Chief Executive’s Monthly Report – April 2016

**Purpose**

For discussion and direction.

**Summary**

The LGA business plan for 2015/16 centres on five priorities:

* Funding for local government
* Devolution
* Promoting Health and Wellbeing
* Economic growth, jobs and housing
* Sector-led improvement

The six-weekly Chief Executive’s report sets out the LGA’s main achievements against those priorities. In part two, the report summarises the LGA’s media outreach and provides an update of membership related activity.

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| **Recommendation**That the Leadership Board notes the Chief Executive’s report for April 2016.**Action**As directed by Members. |

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**Chief Executive’s Monthly Report – April 2016**

**Part 1 – Achievements against our five priorities**

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| **Priority 1 – Funding for Local Government*** 1. **Budget 2016** - provided an [on-the-day briefing](http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/5533246/On%2Bthe%2BDay%2BBriefing%2B-%2BBudget%2B2016%2B-%2B16.03.2016.pdf/00af6479-0f9b-4a91-9bf4-33a6c31ef963) focussing on announcements with an impact on local government, including extensions of small business rate relief, the Apprenticeship Levy and other issues.

 * 1. **NHS Trusts rates relief** - supported councils by seeking legal advice regarding applications for charitable business rate relief by NHS Trusts.
	2. **New Homes Bonus (NHB)** - submitted a response to the Government’s consultation on **r**eforming the NHB. The LGA emphasised that there is a question of how the bonus gets funded in an era of 100 per cent business rates retention which the consultation does not touch on.

 * 1. **Business rate retention** - discussed joint working on 100 per cent business rates retention with Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) officials and LGA members and commented on early discussion documents.
	2. **Local Government Pensions** - obtained clarification from the Government that the exit payment cap for public sector employers will not come into effect until 1 October 2016 at the earliest.
	3. **Sport funding** - responded to consultation on Sport England’s new strategy by making the case for re-balancing national sport and physical activity funding away from national bodies and towards councils and partners to help increase activity rates and maximise the health benefits.

