

# LGA Conservative Group

Report & Review 2017/2018



# Contents:

4. Message from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.  
The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP
6. Message from the Chairman of the LGA and the LGA Conservative Group Leader
8. LGA Conservative Group Executive 2017/2018
10. What is the LGA and what has it done for my council?
11. The LGA's priorities for the year ahead
12. The 2018 Local elections
13. Be a Councillor – Finding the next generation of councillors
15. Who are my Conservative LGA Board representatives? – How can I get involved?
16. Children and Young People Board
17. City Regions Board
18. Community Wellbeing Board
19. Culture, Tourism and Sport Board
20. Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board
21. Improvement and Innovation Board
22. People and Places Board
23. Resources Board
24. Safer and Stronger Communities Board
25. Fire Services Management Committee and Fire Commission
26. What is sector-led improvement and how can it benefit my council?
28. Peer Review - Enabling learning, development and improvement within local government
29. Next Generation - Cllr Jordan Meade of Gravesham Borough Council
30. LGA Conservative Group Office
32. Contact Us

# Message from the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

## The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP

**I am honoured to have been appointed as Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and to be able to work with our great councillors across the country to make people's lives and the places they live better. That is what we all strive for.**

Working in partnership, I know we can achieve this. The task facing us is vast but having met so many of you, I know that we share this ambition to make a real difference.

One of our major challenges is making sure that people's concerns over housing are tackled in a meaningful way. We must build quality homes for young people, families and everyone else who needs a place to call their own.

No-one is better placed to do this than local councillors like yourselves, who know your communities better than anyone else.

Your achievements speak for themselves.

Many of you have continued to deliver quality public services and have maintained public satisfaction levels in a tough financial environment.

I know this has not been easy, and I am committed to working with you to understand the challenges you face and to put local government finance on a fair and sustainable footing to serve all parts of our country.

This includes important work on the latest phase of our business rates retention programme, which gives local councils the incentives they need to grow their local economies.

These local economies depend on thriving high streets. These, unfortunately, have declined in recent years as online shopping has boomed.

Yet, where we have seen a diverse approach, new businesses and start-ups have flourished and I want to do everything I can to encourage this investment in our high streets.

They are not just shopping centres, but places where people from all backgrounds socialise and come together.

And this work to build well-integrated confident communities where people have a strong sense of civic pride and belonging is something that matters hugely to me.

It is for this reason that I am looking forward to unveiling our new integration strategy. This will help ensure that everyone, regardless of their background, can take advantage of the incredible opportunities that our country offers.

So, there is a lot of work to do to meet the aspirations of the people we serve; to build more homes, deliver great public services and create vibrant communities that can prosper.

I am confident that by working together, we can achieve this and more.

Conservative Councils continue to offer better value than others, delivering better services. Conservative councillors are delivering high quality local services and we will continue to do so together.



**The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP**



James chats with Lord Porter, the LGA Chairman, at the launch of the LGA's Bright Futures Exhibition Campaign in Parliament. The exhibition promoted the work of councils in children's services to MPs, Peers and external stakeholders throughout the week of the 21st-25th May.



James campaigns with local Conservatives in his constituency for the local elections this May.

# Message from the Chairman of the LGA and the LGA Conservative Group Leader

**The elections on the 3rd May saw little significant net change. Overall, we still have 2500 more councillors than Labour and control almost twice as many councils. We also remain the largest group at the LGA and will therefore continue to hold the Chairmanship in 2018-2019.**

Following his appointment as Secretary of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in April, we have had a number of productive meetings with James Brokenshire. James was already well known to many of us during his previous role in the Home Office as a result of our shared work on refugees and migration when he recognised, along with Theresa May, the then Home Secretary, the crucial role which the LGA could play in managing the Syrian resettlement programme. This previous relationship bodes well for future joint working now that he is our Secretary of State.

In the reshuffle, Sajid Javid was appointed Home Secretary. We would like to place on record our thanks to Sajid for his engagement with us during his nearly two years in post and for his attendance at various LGA and Conservative Group events and conferences.

Sajid secured a number of key 'wins' for us during his time as Secretary of State, the most important of which was the significant extra funding for adult social care that was announced in last year's Budget. This money would not have been secured without Sajid's persistent lobbying on our behalf and it is something that we are extremely grateful for.

Our new Secretary of State hosts, as did Sajid, a weekly catch-up meeting that we attend every Wednesday morning when Parliament is sitting. The other attendees are Cllr Paul Carter (Chairman of the County Councils' Network), Cllr John Fuller (Chairman of the District Councils' Network), Cllr Teresa O'Neill (Conservative

Group Leader at London Councils) and Cllr Rory Love (Chairman of the Conservative Councillors' Association).

These meetings provide a unique opportunity for us to be briefed on key announcements and for us to raise issues on your behalf. We are extremely grateful to both Sajid and James for making time in their busy schedules to meet with us on such a regular basis.

For the LGA it has been another busy year. In October, after exactly twelve months in Farringdon, we returned to our refurbished headquarters at 18 Smith Square in Westminster. Like councils, we are making our own space work better, with three floors being released for commercial letting. The first of our new tenants will be the National Farmers' Union.

Member councils can book a meeting room at 18 Smith Square twice a year, free of charge. Therefore, if you are looking to hold an away day in London please do contact our venue team for more information: [venue@local.gov.uk](mailto:venue@local.gov.uk)

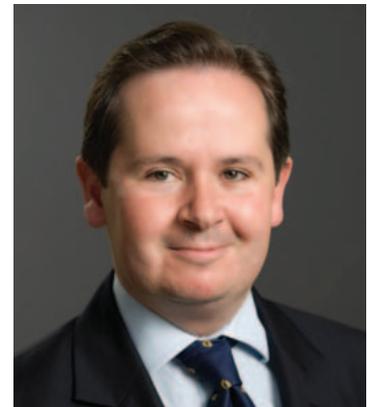
For informal meetings, or to pass the time between appointments, our new seventh floor Open Council coffee lounge and terrace is open to all councillors and officers of LGA member authorities. Please do feel free to make use of this facility if you are in London.

The LGA is currently overseeing on the redevelopment of our other building – Layden House in Farringdon – which, once completed in 2019, will be fully let to commercial tenants. The income that this produces will play a key role in both ensuring that the LGA is financially sustainable and in helping us to keep subscriptions to the lowest possible level.

We hope that you will find the report interesting, and we would draw your attention to the reports of our lead members



Lord Porter of Spalding CBE



Cllr David Simmonds CBE

on the LGA's policy Boards. These updates outline how they and their colleagues have provided a strong Conservative voice within the LGA, their work with Ministers across Government Departments and the successes they have achieved.

Many of the issues that we have focused on over the past twelve months will continue to be priorities in the coming year. Putting local government finance on a sustainable long-term footing is a key priority, and the forthcoming Spending Review, the implementation of greater business rates retention and work around the Fair Funding Review will all be critical too.

The imminent publication of the Adult Social Care Green Paper will be an important event for all of us. To prepare for the publication, and to ensure that we are in a strong position to respond, a working group of leading Conservative members has been established, with its first meeting taking place in June.

The UK is due to leave the EU next March. The LGA was neutral during the referendum but since June 2016 we have been clear that Brexit offers the opportunity to devolve powers that currently reside in Brussels to local government rather than by default to Whitehall.

