

## 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:** Putting people first

### 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.**

### 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. The “Make it local” children and young people chapter is focussed on improving life chances for all children, calling on Government to ensure all children and young people fulfil their potential and lead fulfilling lives by enabling councils to deliver joined up local support. The specific asks are as follows:
  - 2.1 Give councils the powers and funding to effectively lead local SEND systems, including powers to hold all mainstream schools to account for their work to increase levels of inclusion.
  - 2.2 Fully trial Work Local, co-design an employment and skills devolution framework, and work with local government to plan provision.
  - 2.3 Make a cross-Whitehall commitment to children – ensuring that every department plays its part in creating good childhoods.
  - 2.4 Prioritise children’s health and mental health through investing in early intervention and prevention.
  - 2.5 Ensure councils have the skills, resources and tools available to effectively support providers and partners to deliver high quality early years education and childcare.
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 Children and Young People 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 improving life chances for all children. 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 the Board agrees to the creation of a Member-led task and finish group to lead on this work.

## **Implications for Wales**

10. The LGA will work closely with WLGA on any issues that will impact on both administrations.

## **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.

## **Next steps**

13. Taking account of any views and comments raised by members, the Board agrees that Office Holders should oversee the development of the children and young people-focussed proposals for inclusion in the White paper.