

## LGA Statement on Special Interest Groups

### Introduction

1. The LGA Governance Framework provides for 10 or more full member authorities with common features, interests or concerns to form a Special Interest Group (SIG). Under exceptional circumstances, the LGA Board may agree for smaller groups of councils to establish a SIG.

#### Part 3 – LGA Political Conventions – Special Interest Groups

7. *If ten or more Member Authorities with common features, interests or concerns so request by formal notice to the Chief Executive, then the Association, acting through the LGA Board, may establish a Special Interest Group (SIG). Membership shall be open to all Member Authorities with those common features. Political proportionality does not apply.*
8. *In any case of doubt as whether a Member Authority is eligible for membership of a SIG, the LGA Board shall determine the matter.*
9. *SIGs are able to speak for their interests as part of the LGA provided that their policies or statements do not conflict with or undermine LGA policy as a whole, or damage the interests of other member authorities.*
10. *Each SIG shall report annually on its activities to the LGA Board. Detailed information on the process and procedure for setting up and running a SIG is set out in the SIG protocol.*

### Rules of Operation of SIGs

2. If requested, and subject to the availability of resources, the LGA will provide:
  - ✓ secretarial support to Special Interest Groups for up to a maximum of 3 meetings per year in London;
  - ✓ free use of commercial meeting rooms on floor seven of 18 Smith Square for up to 6 meetings a year (any additional bookings or rooms on other floors will be charged at LGA membership discounted rate);
  - ✓ catering at normal LGA rates.

*The LGA is a paperless organisation, therefore printing and hardcopy mailing will not be supported in line with the LGA's internal policies.*

3. The LGA will not make any payments to members attending SIGs, including:
  - × Attendance allowances
  - × SRAs
  - × Subsistence

These expenses remain the responsibility of member authorities.

4. SIGs are permitted to raise any resources they might need to support their activities and running costs from their member authorities.
5. SIGs are able to make representations direct to Government and elsewhere on matters arising directly from their special interest, and to obtain LGA assistance in doing so. However those representations must not conflict with or undermine LGA policy as a whole or damage the interests of other member authorities. The LGA has agreed protocols relating to local government finance and other distributional issues.
6. The LGA has strict protocols relating to press and media activity. SIGs should not issue press releases or undertake any direct media activity that claims to be on behalf of the LGA.
7. All SIGs are required to submit a full report at the end of April each year to the LGA Board covering such matters as their dealings with Government Departments. The LGA Board reserves the right to invite the Chairman of a SIG to discuss an Annual Report or issues arising from it.
8. SIGs may also be required to report to the appropriate board, whose remit covers the SIG's particular area of interest.
9. The LGA will review support for SIGs annually.
10. SIGs will be established for five years. Continuation of the SIG after five years will be subject to SIG Member Councils restating the case for maintaining a SIG to the LGA Board.

### **Application to set up a SIG**

11. Applications to establish a SIG should be made in writing and sent to:

Chief Executive                      or            [memberservices@local.gov.uk](mailto:memberservices@local.gov.uk)  
LGA  
18 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3HZ

12. Applications should:

- 12.1. define the purpose of the SIG and the nature of the common feature or interest;
- 12.2. include the names of at least 10 authorities in full membership who have committed to join the SIG; and
- 12.3. undertake to admit to membership all authorities who share that interest <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In case of any dispute over whether an authority is eligible for membership of a particular SIG, the LGA Board will decide.