We are particularly grateful to our colleague, Cllr Kevin Bentley, who chairs the LGA's Brexit Task and Finish Group. Kevin has established himself as an excellent Chairman, quickly getting to grips with the technical issues that impact on local government and delivering a recent assured performance at an MHCLG Select Committee evidence-gathering session.

Our priority is to ensure that ministers and all those responsible for decisions that affect local government hear your views. Our weekly meetings with MHCLG

Ministerial Team means that LGA member councils can influence government to a far greater degree than any council acting alone. Sometimes our successes are about avoiding policy decisions with a negative impact, but more often they are about ensuring councillors' insights and experiences influence policy in the most helpful direction.

We would like to highlight the fact that all Conservative councillors are welcome to attend our regular group meetings that take place before the LGA's cross-party Councillors' Forum.

These meetings are often attended by a Government Minister or other leading party figures – we have, for example, recently welcomed Gavin Barwell, the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff, Marcus Jones MP, the Party's Vice Chairman for Local Government and Rishi Sunak MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government – and they are a great opportunity to discuss topical issues in closed session.

The dates and timings for both the group meetings and the Councillors' Forum (which all members are also welcome to attend) are published in our monthly email bulletins.

We would like to end by thanking you, our fellow Conservative councillors, for all that you have done for your communities and for our Party over the past year. As the largest party in local government your voice will continue to be heard loud and clear within the LGA and the corridors of power in Whitehall and Westminster over the coming year.

# LGA Conservative Group Executive 2017/2018

The LGA Conservative Group Executive is elected annually and is the body which steers and takes decisions on behalf of the LGA Conservative Group.

A new team is elected in June of each year and the elected members for the past year (2017/2018) were:



LGA Chairman

**Lord Porter of Spalding CBE**  
South Holland District Council



Group Leader  
*(and LGA Vice Chairman)*

**Cllr David Simmonds CBE**  
London Borough of Hillingdon



Deputy Group Leader  
*(and LGA Deputy Chairman)*

**Cllr Sean Anstee**  
Trafford Metropolitan  
Borough Council



County Council Executive Member

**Cllr Colin Noble**  
Suffolk County Council

## ‘At large’ Executive Members



**Cllr Tom Fitzpatrick**  
North Norfolk District Council



**Cllr Philip Atkins OBE**  
Staffordshire County Council



**Cllr Kevin Bentley**  
Essex County Council



**Cllr David Renard**  
Swindon Borough Council



Non-Met District  
Council Executive Member  
**Cllr John Fuller**  
South Norfolk District Council



London Borough Council  
Executive Member  
**Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE**  
London Borough of Bexley



Metropolitan District Council  
Executive Member  
**Cllr Robert Light**  
Kirklees Metropolitan  
Borough Council



Unitary Council Executive Member  
**Cllr Paul Bettison OBE**  
Bracknell Forest  
Borough Council

## Co-opted



**Cllr Rory Love**  
(CCA Chairman)  
Folkestone and Hythe  
District Council



**Cllr Donna Jones**  
Portsmouth City Council



### Further information

For all the latest news on the LGA Conservative Group please visit our website:

[www.local.gov.uk/lga-conservatives](http://www.local.gov.uk/lga-conservatives)

# What is the LGA and what has it done for my council?

## The LGA is a politically-led, cross-party organisation which:

- Lobbies on the key financial and policy decisions which affect your council.
- Presses for greater powers to be devolved from Whitehall to local government.
- Speaks with one voice through local, regional and national media to promote the good things that councils are doing and defend local government's reputation.
- Supports councils to drive innovation and improvement and shares best practice in order to help councils become more efficient and effective.
- Negotiates fair pay and pensions settlements and provides advice on workforce matters to councils.

## Since 2009 we have reduced our total subscription income by 30 per cent and this year we have frozen our subscription levels for the sixth year running.

Our work often takes place behind the scenes with Government, ministers and a wide range of partner organisations. As well as securing extra money for councils, we have prevented additional burdens, both costs and duties, being imposed on councils. Our 'wins' for our member councils including the following notable examples:

- The Government agreed to a further £2 billion for the Affordable Homes Programme, taking the total funding pot to over £9 billion.
- The Government announced additional New Burdens funding for implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act, taking the total from £61 million to £72.7 million.

- In the Budget the Chancellor announced a partial lifting of the Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap, worth £1 billion from 2019/2020.
- In response to calls from the LGA's Housing Commission, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) announced £886 million in funding to deliver 200,000 homes across 133 council-led projects as part of the Housing Infrastructure Fund.
- Following our lobbying, the Government announced an extra £150 million grant for adult social care in 2018/2019.
- The Government has committed to continue to move towards further business rates retention by 2020/2021 and to implement improvements to the current system, including dealing with business rates appeals.
- The Government has confirmed its commitment to replicate local government's formal role in the EU policy making process following Brexit.
- The final New Burdens payment in relation to property searches was agreed. This payment of £10 million brought the total secured for councils in England and Wales to just under £54 million.
- Councils are granted powers to double maximum litter fines from April 2018 from £75 to £150 and to fine owners of vehicles from which litter is thrown.
- Flexibility to use capital receipts to fund the revenue costs of transformation funds has been extended to 2022.

The LGA Conservative Group can provide, upon request, a briefing of how LGA activity has specifically benefited your council over the past year.



# The LGA's priorities for the year ahead

Building on its lobbying successes over the past year, the LGA has identified six priority campaigns for the coming year:

## Sustainable funding for local government

In addition to our specific lobbying in relation to the future funding of adult social care and children's social care (see below), the LGA will continue to call on the Government to plug the overall £5.8 billion funding gap that councils are set to face by 2020.

The LGA will also work with the Government to ensure that further business rates retention is introduced in such a way that gives councils the maximum financial independence whilst also recognising the associated risks.

## Adult social care

We are calling on the Government to set out in detail its proposals to close the £2 billion funding gap for adult social care by 2020 and to share the risk of high care costs effectively.

## Children's social care and wellbeing

With a £2 billion funding gap for children's services expected by 2020, the LGA is pressing for urgent action to be taken to reduce financial pressures and for a renewed focus on investing in early intervention.

## Housing

The LGA's housing campaign is a national programme of work calling on the Government to give councils the powers and funding to resume their role as a major builder of affordable homes and lift the housing borrowing cap.

## Work Local

Work Local is our positive vision for an integrated and devolved employment and skills service to bring together information, advice and guidance alongside the delivery of apprenticeships and wider support for individuals and employers.

## Brexit

The LGA is calling for powers and funding to be transferred from Brussels to local areas, not to Whitehall. We will continue to lobby to ensure that decision-makers fully understand the legal and funding implications of their decisions for local government.

