



Annual report

2009/2010

Local Government Group – supporting local government

Local Government Improvement and Development (LG Improvement and Development) is working with other parts of the Local Government Group (LG Group) to support, promote and improve local government. During 2009/2010 the organisation was known as the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA).

We are working for:

- a new world of responsibility, choice and local control with **public services redesigned and reshaped around the needs of local places and local people** so they can take responsibility for improving their own lives
- a shift in the balance of power away from central government to local government, with **accountability for public services transferred to the local level**, along with a reduction in the burden of central bureaucracy
- **stronger, more powerful local government**, with councils and elected councillors providing leadership at the centre of new local governance arrangements
- **local public service providers to be freed up from unnecessary controls** so they can develop tailored responses appropriate to the challenges of their communities
- **local people to be able to make informed judgements and choices about local services**, with the information and ability to challenge those who provide public services on their behalf
- councils working in fundamentally different ways with their partners to provide **more responsive, more efficient and more innovative public services in a world of tighter public finance**.

Foreword

Local government is the most efficient and improved part of the public sector. As part of this, over the last four years local government has delivered over four billion pounds in efficiency savings.

LG Improvement and Development has contributed to this success. Since we were set up over ten years ago, we've been flexible in responding to the changing needs of local government. We've extended our work from supporting councils with corporate improvement, to helping them with specific services such as housing and planning, and children's and adults' services. Increasingly we've been working with them on cross-cutting issues such as health and economic development. Helping councils work with and learn from each other is at the heart of what we do. It's this distinct approach that defines us as the national improvement and development organisation for local government.

The recession and its implications for public sector funding mean that councils are now working to accelerate the pace of change. The first call on any government following the general election will be to address total government spending. Nationally and locally, a consensus is emerging about the direction of public sector reform and the need to move from an era of high regulation and intervention – which is expensive and judged often not to be very effective – to one where local government takes responsibility itself for making services better at lower cost.

We are entering a new era, where constitutional reforms at Westminster need to go hand-in-hand with structural reforms in the relationship between central and local government. Responsibility for key local services and the associated funding needs to be transferred to local government from other parts of the public sector including quangos. This would address the democratic deficit which exists in the provision of many public services by many non-accountable government bodies, and would deliver considerable efficiency savings.

Joining up services through leadership from local government, is the most effective way of transforming local public services. Our vision is based on councils being free to set local priorities and above all else being accountable to local people for delivering outcomes and efficiencies. The LG Group's consultation document, *Freedom to Lead, Trust to Deliver*, published earlier this year is a blueprint for a confident local government sector that manages its own benchmarking data, carries out regular peer reviews and works with partners in health, schools and the police to improve services.

As this report of our work in 2009/10 shows, we have been working with councils on these issues and look forward to building on these recent achievements as we support councils in the challenging times ahead.

**Councillor Ian Swithenbank CBE, Chairman
Paul Roberts OBE, Managing Director
May 2010**

Our achievements 2009/10

Most of our work is with councils on the ground and we know that local government is having to respond fast to the challenges presented by the recession and a number of other high profile issues that have put councils centre stage over the last year.

Our focus over the last year reflects the important issues for local government. Our achievements in 2009/10 are set out in more detail in the rest of this report and in summary below.

Economy – we have provided councils with practical advice and support on dealing with the recession and on their new responsibilities for local economic assessments. We have been supporting councils with delivering the challenging targets on climate change that they have signed up to with their partners and we have also been helping councils tackle worklessness.

Reputation – we have been helping councils build their capacity and supported improvement in a number of key service areas. Safeguarding children has been high on our agenda along with adult safeguarding, and we have also been helping councils with the transformation of adult social care. We have been working with partners to improve leadership skills in culture and sport and have developed a programme of peer support and challenge to help councils with community

safety and also cohesion. Following the launch of the Equality Framework for Local Government in March 2009 we have been supporting councils in understanding the needs of their diverse communities. Through our healthy communities and tobacco control programme we have been helping councils develop and share good practice to reduce health inequalities in their areas. We have also supported councils in being excellent employers through our work on achieving the right organisational culture for success and by promoting councils as excellent employers through schemes such as the National Graduate Development Programme.

