

# Sector Led Improvement: Opportunities and Challenges

# Introduction

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# This Session

- The purpose of this session is to provide peers with a forum to discuss opportunities and challenges facing sector led improvement.
- It is to discuss the sector's and the LGA's role in addressing these shared challenges.
- It will also seek views on the next steps for Sector Led Improvement (SLI) and the LGA's sector support offer including peer challenge



## SLI – Key Principles

- Councils primarily accountable locally
- Transparency can drive improvement
- Collective responsibility for improvement
- SLI is about using the skills and expertise from within the sector
- LGA role is to provide the tools and support and maintain an overview of the performance of the sector

## State of the Sector

National performance against Key Indicators continue to show improvements

3 times as many residents satisfied with their council than dissatisfied. Much better than comparable figures for the NHS or Central government

Residents 7 times more likely to trust their council than MP's or Ministers to make decisions about local service provision

## State of the Sector - But

- 8 Councils in Statutory intervention – by DLUHC
- 6 Councils in Non-statutory intervention including Best Value Notices
- 24 Councils rated inadequate by Ofsted
- 8 Section 114 reports issued since 2018
- Over 900 accounts not signed off by the external auditors

# What would you say are the key challenges facing sector-led improvement?

- Please use Slido to share your views on the biggest challenges facing sector-led improvement
- You can scan the QR code or join at Slido.com using **#3364 151**



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## Oflog – 6 Key Work areas

- Expanding their Dashboard – from 21 metrics to 47 with even more to come (linked to LG Inform).
- Sharing good practice – eg webinars
- Rationalising data collection
- Data Capacity and capability in the sector
- Thematic Reviews
- Early Warning Conversations and Peer Reviews



## Peer Challenge

Oflog has recently shared feedback on our peer challenge programme which query the robustness of peer challenge. These include:

- Councils are issuing s114 notices because SLI and peer challenges are not effective enough
- Councils are not required to publish peer challenge reports
- Messages in peer challenge reports are too soft/not hard enough and are ‘watered down’ by the councils subject to the challenge
- Councils have too much sway in terms of selecting members of their visiting peer team
- Only take place every 5 years

More positively...

DLUHC and the Minister have previously shown strong support for peer challenge process.

Recently, the draft Best Value Intervention guidance noted that a “characteristic of a well-functioning authority” is one who arranges a corporate or finance peer challenge at least every 5 years

DLUHC have given LGA an ambitious target of CPCs to achieve each year further highlighting their recognised value

# Table Discussion

1. How can we better promote SLI including peer challenges to ensure councils take them up regularly and to demonstrate the value and assurance they already offer?
2. What changes, if any, do you think would help make the peer challenge process more robust?
3. Is there any wider support the LGA could offer to address the challenges the sector is facing and/or enable improvement?
4. What can peers do to better support SLI given the opportunities and challenges we have identified?

# What are the opportunities for the sector and sector-led improvement?

Please use Slido to share your views on the biggest opportunities facing your sector

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## How can peers support the process?

By being advocates of SLI by promoting when on peer challenges and/or delivering support through channels including social media (including through tweeting @LGApeers)

Through engagement with LGA development options including mentoring and peer challenge training to learn notable practice and deliver more effective support

By providing the LGA case studies, quotes, feedback and testimonies when your council receives impactful support through the SLI offer

# Questions and Final Remarks