

LGA Boards' Improvement Activity

Purpose

To note the improvement activity undertaken by the LGA Boards.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the improvement activity undertaken by LGA Boards and to comment as appropriate on the activities highlighted at **para 5**.

Action

Officers to respond as necessary to any comments.

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LGA Boards' Improvement Activity

Background

1. In June 2014 the Board held a workshop (involving leading members from other LGA Boards) to consider the practical implications of the LGA governance review, which had concluded that the Improvement and Innovation Board should take responsibility for all improvement activity across the LGA.
2. Members concluded that it was important to retain and build on the knowledge and experience already developed by other Boards in pursuing improvement within their remit and that there was an opportunity for the Improvement and Innovation Board to develop a more strategic or “overarching” approach.
3. Subsequently, at its last meeting on 15 July 2014, the Improvement and Innovation Board agreed a number of ways in which this “overarching” approach might be achieved in practice, whilst seeking to avoid any duplication with other Board’s activities. The Board agreed that:
 - 3.1. officers be asked to coordinate the flow of business through the Boards so that the Improvement and Innovation Board is invited to express strategic views about any significant improvement issues put before other Boards
 - 3.2. during the year the Improvement and Innovation Board receives suitably timed progress reports on the major improvement programmes, for example:
 - 3.2.1. Children’s: around the Annual Ofsted report
 - 3.2.2. Corporate/Finance: around Budget time
 - 3.2.3. Adults/Health: around the annual Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care (TEASC) report of performance in adult social care
 - 3.2.4 relevant Board Chairs be invited to attend.
 - 3.3 as far as possible, the Improvement and Innovation Board meets towards the end of each quarterly cycle of meetings so it can consider any significant issues put before other Boards and then report back to Boards at their next meeting.
4. A description of the current improvement activity of the LGA Boards is attached as an Appendix. This may change as Boards consider their priorities and work programmes for the current year.
5. In terms of consistency with, and implications for, our approach to sector-led improvement, Members may wish to note that:
 - 5.1. There continues to be a strong element of external inspection and intervention in Children’s services. Ofsted introduced a new single inspection framework for local authority child protection and looked after children services in November 2013. It brings together child protection, services for looked after children and care leavers, and local authority fostering and adoption services into a single inspection framework. All 152 local authorities in England and the associated local safeguarding

children's boards (LSCBs) will be inspected within three years. The early results of the new single inspection framework suggest that the bar has been raised.

- 5.2. To varying degrees, some of the health improvement programmes have required the LGA and Department of Health (DH) to put in place assurance mechanisms to ensure that councils and their partners are on track, and to identify where support may be helpful. This is particularly the case with the Better Care Fund (paras 19/20) but also Care Act implementation (para 10) and earlier in its development, Winterbourne View. The Board may want to consider the issues this raises in more depth at a future meeting.
- 5.3. The TEASC programme of sector-led improvement in adult social care will shortly be producing its third annual report on adult social care performance. This is an important example of the sector taking stock of its own performance and making the results publicly available.
- 5.4. There is a range of evaluation activities underway across the adults and health programmes and these will be drawn together in a summary report for publication in spring 2015. This will provide an opportunity to draw out any lessons that are of wider relevance for sector-led improvement and for our other support offers to the sector.

Next steps

6. Subject to members' views, officers will continue to update the Board on the improvement activities across all LGA Boards.