For more detailed information on these individual campaigns, please download the LGA's Business Plan for 2017/2018 at: [www.local.gov.uk/business-plan-201718](http://www.local.gov.uk/business-plan-201718)



## Your views

In order to support our evidence gathering on the impact of Brexit on local areas, the LGA is inviting feedback from councils and councillors. Please email:

[brexit@local.gov.uk](mailto:brexit@local.gov.uk)



## Further information

For all the latest news on how Brexit is impacting on local government, and updates on the LGA's activity in relation to this, visit our dedicated website:

[www.local.gov.uk/brexit](http://www.local.gov.uk/brexit)

# The 2018 Local elections

**Over the past eight years, Conservatives in local and national government have broken one of the golden rules of British politics – one that certainly held true for the Conservatives in the early to mid-nineties and then for Labour from 1997 onwards – namely that the party in power nationally will inevitably see its local government base dramatically reduced.**

Our dominant position is illustrated by the fact that following the elections we have over 9000 councillors and control 198 councils, whilst Labour have 6,500 councillors and 103 councils.

The overall results hid the usual churn as we

suffered net losses in London – although in Barnet, Greenwich, Hackney, Havering, Harrow, Hillingdon and Sutton we made gains – whilst outside London we had net gains.

Particular congratulations are due to colleagues in Basildon, Peterborough and Pendle, which we gained from NOC, and Redditch, which we gained from Labour.

Also noteworthy was our success in Nuneaton and Bedworth, where we won nine seats, moving the council to NOC.

That we came so close to taking control, despite only half of the seats being contested, is testament to the campaigning

efforts of our Vice-Chairman for Local Government, Marcus Jones MP, and his local Conservative team.

The changes in the number of councillors and councils controlled for each party following this year's local elections are summarised below (the minus figure in the total seat changes is due to boundary changes which have led to a decrease in the overall number of seats).

## Councils

	Conservatives	Labour	Lib Dems	UKIP	Others	NOC	Total
Before	199	103	7	0	6	91	406
After	198	103	11	0	6	88	406
Change	-1	0	+4	-	-	-3	0

## Seats

	Conservatives	Labour	Lib Dems	UKIP	Others	Total
Before	9167	6415	1791	213	2637	20,223
After	9074	6499	1869	156	2526	20,124
Change	+93	+84	+78	-57	-111	-99*

# Be a Councillor

## Finding the next generation of councillors



**How do we convey the enthusiasm of existing councillors to a new generation by persuading Conservative members and supporters that being a councillor is a rewarding experience?**

The LGA Conservative Group seeks to answer this question through its participation in the LGA's corporate 'Be a Councillor' campaign which publicises the role of the councillor and encourages people who are engaged in their communities to consider standing for election.

Of course the electorate ultimately decides who is elected, but this campaign highlights how skills gained through experiences as diverse as raising a family, caring for a relative, volunteering or being active in your community could make you a successful councillor.

Over the past year, leading up to May's elections, we supported Conservative associations by funding mailshots, newspaper advertising and Facebook advertising to recruit candidates.

We have helped associations with large council groups and also in areas where we have less representation and where we have historically struggled to field a full list of candidates.

We have also funded successful local training sessions for selected candidates to help prepare them for the role of the councillor and held similar training events here at the LGA.

Associations and council groups can also make use of *The X Factor: A talent spotter's guide for local elections* and the *Be a Conservative Councillor* brochure for prospective candidates which includes case studies, legal advice and other useful information.

Cllr Jo Beavis, recently elected to Essex County Council, has been closely involved with the programme:

**"Never has there been a more interesting time to be a councillor. Housing, health, social care, community wellbeing and devolution dominate the headlines as we, as councillors, shape the agenda within our communities."**

**Councillors have the democratic mandate to be local leaders of place. 'Be a Councillor' is helping to drive that vision for the future in searching for new talent and encouraging more people to be councillors. Please help the LGA to help you and your community by encouraging more people to come forward to represent their communities as councillors."**



Electronic copies of Be a Conservative Councillor are available from the LGA Conservative Group. Please email us at:

**[lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk](mailto:lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk)**

or call 020 7664 3264. Do also contact us if you would like further information about the campaign and how we could help you locally or indeed if you have any best practice that you would like to share.



The corporate 'Be a Councillor' webpage on the LGA website

**[www.beacouncillor.co.uk](http://www.beacouncillor.co.uk)**

provides further detailed information and resources, including the 'Be a Councillor' toolkit for councils and e-learning.

It is never too early to plan for the next set of local elections, so please do visit the website to see how we can help you recruit your next generation of candidates and councillors.



You can also follow the Be a Councillor campaign at [www.twitter.com/beacouncillor](https://www.twitter.com/beacouncillor)



Stack of green cards with a 'Y' mark and some text.

Y		
---	--	--

...Berk Comments...  
...Poderding, though the first...  
...DNC

# Who are my Conservative LGA Board representatives? How can I get involved?

**The LGA is a politically-led organisation and the members who serve on its policy Boards are responsible for developing and overseeing its lobbying and policy formulation across all the key policy areas that local government is responsible for.**

The LGA's political groups make annual appointments to the Boards with the overall proportionality figures determining how many lead positions and places they are entitled to.

The following pages include summaries from our Conservative lead members outlining the work that they and their colleagues have undertaken on your behalf over the past year.

For more detailed information on each Board, including your Conservative representatives, please contact the LGA Conservative Group Office.

Conservative councillors are appointed to serve on these Boards annually. Nomination forms are sent to group leaders in June, the appointments are made in July and take effect at the start of the new LGA year on 1st September.

Nominations forms are sent to each Conservative council group leader and they are invited to nominate up to three councillors from their group.

Each year we are heavily oversubscribed and so unfortunately we cannot offer a place to everyone who is nominated. However, vacancies do occur throughout the year and we keep every application form on file for consideration as and when these occur.

In making the appointments the LGA Conservative Group Leader considers a number of factors. The areas of expertise and supporting statement are obviously important and we are very careful to ensure that our appointments reflect our geographical strengths across the various tiers of local government.

Whilst there has been a perception amongst some councillors that the appointments are biased towards the South of England, detailed analysis each year shows that overall they reflect the representation of Conservative councillors geographically. Ultimately we want a strong and varied team which is reflective of Conservative councillors across the country.

## How to submit an application:

1. Download the nomination form from: [www.local.gov.uk/lga-conservatives](http://www.local.gov.uk/lga-conservatives) or ask your group leader for a form or request one from the LGA Conservative Group Office.
2. Fill in your contact details, your areas of interest and expertise and write a short supporting statement.
3. Give the completed form to your group leader to countersign.
4. Ensure that the form is returned to the Conservative Group Office no later than Monday 9th July 2018.

Once the appointments have been finalised we will write to everyone who has applied to let them know whether or not they have been successful.

# Children and Young People Board

## Cllr Roy Perry

**The Children and Young People Board is concerned with the wellbeing of children and young people, including education, social care and careers.**

During the course of the year we had a change of Secretary of State as Justine Greening was replaced by Damian Hinds. I would like to place on record my thanks to Justine for her engagement with the Board during her time as Secretary of State and congratulate Damian on his appointment. We look forward to working with Damian over the coming year.

In January we considered the interim findings of a major piece of research on variations in local spending on children's services. Working with a sample of local authorities, we intend to develop a deeper, more complete picture of council spending on children's services whilst also identifying areas of good practice and the underlying levers driving cost and performance.

The output of this work will have a range of valuable practical applications and more details will be available once the research has concluded.

Also in January, we published a report titled *Enabling School Improvement* (available on the LGA website). While the council role in education continues to evolve, one thing that has remained constant is the vital role that councils play in driving school improvement to ensure that children, young people and their families all have access to a good school place.