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| **Priority 2 – Devolution*** 1. **Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 -** published the LGA’s [Get in on the Act](http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/7632544/L16-23%2BGet%2Bin%2Bon%2Bthe%2BAct%2B-%2BCities%2Band%2BLocal%2BGovernment%2BDevolution%2BAct%2B2016/64b08cf2-3c22-447e-856b-c5e75440f139) report, which summarises the main issues on which the LGA campaigned.
	2. **Better devolution inquiry -** supported the launch of the final report of the APPG on Reform, Decentralisation and Devolution’s Inquiry. The LGA is providing secretarial support to this inquiry, which is chaired by our President Lord Kerslake.
	3. **Learning workshop** - Hosted a workshop with devolution officers and New Economy to develop our joint work on learning from the first phase of devolution deals.
	4. **DevoNext hub** - produced new content, including a new video explaining devolution in 60 seconds, which can be found [here](http://www.local.gov.uk/devolution).
	5. **Health and care devolution** - hosted two events on this topic, one for lead officers and one for voluntary and community sector organisations.
	6. **Devo support** - continued to provide direct support and advice to councils across the country as they continue to develop their devolution proposals ahead of the Budget.
	7. **Policing and Crime Bill** - tabled amendments to the provisions on changes to fire governance and met the Home Secretary to highlight fire and rescue authorities’ concerns about the legislation.
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| **Priority 3 – Promoting Health and Wellbeing*** 1. **LGA Annual Culture, Tourism and Sport Conference** - over 140 councillors and senior officers attended this year in Leicester. Keynote speakers included Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, Chair of ukactive; Viscountess Penelope Cobham, Chairman VisitEngland; Jennie Price, Chief Executive Sport England; Sir Laurie Magnus, Chairman Historic England; and Stella Duffy, Co-Director of Fun Palaces.
	2. **Third Fire/Health summit** - attended by representatives from the LGA, the Chief Fire Officers Association, Age UK, Public health England and NHS England. Delegates acknowledged the good progress made so far and agreed to continue work to consolidate fire/health collaboration.
	3. **LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition** – attended by approximately 280 delegates from across the fire and rescue services and Mike Penning MP, the Fire Minister, who discussed the Government’s priorities for the next five years. There were also sessions on flooding, the Policing and Crime Bill, devolution and collaboration.
	4. **Beyond Fighting Fires 2** – [this report](http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/7632544/L16-42%2BFire%2Bcase%2Bstudies_v03.pdf/2f24cf0a-f7f5-4aa6-8ee6-31f64faf44ee), published to coincide with the LGA Annual Fire Conference, . highlights where the fire and rescue service is leading the way in transforming the services that it delivers to its communities, through new partnerships and finding more effective ways of working.
	5. **Firefighter Fitness Best Practice Guide –** worked together with the Home Office and fire service employer and employee representatives to launch [this guide](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/fire-and-rescue-resources/-/journal_content/56/10180/7731172/ARTICLE) under the auspices of the National Joint Council for Fire.
	6. **Licensing Conference** - attended by over 80 delegates and Karen Bradley MP, Minister for Preventing Abuse, who announced a new Modern Crime Prevention Strategy. The strategy will include proposals that the LGA has called for around the late-night levy and strengthening cumulative impact policies.
	7. **Licensing and public health** - conducted a licensing peer review for Warrington Council, looking at their integration of public health into the licensing process.
	8. **Care and Health Improvement Programme -**  selected 10 councils to participate in the programme, which aims to help councils and partners to develop innovative, efficient and sustainable approaches in care and health services: Borough of Poole, Bristol City Council, City of York Council, London Borough of Waltham Forest, Newcastle City Council, Norfolk County Council, Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Somerset County Council and a joint bid from Swindon and Wiltshire Councils.
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| **Priority 4 – Economic Growth, Jobs and Housing*** 1. **Housing and Planning Bill -** the LGA continues to work with peers and partners to support the drafting and tabling of amendments that mitigate the unintended consequences of the proposal on councils. Some key work includes:
		+ a focus on key issues for councils and their tenants, covered in the [Bill briefing](http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/11607/160123%2BLGA%2BBriefing%2B-%2BHousing%2Band%2BPlanning%2BBill%2B-%2BLords%2BSecond%2BReading/08faefdb-c60b-4bb4-b744-d9c2d63049e1);
		+ gaining significant national coverage for analysis of the impact of reforms on the supply of [council homes](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/jan/29/housing-bill-80000-council-houses-local-government-association), affordability of [starter homes](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/2e2229e2-d49c-11e5-829b-8564e7528e54.html#axzz42JmL8Qxh), ‘high income’ [council tenants](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/feb/06/pay-stay-rules-families-council-homes-private-sector-rent), and the welfare bill;
		+ gaining significant national coverage for research highlighting the number of [unimplemented planning permissions](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-35245313).
	2. **Housing Commission -** the Housing Board Lead Members are each hosting a session on each of the four themes of the [Housing Commission](http://www.local.gov.uk/housing/-/journal_content/56/10180/7570944?_56_INSTANCE_0000_templateId=ARTICLE). Sessions have already been held on house-building, and on place-making and growth. Sessions on employment and housing, and housing an ageing population will be hosted in April 2016.
	3. **Housing Commission research** - in the lead up to publishing a report at the LGA Annual Conference, the Housing Commission is funding a range of research (for instance around the skills and employment prospects of those in need of affordable housing) and peer improvement work (for instance in supporting councils to increase their housebuilding outside the Housing Revenue Account) to help support its case.
	4. **Buses Bill –** the LGA anticipates that the Bill will strengthen statutory bus partnerships, require bus operators to make data on fares more accessible, reform the licensing system and make smart ticketing easier to implement – all of which the LGA has previously called for.
	5. **Superfast Broadband Conference** - held jointly with Government, the conference heard from a range of digital infrastructure providers, Government officials and councillors on the different solutions councils could utilise to reach the five percent of residents without Superfast Broadband.
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| **Priority 5 - Sector-led Improvement** * 1. **Establishing a sector-led body for procuring future audit contracts -** we have asked councils to express an interest in opting-in to a sector-led body to procure future audit contracts on behalf of the sector by 30 April 2016. LGA analysis indicates that collective procurement would be far cheaper for councils.
	2. **Impacts of the National Procurement Strategy (NPS) one year on -** in July 2015, all councils in England were invited to complete an online survey to help gain a better understanding of the NPS’s impacts. [The final LGA report](http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/6281932/6282225/NPS%2BSurvey%2BReport%2BFINAL.pdf/6780de29-aee7-4d4d-a50f-489bf9eeb9e7) demonstrates high levels of awareness about the strategy and take up of its recommendations.
	3. **Leadership and Localism Political Leadership Programmes -** 2015/16 has been a record-breaking year with 806 delegates (including 767 councillors) from 275 authorities attending LGA political leadership programmes. This marks a 33 per cent increase on last year and feedback for all programmes has been consistently positive.
	4. **National Graduate Development Programme -** a record 1778 graduates have applied this year. 47 councils have participated this year, creating 108 places. Cornwall, Luton, West Sussex, Cheltenham, Cotswold and Forest of Dean councils have all signed up for the first time.
	5. **LGA/Sport England Leadership Essentials Programme** - supported nine portfolio holders to lead transformation of sport and leisure services.
	6. **Refresh of our shared services map -** received 288 responses to our request for entries to our updated 2016 Shared Services Map.
	7. **One Public Estate -** all council Chief Executives have been invited to a session on 11 April to help shape the development of new national policy to enable local and central government to work together more effectively on strategic asset management.
	8. **Police and Crime Panel training** - held a training event for Police and Crime Panels and launched an e-learning tool for panel members.
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**Part 2 – Media outreach and membership related activity**