Financial implications

7. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

Appendix

LGA Boards' Improvement Activity

Children and Young People Board

1. Following the withdrawal of DfE funding in April 2013 (and subsequent consultation with local authorities), the LGA Children and Young People's Board agreed that the LGA would continue some key elements of the Children's Improvement Board led programme and continue to work in partnership with the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and Solace to support councils, and maintain a high level dialogue on improvement and relationship with regulation by Ofsted.
2. The key elements of the sector-led offer are:
 - 2.1 Children's Improvement Advisers (CIAs) have been appointed by the LGA to work with our Principal Advisers (PAs) in each of the regions along with a prime associate with strategic overview to draw together learning from each of the regions and advise on the best support to councils. Whilst strengthening our support offer, we are only in a position to fund these advisers currently for around 12 days per region. The LGA provides:
 - 2.1.1 a quarterly meeting of stakeholders at a national level (comprising representatives of the LGA, Solace and ADCS), informed and supported by intelligence and data gathered by the CIAs in conjunction with PAs, which will consider the need for further challenge and support to councils;
 - 2.1.2 a Leadership Academy for lead members for children's services and scrutiny chairs covering children's services and the role of councils in school improvement; 48 elected members attended three events during 2013-14 and three more are planned for 2014-15;
 - 2.1.3 work on leadership in partnership with Solace and the Virtual Staff College (who provide leadership support for DCSs);
 - 2.1.4 quicker and easier access to data reports on children's services.
 - 2.2 Safeguarding peer challenges, shorter "diagnostics" on safeguarding and care, and we are piloting a LSCB diagnostic.
 - 2.3 Up to five days immediate specialist children's services support for councils receiving an inadequate Ofsted judgement.
3. The LGA's Principal Advisers are the first point of contact for advice for councils and each region has a lead member, a chief executive and a DCS who leads on sector-led improvement, as well as the regional networks of lead members for children who receive regular updates from the LGA: <http://www.local.gov.uk/cyp-improvement-and-support>.

Community Wellbeing Board

Update on joint programme support to adult social care - August 2014

4. The following outlines the current improvement offer to adult social care in five key areas; TEASC, the Care Act implementation, Health and Wellbeing Board support, the Better Care Fund and Winterbourne View Joint Improvement Programme.

TEASC

5. The Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care (TEASC) programme brings together partners at a local, regional and national level to improve outcomes for citizens. It works with and for local government and its partners, to enable them to take responsibility for their own improvement, with a focus on innovation and people-centred coordinated care. It uses the commitment of councils to share learning and support; to find new ways of engaging local people; to invite challenge from peers; and to use the knowledge of what works, data and innovation to act as drivers for improvement in the quality of services locally. The programme is based on the adult social care sector's confidence that this approach is best able to improve outcomes for local people and to identify risks.
6. The Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) programme and support to councils with the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty standards are also part of the TEASC programme. MSP is a sector-led improvement initiative, which aims to transform safeguarding practice so that it is person-centred and outcomes focused, with a range of support and approaches to enable people to resolve or improve their circumstances. The MSP programme was initiated by the sector and the 2013/14 work has informed statutory guidance. 138 councils are currently registered for the MSP programme for 2014/15 though not all have agreed their level of involvement.
7. The TEASC programme began in 2011. The programme is delivered regionally and led by the TEASC Board. The TEASC Board has representation from a range of partners including the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), LGA, DH, Care Quality Commission (CQC) and others, and the Board is chaired by David Pearson the new ADASS President. Funding for TEASC comes from the DH. The new Programme director is Sarah Mitchell who began her role in August 2014.
8. There are six key priorities agreed by the Board for TEASC for 2014-15. These are:
 - a. All authorities to publish local accounts. Local Accounts are a way of ensuring that communities have an overview of the performance and development of adult social care services in their area.
 - b. Identifying and sharing best practice in sector-led improvement regional systems. Regional Chairs, LGA Principal Advisers and TEASC regional leads will work together to share best practice, to identify joint regional objectives for the year and to establish an evidence base of what works.

- c. Commitment to demonstrating outcomes. The TEASC Board will promote the production of evidence to demonstrate the impact of sector-led improvement.
- d. Building confidence amongst stakeholders. The TEASC Board will work with regions to build confidence amongst stakeholders and continue to develop a vision for excellence in adult social care.
- e. Ensure an effective and transparent system for identifying and supporting authorities where there are concerns about delivery. The President of ADASS and the Director of TEASC will continue work with Regional Chairs, Principal Advisers, DH Deputy Directors and TEASC leads to be clear about how we offer the right support challenging environment in line with the existing protocol.
- f. Clarifying the offer of support to organisations and over what issues. The TEASC Board will articulate the current offer of support in adult social care and continue to review and update it to meet the needs of the sector.