Local democracy – over the last year we have been working closely with the Local Government Association (LGA) in lobbying for a new local accountability framework for local government. We have delivered a comprehensive range of leadership programmes for councillors in their strategic roles. We have helped councils develop good practice in partnership working and community engagement. We have also been

supporting the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs) and other groups of councils who want to work together.

Innovation and value for money – we have worked directly with councils involved in the Total Place pilots and ensured that the learning from these was widely shared across local government. We received additional funding to help councils with redesigning services around the customer and we also made significant progress in supporting councils in learning from benchmarking. We launched the Local Innovation Awards Scheme, building on the best of the Beacon Scheme, and continued our work with key partners on a number of innovation projects. We helped councils improve efficiency in other ways with our work on organisational productivity and our support to councils with strategic commissioning.

How we do it - underpinning all of this work are our core improvement services which focus on helping councils work with and learn from each other. It's this distinctive approach that makes us the national improvement and development organisation for local government. We achieve this by:

- developing **national networks**, supported by leading-edge technology
- publishing **guidance and good practice** that we have developed with councils
- providing **direct support** to councils on specific improvement issues
- recruiting **experienced councillor, officer and partner peers** to support and challenge other councils
- supporting and developing local government's **political and managerial leaders**
- coordinating improvement support at the national level, **working with regional and national improvement bodies**.

In 2009/10 we:

- delivered over 150 peer reviews
- supported over 1,000 councillor and officer peers in working directly with other councils
- provided leadership development for nearly 550 councillors with LG Improvement and Development's Leadership Academy
- ran the National Graduate Development Programme, recruiting 89 graduates for local government
- published good practice information on the LG Improvement and Development website with an average of 132,500 visits each month
- supported a wide range of online communities of practice (CoP), which over 45,000 people have now joined
- delivered nearly 6,000 days direct support to councils.

LG Improvement and Development's Communities of Practice

In our annual survey of communities of practice in November 2009, one of the questions we asked was about how much time people save by joining a CoP. Ruth Hyde, chief executive of Broxtowe Borough Council signed up after an LG Improvement and Development seminar on community cohesion.

She says the event was so interesting "I thought I'd quite like to keep thinking about the issues and join in a conversation about it." Going online with the communities of practice was a really good way of "continuing thought patterns." As soon as she was back in her office the next day, Hyde registered for the CoPs. She says the email alerts that bring her attention to the subjects she is interested in are "a brilliant time saver."

Economy

Leading the local economy is key to leading the local community.

In the face of the economic downturn, tighter public spending and the UK's commitments to carbon reduction, more will be expected of local government in providing leadership and generating capital for regeneration.

The development of an area's local economy embraces a wide range of council-led activities that are particularly important, not only in tackling the recession but in providing a robust foundation to support sustained growth over the next decade.

Our approach is to offer councils a comprehensive package of support and guidance that assists them in using the levers available to them to develop and implement a comprehensive approach to 'place leadership'. This includes helping councils develop their statutory roles for spatial planning, housing strategy and economic development, and helping councils translate strategies into physical investment and development, to increase employment opportunities for local people.

In 2009/10 we:

continued to support councils in dealing with the recession and in meeting the new responsibilities devolved to them

- set up a new recession website which included practical guidance and information for councillors, and also case studies on the recession
- published guides and case studies on tackling worklessness which we developed with councils, covering topics ranging from the role of social housing in tackling unemployment, to how financial inclusion can be overcome as a barrier to employment, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Communities and Local Government (CLG)
- supported a community of practice from the National Worklessness Learning Forum to support all those involved in tackling worklessness to share innovation and good practice and convened its first gathering with over 170 delegates

