

LGA Sector Support Offer quick reference guide

Support for the sector, by the sector

The Local Government Association (LGA) provides practical support to councils and combined authorities, and individual councillors and officers across England through its **Sector Support Offer**, which delivers unrivalled value for money.

This support brings together the experience of councillors and officers from across local government to provide **tailored advice, peer-led support and wider learning and development opportunities**, helping councils strengthen governance, improve services and respond to complex local challenges and opportunities.

Much of this support is **funded by government and free for councils to access**, ensuring authorities of all sizes, and regardless of financial pressures, can benefit from expert support and shared learning from across the sector.

Support is accessible cross-party, including support for opposition groups.

A sector-led approach to improvement

Sector-led improvement is based on a set of principles:

- local authorities are **responsible for their own performance**
- local authorities are **accountable locally**, not nationally
- there is a sense of **collective responsibility** for the performance of the sector.

This means authorities helping others to improve through peer support, challenge, learning and shared experience.

Peer-led support is a unique strength of the offer and central to this approach. Councillor and officer peers understand the realities of local government and can offer **practical insight, trusted advice** and **constructive challenge** based on first-hand experience.

The LGA connects councils, councillors and officers with people, expertise and programmes most relevant to their needs.

Types of support

Our programmes span corporate improvement and assurance, service-specific support, and wider specialist offers. These include:

- **Peer led support**
Corporate, finance and service-specific peer challenges, bespoke peer support, and access to experienced member and officer peers with wide ranging experience across services and portfolio areas.
- **Regional support and improvement advice**
Engagement and support from LGA principal advisers and regional teams—underpinned by peers and political group offices—including tailored advice and signposting to wider offers.
- **Leadership development and workforce support**
Councillor and officer development, leadership programmes, workforce and HR support, and programmes to help attract new talent, including graduate schemes and support standing for election.

- **Governance, finance and organisational improvement**
Support for corporate services and navigating change, including guidance, tools and bespoke support on governance, assurance, finance, transformation, procurement and organisational resilience.
- **Service-specific improvement support**
Targeted support for key service areas such as children's services, adult social care and public health, planning, housing, culture and sport.
- **Digital, data and cyber support**
Support to strengthen digital capability, cyber resilience and research and data functions, including benchmarking through LG Inform.
- **Place-based and system-wide programmes**
Support for local government reorganisation and devolution, sustainability and net zero, housing and cross-public sector collaboration through programmes, such as One Public Estate.
- **Other technical and specialist support**
Specialist programmes include fire safety inspection (Joint Inspection Team), planning, communications and cohesion.

This support can be tailored to local circumstances, and many LGA programmes provide cross-cutting support across several of these themes.

More detail on each programme is available in the annex below.

Scale of support

Each year the LGA works with authorities across the country to provide practical improvement support.

Collectively, **LGA programmes are open to—and reach—100 per cent of councils and combined authorities each year.**

In 2025/6:

- Regional improvement teams **engage with every council and combined authority in England.**
- The LGA provided over **3,400 instances of direct support to councils and combined authorities** in 2025/26.
- **1,500 days of peer support** was provided at no cost to recipients - at least **£1.5 million in savings to the sector.**
- **More than 2,500 councillors attended training and development opportunities.**

Impact and value for money

The LGA has a strong track record of delivering high impact, low-cost programmes. The sector support programme **saves the sector tens of millions of pounds annually**, delivering significant economies of scale, using a peer-based approach. In 2025/26:

- 100 per cent of councils receiving a CPC in 2025/26 reported positive impacts for their authority. 99 per cent of authorities said **support from the LGA had a positive impact.**
- **100 per cent of councils receiving a CPC reported positive impacts** for their authority.
- 97 per cent of councillors and officers said **support improved their knowledge, understanding and/or skills.**

The LGA's sector-led approach **helps authorities improve efficiency and services, innovate, and deliver better value for money.** It avoids the high costs associated with inspection and intervention regimes, sharing knowledge and expertise across local government.

Preventative support saves costs in the longer term.

What councils say

LGA support is trusted and valued by the sector:

“The LGA's Sector support programme is vital in supporting councils to respond to the toughest challenges facing local government, delivering highly impactful programmes at low cost for both central and local government.”