Care Act

- 9. The programme to implement the care and support reforms introduced by the Care Act is part of a wider programme of system change, including the greater integration of health and social care. The programme is led by a partnership between the LGA, DH and ADASS and is managed by a joint programme management office bringing staff from the three organisations together. A partnership board, including a number of local authority representatives has oversight of the programme.
- 10. A recent stocktake of progress by local authorities (carried out in May and June this year) showed that most councils have plans underway for implementation and that there is a high level of confidence that the plans are on track and that the reforms will be implemented effectively. However, the main challenges to implementation, and the current priorities for the support programme are:
 - a. Ensuring that the local government workforce is trained and ready for the changes;
 - b. Ensuring IT systems are ready for new processes and with sufficient capacity;
 - c. Communicating effectively about the changes to stakeholders, service users and carers;
 - d. Understanding the cost impact on local authorities in 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- 11. Key developments over the next few weeks will be: the publication of a guide to resources and tools for implementation including learning and development materials for staff, a set of communications resources for local adaptation and modelling of costs through work being jointly led by DH, LGA and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

Health and Wellbeing Board support

12. The Health and Wellbeing System Improvement Programme 2014/15 is in its second year and is now part of an integrated support offer across health and care managed by the LGA and funded by DH. For this year's sector-led support offer we have taken every opportunity to seek the input of Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) and their partners to shape the programme. Through this feedback and the independent evaluation of the programme by Shared Intelligence, we have adopted a more simplified and coordinated approach.
13. There are three main priorities reflected in the new programme:
 - a. To support HWBs' leadership;
 - b. To strengthen regional partnerships;
 - c. To provide some capacity for bespoke support.
14. We will continue to work collaboratively with a host of key partners eg NHS England, Public Health England, NHS Confederation and Healthwatch England to develop and align the offer to the sector, which is as follows:
 - a. Two-day residential leadership development opportunities for chairs and vice-chairs of HWBs – running three times and so far we have had excellent feedback;
 - b. Mentoring programme for chairs of HWBs;
 - c. Support to regional partnerships through funding for activities such as Chairs Networks and other local priorities;
 - d. Our Health and Wellbeing peer challenge programme – including peer training and sharing learning – the programme has risen from 17 last year to 22 this year;
 - e. Bespoke peer support – accessed through LGA Principal Advisers, currently 11 areas are engaged;
 - f. A revised Self-Assessment Tool and other products such as the revised Governance Guide for HWBs and social media guidelines for HWBs;
 - g. A national post to coordinate support to local Healthwatch – we have launched our offer 'On the Board' to support Local Healthwatch reps with their role on the HWB;
 - h. A monthly electronic bulletin.

Better Care

15. A Better Care Task Force was set up in June 2014 under programme director Andrew Ridley to oversee the submission and assurance of Better Care Fund (BCF) planning. The LGA has expressed its concerns to ministers and Simon Stevens at both the delay and revisions to the fund, noting that they undermine the fund's core purpose of promoting locally led integrated care, and reduce the level of resources to protect social care.
16. The LGA continues to work with NHS England and government officials to explore how the risks associated with the changes could be mitigated, and to ensure that the voice of local government is heard and understood. These include high-level representation across national government as well as contributing to the task force, which also includes officers across DH, Communities and Local Government, and NHS England.
17. The BCF programme has a number of work streams including assessment, assurance, improvement support and communications, among others. The task force has issued revised templates and supporting guidance covering the new requirements of the BCF. Local areas are required to submit their completed templates by 19 September 2014. Copies of all documentation, as well as recent communications from Andrew Ridley, government leads and ministers, can be found on the LGA website at http://www.local.gov.uk/home/-/journal_content/56/10180/4096799/ARTICLE.
18. The key policy change relates to the £1bn payment for the performance framework, with the proportion now linked to performance dependent solely on an area's scale of ambition in setting a planned level of reduction in total emergency admissions.
19. The assessment and assurance process has been strengthened, with the template requiring local areas to set out a detailed, risk-stratified vision and plan of action for implementing integrated care. The quality of the plans and the context in which they will be delivered – for example provider financial health – will be assessed by NHS England regional teams and local government peers, followed by a national assurance review to develop a consistent view of the status of local plans. Each plan will be awarded to one of four categories: approved; approved with support; approved with conditions; and not approved.
20. It is anticipated that the assurance phase will be completed by the end of October 2014.
21. Five local areas have agreed to act as 'fast tracks', and are being supported to submit their plans on 29 August. The five are: Sunderland, Nottinghamshire, Greenwich, Wiltshire and Reading. Their completed templates will be shared as exemplars, and the learning from working intensively with these areas has shaped the revisions to the template as well as to developing improvement support packages. The task force has issued a range of resources to support local areas in meeting the new requirements. This package of support includes universally available material such as online resources, webinars and FAQs, through to tailored regional workshops and seminars, and bespoke support for areas requesting it. The LGA is working with the Leadership Centre and NHS Interim Management and Support (IMAS) to develop bespoke peer-