- published guidance for councils on the Future Job Fund, building on past lessons and best practice, and sponsored the national Future Jobs Fund conference attended by 400 people
- published a new self-assessment to help drive economic prosperity which was piloted with councils, and carried out two economic prosperity economic peer reviews with councils
- held a Leadership Academy on leading economic recovery for councillors, and also ensured that LG Improvement and Development's main Leadership Academy included a session on the economy
- set up an action learning set of councils involved with the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative, focusing on key areas of local enterprise practice
- worked with the eleven Beacon councils for Raising Economic Prosperity, Cutting Red Tape and Managing the Night-Time Economy, to share innovation and good practice with other councils, and supported a consortium led by the London Borough of Croydon to secure £480k to develop an improvement programme for people not in education, employment or training (NEETs).
- worked with councils to produce good practice guidance on how to produce a local economic assessment and supported a community of practice with over 600 subscribers and a more focused action learning set with ten councils, and worked with regional organisations and national stakeholders to promote the local authority role in economic assessments
- published new web material on rural transport to help councils develop business cases for decision makers along with guidance on funding sources and good practice case studies
- launched a toolkit to help local strategic partnerships steer infrastructure delivery
- delivered 20 Planning Advisory Service (PAS) regional events to over 600 delegates on pragmatic planning and facing the future
- supported 40 councils in PAS benchmarking groups to understand costs and times in different parts of the planning process
- held four PAS events with over 100 participants on understanding local government's approach to the newly introduced Community Infrastructure Levy
- provided direct support on plan making and integration into other policies and programmes, including waste, climate change and health inequalities
- published guidance on supporting households in the recession and councils house-building programmes along with case studies
- worked with the Homes for the Future Beacon councils to help share innovation and good practice on strategic housing.

helped councils develop their statutory roles for spatial planning, housing strategy and economic development

- held a Leadership Academy for lead members, dedicated to the role of joining up planning, housing and economic development in the current economic recession

The Planning Advisory Service, which is hosted by LG Improvement and Development, is delivering potentially huge savings for the local planning authorities that use its services.

The total time and money savings attributed by PAS users interviewed in an independent survey, equal just over £1.7 million for the three months from October 2009. When asked about the PAS Local Development Framework Services, responses included:

‘I appreciate the PAS direct support as it was tailored to our individual circumstances. I used it for help with infrastructure planning. I also got support on project management, evidence base and options generation.’

supported councils in delivering the challenging targets on climate change that they have signed up to with their partners

- facilitated the Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change community of practice with over 1,000 members and published web guidance to help councils build a local low carbon economy
- held three national conferences with key partners including the online Climate Change Adaptation forum, with Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP), attended by over 300 people
- published an online directory of national and regional support for councils and also facilitated an online community reviewing the usefulness of tools and resources for councils on climate change
- launched the online Flood Risk and Water Management Network, facilitated with the LGA and the Yorkshire and Humber Learning Alliance, to provide practical self-help to council through the sharing of good practice and innovation
- supported work at the regional level on climate change working with the RIEPs
- held a Leadership Academy on climate change with 24 senior elected members and published three member workbooks including one on climate change and transport
- set up the green skills community of practice.



helped councils tackle worklessness locally

- with JobCentre Plus launched Leading by Example – an online strategic framework and self assessment toolkit for councils as employers dealing with unemployment, developed with eight exemplar councils and now being used by over 150 councils
- increased membership and usage of the apprenticeships community of practice with focused activity during apprenticeship week including success stories from a number of councils
- working with Improvement and Efficiency West Midlands (the West Midlands RIEP), the National Apprenticeships Service (NAS) and councils, developed an online employers' guide to help councils engage effectively with apprenticeships
- produced a local government job roles/ apprenticeship frameworks map which cross references local government job roles against apprenticeship frameworks
- with NAS, sponsored the LGA's Hidden Talents conference to help councils reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training and deliver apprenticeships
- published a report on the top five occupational skills shortages, signposting councils to a range of support to help tackle recruitment difficulties
- successfully negotiated continuation of the free jobs listing service for councils in England and Wales, LGjobs.com, for a further 12 months at no additional cost to local government – 70 per cent of councils are now using the service.