(Council Leader)

“A peer challenge uses the expertise and experience of fellow local government officers and members to be a critical friend. It provides constructive challenge and practical advice that helps councils improve.”

(Council Leader)

“The peer challenge process helped us step back, reflect on our priorities and strengthen how we deliver for our communities.”

(Council Chief Executive)

Accessing support

Councils and combined authorities can find out more about the LGA's Sector Support Offer by visiting the [LGA website](#) or speaking with the relevant [contact for their region](#) or [political group office](#), who can help identify appropriate support, whatever the challenge faced.

Annex

The Sector Support Offer

1. [Sector Support Programme](#)

Vital tools and support to deliver critical services to communities, while helping drive change and improvement across all regions. The support includes:

- [Regional support](#)
Tailored support and advice, including from councillor and officer peers.
- [Corporate peer challenge](#)
Corporate and finance peer challenges, including progress reviews.
- [Governance, assurance and finance](#)
Direct support, learning and development on issues relating to governance, assurance and finance.
- [Research and data](#)
Benchmarking through [LG Inform](#) and wider data and performance skills and development.
- [Leadership](#)
Councillor and officer learning and development, including programmes to attract new talent (Be A Councillor Campaign and Impact: The Local Government Graduate Programme).
- [Workforce and HR support](#)
Direct advice and support, employment law, workforce research and policy, national terms and conditions, collective bargaining.
- [Transformation](#)
Learning and development for councillors and officers

2. [Local government reorganisation \(LGR\) and devolution support](#)

Support relating to LGR and devolution – including webinars, networks and direct support provided by LGA peers and regional teams.

3. [Partners in Care and Health](#)

Tools and support to help local authorities to improve the way they deliver adult social care and public health services, delivered in partnership with ADASS.

4. [Children's services improvement programme](#)

Support to facilitate and enable children's services improvement, including direct support and learning and development offers.

5. [Cyber, digital and technology](#)

Support to strengthen digital resilience, share knowledge, and navigate an evolving technical landscape.

6. [Council Housing Building Support Service \(CHoSS\)](#)

Support to help councils strengthen capacity, capability and confidence to boost council-led housebuilding across England.

7. **One Public Estate**

Supporting locally-led partnerships of public sector bodies to kickstart regeneration and transform public service delivery – delivered in partnership with the Office of Government Property (OGP) within Cabinet Office and MHCLG.

8. **Joint Inspection Team**

A multidisciplinary team that assesses fire hazards and provides specialist fire safety advice to local authorities – invited by local authorities to inspect blocks using the Housing Act 2004 and associated powers of the local authority.

9. **Planning (including the Planning Advisory Service and Pathways to Planning)**

Support for councils and local planning authorities to understand and respond to the Government's reforms to the planning system, including 1-2-1 support. Pathways to Planning provides local planning authorities with a pipeline to talented, supported new planners each year.

10. **Procurement and commissioning programme**

Supporting commercial capability, competency and operational effectiveness of procurement and supply chain staff across the sector.

11. **Sustainability improvement programme**

Supporting councils to reach their local net zero and adaptation goals, including training, networks and tools across energy, the green economy and measuring emissions.

12. **Communications improvement programme**

Networks, events, resources, training and strategy development to aid effective communications, alongside reactive support for crisis communications and other ad-hoc assistance.

13. **Culture and sport improvement offer**

A range of development programmes and tools to help councils tackle the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities for culture, physical activity and sport.

14. **Impact finance stream**

Part of our graduate offer to councils, to attract and develop talent within councils and support skills and capacity within public sector finance.

15. **Community Cohesion**

Community Cohesion support is delivered in collaboration with Belong and includes a range of tools, resources and a training offer. Support covers areas such as tensions monitoring, mis-/dis- and mal-information, cohesion awareness and incident reporting.

16. **Strategic Highways Peer Challenge**

A new peer-led review of a council's highways service to support improvement, strengthen leadership and delivery, and support good practice.

17. **Local Resilience Programme**

The new Local Resilience programme provides resilience and crisis management learning and development training to local government officers. This includes in-person training to council chief executives and online training to other council staff.