led support around strengthening systems leadership and governance arrangements. The programme director issues a weekly bulletin covering key developments – to subscribe, email bettercarefund@dh.gsi.gov.uk – or go to the LGA's BCF page for further details of available support and programme milestones.

The Winterbourne View Joint Improvement Programme

22. In response to the abuse that took place at Winterbourne View, the Winterbourne View Joint Improvement Programme (JIP) was established to help local areas fundamentally transform health and care services for people with a learning disability and / or autism (including Asperger's Syndrome) with behaviour that challenges and /or a mental health condition or those who are at significant risk of the above.
23. Joint with NHS England, the key aim of the JIP is to support local partners to work together to develop safe, appropriate and high quality services that allow people to get the support they need to live locally in community-based settings. The focus is on prevention and sustainability, with the aim of reducing reliance on inpatient care for this group and leading to a permanent and significant reduction in the numbers of people in places like Winterbourne View.
24. The response to Winterbourne requires an ambitious programme that seeks to bring lasting change where other programmes and policy initiatives have not been successful for this group of people. There is still a lack of appropriate provision, a system that does not work in an integrated way and one that does not focus on the 'move on' of inpatients with behaviour that challenges.
25. As well as working with key national stakeholders, the programme is providing a range of 'supported improvement' options for local areas, working with 35 local partners on an 'in depth review', aimed at providing bespoke support for each area, based on local area support needs and requests. The Programme is also working to develop a spectrum of support for engagement with all remaining local areas.
26. The JIP is also collating good practice from local areas and is always keen to gain more examples of how local areas are overcoming the challenges of ensuring progress. An engagement strategy group has been set up to ensure that all aspects of the JIP are influenced by people with learning disabilities and autism, their family members and wider support networks.
27. Ten local workshops will look at identifying local challenges to develop a clear pathway between services commissioned by specialist NHS commissioners, and those commissioned by local NHS and social care commissioners. The events will lead to the development of action plans for local areas to implement, to be followed up during a second round of workshops.

Culture, Tourism and Sport (CTS) Board

28. Over the last three years, the Culture, Tourism and Sport Board has levered in over £200,000 of funding from Sport England and Arts Council England that has enabled the LGA to support over 300 portfolio holders to lead transformational change through

leadership academies, one-day leadership seminars and peer challenge on priority CTS issues for councillors. The offer builds on the key components set out in “Taking the Lead”.

29. Feedback from councillors has been excellent, with over 90% of leadership seminar attendees agreeing that the support was beneficial to them in carrying out their leadership functions more effectively in the future, and 100% of councils benefitting from peer challenge agreeing that their experience was good or very good. In recognition of the continued challenges facing local culture and sport, and the impressive innovation that councils are leading, the CTS Board has agreed to develop the programme further in 2014/15 and it is a 2014/15 LGA business plan priority. We are working with Sport England and the Arts Council with the objective of supporting around 150 portfolio holders this year, with a particular focus on new portfolio holders.
30. The Board continues to contribute towards William Sieghart’s independent review of public libraries. We have made the case for recommendations that reinforce the locally-led nature of the service and build upon the considerable sector-led innovation to date.

Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board

31. This new Board provides strategic oversight of the LGA's policy, regulatory and improvement activity in relation to the economy and environment, including transport, employment and skills, economic development and business support, housing, planning, waste and climate change, in line with LGA priorities and any specific regulatory and LGA European lobbying priorities as they relate to this activity. The new Board met for the first time on 2 October 2014 to consider its priorities and work programme.
32. The Board brings together the work of the previous Economy and Transport Board and Environment and Housing Board, whose improvement related activity is set out below.
33. **Economy and Transport Board:** The LGA’s growth offer to councils was promoted at last year’s annual conference and is described in “Investing in local economic growth’ – the LGA’s offer of support to councils 2013/14”:
http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ef1944ec-1e3c-41bb-bec6-6a3c4870a333&groupId=10180.
34. Over 70 councils took part in a learning event on Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and local growth in September 2013.
35. A number of councils that have received a corporate peer challenge have chosen to focus the flexible element on local growth, ranging from inward investment strategies; to how open services are to business; and to overall economic strategy. A selection of case studies has been drawn together to illustrate and promote this work.

36. In addition consideration is currently being given to the future of the **Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme** (HMEP) which exists to support local government on improvement and transformation of highway services. DfT are looking at the longer-term future of HMEP, one where the programme is not reliant on DfT funding alone, at some stage becoming self-sustaining. LGA is exploring the opportunity to manage the programme, keeping it within the sector.
37. **Environment and Housing Board:** There are two main programmes on planning and Climate Local. Supporting councils to drive improvement in **planning** is a priority for the Board with the aim that councils are effectively supported on priorities in planning including getting a plan in place and avoiding designation for poor performance. Experience from councils is used to inform LGA policy development and good practice. The work is undertaken through the Planning Advisory Service which is funded by DCLG: <http://www.pas.gov.uk/home>.
38. **Climate Local** is an LGA initiative to drive, inspire and support council action on climate change. Launched in June 2012, it supports councils to both reduce carbon emissions and increase resilience to a changing climate. 93 local authorities have signed up to Climate Local. Climate Local councils have committed to over 1,500 actions to tackle climate change, with added value coming from money saving and income generation for councils, energy bill savings for residents and improvements to local infrastructure. The Climate Local Network continues to expand and now has over 360 members, representing over 40% of English councils. Climate Local is resourced principally through a secondment from the Environment Agency. The current arrangements are due to conclude at the end of this financial year.
39. Over the coming year the programme will focus on facilitating peer to peer support across councils and support councils to join up activity and learning locally, raising the profile of Climate Local, outlining the business case for action on climate change and demonstrating the impact activity is having locally and supporting councillors to take action on climate change, making links and encouraging join up between public health, economic development and planning initiatives with carbon reduction and climate resilience.
40. In addition, on **Housing**, the Board has also published a good practice publication for councils on supporting housing investment:
http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/publications/-/journal_content/56/10180/5956672/PUBLICATION.

Safer and Stronger Communities Board

41. The Board has reviewed the community safety improvement offer in light of the changing pattern of demand from the sector, diminishing resources, and the contribution of other providers. Currently support is focused towards raising awareness and understanding amongst councils and community safety partnerships about new types of crime, such as modern slavery, child sexual exploitation, etc, providing opportunities for practitioners to share good practice (eg recent anti-social behaviour workshops) and advising on the implications of new legislation. We can

continue to provide a Community Safety Peer challenge on a paid for basis where there is demand.

Fire Services Management Committee

42. There are two components to the LGA and Chief Fire Officers Association improvement offer. These are:
43. **Operational Assessment and Fire Peer Challenge:** The Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) and the LGA have developed an approach to peer challenge that builds on past experience and has been tested in a range of fire and rescue services. Each fire and rescue service can have a peer challenge at a time of its choosing until March 2015. These will be delivered at no cost to the receiving fire and rescue authority. To date, 41 English fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) have had a peer challenge with the remainder scheduled for 2014/15.
44. **Fire and Rescue Leadership Academy:** The Leadership Academy is the gateway to 'top team' development for councillors in leadership positions. The main objectives of the fire and rescue leadership academy programme are to develop the nature of political leadership in FRAs, ensure elected members are kept up to date on the key strategic issues facing the sector, appreciate how different leadership styles can assist in organisational change and explore tools and techniques for working with communities, partners, and the media.