Bringing both strategic clarity and coherence to local education systems, councils throughout the country act as independent and impartial brokers and evaluators for school improvement, resulting in stronger support for schools.

This publication highlights the variety of different approaches that councils have taken to developing effective school improvement systems and how they have responded differently to the challenges facing the education system.

At least one in ten children and young people are affected by mental health problems, and the unreported figures are likely to be even higher. Young people are increasingly struggling with problems like anxiety, depression and self-harm, with nearly 19,000 admitted to hospital after harming themselves in 2015.

We are also only just beginning to understand how the increasing prevalence of social media in young people's lives, whilst having some positive benefits, is also negatively impacting on their emotional health.

To help councillors and officers dealing with these issues, earlier this year we launched a short guide, *Don't be left in the dark: children and young people's mental health*, which can be downloaded from the LGA website.

These issues highlight how challenging the role of the lead member for children's services can be. It is for this reason that the LGA's Leadership Essentials programme is so valuable.

This programme is funded as part of the sector led improvement programme and aims to support lead members with the key challenges they face in the changing policy landscape and to develop leadership capacity, share learning and provide networking opportunities. If you are a lead member who has not already participated I would strongly encourage you to do so.



Cllr Roy Perry

# City Regions Board

## Cllr Robert Light

**The City Regions Board has responsibility for LGA activity in relation to growth, transport, infrastructure, skills and wider public service reform. Its membership is drawn from the Core and Key Cities, SIGOMA and the London Boroughs.**

It is now two years since the Government invited devolution submissions from areas across the UK. Since then, the Board has been at the forefront of the debate on devolution, working with councils, combined authorities, special interest groups and independent organisations to make the case for devolving powers and funding to local areas.

The LGA continues to provide bespoke improvement support to combined authorities, combined authority mayors and all metropolitan areas looking to secure and advance local devolution. For further information on our work in relation to devolution please visit our dedicated webpage at: <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/devolution>

Last year, working with our colleagues on the People and Places Board, we commissioned the Learning and Work Institute (LWI) to develop a local government vision for an integrated and devolved employment and skills service.

The final report, *Work Local*, which details the proposed model and recommendations to achieve it, was launched at the LGA Conference and features on a dedicated *Work Local* webpage on our website: <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/employment-and-skills/work-local>

The report notes that employment and skills systems are fragmented with 17 funding streams, managed by eight departments or agencies, spending more than £10 billion a year.

In response, it proposes that combined authorities and groups of councils, in partnership with stakeholders should plan, commission and have oversight of provision in this area.

This would bring together advice and guidance, employment, skills, apprenticeships and business support around place, providing more coherent support for the unemployed and low skilled of all ages, whilst also supporting local economic growth by forging better links between training providers and employers.

We estimate that implementing the proposals in *Work Local* could annually result in 8500 more people in work, fiscal benefits of £280 million and an economic benefit of £420 million.

Building on this work, the Board has had some useful Ministerial engagement, including a meeting with the Rt Hon Anne Milton MP, the Minister for Skills and Apprenticeships, earlier this year to discuss the LGA's vision for a more localised skills system.

This was a positive meeting and key issues that we hope to work together in partnership on include skills advisory panels, SME engagement, post-16 routes and apprenticeships.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues on the Board, Cllr Robert Alden (Birmingham City Council), Cllr Abi Brown (Stoke-on-Trent City Council), Cllr Donna Jones (Portsmouth City Council), Cllr Tim Warren (Bath and North East Somerset Council) and Cllr Barry Anderson (Leeds City Council), for their support over the past year and for ensuring that the voice of Conservatives in urban and metropolitan areas has been heard clearly within the LGA.



Cllr Robert Light

# Community Wellbeing Board

## Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE

**The Community Wellbeing Board is responsible for LGA activity in relation to the wellbeing of adults, public health, mental health, lifelong learning, training, health and social care.**

The LGA estimates that adult social care has had to close a funding gap of £6 billion since 2010 and that there will be a gap of over £2.2 billion by 2020. This funding gap does not cover any costs associated with provision for existing unmet or under-met needs, or other known pressures such as the historic, current and future costs associated with 'sleep-in' payments.

The Government's long awaited Green Paper on Health and Social Care is expected to be published this summer, and we have consistently argued that we are an essential part of the development of this important publication.

We view the Green Paper as an important opportunity for the Government to restate its national support for joining up care and support to promote better health and wellbeing outcomes. As part of our own contribution to the debate, in October we published *Adult Social Care Funding: State of the Nation 2017* (which is available on the LGA's website).

We have also agreed to sponsor the Institute for Public Policy Research's (IPPR) *Review of the Future of Health and Care*. As part of this we have submitted written evidence on what we consider to be the top 10 innovations in health and social care over the past decade.

The LGA has consistently prioritised working with Government and NHS partners to support local areas to use the Better Care Fund (BCF) to escalate the scale and pace of integration.

In some areas, the BCF has provided the necessary impetus for health and social care to work more effectively and consistently to provide joined-up care and support. However, in others that were already working well together, innovation and creativity have been stifled.

As such, we have consistently called for a return to the original intentions of the BCF, which is to maintain adult social care funding and encourage local health and care partners to join up provision to maintain people's health, wellbeing and independence.

My Board colleagues and I are strongly committed to ensuring that individuals who need care and support have their opinions heard and listened to. As such, we continue to play a leading role, in partnership with NHS England, in promoting personalised care and support, in particular through the Personalised Care Programme.

We therefore support in principle the Government's proposals to escalate the scale and pace of personalisation by extending the right to a personal health and care budget or an integration personal budget for specific groups of people.

Extending integrated personal budgets is one way in which we can help to meet people's complex needs in a more holistic way. We will seek to reflect the views and interests of local government in responding to the consultation.

All the above demonstrates both what a busy year it has been for the Board and the many challenges that lie ahead. Since this has been my final year chairing the Board, I would like to place on record my thanks to all of my Conservative colleagues, past and present, for their support and enthusiastic participation over the past four years.



Cllr Izzi Seccombe OBE

# Culture, Tourism and Sport Board

## Cllr Peter Golds CBE

**The Culture, Tourism and Sport Board has responsibility for LGA activity in the areas of culture, tourism and sport, including the legacy of the 2012 Olympic Games.**

Although our Board is chaired by a Liberal Democrat, our Conservative delegation plays an active and prominent role in its deliberations and is able to actively shape its work.

As our lead member I have been pleased to undertake a number of duties on behalf of the Board, including meeting with the Mayor of Ouistreham to discuss our support for a shared Anglo-French centre to be built on Sword Bridge, celebrating the Normandy landings.

Earlier this year, I spoke at a Westminster Briefing event on the Mendoza Museums Review and the support available for local authority-run or –supported museums.

I was also pleased to chair the LGA's first sport and physical activity conference, which was attended by over 75 delegates. Keynote speakers included the Minister for Sport, Tracey Crouch MP, and twice women's cricket World Cup winner, Lydia Greenway.

At the conference we launched our *Active People, Healthy Places* report, bringing together good practice and different models for delivering sport and physical activity services. The report, which is available on the LGA website, is well worth reading.

We have continued to work closely with Sport England, including through our joint delivery of Leadership Essentials sport programmes and supporting them in the implementation of their sports strategy. For example, we have provided advice to them on the best way to deliver pilots across 12 areas in England aimed at increasing physical activity.

