

## Local Government White Paper

### Purpose of Report

For direction.

### Summary

This report outlines the work within the LGA to develop a Local Government White Paper that was announced as an LGA priority at its annual conference, and a process for providing the Board's input to it.

**LGA Plan Theme:** Championing climate change and local environments

### Recommendation(s)

**That the Board members:**

- a) **Note the work in the LGA for developing a Local Government White Paper; and**
- b) **Agree the process outlined in paragraph 13 for developing the Board's contribution to the White Paper, with proposals being brought back to the Board at its November meeting.**

### Contact details

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# Local Government White Paper

## Background

1. At the LGA Conference in July, our publication “Make It Local” was launched. The report sets out a range of clear offers from local government in the areas that pollsters are reporting as the biggest issues of concern for the public (and which will form the background to manifesto writing).
2. From this publication, the LGA has a clear set of proposals which shows that the partnership between local and central government is key to delivery and that stronger local democracy leads to a better and more efficient public sector:
  - 2.1 Local climate action could hit net zero by 2050 while saving taxpayers around £140 billion when compared to national approaches and returning an additional £400 billion in wider co-benefits.
  - 2.2 A cost-benefit analysis shows a place-based, Work Local approach has the potential to increase by 15 per cent the number of people improving their skills or finding work at lower cost, just by using a limited amount of existing investment more effectively.
  - 2.3 Every £1 invested in a new social home generates £2.84 in the wider economy with every new social home generating a saving of £780 a year in housing benefit.
  - 2.4 £1 spent on alcohol treatment services locally provides a return of £3, with local addiction support services saving our overstretched health and social care system a staggering £2 billion every year.
3. The July publication was aimed at those developing manifestos for the next election. The LGA will continue this work with all our political groups. Looking beyond manifesto development, manifestos’ headline ideas will be developed into detailed delivery plans by numerous Whitehall departments.
4. The LGA is in a position where it can look to influence the detailed delivery plans of both the first year and the longer-term programme of a new/returning government. It is in this context that the LGA announced the development of a White Paper on Local Government.

## Proposal

5. At its meeting earlier in the month the Executive Advisory Board (EAB) considered how the White Paper is developed. It agreed the aim of the White Paper should be to *demonstrate how stronger and more empowered local government could deliver the public’s priorities more effectively and strengthen the value that the public place on the UK’s democratic structures.*
6. The EAB also agreed that each of the LGA’s boards use their policy work to make specific offers from the sector to a new/returning minister in their policy area. In particular the EAB wants boards to consider and make proposals on:

- 6.1. How public services should be reformed in their policy areas to deliver the ambitions set out in paragraph 5; and
- 6.2. How local government, and central government should change to deliver the public's priorities in their policy areas.
7. This would then inform a narrative for each relevant Whitehall department and new/returning Secretary of State, with the narrative covering:
  - 7.1. Where the department relies on local government to deliver priorities;
  - 7.2. How stronger and empowered local government would provide better value for money; and
  - 7.3. A set of departmental options for the Kings Speech and the first year's delivery plan.
8. The Safer and Stronger Communities Board will therefore need to develop proposals setting out how a stronger and more empowered local government can deliver more effectively than central government on the public's priorities around reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, improving community safety, and strengthening consumer protection as well as emergency planning. In order to do this the Board will be able to draw on the priorities for the Board outlined in the relevant paper in the agenda, and the work programme that will flow from that. However, if members have some early views on what the Board might be putting forward at this stage that would be helpful as the Board's input is developed.
9. The timetable for the development of the White Paper is for views to be sought from the sector and stakeholders over the autumn through a variety of mechanisms, with these being collated at the start of the new year. It is therefore suggested that officers work up some proposals from the Board taking into account members' views which are then discussed with the Board's Lead Members. Following on from that a more detailed set of proposals are brought back to the Board for discussion at its meeting in November.

## Implications for Wales

10. The LGA will work closely with WLGA to share our approach and approved findings. One area of discussion is likely to be the differing model of local/central partnership which has developed in Wales since devolution. Similarly, there is much learning from the models in Northern Ireland and Scotland, and how they are perceived at the local level. There may be elements of the different models for reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, improving community safety and strengthening regulatory services and emergency planning in the devolved administrations that the Safer and Stronger Communities Board will want to consider as it develops proposals for strengthening community safety in England.

## **Financial Implications**

11. There are no direct financial implications arising from this work for the Board. Activity suggested in the options developed by each Board should concentrate on what could be delivered by reprioritising existing departmental budgets.

## **Equalities implications**

12. As the Board develops its proposals it will want to consider their impact on equality, diversity and inclusion, and how any proposals it puts forward in relation to community safety and regulatory services may also enhance equality, diversity and inclusion.

## **Next steps**

13. Taking account of any views and comments raised by members officers will develop proposals to be taken initially to the Board's Lead members and then brought back to the Board for consideration at its November meeting.