Reputation

To be able to play its full part in the transformation of public service, local government must be strong and confident and seen by local people, the public as a whole and Government, as effective, credible local leaders, service providers and employers.

Local government outperforms the rest of the public sector on efficiency, effectiveness and innovation, yet it trails behind other parts in public confidence, trust and reputation.

It is a core part of our activity with councils to help build councils' capacity and support improvement on specific service issues. This is particularly important during and after the general election when the sector is seeking more freedom and responsibilities as part of the shift to localism. It is also vital as councils are now facing serious budget challenges which will further affect their reputation. There has been growing interest by all political parties, regulators and by civil servants in a more proportionate and sector-led approach to performance management, particularly on how potential service failure might be anticipated and successfully addressed upstream. The public also values local government's response to emergencies like fires, flooding or adverse weather conditions. Managing these situations well, promoting good practice, learning lessons and rebutting unjustified criticism are key reputational issues for the sector.

In 2009/10 we:

children and young people

- supported lead councillors for children's services with a series of regional and national events and delivered the Making Children Matter Leadership Academy
- published *must knows* for councillors on the 16-19 agenda and on the new statutory guidance on the role of lead members
- published the *Safeguarding Children Scrutiny Toolkit* which has been read by over 1,000 people
- worked with the Total Place pilots focusing on children's services including on early intervention and prevention, corporate parenting and high demand families
- carried out peer reviews of children's safeguarding services in six councils
- provided direct support to 13 councils with significant performance issues in children's services

- published new careers content on LGcareers.com website including a film and three audio podcasts in support of the LGA's respect, recruit and retain campaign to promote careers and recruitment in social work, and held a successful online conference on Children's Social Worker Recruitment and Retention with over 100 delegates
- worked with the three Beacon councils for Preventing and Tackling Child Poverty to share innovation and good practice with other councils.

adult social care and wellbeing

- supported lead councillors for adult social care with a series of regional events and national work, focusing on adult safeguarding and the adult social care Green Paper and delivered the Health, Care and Wellbeing Leadership Academy
- published a briefing for lead members on comprehensive area assessment (CAA) and adult social care and also scrutiny guidance on adult social care transformation
- carried out peer reviews of adults' safeguarding in three councils, and one of a Learning Disability Partnership Board
- provided direct support to six councils with significant performance issues on safeguarding
- jointly with Department of Health (DH) and Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), published milestones for councils for implementing the adult social care transformation agenda, Putting People First
- supported councils engaging with the Total Place pilot on older people
- with the LGA published *Getting on Well Together* – focusing on council activity on

the older people's agenda, and secured funding from DWP of £4.7 million for a programme on 'Building a Society for all the Ages'

- published a framework for councils in producing local information, advice and advocacy strategies
- held the Real Roles conference on learning disability and employment
- worked with the six Beacon councils for Supporting Independent Living for Disabled Adults, and for Positive engagement of Older People, to share innovation and good practice with other councils, and supported a consortium led by the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service to secure £330k to implement policy recommendations arising from the Marmot Review.

safer communities

- held a Leadership Academy for Community Safety portfolio holders
- delivered nine community safety peer challenges funded by the Home Office and developed the Anti-Social Behaviour peer challenge
- established 12 Neighbourhood Partnership exemplar sites of integrated service delivery, showcasing excellent integration of neighbourhood policing with neighbourhood management, which provided the basis for a series of improvement workshops, case studies and online features and an international best practice conference, in partnership with the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA)
- facilitated online communities of practice on neighbourhood management, community safety and the policing pledge

- provided research and other support for the Total Place pilots including organising the Total Place Offender Management conference
- held a Fire and Rescue Leadership Academy for new chairs and portfolio holders
- delivered 21 Operational Assessment peer reviews for Fire and Rescue Services and published nine notable practice case studies
- facilitated the Community Cohesion online community of practice with over 900 members
- as part of the Prevent programme, set up the cohesion and resilience councillors network with over 300 members providing regular advice and support through email, articles and events, and delivered direct peer support and challenge to eight councils
- worked with the 18 Beacon councils for Cohesive and Resilient Communities to share innovation and good practice with other councils.