Over the past year the Board has taken a strong interest in the role that theatres can play in supporting culture-led regeneration. As such, I was pleased to have the opportunity to speak at the UK Theatre's Business Resilience Conference, where I was able to emphasise how theatres can engage with councils to maximise their impact on local communities.

The FA, in partnership with the Premier League and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, has committed to making a major investment in local football over the next ten years.

To inform and direct this investment, they will work with every council in England to develop a local football facility plan. The LGA welcomes this commitment and will work the FA and the Premier League to ensure that every council benefits to the fullest extent from this.

I am pleased that the Board, in line with the sector-led improvement agenda championed by the LGA, has once again been able to offer a comprehensive support and improvement offer to culture and sport portfolio holders from councils across the country. Much of our activity in this area is externally sponsored by Arts Council England and Sports England, with whom we work in close partnership.

Our members play an important role on outside bodies and particular thanks go to our members who have undertaken additional responsibilities, Councillor Geraldine Carter (the LGA's representative on the Tourism Alliance Board) and Councillor Michelle Tanfield (the LGA's Theatre Champion). They are all champions of the role that councils can play in promoting the work of our Board to the wider community.



Cllr Peter Golds CBE

# Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board

## Cllr Martin Tett

**The Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board provides strategic oversight of the LGA's policy, regulatory and improvement activity in relation to the economy, skills and employment, the environment, transport, housing and planning, waste and climate change.**

Given the wide range of policy areas that the Board covers, engagement with Ministerial colleagues and stakeholders is a key part of our work and I am delighted to have had a number of productive meetings since my update in last year's annual report.

Over the course of the year I have had separate meetings with Chris Grayling, the Secretary of State for Transport, and Jesse Norman, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Transport. Both meetings involved constructive discussions on a range of issues, including funding, tackling congestion and electric charging infrastructure.

I was also pleased to meet with Therese Coffey, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Various issues were discussed, including how we can work with central government to avoid sending food waste to landfill.

Earlier in the year I also had a useful meeting with Colin Matthews, the Chairman of Highways England. We discussed how Highways England is managing their relationship with local authorities since the transition to being a Government-owned company.

I made it clear that Highways England needs to engage with councils, and in particular with transport authorities who manage local networks and interactions with the strategic network. The Board is also keen for Highways England to engage with authorities that have issues with air quality and where the strategic network is a major contributor to emissions.

I represented the LGA at a number of events at the Conservative Party Conference last October. I also took part in panel discussions with MPs and representatives from other organisations on issues ranging from planning and housing to financing infrastructure.

Housing has risen up the political agenda in recent years, and getting more homes built and helping people to get on the property ladder is one of the Government's key priorities.

Whilst supportive of these aims, we have consistently highlighted the fact that the planning system is not a barrier to building, as demonstrated by our research which shows that there are more than 423,000 homes with planning permission that are waiting to be built.

The Board had an opportunity to discuss these issues with Oliver Letwin, who is leading a review on behalf of the Government into the build out of large sites with planning permission, when he attended our meeting in May. This was a very productive discussion and we agreed to maintain the dialogue over the coming months leading up to the publication of his report.

Also on housing, I strongly welcomed the creation of the £5 billion Housing Infrastructure Fund, which was announced earlier this year. Already 133 council-led projects supporting 200,000 new homes have received funding totalling £866 million to support vital local work such as the construction of new roads, flood defences and land remediation work.

I look forward to further projects being funded over the coming year as Conservative local government works to support the Government in delivering sustainable development.



Cllr Martin Tett

# Improvement and Innovation Board

## Cllr Paul Bettison OBE

**The Improvement and Innovation Board has responsibility for LGA activity in relation to improving councils' performance, including peer support and mentoring, and also relations with the various central bodies who contribute to that process.**

Public Sector Audit Appointments, a company established by the LGA, has successfully put in place national contracts to provide a cost effective and quality audit service for the local government sector as a whole. Fees for all councils opting into the national scheme are now proposed to fall by 23% on top of the 55% reduction achieved since 2011/2012.

These savings are even greater than initially anticipated and are testament to the joint work of the LGA and PSAA colleagues, the benefits of which are being passed on to all councils and other district bodies opting in to the scheme.

By council type, a county council will, on average, save £25,000, a district council £12,000, a London Borough £38,000 and a metropolitan district council £35,000. Further information is available on the PSAA's website.

Over the last year, public and private sector organisations have been subject to increasing numbers of cyber-attacks. With this in mind, the LGA has been developing easily accessible tools to help councils' cyber resilience activities.

In particular, the National Cyber Security Centre has worked with councils and other public sector organisations to develop a free to use Web Check - a website configuration and vulnerability scanning service that will highlight certificates that are out of date and other potential vulnerabilities.

Over 120 councils have already signed up. For further information on this resource, please visit <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/blog-post/web-check-helping-you-secure-your-public-sector-websites>

In preparation for the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which requires organisations to follow stricter data protection rules, the LGA organised free briefing events across the country. These events, which brought together officers, councillors, data experts and regulators, provided comprehensive advice and received excellent feedback.

Increasingly, councils are having to make difficult decisions about which services they provide to their communities. These decisions can sometimes be stressful, especially when it comes to explaining them to, and dealing with their impact on, local communities.

It is for this reason that the LGA has published a workbook on stress management and personal resilience which is available, along with a range of workbooks covering a variety of other subjects, at <https://www.local.gov.uk/councillor-workbooks>

Finally, I would like to remind you that the LGA provides direct support to improve the skills of our councillors and senior managers across local government. For further information on what we offer, including our comprehensive peer support programme which has delivered 115 peer challenges across the country over the past year, please see the information on page 28 of this report.



Cllr Paul Bettison OBE

# People and Places Board

## Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE

**The People and Places Board is responsible for LGA activity on growth, transport, infrastructure, skills and wider public service reform. Its membership is drawn from the CCN, the DCN and non-county unitary councils who are outside those bodies.**

In under a year's time, the UK is scheduled to withdraw from the EU. Whatever the shape of the final deal with the EU, the country will face a number of significant challenges that will impact each part of the country differently.

Non-Metropolitan England comprises 62% of the population, provides 56% of England's Gross Value Added (GVA) and between 2010 and 2015 increased its GVA per head by 13%.

The Board believes that the time is right to reassert the case for devolution to non-metropolitan England and to consider in detail what local powers and resources will be required if we are to achieve the best possible outcomes for communities and businesses across the country.

It is for this reason that we have established the Post-Brexit England Commission to explore how councils in non-metropolitan areas can help to deliver, amongst other things, better productivity and more inclusive growth; a more skilled workforce; better employment services; improved transport and digital infrastructure; more and better housing; increased exports and foreign investment; and public services that meet the specific needs of deeply rural areas.

The Commission's interim report will be launched at the LGA's annual conference in July and work will continue in the months afterwards leading to the publication of the final report.

Related to this is our ongoing work in relation to the Industrial Strategy White Paper, which was published in November and is structured around five pillars: Ideas, People, Business Environment, Infrastructure and Place. Particularly relevant to us is the emphasis on 'Place' as one of the foundations of productivity and the building block of local industrial strategies.

