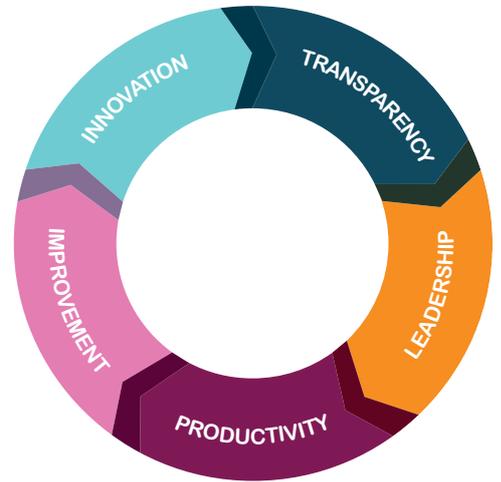


# SECTOR-LED IMPROVEMENT

OUR OFFER OF SUPPORT

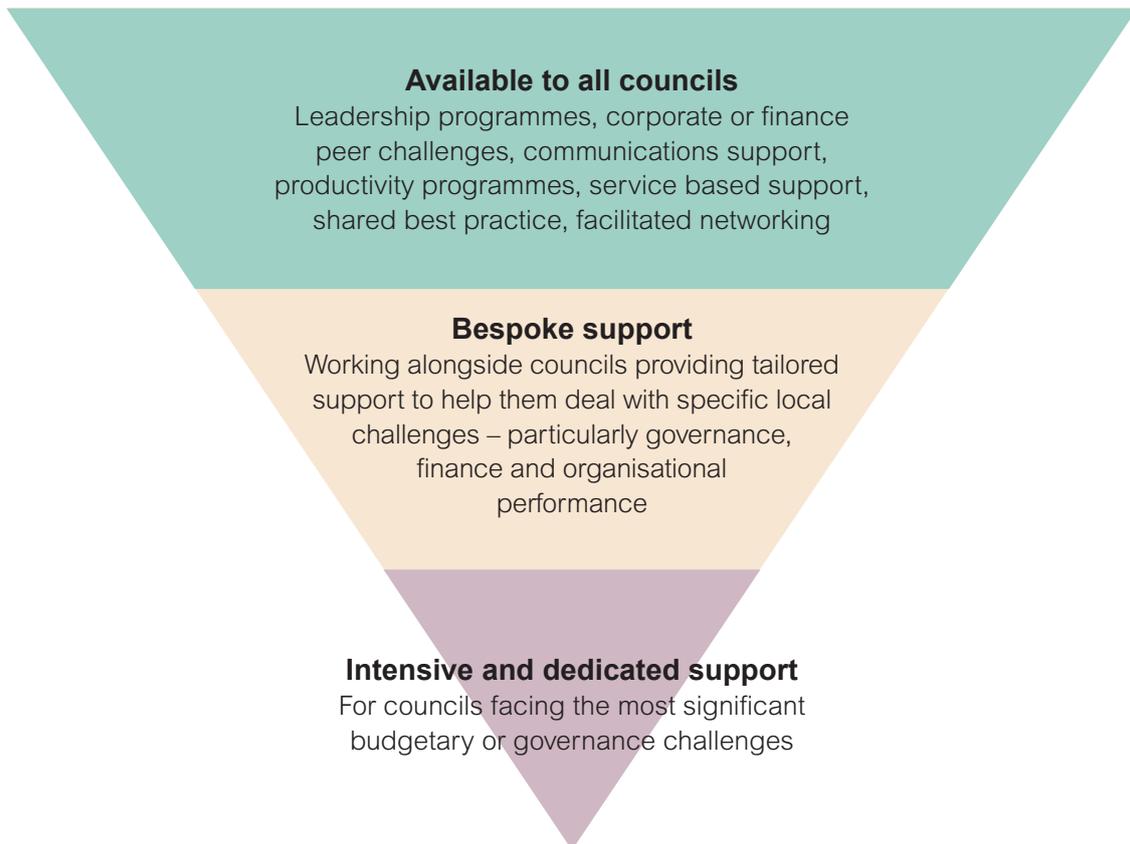


The challenges currently facing councils are unprecedented, but sector-led improvement has proven to be a success even in tough times. Our refreshed offer provides different tiers of support depending on the intensity of the challenges being faced locally.

The range of tools and support available have been shaped by what councils have told us they need and would be most helpful to them.

In addition we continue to maintain an overview of performance in the sector so that we are able to offer support on a proactive basis, helping councils facing severe challenges and minimising the need for government intervention.

[www.local.gov.uk/sector-led-improvement](http://www.local.gov.uk/sector-led-improvement)



**95%** of chief executives and council leaders said support from the LGA had a positive impact on their authority



# Support and challenge from peers

Support and challenge from our network of experienced member and officer peers is what makes a sector-led approach to improvement unique and successful.

