

Workforce Support impact survey 2018-19

April 2018 to March 2019



Acknowledgements

The Local Government Association (LGA) Research and Information team would like to thank all the respondents who took part in this survey.

To view more research from the Local Government Association Research and Information team please visit: <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/research>

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Summary

The Local Government Association (LGA) works with councils and their partners to help create a workforce able to respond to major changes within the public sector. A key feature of this programme is the delivery of bespoke support by the LGA's workforce team. To assess the impact of support provided in the financial year 2018/19, an online survey was sent to all 52 recipient organisations. Surveys were sent out around six months after the support concluded, in order to identify the longer-term impact. A total of 20 responses were received – a response rate of 38 per cent.

Key messages

- **Main priorities:** The main improvement priorities for the 20 participating councils were 'culture and behaviours within the organisation', followed by 'the organisation's performance', 'delivery of the organisation's priorities', and 'recruitment and retention issues'.
- **Level of impact:** Most respondents reported that the LGA's workforce support had achieved a positive impact to a moderate to great extent. This included positive impacts on a council's senior management structure, the delivery of more robust and transparent processes, and the ability to enact tangible change in organisational culture and behaviours and improve staff morale.
- **Further support:** Half of respondents said they would like more information about further workforce support from the LGA, while half said that no further workforce support was needed at this time.

Introduction

The Local Government Association (LGA) works with councils and their partners to help create a workforce able to respond to major changes within the public sector. A key feature of this programme is the delivery of bespoke support by the LGA's workforce team. To assess the impact of support provided in the financial year 2018/19, an online survey was sent to all 52 recipient organisations. Surveys were sent out around six months after the support concluded, in order to identify the longer-term impact.

Methodology

The LGA's Research and Information team conducted an online survey of the 52 organisations receiving support from the workforce team in the financial year 2018/19. Respondents were asked the extent to which, if at all, the workforce support had a positive impact on the outcomes which they had hoped to achieve. Surveys were sent out around six months after the support concluded, in order to identify the longer-term impact. Fieldwork took place at the following intervals:

- March 2019 (sent to 27 respondents)
- May 2019 (sent to seven respondents)
- August 2019 (sent to 18 respondents)

A total of 20 responses were received – a response rate of 38 per cent. This level of response rate means that these results should not be taken to be more widely representative of the views of all councils. Rather, they are a snapshot of the views of this group of respondents.

Where the response base is less than 50, care should be taken when interpreting percentages, as small differences can seem magnified. Therefore, where this is the case in this report, absolute numbers are reported alongside the percentage values.

Full Survey Results

This section outlines the full set of results for the survey.

Areas of support

All respondents were asked to indicate which of the areas they hoped to see an improvement in as a result of the workforce support provided by the LGA. Forty-five per cent (nine respondents) of respondents said that they hoped to see an improvement in the delivery of the organisation's priorities. Over one third of respondents (35 per cent, seven respondents) hoped for an improvement in culture and behaviours within the organisation. A quarter of respondents (25 per cent, five respondents) wanted to see a benefit to their organisation's performance. Of those who specified 'other impacts', their responses covered seeking improvements in pay and grading, improvements in their regional review, advice on their specific project, and a resolution to their own specific issue. See Table 1.

Table 1: Which of the following areas did you hope to see an improvement in, as a result of the workforce support your organisation received from the Local Government Association (LGA)?

	N	%
The organisation's performance	5	25
Delivery of the organisation's priorities	9	45
Recruitment and retention issues	4	20
Culture and behaviours within the organisation	7	35
Workforce productivity	3	15
The way that services are delivered	1	5
The financial sustainability of the organisation	1	5
Other impacts	5	25
Don't know	1	5

Base: all respondents (20). Respondents could give more than one answer from a randomised list.

Focus of support

The nine respondents who selected multiple areas for improvement were asked to select their main improvement priority area. One third (three respondents) said their main priority was to improve their organisation's culture and behaviour. This was followed jointly by 22 per cent of respondents (two people) who said their main improvement priority was their organisation's performance, and another two respondents who selected recruitment and retention issues.

The remaining areas selected, each for one respondent only, were improving the delivery of their organisation's priorities and improving the financial sustainability of the organisation. See Table 2.

Table 2: Which of these was the main area you hoped to see an improvement in, as a result of the workforce support your organisation received from the LGA?