In our recent assessment of the impact of our peer review programme with Fire and Rescue Authorities, we asked a number of senior managers why they had requested the peer review.

The responses included:

“We volunteered for this as we see the opportunity to develop further our self awareness. We are open to change and have a motivation to do so.”

Vij Randeniya, Chief Fire Officer, West Midlands Fire Service

“Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service consider themselves to be a self aware organisation but I wanted to use the peer review process to confirm that this was the case. The peer review looked like a thorough process and I hoped that it would challenge us to improve services and raise aspirations even higher.”

Steve McGuirk, Chief Fire Officer, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service



culture, tourism and sport

- held two culture and sport Leadership Academies for lead councillors
- supported the Leading Learning programme for over 30 middle and senior culture and sport managers in partnership with the sector professional bodies
- published guidance and research on commissioning cultural activity and held events to promote this working with the RIEPs
- provided direct support to a range of local and regional partnerships and improvement programmes
- with the LGA launched guidance on investing in the creative industries
- published ten case studies on how councils are using tourism and the visitor economy to improve place, with Visit England
- published guidance on improving performance management and partnership working in the culture and sport sector and also guidance on the role culture and sport can play in supporting adult social care
- with the Museum and Libraries Archive completed three separate pieces of research into culture and sports' contribution to partnership working and achieving local outcomes
- with our partners, commissioned an independent evaluation of the culture and sport improvement project which showed that the strategy Passion for Excellence has built momentum in supporting the culture and sport sector
- worked with the five Beacon councils for the Olympic Games and Paralympics legacy to share innovation and good practice with other councils and supported a consortium led by Essex County Council to secure £330k for an improvement programme on the Olympic Legacy.

equalities

- following the launch of the Equality Framework for Local Government in March 2009, published a survey of council engagement with the Equality Framework for Local Government in its first year showing high levels of take-up
- launched EFECT, an online toolkit to help councils compile evidence and assess themselves against the Equality Framework for Local Government, subscribed to by 120 councils, with 120 people being trained to use it
- delivered 40 diversity peer challenges
- facilitated the online equalities community of practice
- developed the Equality Standard for the Police, working with the National Police Improvement Agency and the Equality Framework for Fire and Rescue Services
- held a national conference on equality and procurement and published guidance on this.

In our first survey of the Equality Framework for Local Government, 84 per cent of respondents stated that they are using the Equality Framework with a further 15 per cent stating that they plan to. More than half have already had an external assessment of their performance, and 68 per cent want to be assessed at a higher level of achievement.

In response to a question about their need for guidance and support, the most commonly identified issues were 'knowing your community – equality mapping' and "improving representation of under-represented groups.'

healthy communities and tobacco control

- continued to support the online community of practice which now has over 1,000 members
- published 350 case studies showcasing innovative practice from councils involved with the Department of Health Communities for Health programme
- provided direct support to a number of partnerships in tackling health inequalities in their areas
- hosted a major national conference on health and wellbeing in rural areas with key partners including DH, Defra and the Commission of Rural Communities
- delivered a programme of support on tackling health inequalities in coastal areas with events and information to help coastal authorities better understand their communities
- selected nine Scrutiny Development Areas to help develop the role of scrutiny in tackling health inequalities, involving 34 councils
- published *Valuing Health: developing a business case for health improvement* highlighting the role of local government in delivering health improvement and the financial and non-financial benefits
- supported two action learning sets with the issue of evaluating the impact they are having in their communities, and held workshops on this issues attended by over 150 people
- published a survey of council chief executives and Primary Care Trust (PCT) chief executives to understand how councils are tackling the health of local communities
- engaged with and responded to the Marmot Review on the wider determinants of health in the UK, with a focus on the pivotal role of local government

- helped 25 councils improve their approach to tobacco control through direct support involving member peers, two national events, good practice guides and case studies and an online community of practice
- worked with the six Reducing Health Inequalities Beacon councils to share innovation and good practice with other councils.

