

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Improvement and Development Agency regarding the provision of support and assistance to the local government sector

Grant Funding 2020-21

Introduction

1. This Memorandum of Understanding sets out the agreement between the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) for the package of sector-led support to be funded through grant from MHCLG. Whilst the agreement is with the IDeA, the Local Government Association (LGA) is the parent body and will lead on some issues.

COVID 19

2. Given the unprecedented challenge of COVID 19 for local and national Government alike, MHCLG and IDeA have agreed that in the first 6 months of this agreement (until September 2020), support activity will be refocused and dedicated to supporting councils in their central role in tackling COVID 19.
3. The IDeA has refocused its support offer to provide flexible, dedicated and comprehensive support on COVID 19 including;
 - Dedicated ongoing regional support, peer support and intelligence gathering including through principal advisors, political group offices and identifying key issues impacting on all councils
 - Exchange of good/common practice;
 - Leadership Support for elected members and officers – including regional peer support, mentoring, remote networks and online learning/webinars
 - Financial and Governance Support including through bespoke financial support and analysis and guidance on remote council meetings
 - Communicating information to all local authorities
 - Workforce Capacity Support and guidance
 - Advice and support to councils on supply chain and procurement issues emerging from the COVID 19 crisis and identifying the support required to councils in relation to local economy recovery in the future.
 - Utilising expertise of Local Partnerships, and other key partners
4. The IDeA will continue to work closely with councils to continually evolve its offer during this 6 month period, so that it can best support councils in tackling COVID
5. The IDeA will keep MHCLG informed about the format and nature of the evolving support throughout this period, particularly as the focus of support shifts to transition and recovery.

6. The IDeA and MHCLG will share the information and intelligence it gathers on the impact of COVID 19 on councils ,through the existing points of contact within each organisation. The IDeA, through the LGA, will communicate information to all local authorities as appropriate. The IDeA will also share examples of good practice with councils through a central information database and will make this available to MHCLG.
7. The IDeA will continue to support existing programmes that are complimentary to supporting councils in tackling COVID 19, for example in relation to cyber security. Activity that already commenced in 19/20 and was due to carry over into 2020/21, will also be continued where appropriate.
8. Improvement support delivered in accordance with the programme of sector improvement support set out above will be available to all local authorities, whether or not they are members of the LGA.
9. In September 2020, IDeA and MHCLG will agree the focus of activity in the second half of the year, based on what councils require at that time. This is likely to be either
 - a continuation of the COVID 19 support outlined above,
 - a focus on supporting councils in the immediate post COVID19 recovery and transition phase
 - moving towards 'business as usual' in relation to supporting council improvement

or a combination of some or all of the above options. An addendum to this document will be agreed in September that sets out the headline focus for improvement support in the second half of 2020/21.

10. In any return to 'business as usual' in the second half of 2020/21, it is recognised that there will be a lead in time as support shifts and that any agreed activity will require a flexible approach for the entire 2020/21 period.
11. IDeA will continue to update MHCLG on the support outlined above throughout the period covered by this memorandum of understanding.

Programme funding and communication

12. In order to deliver the support set out above, a Grant of £19.2 million will be paid in 2020-21 to the Improvement and Development Agency.
13. The LGA will communicate this MoU to Local authority Leaders and Chief Executives in April 2020 to publicise the refocused offer to local authorities on COVID 19 and the core details contained in this Memorandum of Understanding.

Signatures

Cllr Peter Fleming OBE

**Chairman
Improvement & Development Agency**

Nick Burkitt

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and
Local Government**

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large loop on the left and a series of connected strokes on the right.

Dated: 30.04.2020

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a series of overlapping, cursive-like strokes.

Dated: 30.04.2020