Resources Board

45. The new Resources Board will be meeting for the first time on 17 October 2014 when it will be considering its work programme and priorities. The Board is responsible for shaping and developing the Association's policies and programmes in line with LGA priorities in relation to: Local Government Finance; Welfare Reform; European Structural Investment Funding and Workforce issues. The new Board brings together the work of the Finance Panel and Workforce Board, whose improvement related activity is set out below:
46. **Finance Panel:** Finance is an enabler in practically everything local authorities do, so it is very difficult to entirely separate the improvement and policy agendas in relation to finance. Both are concerned with sustainability of income and spending levels and the effective allocation of financial resources where they are going to add most value as well as questions of transparency and governance. At its most fundamental, our work to promote the financial independence of local authorities through the 'Rewiring' agenda supports improvement by seeking to give authorities more flexibility to adopt innovative local solutions to improvement.
47. Much of the improvement work of the Finance Panel so far has been concerned with financial sustainability and resilience and this has a significant overlap with our work lobbying government. Recognising this, the Finance Team in the Finance & Policy Directorate and the Leadership and Productivity Team have been strengthened to take on more of a role supporting the improvement work of the LGA, including:

- .1 Analysis of the impact of funding cuts at national and local authority level through the Future Funding Outlook;
 - .2 Analysis of local authorities' financial positions and communication of that back to the authorities themselves via 'spidergrams' etc;
 - .3 Financial input to Corporate Peer Challenges has been enhanced to reflect a growing emphasis on the issue;
 - .4 Advice and support to Principal Advisers in the regions, including visits to authorities;
 - .5 Bespoke interventions for authorities causing particular concern.
48. There is a separate item on the Improvement and Innovation Board agenda regarding the development of a refreshed finance improvement offer.
49. **Workforce:** The Workforce team works with councils and other employers to support them to create a workforce able to respond to the major challenges within the public sector. Their support and specialist advice is designed to:
- help councils develop a flexible, engaged and productive workforce;
 - ensure that pay and reward is fair, affordable and effective;
 - identify, develop and provide tailored, innovative, interventions, products or advice that address the strategic workforce challenges facing councils in areas such as recruitment, skills, employee engagement, performance management, organisational restructuring and pay and grading structures.
50. For example:
- The LGA is working with Stanton Marris, a consultancy firm, to deliver the Decision Making Accountability (DMA) approach to organisation design in local government. The approach identifies the maximum number of management layers required for any organisation and the optimum design of accountability level. Its key aim is to protect front line services and ensure that these are supported by an efficient and accountable management structure. The use of DMA techniques has been found to create typical financial savings of between 5 - 20 per cent of management costs.
 - The workforce team is working jointly with the Children and Young People Team on a programme and campaign focusing on social work careers. Endemic shortages of experienced social workers have been experienced for some time; the challenges of a career in social work have been brought into focus by events in Rotherham. Key ideas for the retention of experienced staff will be presented through case studies and podcasts; funding for a social work employer development scheme that cements the national Employer Standards is being sought through the innovation fund and Government will be asked to fund further professional development ideas to keep staff at the front line.
 - The team also continues to support a number of local authorities to resolve complex employee relations cases relating to senior managers:
<http://www.local.gov.uk/workforce>.

City Regions Board

51. This new Board was established in May 2014 and its first meeting in April established lobbying and policy priorities to support developing city regions in England. Members have yet to give detailed consideration to any improvement related activity in this field.

People and Places Board

52. This new Board was established in February 2014 and held its first meeting in April, at which it discussed its lobbying and policy priorities to support the non-metropolitan areas of England. The Board's priorities are:

- housing
- planning and infrastructure
- employment, skills and economic growth
- public service transformation.

53. Lead officers from each area will be in touch with improvement colleagues in the near future to discuss any improvement and support needs arising from the Board's work programme.