

New Sustainability Support Programme

Update on the Improvement and Development Agency's bid to Crown Commercial Service for funding on sustainability.

Purpose of Report

For information.

Is this report confidential? No

Summary

This report updates the board on the progress of the LGA bid to Crown Commercial Service for funding on Sustainability.

LGA Plan Theme: Other service specific support

Recommendation(s)

That the Board notes the report and agrees any follow-up action.

Contact details:

Contact officer: Susan Attard

Position: Head of Productivity

Phone no: 07825 530 528

Email: susan.attard@local.gov.uk

New Sustainability Support Programme

Background

1. The Improvement and Innovation Board (IIB) will be aware that the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) decided not to continue with funding for a number of programmes in the grant determination letter including the LGA Climate Change Programme.
2. In light of this and following disappointment expressed by both members and officers, alongside a clear need for support, the IIB and LGA Senior Management Team agreed that we should seek alternative sources of funding for the Climate Change Programme.

Programme Update

3. The Climate Change Programme was subject to bid for funding from the Crown Commercial Service (CCS), an executive agency and trading fund of the Cabinet Office of the UK Government. CCS provide procurement frameworks that are open to the wider public sector to use. Suppliers on the frameworks return a small administration fee back to CCS and CCS have permission to return any surplus back to the public sector by way of funding projects and training.
4. As DLUHC decided not to fund the LGA to deliver climate change work, it was agreed that the programme should bid for funding under a new name of “Sustainability” to cover a wider range of issues.
5. The CCS Products and Services Sub-Committee approved the bid with a total value of £715,246 for two years.
6. The programme will help councils through 3 key pillars:
 - 6.1 **Building capability** – learning, skills, and guidance to help councils deliver on their climate and adaptation targets, through masterclasses and workshops that will highlight key sustainability themes and upskill participants. There will be specific masterclasses designed for Councillors.
 - 6.2 **Tools** - such as the greenhouse gas accounting tool and waste emissions calculator which will help councils baseline their data and assist with internal emissions reporting. The programme will be funding the maintenance of these tools with the hope of developing updates as well.
 - 6.3 **Networks** – an online sustainability hub, a monthly sustainability bulletin and an officer communities of practice network.
7. The work will be broken down within these pillars as follows:

7.1 Building Capability

- 7.1.1 Deliver Sustainability Masterclasses which will provide participants with a carbon literacy accreditation, enabling them to make informed decisions about carbon reduction.
- 7.1.2 Produce Sustainability Strategic Briefings which will provide the context, opportunities and wider benefits to lead a local pathway to sustainability. Briefing topics include housing retrofit and decarbonising transport.
- 7.1.3 Deliver Action Learning Sets which provide the opportunity for a group of councils to meet with a specific intention of solving a council's own sustainability challenge. Officers will come away with a set of actions, that will help to solve or understand the issues at hand.
- 7.1.4 Organise and execute sustainability virtual events to provide councils with the opportunity to hear from peers and experts to adopt scalable learning, processes, practice and tools. Topics will include adaptation and green finance.
- 7.1.5 Deliver Sustainability Roundtables which will offer an opportunity for peers to share common challenges, learnings and benefits to implement new techniques and practices into their own sustainability work. Topics will include engaging the community on sustainability and using renewable energy.
- 7.1.6 Produce Sustainability Case Studies to share good practice from the sector.

7.2 Tools

- 7.2.1 Update and maintain The Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool Suite, which provides a data driven and consistent approach for councils to calculate their reductions in carbon emissions year on year. The tools help councils to prioritise actions for their own sustainability activity.
- 7.2.2 Distribute the Sustainability Survey to ascertain ongoing support needs and trends amongst the local government sector so that the LGA and CCS can best respond.

7.3 Networks

- 7.3.1 Release a Sustainability Bulletin which will round up all of the latest support and news for councils.
- 7.3.2 Arrange a quarterly Sustainability Action Network meeting to support councils in sustainability related roles to discuss emerging issues and trends affecting councils and hear from each other and guests on new policies, programmes and practices.
- 7.3.3 Update and maintain the Sustainability Web Hub which will host a bank of resources available to councils online.

Programme Launch and Delivery

- 8. Our [press release](#) featuring comments from the Board Chairman, Cllr Abi Brown, about the launch of the programme was published on 2 October 2023
- 9. We are going to be launching the new Sustainability Hub in November where all information, resources and case studies from the programme will be held. The Climate Change Hub will become a resource page on the new webpage.
- 10. We will also be renaming the current Climate Change Bulletin to the Sustainability Bulletin to retain the current subscribers and make them aware of the new programme.
- 11. LGA members will be able to access the programme by signing up to the relevant offers through the web hub and Sustainability bulletin.
- 12. The first offers to be available will be the virtual events and roundtables. Procurement is currently underway for the Masterclasses delivery and Action Learning Sets which will be delivered in early 2024.

Implications for Wales

- 13. The CCS contract is to support English authorities. The LGA will look to make resources available to the WLGA and Welsh authorities where possible.
- 14. We will continue to share and learn from the Welsh LGA, Northern Ireland LGA, the Scottish Improvement Service, and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities. We have a regular meeting set up between all five organisations to collaborate where possible.
- 15. We will also learn from their member councils working on sustainability projects.

Financial Implications

- 16. The contract is for the period October 2023 to the end of September 2025.

Equalities implications

17. All procurement activity for the programme will consider equalities and inclusion, i.e., implementing word limits or not putting all evaluation criteria weighting on experience.
18. Meetings and events will be held virtually, where possible, to allow as many participants as possible to attend.
19. All facilitated sessions will make allowances for people with accessibility requirements.

Next steps

20. That officers progress any requires actions as requested by the Board.
21. Updates on the CCS funded work will be provided to the IIB as appropriate.