**Media and Public Affairs**

1. The LGA was mentioned **over 230 times** in the Houses of Parliament.
2. The LGA submitted evidence to **11 parliamentary inquiries** including written evidence to the inquiry into children’s social work and oral evidence on business rates and public health.
3. The LGA circulated formal written briefings to MPs and Peers for **23 parliamentary debates**. We briefed on, and suggested amendments to, a range of primary legislation including the Housing and Planning Bill, Welfare Reform and Work Bill and Enterprise Bill.

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| **Media Source** | **Issue**  |
| **Guardian Online, BBC Radio 4 Westminster Hour** | The LGA’s release warning that planned council tax rises will not be enough to pay for rising social care costs. |
| **BBC Online** | The LGA’s lines on how transitional support is needed for councils over the next two years. |
| **Telegraph Online** | The LGA’swarnings about the impact of funding reductions on childcare provision over the next few years. |
| **BBC Online** | TheLGA’s calls for the concessionary bus fares scheme to be fully funded. |
| **Mail Online** | Fire Services Committee Chairman Cllr Jeremy Hilton featured alongside the LGA’s response to the Public Accounts Committee’s call for funding for fire services to be protected. |
| **Guardian** | The LGA’s response to an application by NHS trusts to a number of councils for mandatory business rate relief. |
| **FT** | The LGA’s evidence to a recent Parliamentary inquiry into Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) loans. |
| **Guardian** | Asylum, Refugee and Migration Task Group Chairman Cllr David Simmonds’ featured alongside the LGA’s call for extra funding for councils accepting more unaccompanied child refugees. |
| **Guardian Online** | Children and Young People Board Vice-Chair Cllr Richard Watts quoted in an opinion piece on analysis by a coalition of charities on early intervention funding. |
| **BBC Online** | Children and Young People Board Chairman Cllr Roy Perry featured alongside the LGA’s response to the Government’s consultation on the schools funding formula. |
| **Observer, Guardian, BBC Online, ITV Online, Independent Online, Mail Online, FT Online, i paper, Times, Mirror, Metro,** **Sun**, **BBC News, Sky News, BBC Andrew Marr Show, BBC Radio 5 Live,** **LBC** | The LGA’s analysis of the impact of the Government’s Pay to Stay policy, which shows that 60,000 social housing tenants will be unable to afford market rents or to buy their own home under the Pay to Stay policy |
| **BBC Online**, **Guardian Online** | The LGA’s response to the Communities and Local Government Committee’s report on Housing Associations and Right to Buy. |
| **Independent** | Housing spokesman Cllr Peter Box’s comments featured in the **i**n response to government figures showing a 30 per cent increase in the number of rough sleepers in England between 2014 and 2015. |
| **Independent,** **i paper**, **Sun**, **Guardian Online,** **Mail Online** | The LGA’s research showing a record half a million homes in England now have planning permission granted but have yet to be built. |
| **Mirror, Independent, FT, Guardian Online, Mail Online, ITV Online and Metro Online. Guardian Online** | The LGA’s research showing how discounted starter home prices could be out of reach for the majority of families in need of an affordable home in England. |
| **Sunday People, Mirror Online**. | The LGA’s research showing that discounted starter home prices could be out of reach for all people in need of affordable housing in 220 council areas. |
| **BBC News, Mail Online**  | Deputy Chairman Cllr Peter Fleming was interviewed on channel about the LGA’s response to Public Health England’s report on increased life expectancy. Community Wellbeing spokesperson Cllr Izzi Seccombe also featured in a written piece about the issue. |
| **Mail Online**  | The LGA’s call for drink manufacturers to put calorie information on beer and wine bottles. |
| **Mail**, **Mirror**, **Times**, **Express Online** and **Telegraph Online, BBC Radio 5 Live, TalkSport** | The LGA’s call for soft drink companies to spell out sugar content in teaspoons on their product labels. |
| **Express, Mirror Online** | Community Wellbeing spokesperson Cllr Izzi Seccombe’s comments urging householders to look out for vulnerable and elderly friends and neighbours during the cold weather. |
| **New Day,** **Mirror Online**, **Sunday Mirror,** **Sunday People** | Fire Services spokesman Cllr Jeremy Hilton’s comments regarding the LGA’s call for e-cigarettes manufacturers to do more to warn of their dangers, after cases of e-cigarettes exploding and causing injury. |
| **Times** | The LGA’s response to NHS plans to create ten ‘healthy new towns’ across the country. |
| **Express Online** | Community Wellbeing spokesperson Cllr Izzi Seccombe featured on the LGA’s warnings about how how proposed community pharmacy budget reductions could cut off a vital lifeline for elderly and vulnerable people. |