Earlier this year I was pleased to meet with the Rt Hon Anne Milton MP, the Minister of State for Skills and Apprenticeships, to discuss our vision for a more localised skills system. This was a positive and open meeting which I hope will lay the foundations for future working.

As those who read my update in last year's report will be aware, the Board has helped establish the LGA and local government as a credible and respected voice in the field of digital connectivity, with a particular focus on access to broadband, for residents in rural and non-metropolitan areas.

To ensure that this important work continues, we have established a working group to oversee our activity in relation to this and ensure that we continue to strengthen key relationships with national government and the communications regulator, Ofcom.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the LGA's devolution website, an excellent online resource available at <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/devolution> which contains everything you need to know about devolution for local government - what has been secured, what is happening across the country and what you can do at your council.



Cllr Mark Hawthorne MBE

# Resources Board

## Cllr John Fuller

**The Resources Board is responsible for shaping and developing the LGA's policies and programmes in relation to local government finance; welfare reform; European structural investment funding and workforce issues.**

Labour's Claire Kober chaired the Board this year but well publicised problems in her council meant that I carried a greater share of the burden this year.

The Fair Funding Review and Business Rates Retention has been a key focal point for us over the past year. Devising a system for the fifteen types of authority that are members of the LGA that recognises the true costs of delivering services today without relying on out-of-date assumptions from over ten years ago has been a challenge.

We want a new system that is simpler but not simplistic. That is responsive to changes in demand. And which accurately reflects costs of production for areas – some of which have quite distinctive needs. And all at the same time as providing positive incentives to grow the economy, generate taxes to pay for services, whilst encouraging the innovation that reduces demand. It's a tough one to crack and the Fair Funding Review and Business Rates Retention Task and Finish Group has met regularly and continues to advise the LGA on this.

Work is ongoing following the announcement by the Government that it will proceed with introducing 75% business rates retention from April 2020 by rolling in a number of grants. Following this switch, English councils in aggregate will collectively keep 75% of any future growth in business rates income but redistributed according to the new formula.

Earlier this year the Government also announced that 10 areas were successful in applying to pilot 100% business rates retention in 2018/2019. They will do so alongside the existing pilots, which have been extended for another year. The London pilot has also been expanded to include all London Boroughs as well as the Greater London Authority.

The LGA welcomed both the extension of the pilots and the Government's commitment to working with the sector to improve the way that the local government finance system works overall, including tackling the impact of business rate appeals.

The Board has had oversight of the new pay spine that seeks to incorporate the effects of the national minimum wage and better reflect work patterns. We have endorsed work to clarify the rules around sleep-ins and encouraged campaigns highlighting better career prospects and opportunities for carers and social workers.

The Secretary of State announced the 2018/2019 local government finance settlement in February. In addition to the provisional settlement, there was an extra £150 million for adult social care and an extra £81 million for the Rural Services Grant.

The extra money for adult social care is recognition of our lobbying on the subject. However, whilst welcome, it is a temporary measure and we have continued to highlight that, due to demographic pressures, adult social care remains under severe pressure and that £1.3 billion is needed to stabilise the adult social care provider market.



Cllr John Fuller

# Safer and Stronger Communities Board

## Cllr Morris Bright MBE

**The Safer and Stronger Communities Board is responsible for all LGA activity in relation to the safety of local communities. This includes crime and anti-social behaviour, police liaison, Police and Crime Commissioners and Police and Crime Panels, community safety, public protection, the fire service, emergency planning, and licensing and other regulatory activities.**

Community cohesion and integration have been key topics for the Board over the past year and we responded to both Dame Louise Casey's review of integration and the consultation on the Government's Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper.

We have also made contact with the five councils who will be working with the Government to pilot the ideas contained in the strategy and, for the benefit of all members, our updated guidance on community cohesion for councillors will be published later this summer.

In February, Sara Khan was appointed as the new Counter Extremism Commissioner. I congratulate Sara on her appointment and look forward to the Board working with her on issues around tackling extremism and promoting community cohesion and British values.

On domestic abuse, the LGA continues to argue that councils should have the flexibility to commission a range of services for victims. Our participation in the National Oversight Group, chaired by the Home Secretary, has allowed us to lobby directly in relation to this.

I was delighted that in February the National FGM Centre received a further three years of funding from the Government.

The LGA and the Board continues to work in partnership with the Centre to help communicate its offer to councils. Further information about its work can be found at: <http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/>

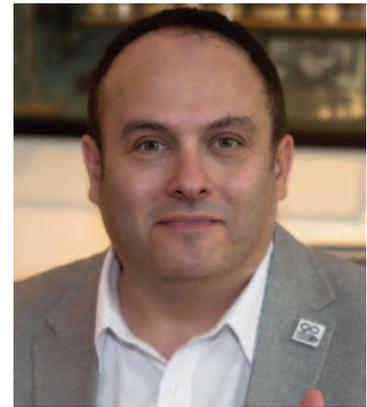
Over the past year we have made substantial progress on work to develop a national register of taxi/PHV licence refusals and revocations. The register functionality has been developed, and we have developed a suite of supporting guidance and template materials to enable licensing authorities to use the register, which is expected to go live in the summer.

We have also worked with the Institute of Licensing to support the development of guidance on the fit and proper person assessment and a standardised approach to convictions.

We continued to lobby Government in relation to gaming machines. I was pleased to have the opportunity to give evidence to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Fixed-Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs), where I reiterated the LGA's call for maximum stake on FOBTs to be reduced to £2 – a change that the Government announced in May it would be introducing.

As a result of our engagement with GambleAware, the charity responsible for research, education and treatment of problem gambling, representatives from the Board were invited to sit on their advisory panel for the responsible gambling advertising programme.

Finally, over the course of year the Board has run various events, including the annual licensing conference and a violent crime conference. I have attended a number of these events and it is always great to meet with Conservative colleagues from around the country.



Cllr Morris Bright MBE

# Fire Services Management Committee and Fire Commission

## Cllr Rebecca Knox

**The Fire Commission and the Fire Services Management Committee represent the views of fire authorities in relation to fire service modernisation and all other fire related issues.**

Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower we have contributed to the debate around building regulations and fire safety, including providing a submission to the independent enquiry that was led by Dame Judith Hackitt.

Our overriding priority is to ensure that a fire like that at Grenfell never happens again by ensuring that buildings are safe. It was therefore disappointing that in her final report Dame Judith stopped short of recommending a ban on combustible materials and the use of desktop studies, both of which we consider to be essential measures to improve safety.

More generally, we will continue to lobby for any new burdens to be fully funded and we will monitor the impact of increased inspections post Grenfell. The Sprinklers Working Group will report on possible revisions to LGA position regarding the sprinklers and other fire suppression methods. We will take these recommendations forward in line with wider LGA policy.

The LGA has been supportive of a change in fire and rescue service governance where it has been agreed locally, as was the case in, for example, Essex.

However, we continue to have concerns that a change in governance can be made against the wishes of the relevant local authorities within an area and we have been providing support to a number of affected FRAs where there has not been consent for such change.

We have also provided input to the Home Office's work on the Independent Assessment of PCCs' business cases and raised concerns about the potential for challenge if decisions are not made by a panel with a range of expertise.

