

13 October 2014

New Highlighting Leadership Programme - progress update

Purpose

For information.

Summary

This paper is a progress update for the Board on the new Highlighting Leadership Programme, which was officially launched at the LGA Annual Conference in July 2014.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Action

Officers to action as agreed by Members.

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New Highlighting Leadership Programme - progress update

Background

1. In September 2013, the Board agreed that the LGA's leadership offer should be refreshed to ensure a focus on political leadership; better targeting with clear, differentiated audiences; a more cohesive offer; with new content and formats as well as the flexibility to respond to changing local government agendas.
2. The refreshed and new look 'Highlighting Leadership' offer was launched at the LGA's Annual Conference and a number of its suite of programmes are now up and running. This report is to update Members on progress to date on delivering Highlighting Leadership.

National Graduate Development Programme (ngdp)

3. The ngdp continues to thrive as a vibrant and growing initiative. Ninety graduates remain from last year's intake (Cohort 15), with five having left for permanent positions - almost all within their council. This Cohort has recently concluded the second of four learning and development modules with positive feedback from the Cohort and the learning and development team. Feedback from councils remains consistently high.
4. After a record level of interest from councils and the assessment of over 2,000 applications from graduates, Cohort 16 of the ngdp has been selected and is beginning work this autumn. This Cohort has 110 national management trainees (NMTs) who have been placed in 53 councils in England and Wales. Ninety one of these NMTs have been recruited through the ngdp's national recruitment programme. The rest were recruited through local campaigns or by councils from within their existing employees (this option is known as 'grow your own' recruitment). All three methods assessed candidates on a national standard, using ngdp resources and team support. The table below provides a breakdown of how many NMTs will be placed in each region, and also how they were recruited:

National Graduate Development Programme: Cohort 16					
Region	Number of councils	Number of national NMTs	Number of locally recruited NMTs	Number of 'grow your own' NMTs	Total number of NMTs
North West	4	2	12	0	14
North East	1	1	0	0	1
South West	4	6	0	0	6
South East	10	18	0	1	19
London	16	36	3	1	40
Yorkshire and Humber	2	3	0	0	3
East of England	7	11	0	0	11
West	5	9	0	1	10

Midlands					
East Midlands	3	5	0	0	5
Wales	1	0	0	1	1
Total number	53	91	15	4	110

- The ngdp begins recruiting for Cohort 17 at the end of September 2014. Changes to the assessment process have been introduced to streamline the process and ensure that it remains competitive yet accessible to all candidates. The ngdp is in a strong position in the graduate market, having been ranked 53rd in the Times Top 100 Graduate Employers (up from 65th last year) and ranking 5th in the sector and 24th overall in the Guardian UK 300 Most Popular Graduate Employers.
- Our website and publicity materials have been refreshed for our next round of recruitment, and we have teamed up with four other public sector Times Top 100 employers - the Civil Service Fast Stream, TeachFirst, Frontline and the NHS Leadership Academy - to form a Public Sector Panel that will visit the top universities to attract the brightest graduates into a career in the public sector, and to local government. We are also hosting two events – in London and in Birmingham – in conjunction with local councils to focus on recruiting graduates from diverse backgrounds so that we are able to provide councils with high quality candidates that reflect the communities that they serve.

Leading edge – programme for leaders and chief executives

- Building on the success of the Leadership for Improvement workshops in 2013/14, we are again working with the District Councils' Network to host another two workshops in this financial year. These 24 hour events for leaders and chief executives from district councils provide a unique opportunity for them to focus on common and individual leadership challenges and to look at developing new strategies for improvement and transformation. They will take place in late October 2014 and February 2015, and all 24 places at the February event have already been booked.

Leadership Academy, Leadership Essentials and Focus on Leadership Programmes

- To date, we have 407 elected members from 184 authorities registered for these cross party leadership development programmes for elected members, which is a significant increase on the numbers we had booked at this stage last year.
- So far this year, 80 elected members have registered to attend **The Leadership Academy**, our flagship 3 module programme for councillors holding leadership positions at their authority.
- Leadership Essentials** are the 'focused programmes' covering a range of portfolio areas and themes including children's services, adults and social care, health, planning, digital leadership and scrutiny; and two new ones we have introduced this year cover commissioning and finance. To date, 253 members have registered to attend the various Leadership Essentials programmes.

11. Our **Focus on Leadership** programmes, which are designed to provide councillors with a bridge to move from their existing roles to more senior positions at their authority include a Leadership Development Summer School and the Young Councillors Weekender. So far 74 members have attended or are registered to attend these programmes.

Next Generation

12. The Next Generation programme is in its ninth year for the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat Groups. This year, for the first time, we will also be running a Next Generation programme for councillors from the Independent Group. The 2014/15 cohorts begin in October/November and as we finalise the cohorts, numbers remain similar to last year, at around 15 to 20 members taking part per programme. Each of these three module programmes is unique and built around the particular political group's priorities, but all cover aspects of leadership development, personal development and political career development. Each cohort will hear from a range of experienced elected members, local and central government policy experts, high profile MPs, leading academics and leadership development facilitators.

Community Leadership

13. Following research and a scoping exercise during the spring of 2014, and as a part of the revised Highlighting Leadership offer, we shall be launching the first of our e-learning modules for elected members in October 2014. The first (on being an Effective Ward Councillor) and subsequent two modules will focus on the core skills needed by newly elected and relatively inexperienced members with more topic based modules being planned for next financial year. The content for these modules is principally drawn from the existing suite of councillor workbooks and it is planned to have three modules available for use by the end of March 2015. The modules will be accessed via the LGA website, which will direct users to a portal run by Learning Nexus who also currently provide the LGA employee e-learning site.
14. In addition to the self-directed learning above, we are also rolling out a programme of 'in house' training modules to councils who have requested specific training for their members on topics such as chairing skills, member-officer relationships, community leadership and social media. So far 10 councils have received or are booked to receive one or more of our in-house training modules.

Be a Councillor

15. We continue to work with our political group offices to raise-awareness of and deliver events and activities for the Be a Councillor campaign, which aims to promote the role of a councillor and encourage new talent to stand for election. We are currently working on refreshing our booklets and the Be a Councillor website to ensure we can continue to provide inspiring and informative materials for aspiring politicians, political parties, and councils promoting democracy and participation. We will also be calling for best practice from parties and councils so that we can share ideas, resources and learning.
16. Over the last year or so, the Be a Councillor programme has established a new focus on encouraging more disabled people to consider becoming a councillor. This has been

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possible through a pilot piece of work funded by the Government Equalities Office within the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. We are working with each political group to run a programme where members mentor aspiring politicians with disabilities, who are also able to apply for funding from the Government's Access to Elected Office.