and domestic abuse, serious violent crime etc. However, the SSC team work with a number of colleagues reporting to other policy boards on a wide range of issues (for example, transport and taxi licensing; modern slavery and housing etc).

15. The table below provides an overview of the priorities of each Board for this Board cycle. The impact of the cost-of-living crisis features as a priority for many boards, as does the levelling up agenda.

16. Members may be interested in the work of the Community Wellbeing Board around public health and prevention, given the focus on the drug strategy, as well as the work of the City Regions Board around building resilient communities.

Board	Priority
Children and Young People’s Board	Cost-of-living crisis, including impact on organisations and the links between deprivation, poverty and involvement with children’s social care
	Independent review of children’s social care
	SEND Green paper
	Funding
Community Wellbeing Board	Adult social care
	Integration
	Public health and prevention, including continuing efforts to improve public health services such as substance misuse services. Working closely with the joint combating drugs unit to deliver on the aspects of the 10-year drugs strategy that relate to drug and alcohol treatment services commissioned by councils.
	Children’s health People in vulnerable circumstances, including mental health, learning disabilities and carers, amongst other areas.
Culture, Tourism and Sport Board	Cost of living and financial pressures

	Commission on Culture and Local Government
	Meeting net zero and climate adaptation and mitigation efforts
	Understanding and addressing the disparities of access and outcomes to CTS services from an EDI perspective
	Investment in sports, physical activity, and parks
Fire Services Management Committee	<p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDI • Leadership training for members <p>Professionalism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building safety • Finance for the sector • Inspections and sector led improvement • Role of the LGA on the Fire Standards Board <p>Governance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting members in their governance role
Resources Board	<p>Council funding</p> <p>Locally raised resources</p> <p>Capital investment</p> <p>Pensions</p>
People and places	<p>Rural proofing and recognising rural needs in policy</p> <p>Levelling Up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levelling Up Locally Inquiry • Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill • Work Local Proposals – localised employment and skills system <p>Digital connectivity and inclusion</p> <p>Skills for the green economy</p> <p>Growth funding</p>
City regions	<p>Future of cities</p> <p>Levelling Up</p> <p>Urban resilience: identify the challenges and opportunities facing leaders in urban areas looking to build resilient communities. This work is initially focusing on understanding heat mapping work in Bristol.</p> <p>Green jobs</p> <p>Growth funding</p>
Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board	<p>Environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental reforms • Flooding • Air quality • Climate change <p>Economy:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High streets and town centres Organising and delivering economic growth support • Promoting green growth opportunities
	<p>Housing, planning and homelessness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning reforms • Delivering more homes • Social housing quality • Housing improvement programme • Private rented sector • Homelessness
	<p>Transport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with highway obstructions • Electric vehicle charging • Highway maintenance • Freight • Buses • Active travel • Drones • Manage demand for car use • Local Transport Plans • Car share • Road pricing • Parking

17. We would welcome the Board's reflections on where there may be overlaps with the SSCB's agreed priorities, and on any areas of joint interest.

Implications for Wales

18. The LGA Plan includes the support that we provide to the 22 Welsh councils, in membership of the LGA through the Welsh LGA. However, some central government grant-funded activities do not include support to Wales, where funding may be allocated through the Welsh government.

Financial implications

19. Delivery of the LGA Plan and Board priorities is reflected in the LGA's medium term financial strategy. Our internal business priorities include priorities to ensure the financial sustainability of the LGA.

Equalities implications

20. Our internal business priorities include the delivery of the LGA's equalities strategy and action plan.

Next steps

21. Subject to members' comments, officers will update the Board's work programme to take account of any member feedback following consideration of the LGA plan priorities.
22. Officers will approach other LGA Boards where required to discuss shared priorities or potential joint work opportunities that members identify.