We have worked with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), through their External Reference Group, on the introduction of the new inspection regime. We responded to the consultation on the methodology framework and continue to raise concerns about the potential for a new inspection process to introduce new burdens, particularly if it covers areas that are not statutory duties.

Promoting collaboration has been a key priority for the Board, and at our Fire Conference in March we had sessions on collaboration with the trade unions, on joint procurement with the police and more generally on the legal implications of collaboration.

Also at the conference we also launched Fire Vision 2024, our plan for the fire and rescue services over the next six years. Copies of the report are available on the LGA website at: <https://www.local.gov.uk/fire-vision-2024>

Finally, I would like to remind you that FRA Chairmen and senior members can attend the LGA's Fire Essentials programmes for free. The LGA will be holding two such programmes in 2018-19, with the exact dates due to be set shortly.

If you are interested in participating in these programmes please email the Conservative Group Office at [lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk](mailto:lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk) for further information.



Cllr Rebecca Knox

# What is sector-led improvement and how can it benefit my council?

**Sector-led improvement is the approach put in place by councils and the LGA following the abolition by the coalition Government of the Labour Government's national performance framework. It is based on the following key principles:**

- Councils are responsible for their own performance and improvement and for leading the delivery of better outcomes for local people in their area.
- Councils are primarily accountable to local communities. Stronger accountability through increased transparency helps local people drive further improvement.
- Councils have a collective responsibility for the performance of the sector as a whole.
- The LGA's role is to maintain an overview of the performance of the sector in order to identify potential performance challenges and opportunities and to provide tools and support to help councils take advantage of this new approach.

Working with the LGA's Leadership and Localism Team, the Conservative Group offers a range of opportunities for councillors to develop their skills whatever their current position.

## Peer challenge

Peer challenge is delivered by the sector for the sector, providing a 'practitioner perspective' and a 'critical friend' challenge. Working as a team, and supported by an experienced LGA peer challenge manager, member and officer peers spend time onsite at a council, or at a fire and rescue service, analysing performance and making constructive suggestions for improvements. The peers often benefit by being able to take new ideas back to their council.



All councils are entitled to one free corporate peer challenge every four to five years. Over the past year the LGA has delivered well over 100 peer challenges across various service areas, including children's safeguarding, adult social care, public health and fire services.

If you are an experienced councillor who has held a senior position – a cabinet member or at least a scrutiny chair – for three years or more then you are welcome to apply to become a Conservative peer by contacting the LGA Conservative Group Office, who will answer any questions that you have and send you an application form to complete.

When we receive your form it will be considered by the LGA Conservative Group Executive. If they feel that you meet the necessary criteria then they will approve your application and you will be considered for peer reviews that match your areas of experience and expertise.

## Leadership Academy

The Leadership Academy offers leadership development opportunities for councillors in frontline positions. The programme focuses on enhancing participants' leadership style and building skills and confidence, whilst also creating valuable support networks with colleagues in other councils. The key benefits of attending include:

- Developing leadership styles to improve leadership capabilities.
- Developing effective strategies in the current financial environment.
- Addressing participants' own particular challenges from within their councils.
- Developing a 'leadership toolbox' of techniques and strategies for the participants to draw on in different situations.
- Receiving an ILM recognised certificate on completion.

## Leadership Essentials

Leadership Essentials is a series of themed leadership programmes and masterclasses aimed at leading members and which offer an opportunity to concentrate on particular themes, develop leadership skills and share experiences and knowledge with colleagues. The topics covered include Finance, Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Sport.

## Focus on Leadership

This programme provides events and workshops to help councillors in their existing roles whilst providing a bridge to more senior leadership positions. This includes events like our Young Councillors Weekend and Effective Opposition programmes.

## Next Generation

The Next Generation programme, which is overseen by the LGA's political groups, is aimed at councillors who have already demonstrated potential leadership qualities and who are considered to have the capacity to develop further. Key areas covered include:

- Policy and strategy
- Community leadership
- Political management
- Personal skills development
- Communications

There is no cost involved in attending this programme but there is a competitive application process. The format of the programme is reviewed each year but is typically based around three residential blocks over two days. Information on the Next Generation programme for 2018/2019 will be sent to Conservative group leaders over the summer.

## Councillor Mentoring and Support

The LGA offers bespoke peer support such as up to five days 'change of control' for new leaders/cabinet members and tailored peer mentoring support for individual councillors from experienced councillors with relevant expertise.

## Community Leadership

Community Leadership draws attention to the LGA's resources available for newly elected councillors, including a wide range of workbooks and e-learning modules.

For more information, please visit <https://www.local.gov.uk/Community-Leadership>



## Downloads

Our Councillors Guide provides a wealth of information and advice and can be downloaded from:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/highlighting-political-leadership/councillors-guide>



## Further information

For more information on these programmes and the LGA's development offer to councillors, please contact the LGA Conservative Group.

# Peer Review

## Enabling learning, development and improvement within local government

**Corporate Peer Challenge is a core element of the LGA's sector-led improvement offer to councils. Managed and delivered by the sector on behalf of the sector, the peer challenge process is designed to support councils to take responsibility for their own improvement.**

At the heart of the process are local government officers and councillors who spend their time as 'peers' at a council that they have no direct association with in order to contribute to its improvement and development. As fellow local government practitioners, these peers bring credibility, trust and mutual respect to the challenge process.

Sharing knowledge and learning is a key feature of the interaction that occurs during the peer challenge process. Peers provide challenge and reassurance, and in doing so draw on experience from their own organisations, helping to raise performance standards across the sector. Crucially, they almost always take something back to their own council too.

Often the peer challenge is a catalyst for continued informal relationships, networks and the sharing of knowledge and learning. Mutual learning not only occurs between the council and the peers, but amongst the peer team too. Peers learn about practice in the council they are visiting, but can also benefit from their discussions with colleagues on the review team.

Cllr Peter Fleming, the Leader of Sevenoaks District Council and one of our Conservative peers, comments:

*"I have had the privilege to participate as a member peer on a number of peer*

*challenges. Each review is always different as individual councils inevitably have their own cultures, priorities and dynamics.*

*"Whilst a key part of my role as a team member is to share my experience and expertise with the council I am visiting, it is very much a two-way process and I have always taken away something that I feel will benefit my own council.*

*"Sharing the experiences gained from peer work has definitely been beneficial for me. I believe that it has contributed to my development as both a councillor and a council leader."*

The average peer review is 3-4 days and all member peers receive a flat daily rate plus expenses for any work that they undertake.

If you are an experienced councillor who has held a senior position – a Cabinet Member or at least a Scrutiny Chairman – for at least three years then you are welcome to apply to become a peer. Please email us at [lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk](mailto:lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk) or **call us on 020 7664 3223**. We will answer any questions that you may have and if you wish to formally put your name forward we will then send you an application form to complete.

When we receive your completed form it will then be considered by the LGA Conservative Group Executive. If they feel that you meet the criteria expected of a peer then they will approve your application. You will then officially become a peer and will be considered for peer requests that match your areas of expertise and experience.

# Next Generation

## Cllr Jordan Meade of Gravesham Borough Council

**Having only been a councillor for two years when I applied to join the most recent Next Generation course, I was pleasantly surprised to be selected for the 2017-2018 programme!**

At the age of 19 I was honoured to be appointed Cabinet Member for Heritage, Tourism, the Arts and Young People. However, despite being given this frontline position on my council I was aware that there was still much more that I needed to learn in order to make myself a better representative for the people that I was elected to serve and also to achieve my own ambitions within the council.