Our peer challenge approach involves a team of officers and members spending time onsite at another council as 'peers' to provide challenge and share learning. It is an established and proven tool that supports improvement. In our most recent perceptions survey 92 per cent of respondents said peer challenges are useful to councils.

A recent independent evaluation, 'Rising to the challenge', concludes

that our corporate peer challenge continues to have positive impact for participating councils and local government as a whole.

We want all councils to benefit from peer challenge and there is an expectation that all councils will have a corporate peer challenge (at no charge) every 4 to 5 years. Councils can choose the timing of their peer challenge and there is scope to tailor its focus.

The LGA also provides direct bespoke support through its pool of member and officer peers and in-house experts, helping councils and their councillors with improvement and learning by providing a 'practitioner perspective' and 'critical friend', for example mentoring for new leaders and portfolio holders.

[www.local.gov.uk/peer-challenges](http://www.local.gov.uk/peer-challenges)

**92%** of leaders and chief executives said that peer challenge is a useful way to get an external view on performance

LGA Perceptions Survey 2017/18

## How we can help with immediate challenges

To support councils to be the very best we have shaped our offer of support to reflect the key challenges councils are facing.

### Adult social care and health

The Care and Health Improvement Programme offers a range of options to help councils and their health partners to overcome the demands on adult social care provision. Our current offer for system leaders and directors includes:

- a risk awareness self-assessment tool to manage and mitigate financial and sustainability risks
- the Commissioning for Better Outcomes framework to progress best practice in commissioning
- the high impact change model to minimise unnecessary hospital stays and consider new interventions

- an integration self-assessment tool and facilitated workshops to assess ambitions, capability and capacity to integrate services
- training and networking opportunities
- evidence of efficient and sustainable approaches
- workshops and events to aid public health and prevention decision making
- support for transformation through information sharing and technology.

Our care and health improvement advisers work alongside principal advisers in each region to provide tailored help and advice, coordinate expert mentoring and peer support.

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

### Brexit

Following the EU referendum the LGA has been looking at the risks and opportunities for local government by collecting evidence of the local impacts of Brexit through our ongoing call for information. We are supporting councils to prepare for EU Exit by facilitating a programme of regional sounding boards, where regional sector representatives have the opportunity to highlight risks and opportunities, and share best practice from within the sector on EU Exit planning.

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

## Children's services

We provide advice and a range of support including:

- Leadership Essentials course, providing an intensive introduction to the role of lead member for children's services
- an informal system of support for lead members going through an Ofsted inspection or single inspection framework (SIF) re-inspection
- developing and/or brokering bespoke diagnostic or peer review tools either to individual councils, as part of a regional offer, or commissioned by DfE for authorities in intervention
- courses for practitioners engaging in peer challenge or diagnostic activity
- research looking at what the key enablers, and barriers, are to improvement and how the whole system can support improvement in local children's services.

Children's improvement advisers work with LGA principal advisers.

[www.local.gov.uk/childrens-services-improvement](http://www.local.gov.uk/childrens-services-improvement)

## Communications

A wide range of specialist support is available to communication teams. This includes one-day communications health checks, three-day strategic communications reviews, place branding support, crisis communications assistance and advice on managing issues of high reputational risk. The LGA can also assist with accessing best practice case studies and resources and can provide advice on issues such as research, evaluation and training.

[www.local.gov.uk/communications-support](http://www.local.gov.uk/communications-support)

## Devolution

There is no standard template for our offer as we want to ensure that just as devolution is different in different areas then so too is the

support that we put in place. Our bespoke package, based on current work with combined authorities/ devolution deal areas, could include:

- policy support
- leadership development
- brokering and advice from experienced peers
- technical advice, eg governance
- strategic advice for ongoing discussions with government
- bespoke communications support
- help to gain additional capacity and capability.

Plus, support for the seven directly elected combined authority mayors.

Our devolution hub has everything you need to know, the latest research and intelligence, and our popular 60-second explainer videos. Officers can join our devolution network and senior officers our combined authority networks.

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

## Finance

In the current financial climate councils are increasingly looking for good practice and support to help them manage their overall finances. This can range from achieving productivity or efficiency savings through to engaging local communities in how to prioritise spending with reduced resources. We offer a range of support:

- Financial Review, a specialist financial peer challenge that focuses on a council's strategy for achieving financial sustainability
- Leadership Essentials, a two day residential programme to help leaders and finance portfolio holders get to grips with financial challenges
- Budget Challenge, a facilitated discussion, led by a member peer, working with the cabinet or equivalent, offering political advice and guidance on budget options and issues
- bespoke finance improvement advice.