| **Mail Online** | Community Wellbeing spokesperson Cllr Izzi Seccombe commented on an Age UK warning that hundreds of thousands of older people in Britain are facing unmet care needs and being chronically lonely. |
| **BBC News,** **BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 4** | The LGA’s statement in response to the Prime Minister’s 2020 Dementia Challenge. |
| **Independent**, **i paper, Mail**, **Mirror** | Safer and Stronger Communities Board Chairman Cllr Simon Blackburn featured alongside the LGA’s warnings of dangerous diet pills flooding the market. |
| **ITV News, LBC, Times Online**, **Mail Online**, **ITV Online, Star** | The LGA’s call for pub, restaurant and cinema chains to display calorie counts in order to help tackle the obesity crisis. |
| **Star**, **Guardian Online, TalkSport**. | Environment spokesman Cllr Peter Box featured alongside the LGA’s release about how almost 30,000 tonnes of damaged household goods have had to be dumped in landfill following devastating winter floods  |
| **Guardian Online** | LGA workforce spokesman Cllr Clarence Barrett featured on how the LGA is providing workshops for councils to help them with recruitment and retention of staff. |
| **BBC Radio 5 Live, LBC, BBC News, Sky News**, **BBC One O’clock News,** **BBC Radio 4’s Today**, **BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC Radio 2, BBC Radio 3, TalkSport, Good Morning Britain,** **BBC Online**, **FT**, **Express**, **Times**, **Independent**, **Mirror, Mail Online, i paper** | Resources Portfolio member Cllr Sharon Taylor was interviewed live on BBC Radio 5 Live and LBC about the LGA’s warning that council tax rises will not be enough to meet rising demand and paying staff the new minimum wage, which was also reported widely. |
| **Guardian** | The LGA’s warning that councils may not be able to deliver sufficient school places in future because their power to open new schools has been removed. |
| **LBC, Sky News, BBC Radio 5 Live, Times, Telegraph Online, Guardian Online, Mail Online ITV Online** | Children and Young People Board Vice Chair Cllr Richard Watts and Deputy Chairman Cllr David Simmonds were both interviewed live on LBC about the LGA’s call for councils to be handed the ability to open new secondary schools, or force academies to expand. The LGA’s lines were also reported more widely. |
| **Guardian** | Improvement and Innovation Board Chairman Cllr David Simmonds’ comments about how some councils are taking some services which were previously outsourced back in-house |
| **Mail Online** | The LGA’s warnings about how some council areas risk falling short of the number of secondary school places needed. |
| **Telegraph**, **Sun** | The LGA’s response to a report by insurer Churchill which found that council spending on speed bumps has risen by 50 per cent in a year, due to an increase in 20mph zones |
| **BBC** **Radio 4, Channel 5 News** | The LGA’s call for a more common-sense approach to term-time holidays. |
| **Guardian Online** | Transport spokesman Cllr Peter Box featured with the LGA’s lines about how councils are managing local bus services. |
| **FT, BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC Radio 4** | The LGA’s response to government plans to ban councils from boycotting investments in “unethical companies” |
| **Mail**, **ITV Online** | The LGA’s release warning against government proposals to relax planning rules for mobile phone masts. |
| **BBC Radio 4’s Today programme, Guardian Online, Independent, i paper** | Safer and Stronger Communities Board Chairman Cllr Simon Blackburn interviewed on BBC Radio 4’s Today programme about the use of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs). The LGA’s response was also reported more widely. |
| **Mail**, **Times**, **Express Online, TalkSport** | Transport spokesman Cllr Peter Box featured alongside the LGA’s call for councils to be given new powers to fine lorry drivers who ignore vehicle weight and width restrictions on minor roads, blighting rural communities.  |
| **BBC Online** | Children and Young People Board Chairman Cllr Roy Perry’s comments in response to Ofsted’s findings that top executives at some of England's biggest academy chains are paid huge salaries while pupils are left to get poor results. |
| **BBC Online**, **Mail Online**, **Express Online,** **Telegraph Online, BBC Radio 4’s Today programme, BBC News** | The LGA responded to an AA survey on potholes, emphasising that councils fixed a pothole every 15 seconds last year but that it would take more than a decade and £12 billion to clear the current roads repair backlog. |
| **Times** | Cllr Richard Watts, Vice-Chair of the LGA’s Children and Young People Board featured alongside the LGA’s call for councils to have more powers to monitor home-schooled children. |
| **BBC Radio 4’s Today Programme** | Chairman of the LGA’s Asylum, Refugee and Migration Task Group Cllr David Simmonds interviewed about how councils are supporting asylum seekers. |