Next Generation is the only course of its kind for Conservative councillors since it is carried out entirely in a Conservative setting. It aims to equip participants with the skills to develop both as a councillor and as a Conservative politician. It is not just about what you 'do' as a councillor, but also about the 'why' and the 'how.'

As participants we had to consider a number of key questions throughout the course. What is Conservatism in local government? How is it conveyed? What is good political leadership and what skills are needed to provide it? What am I trying to achieve?

What particularly impressed me was the variety of topics that were covered over the four weekends and the quality of the speakers that we heard from.

Key sessions included those on social media (covering the opportunities and pitfalls) led by Cllr Peter Fleming, the Leader of Sevenoaks District Council, 'Communicating with Confidence,' led by a trainer from RADA, and interview technique training from Cllr Morris Bright, the Leader of Hertsmere Borough Council.

We also heard from a variety of experienced Conservative local government leaders, including Cllr Sean Anstee, the then Leader of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, Lord Porter, the Leader of South Holland, District Council and LGA Chairman and Cllr David Simmonds, the Deputy Leader of the London Borough of Hillingdon and Leader of the LGA Conservative Group.

In addition to these sessions, I also learnt a great deal from my colleagues on the course as they came from the different tiers of local government and had so many varied experiences.

From the Next Generation experience I now have a close fraternity of colleagues to call on for support, advice and inspiration.

We were all able to bring different perspectives to the topics that were being discussed and this led to some robust but constructive conversations amongst ourselves about the best approaches to the particular challenges that we were being asked to tackle!

I hugely enjoyed being a participant on the Next Generation course and feel that it has already helped my development as a councillor. I would strongly recommend it to any other councillor who is interested in developing their skills across a wide range of areas.

For more information on the Next Generation programme please contact Angela Page in the LGA Conservative Group Office on 020 7664 3223.



Cllr Jordan Meade



# The Conservative Group Office

**The Conservative Group Office exists to support Conservative council groups and their councillors. It is also the day to day voice of Conservatives in the wider corporate LGA.**

There are four full-time members of staff who have a wealth of knowledge, including first-hand experience of being a councillor and of Conservative Campaign Headquarters (CCHQ) and the Conservative Councillors' Association (CCA).

We work closely with the Local Government Department at CCHQ and the CCA, including hosting joint events and sponsoring sessions at the annual Local Government Conference.

Although much of our time is spent supporting the Group Leader, Group Executive and Conservative members of the various LGA governance bodies, we also deal on a daily basis with enquiries from Conservative councillors in relation to a variety of policy or legal issues, and we aim to be the first point of contact for Conservative council groups.

Should you need support on confidential matters, whether it is checking the advice you may have received or assistance with employment, finance or legal issues you are dealing with, the Group Office can assist by putting you in touch with experienced members or officers.

A key role is to establish and maintain dialogue with Ministers. This includes supporting our lead members in lobbying on specific issues of legislation or policy proposals and securing the attendance of ministers at Conservative group meetings or corporate LGA events.

In summary, the work of the Group Office is focused on the following areas:

- Acting as a secretariat to and arranging the appointments of Conservative councillors on LGA governance bodies.
- Working closely with, but where appropriate challenging, the Government and Party organisation.
- Shaping the LGA's corporate campaigns, policy, media and public affairs work.
- Offering advice and guidance to individual councillors and to Conservative council groups on policy and legal issues.
- Producing an annual report to inform members of our activities.
- Producing an annual directory of Conservative members appointed to LGA bodies.
- Organising the Conservative 'Next Generation' programme each year for aspiring future leaders.
- Delivering the Conservative part of the LGA's 'Be a Councillor' programme.
- Attending and running sessions at Party Conference and the CCA Local Government Conference, and having a visible presence at the LGA annual conference.
- Sending out a monthly email bulletin to keep you updated on key developments.
- Organising a regular programme of briefing seminars around the country.
- Supporting Conservative councils within the context of sector-led improvement.
- Co-ordinating the LGA's Conservative peer support programme.
- For the latest information on our work and activities, please follow us on Twitter @LGACons



Angela Page

## Head of Group Office Angela Page

Angela joined the LGA in 2001 as a Political Assistant and then in 2007 she changed roles to become a Political Advisor. In June 2016 she was appointed Head of Group Office.

She is responsible for advising on and implementing the overall policy and management of the Conservative Group and providing advice to the Group Leader and the Group Executive.

Angela started her working life in banking and after a break whilst her children were still young she went on to become an estate agent before becoming involved in politics.

Having been Conservative Party member for a number of years, Angela was elected as a councillor on the London Borough of Bromley in May 2014 and then re-elected this May.



Paul McCannah

## Political Adviser Paul McCannah

Paul joined the LGA in 2004 from the CCA. He supports and advises Conservative members who serve on the Children and Young People Board, the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board, the Community Wellbeing Board, the Safer and Stronger Communities Board, the People and Places Board and the City Regions Board.

Paul served on Enfield Council from 2002-2014. During this time he chaired a number of scrutiny panels and was a Cabinet Member for Community Safety and for Leisure Services.

Prior to joining the LGA, he worked as the National Organiser of the CCA.



Ghazaleh Pourzadi

## Political Officer Ghazaleh Pourzadi

Ghazaleh joined the LGA in June 2018. She is responsible for maintaining and further developing the communications network between the LGA Conservative Group and Conservative councillors and parliamentary colleagues.

Prior to joining the LGA, Ghazaleh worked at the Conservative Councillors' Association, at the Houses of Parliament and at a number of international charities. She graduated from Kingston University in 2012 with a Masters degree in International Relations with Law.



Penelope Galvin

## Political Administrator Penelope Galvin

Penelope joined the LGA at the beginning of April 2018. She provides administrative support to the Group Office, Group Leader and to Conservative members. She is the first point of contact for general enquiries, as well as facilitating all meetings.

Penelope is a recent Politics graduate from the University of Hull, successfully completing the Westminster Hull Internship Programme at CCHQ alongside her degree. Prior to joining the LGA she worked in an independent recruitment agency.

## Contact Us



**Conservative Group Office**  
Local Government Association  
18 Smith Square  
Westminster  
London  
SW1P 3HZ



[lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk](mailto:lgaconservatives@local.gov.uk)



[www.local.gov.uk/lga-conservatives](http://www.local.gov.uk/lga-conservatives)



**020 7664 3264**



[@lgacons](https://twitter.com/lgacons)

---

## Staff Direct Line Details

**Angela Page**      **0207 664 3223**  
[angela.page@local.gov.uk](mailto:angela.page@local.gov.uk)

**Ghazaleh Pourzadi**      **0207 664 3302**  
[ghazaleh.pourzadi@local.gov.uk](mailto:ghazaleh.pourzadi@local.gov.uk)

**Paul McCannah**      **0207 664 3254**  
[paul.mccannah@local.gov.uk](mailto:paul.mccannah@local.gov.uk)

**Penelope Galvin**      **0207 664 3264**  
[penelope.galvin@local.gov.uk](mailto:penelope.galvin@local.gov.uk)