	N	%
The organisation's performance	2	22
Delivery of the organisation's priorities	1	11
Recruitment and retention issues	2	22
Culture and behaviours within the organisation	3	33
Workforce productivity	0	0
The way that services are delivered	0	0
The financial sustainability of the organisation	1	11
Other impacts	0	0
Don't know	0	0

Base: all respondents who selected more than one area of improvement (9)

Therefore, the main improvement priorities for the 19 councils that gave a reply were:

- Culture and behaviours within the organisation – 5 respondents
- Other – 4 respondents ('resolution of a specific issue', 'specific project', pay and grading' and 'regional review')
- Delivery of the organisation's priorities – 3 respondents
- Recruitment and retention issues – 3 respondents
- The organisation's performance – 3 respondents
- The financial sustainability of the organisation – 1 respondent

Level of impact

The 19 respondents who selected areas in which they hoped to see an improvement as a result of LGA's support were asked to rate the perceived impact of the support they had received. For almost every main area, most respondents said there had been a moderate to great positive impact. The two areas where impact was not mostly positive were 'workforce productivity' and 'the way that services are delivered'.

'Recruitment and retention' was the area with the highest percentage of scores for a great extent of positive impact (75 per cent, three respondents) indicating that the impact from workforce support was particularly helpful in this area. 'Of the three respondents who hoped to see an improvement in 'workforce productivity', as a result of the LGA's support, one reported that this had been achieved to a 'great extent'.

Two respondents said that the positive impact was small or not achieved. The one respondent who had hoped to see a positive effect on 'the way that services are delivered' said this impact had not occurred¹.

The five respondents who answered 'other' said that the LGA's workforce support had achieved either a moderate or great positive impact on their respective

¹ This respondent later mentioned that they would have appreciated private discussions with colleague Officers, which could be a reason behind the low scores they gave .

improvement areas. Both respondents who said they wanted help with a specific issue or project said the support received had a positive impact to a great extent. See **Error! Reference source not found.**

Overall, a vast majority of respondents said the impact of the workforce support on their organisation was positive.

Table 3: To what extent, if at all, do you think that the workforce support has had a positive impact on:

	To a great extent		To a moderate extent		To a small extent		Not at all		Don't know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The organisation's performance	2	40	1	20	1	20	1	20	0	0
Delivery of the organisation's priorities	4	44	3	33	2	22	0	0	0	0
Recruitment and retention issues	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
Culture and behaviours within the organisation	3	43	1	14	3	43	0	0	0	0
Workforce productivity	1	33	0	0	1	33	1	33	0	0
The way that services are delivered	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100	0	0
The financial sustainability of the organisation	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other impacts	2	40	3	60	0	0	0	0	0	0

Base: all respondents who selected areas in which they hoped to see an improvement (19)

Examples of impact

The 15 respondents who reported a positive impact on their organisation, to either a great or moderate extent, were invited to provide illustrative examples. Their examples covered how useful the training had been in supporting their organisations' senior management structure, how it had helped make processes more robust and transparent, allowed the council to enact tangible change in organisational culture and behaviours and improve staff morale, and at the same time provide clear feedback on individual specific issues.

- "Staff morale, staff feel valued as pay is reflective of the role being undertaken."
- "The support really helped our thinking around layers in the organisation and future management development"
- "As our council are still going through significant change LGA have assisted us with job evaluation leading to establishing overall functional change."
- "Contributed to making our processes more robust and transparent. Working with us to provide external mentors for most senior managers which will have a positive impact on the capabilities of our leadership."

Further comments

Respondents were invited to provide further comments about the workforce support they received. Eleven councils gave the following feedback:

- “Service was provided smoothly, calmly and effectively.”
- “The review was undertaken by [name of adviser] who was just brilliant! They managed the process of the review and the delivery of the report and recommendations with sensitivity and skill and their professional approach allowed the organisation to accept and embrace the review findings.”
- “The TEDD survey and the support given by [name of adviser] has been invaluable to our organisation and we are really pleased with the assistance we have had which has enabled us to develop our organisation.”
- “Always helpful and knowledgeable whenever I seek advice/guidance.”
- “We were early users of the CE 360 tool and would use it again.”
- “LGA are an extremely professional organisation it is a pleasure working with your staff.”
- “Both LGA officers have provided high level, quality advice and guidance.
- We have had a huge amount of support from LGA. All of it highly responsive and of very superior quality. We are most grateful.”
- [Name of adviser] was our adviser throughout. They were very helpful both in providing advice and also scoring the jobs with us. They were skilled in delivering training to a wide audience.”
- There was a fundamental difference in the way the workforce support was perceived and engaged with. Elected members wished to explore the management structure and capability. The previous CEO wished to explore the viability of the management structure, possibly to argue for greater resource. His views were dominant and there were no private discussions with colleague officers which was disappointing.”
- “The support provided was first-rate, professional and timely.”

Further information

All respondents were asked whether they would like more information about any further workforce support from the LGA, and if so on what topic. All 20 respondents gave feedback. Half of all respondents (ten people) said that no further support was needed at this time. The remaining half asked for a variety of help, with an almost even spread across topic areas such as those relating directly to employees (for example, employee engagement, pay and grading, job evaluation, and flexible working), to wider organisation level areas (for example, workforce planning, organisational culture, creating effective organisations) and also including more senior managerial issues (for example, Chief Executive 360 appraisals and good manager training). See Table 4.

Table 4: If you would like more information about any further workforce support from the LGA, please select the support you are interested in from the list below:

	N	%
Employee engagement	4	20
Flexible working	2	10
Workforce planning	4	20
HR review	2	10
Chief Executive 360 appraisal	3	15
Creating effective organisations	3	15
Performance and capability enhancement	4	20
Organisational culture review	4	20
Job evaluation	3	15
Pay and grading review	4	20
Good manager training	4	20
Bespoke consultancy	0	0
Other (please specify)	0	0
No further support is needed at this time	10	50

Base: all respondents (20). Respondents could select more than one answer from a randomised list.

Annex A: Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. You can navigate through the questions using the buttons at the bottom of each page. Use the 'previous' button at the bottom of the page if you wish to amend your response to an earlier question.

All responses will be treated confidentially. Information will be aggregated, and no individual or authority will be identified in any publications without your consent. Identifiable information may be used internally within the LGA but will only be held and processed in accordance with our [privacy statement](#). We are undertaking this survey to aid the legitimate interests of the LGA in supporting and representing authorities.

1. Please enter your details below:

Name:

Role:

Email:

Name of organisation:

Name of project:

2. Which of the following areas did you hope to see an improvement in, as a result of the workforce support your organisation received from the Local Government Association (LGA)?
Please tick all that apply

[Randomise answer list order]

- The organisation's performance
- Delivery of the organisation's priorities
- Recruitment and retention issues
- Culture and behaviours within the organisation
- Workforce productivity
- The way that services are delivered
- The financial sustainability of the organisation
- Other impacts (please specify)
- Don't know

To those who selected more than one category above:

3. Which of these was the **main** area you hoped to see an improvement in, as a result of the workforce support your organisation received from the LGA.
Please select just one answer

The categories selected above will be fed through

Don't know

To everyone apart from those who selected 'don't know' to Q2:

4. To what extent, if at all, do you think that the workforce support has had a positive impact on:
Please select one answer for each row

	To a great extent	To a moderate extent	To a small extent	Not at all	Don't know
The categories selected above will be fed through					

To those who answered a great or moderate extent to at least one of the options above:

5. Please provide a couple of examples of how the workforce support has had a positive impact on your organisation.
6. Would you be happy for us to use the examples given above as part of our wider promotion of the support available?

Yes – and this can be attributed to the organisation

Yes – as an anonymised example

No

Not applicable

7. If you have any further comments about the workforce support you received, please use the space below.
8. If you would like more information about any further workforce support from the LGA, please select the support you are interested in from the list below:

[Randomise answer list order]

- Employee engagement
- Flexible working
- Workforce planning
- HR review
- Chief Executive 360 appraisal
- Creating effective organisations
- Performance and capability enhancement
- Organisational culture review
- Job evaluation
- Pay and grading review
- Good manager training
- Bespoke consultancy
- Other (please specify)
- No further support is needed at this time

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this survey. You are in control of any personal data that you have provided to us in your response. You can contact us at all times to have your information changed or deleted. You can find our full [privacy policy here](#). Your feedback will be used to improve and develop the workforce support we offer.



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