**LGA Membership**

1. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and Bristol City Council have now agreed to withdraw their notice to leave the LGA. Preston City Council are rolling over their notice to next year. This brings the number of councils still on notice to leave the LGA on 31 March 2016 to two. The latest position on each will be reported verbally:

**On notice to leave on 31 March 2017**

* 1. East Staffordshire Council (rolled over)
	2. Hartlepool Borough Council
	3. Gosport Borough Council
	4. Preston City Council (rolled over)
	5. Waverley Borough Council (rolled over)
	6. West Sussex County Council (awaiting confirmation)
	7. London Borough of Richmond

**Out of membership**

* 1. Bromley, Sheffield and Wandsworth Councils
	2. Barnet Council (from 1 April 2016)
1. Membership visits for the Senior Management Team:

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| **Chief Executive’s Membership Visits: 3nd March 2016 – 6th April** |
| 3rd March | National CEXs’ Regional LGA Liaison Group meeting |
| 4th March | East of England CEXs’ meeting |
| 9th March | Shropshire Borough Council |
| 10th March | Worcestershire County Leaders and CEXs’ meeting |
| 18th March | Cumbria CEXs' meeting |
| 4th April | City of London Corporation |
| 5th April | London Borough of Haringey  |
| **Forward plan: 7th April 2016 – 8th June 2016** |
| 14th April | North Dorset, West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Councils |
| 22nd April | CEXs' London Committee |
| 25th April | Liverpool City Council |
| 26th April | NW Leadership Commission at NW Employers  |
| 27th April | Essex County Council |
| 10th May | London Borough of Ealing |
| **Deputy Chief Executive’s Membership Visits: 3nd March 2016 – 6th April** |
| 8th March | West Midlands Regional CEXs' meeting |
| 18th March | Surrey CEXs' meeting |
| 18th March | Surrey County Council |
| 24th March | West Berkshire Council |
| **Associate Director's Membership Visits: 3nd March 2016 – 6th April** |
| 4th March | West Midlands Combined Authority Programme Board |
| 8th March | West Midlands Public Sector Reform |
| 10th March | Norfolk and Suffolk Leaders |
| 11th March  | West Midlands Combined Authority Programme Board & Shadow Board & Regional Leaders |
| 21st March | South West Councils |
| 29th March | East Hertfordshire County Council |
| **Forward plan: 7th April 2016 – 8th June 2016** |
| 13th April | Somerset: devolution and communications |
| 14th April | Dorset County Council |
| 15th April  | West Midlands Combined Authority Programme Board |
| 22nd April | West Midlands Combined Authority Programme Board |
| 27th April | Dorset County Council |
| 29th April  | West Midlands Combined Authority Programme Board |
| 13th May | West Midlands Combined Authority Programme Board |
| 27th May | West Midlands Combined Authority Programme Board |
| **Head of Workforce's Membership Visits: 3nd March 2016 – 6th April** |
| 24th March | Eastleigh Council |
| **Head of Policy's** **Membership Visits: 3nd March 2016 – 6th April** |
| 2nd March | Regional Strategic Migration Partnerships meeting |
| 7th March | Round table on health devolution joint with London Councils |
| 21st March | CEXs' meeting with Chris Wormald, DfE |
| 24th March | Asylum and Migration Task Group with members from each region |
| **Forward plan: 7th April 2016 – 8th June 2016** |
| 18th April | Health Transformation Task Group with CEXs from each region |
| **Head of Policy's Membership Visits: 3nd March 2016 – 6th April** |
| 3rd March | Liverpool City Council |
| **Head of Improvement's Membership Visits: 3nd March 2016 – 6th April** |
| 17th March | London Borough of Tower Hamlets |
| **Forward plan: 7th April 2016 – 8th June 2016** |
| 7th April | London Councils |
| 21st April | Swale Borough Council |
| 19th May | Bedford Borough Council |
| **Director of Communication’s** **Membership Visits: 3nd March 2016 – 6th April** |
| 10/11th Mar | London Borough of Tower Hamlets |
|  **Forward plan: 7th April 2016 – 8th June 2016** |
| 14th April | Birmingham City Council |
| 26th April | Manchester City Council |
| tbc April | Newcastle City Council |
| 26th May | Newcastle City Council |