supported councils with being an excellent employer

- launched a new web resource on achieving the right organisational culture for future success, including a report of interviews with nine chief executives
- held events and masterclasses for chief executives and senior managers on accelerating cultural change and a national conference on employee engagement
- held events, and published 'think pieces' on total place and workforce issues
- published a guide on managing the workforce issues in transformation, in partnership with Public Sector People Managers' Association (PPMA), and launched a workforce improvement peer challenge
- provided a self assessment tool used by over 100 human resources leaders, enabling them to assess themselves against a national job specification
- launched the Workforce Matters community of practice – which has achieved over 1300 members, and very high participation rates
- promoted councils as excellent employers nationally via the upgraded LGcareers.com website attracting well over 30,000 visits per month

- published over 30 new best practice case studies, as well as films and podcasts
- with Local Government Employers, organised the Local Government Workforce Leaders conference for over 140 participants
- recruited 89 graduates for local government, through the National Graduate Development Programme (ngdp) and held the first national alumni conference for graduates from the programme
- provided an Academy for Executive Leadership for chief executives and other senior managers, and a Get Ahead programme for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) managers
- organised an event on diversity and leadership issues, attended by over 100 people.

A recent evaluation of the National Graduate Development Programme reported high levels of satisfaction from both graduates and also councils. Graduates are positive about their experiences and line managers and placement co-ordinators also report favourably on the scheme.

'Your first year's placements are all frontlines so it really gives you the opportunities to do consultation and engagement work in a range of different services from children and social care to education, and then the second year is a mix of strategic projects, so then it does give you that strategic overview.'

ngdp graduate

'I am keen to change the demographic make-up of staff and the scheme contributes to this, and brings 'new blood' and 'new ideas.'

chief executive



Local democracy

There is an emerging political consensus that the current highly centralised model of the state is not meeting 21st century needs.

Local public services need to be liberated from unnecessary controls so they can develop tailored responses to the challenges of their communities in a co-ordinated and efficient way. We need a new framework of accountability that liberates public sector partners to work together more effectively, and ensures they are driven by and responsive to the needs of their communities.

Local government has to convince the general public and national politicians that it is competent and trustworthy to take on increased responsibilities and that a new local accountability framework is a viable alternative to top down regulation.

One component of a credible sector-led approach to performance management is through the effective use of quality assured data for monitoring and benchmarking. Another component is an effective framework of sector-led improvement with improvement activity at the level of individual councils, and also the regional and national level.

Local politicians are the key players in this new world of local leadership. Elected members must be at the forefront in demonstrating that increased local control really works. The role of councillor is a difficult one with changing demands, so providing a national lead on the development and support of elected members continues to be a central role for LG Improvement and Development.

In 2009/10 we:

worked with the LGA on lobbying for a new local accountability framework for local government with far less inspection and regulation

- building on *Setting the Pace*, a consultation document from LG Improvement and Development, the LGA published *Freedom to Lead: Trust to Deliver*, on a new accountability framework for local government, including calls to slim down inspection, reduce central control over local priorities and free councils up to work with partners.