Our team of associates can also help councils with their individual, local challenges.

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

## Housing

The 2018/19 Housing Advisers programme will support councils to deliver a project to meet their local housing needs: delivering homes, reducing homelessness, or generating revenue or savings.

Councils can apply for bespoke expert support from an independent adviser.

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

## Innovation

Each year at the LGA Conference our Innovation Zone showcases how councils are innovating to tackle local issues. Ongoing innovation work includes:

- 900 examples of council innovation
- our work with the Design Council, equipping councils with design skills and techniques to apply to service challenges
- our behavioural insights programme
- @LGAcomms #InnovateTuesday, highlighting our latest case studies weekly.

[www.local.gov.uk/case-studies](http://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies)

## Local Partnerships

Local Partnerships, a joint venture between HM Treasury, the LGA and Welsh Government, helps local authorities save money, make money and respond to public sector reform opportunities. Working in partnership with the LGA, Local Partnerships assists the development and implementation of strategic transformation programmes across services including: housing, waste collection and disposal, energy efficiency, mergers and shared services, business case development and more.

<http://localpartnerships.org.uk>

## Managerial leadership

Local government managers are leading through unprecedented times. To support these professionals our development offer focuses on ensuring the best graduates are encouraged into the sector and those leading councils are offered opportunities for joint political and managerial development. Plus, through our partnership with Solace, the prestigious IGNITE programme for chief executives and programmes aimed at aspiring chief executives and middle managers.

[www.local.gov.uk/officer-development](http://www.local.gov.uk/officer-development)

## Planning

The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) provides high-quality help, advice and training to councils to help planners and councillors stay effective and up-to-date. This includes help with progressing a local plan, improving performance with planning applications, delivery and infrastructure funding, peer challenge and support, Leadership Essentials, best practice updates and events.

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

## Political leadership

Inspiring local communities and creating a better future for people and places takes ambitious leadership. The LGA's range of political leadership development programmes and resources helps support and develop councillors – ensuring local politicians are confident, capable, and well equipped to make a difference locally.

[www.local.gov.uk/councillor-development](http://www.local.gov.uk/councillor-development)

## Productivity and efficiency

The LGA supports your council to innovate, save money and generate income. A mix of grant funding, expert help and resources are all offered.

Support includes:

- Cyber security – granted funding by the Cabinet Office to ensure that councils are as resilient against cyber-attacks as possible.
- Commercialisation – as funding shrinks, councils are exploring new ways of generating income. Many councils are using their assets wisely, trading services with others across the public and private sectors, and selling commodities.
- The National Procurement Strategy 2018 and toolkit – focusing on three themes which councils identify as the sector's priorities: showing leadership, behaving commercially and achieving community benefits.

[www.local.gov.uk/efficiency-and-income-generation](http://www.local.gov.uk/efficiency-and-income-generation)

## Research and data

We provide data services and research to support councils and provide the evidence needed to make the best decisions for communities, including:

- regular, national resident satisfaction polls
- monthly research bulletin
- free data benchmarking club
- online eLearning modules and support to help authorities make better use of data
- free tools such as the YouChoose budget simulator and the peer sharing platform Knowledge Hub.

In addition, LG Inform is a free online data benchmarking service containing over 5,500 data items covering demographics, health, finance and performance data. Newly established, LG Inform 'Value for Money' service holds over 950 financial data items for local authorities.

Finally, LG Inform Plus gives subscribers a suite of online services to help add, view and report key data for small areas.

<http://lginform.local.gov.uk>

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

## Scrutiny

The Centre for Public Scrutiny's (CfPS) purpose is to improve lives and places through effective governance and public scrutiny. We work with a wide range of organisations, people and places to support them in developing a culture and ways of working which incorporate challenge, scrutiny and involvement.

[www.cfps.org.uk](http://www.cfps.org.uk)

## Workforce

All of the challenges facing local government have implications for its workforce. Councils, often working with partners, need to look closely at organisational design, recruitment, skills, rewards and leadership to ensure they are getting the best from their people.

We have a range of innovative and practical resources for councils refined through a national consultation on strategic workforce priorities including:

- apprenticeship guidance on best use of the levy
- recruitment of key skill shortages (including social care and planning)
- chief executive appraisal
- complex employee relations guidance
- Decision Making Analysis (DMA) tool – aligning organisational structures to create high performing councils
- 21st Century public servant (21CPS) support offer – modernising workforce culture
- Timewise Councils – developing modern flexible and agile work places
- reward, pay and grading advice (including a new gender pay gap reporting tool)
- wellbeing programmes to improve individual performance
- HR service reviews – ensuring councils have the capacity and capability to deliver.

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

# How do I find out more?

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

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