

Our finance offer

The Local Government Association (LGA) works with councils to promote, support and improve local government. In the current financial climate councils are increasingly looking for good practice and support to help them manage their overall finances.

This can range from achieving productivity and efficiency savings through to ways of helping them engage with their local communities to prioritise how they spend their reduced resources. It includes supporting councils with their financial strategies and governance.

Our support offer uses local government expertise. Therefore we need your help to make sure that what we deliver is high quality. We continue to work with councils to obtain the best financial settlement possible for local councils.



Our offer

Peer challenge

We offer support to councils to help you review and transform services, improve performance and make the best decisions transparently for your communities.

Our free-of-charge corporate peer challenge is flexible, tailored to a council's individual needs around a core financial planning and resilience component. We assemble a corresponding team to help us address the specific focus of each council.

We also offer dedicated finance peer reviews which look in more depth at financial strategy, planning and reporting and use input from local government finance specialists to do this.

www.local.gov.uk/peer-challenges

Financial health check

For a council looking for a technical assessment and analysis of its finances we can offer a financial health check. This will be undertaken over two to three days on site by an LGA associate who is a former local authority finance director, interviewing key stakeholders within the council and reviewing the council's documentation to provide experienced, professional insight.

- The work leads to a report providing:
- an overall view of a council's financial standing
- the robustness of financial plans including levels of reserves and deliverability of savings plans
- a summary of other financial challenges which are likely to impact in the near future
- a view of the appropriateness of the steps the council is taking to tackle their financial issues
- an assessment of the arrangements for managing budgets and reporting variations

- a set of recommendations on how to tackle any identified issues, such as suggestions to reduce costs, make savings, etc.

We can also support councils through desktop reviews or targeted reviews, which will look at a specific aspect of financial management with which a council needs help.

Budget support from member peers

Our member peers are available to lead facilitated discussions, working with your cabinet or mayor to offer political advice and guidance on budget options and issues. The support is geared to the needs of the council, but typically would look at:

- medium and long term budget strategies
- prioritisation of policy options
- budget process
- savings proposals
- community engagement.

Supporting and developing councillors

We provide free or subsidised places to assist in the development of political leaders and help councillors in their leadership roles.

Our popular two-day Finance Leadership Essentials course allows leaders and finance portfolio holders to consider their approach to financial leadership assisted by acknowledged sector experts. This course is also suitable for the chairs of audit committees and those responsible for finance scrutiny.

www.local.gov.uk/councillor-development

Efficiency and income generation

We provide a comprehensive programme of support to help councils improve their productivity through efficiency and income generation. The support changes according to councils current priorities, but currently includes:

- Productivity Experts – confidential external advice to support and challenge councils productivity and commercial initiatives
- behavioural insights – funded projects to help councils use ‘nudge’ techniques to improve service delivery
- demand management – providing insight and tools to manage demand effectively.

www.local.gov.uk/efficiency-and-income-generation

LG Inform and LG Inform Plus

Our online data resource, LG Inform, presents you with up-to-date published data about your local area and the performance of your council. With access to over 1,000 individual items of published data for England LG inform provides:

- easy access to the most relevant up-to-date published data
- the ability to compare one council with another
- high quality online and offline reporting.

This includes pre-written reports on comparative financial data and ‘Value for Money (VFM) Profiles’ which allow cost comparison with neighbours.

www.lginform.local.gov.uk

Commercial skills training for officers

Our commercial skills training for officers is aimed at officers, who are either involved with commercial decision-making or who may be considering working on commercialisation projects.

Contact commercialskills@local.gov.uk to find out more and book your place.

Commercial skills masterclass for elected members

The one day masterclass is hosted by an LGA member peer and a commercial expert trainer, who will discuss key concepts within commercialisation – for example, risk and finance – and share a case study about how a council has applied these.

Contact commercialskills@local.gov.uk to find out more and book your place.

How do I find out more?

To find out more about our services or to discuss any support you may need, please contact your principal adviser.

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