delivered leadership programmes for councillors in their strategic roles

- delivered LG Improvement and Development's Leadership Academy to 550 councillors, with the Leadership Academy's 100th programme being held in November 2009
- held the first Leadership Academy focused on Finance and Performance management, and also one focused on Community Safety. Also held the first Leadership Academy programme aimed at county councillors, in collaboration with the County Council Network
- published and distributed the *2009 Councillors' Guide*
- published a revised councillor workbook on the Effective Ward Councillor and also a Civic Mayors Workbook, *Joining the Chain Gang* to help those nominated as civic mayors to prepare for their year in office
- published *Connected Councillors* a guide to using social media to connect with communities and campaign on local issues
- signed an agreement with the Welsh LGA for them to translate and adapt our Councillor Workbooks for use in Wales – the workbooks are distance learning materials aimed at ward councillors and cover a range of topics
- launched the Member Charter Plus in conjunction with the regional employer bodies, to provide additional challenge to councils that have achieved the Member Development Charter, particularly in the area of councillor support arrangements and promoting participation
- held the annual Local Leadership conference attended by over 100 councillors and officers which covered a range of topics from councillor support to ethics and standards
- continued our support for the Centre for Public Scrutiny
- completed the 2009 Candidate Survey which confirmed that the under-representation of certain groups continues is an issue with councillors
- delivered a session on 'A Woman's Place in Local Government' at the LGA Conference, attended by nearly 100 people
- held the Young Councillor weekender for over 30 councillors, to pilot a new approach to addressing the specific needs of young councillors and build support for a Young Councillors Network, and supported the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU) Young Councillor of the Year Award
- supported the launch of the new Association of Democratic Services Officers at a national conference attended by over 200 people
- delivered the first programme for Democratic Services Officers attended by nearly 40 people and finalised arrangements for a full development programme to include personal skills, career planning and working in a political environment.



In 2009/10 we celebrated our 100th Leadership Academy with over 550 councillors attending Leadership Academy programmes during the year.

‘The whole experience of completing the Leadership Academy was first class. I have learnt a great deal and been given some great leadership tools to use as my leadership path progresses. I would certainly recommend it to other councillors.’

‘Thanks to my experience on the Leadership Academy, cabinet now works better as a group and work is underway to transform how full council operates.’

‘The main benefit of the Leadership Academy is mixing with your peers on a cross-bench basis to learn about the widely varied local authorities out there, what works and what doesn’t.’

supported councils who want to work in regional and sub-regional partnerships

- published a discussion paper on the future of sub-regional working and led two roundtable events with councils from across the country pursuing a sub-regional agenda
- through the RIEP programme office, liaised with central government departments and supported national governance groups such as the RIEP Member Forum, the Chief Executives Task Group (CEXTG) and the Improvement and Efficiency Advisory Network (IEAN) to facilitate collaborative working between the RIEPs and with national programmes
- through the RIEP programme office, published case studies of the RIEPs’ work, reports which summarise the RIEPs’ key achievements in years one and two, a RIEP efficiency casebook which gives councils advice and best practice on efficiency and procurement, and supported the RIEPs in making their business case for future funding
- worked with the RIEPs to produce a series of member guides on procurement
- published *Leading the way by working together* - a report which reflects how local government is working together locally, regionally and nationally to improve services and the places where people live.



worked with councils and their partners to strengthen accountability through new local governance models

- launched an information database on the LG Improvement and Development website with information on all 150 Local Area Agreements (LAAs)/Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) areas detailing information on governance arrangements, membership and resource allocation
- continued to publish case studies on the Partnerships and Places Library with good practice examples and all local area agreement and multiple area agreement outcomes, and also including video case studies
- published reports on the Partnership Improvement Programme and research into third sector representation
- launched a new community empowerment web resource including case studies and a benchmark developed with councils through the Network of Empowering Authorities, facilitated a community of practice with over 500 members and held community empowerment peer challenges as well as direct peer support to ten councils
- held the 'Future Communities: Future Engagement' conference to launch new improvement tools, attended by 175 people
- on behalf of 11 public sector leadership academies, led the commissioning of a new cross public service programme for very senior leaders
- launched the new Leadership Development community of practice for commissioners and providers of leadership development with over 450 members.

As part of our work community empowerment with the Network of Empowering Authorities, a number of councils have undergone intensive peer support and challenge.

In evaluating our work, we interviewed representatives from two councils – Sunderland and Peterborough – to explore their views and experiences of the process. Both interviewees expressed very positive views about the peer challenge process, as the following quotations show:

'It surpassed my expectations... impressed with the team as individuals and together. They came in and got on with it and provided valid and useful recommendations in a short 48 hour visit.'

'The peer review process...helped us think radically about empowerment at the right time and link it into the CAA timeframe very powerful.'



Innovation and value for money

There are major pressures on local government funding as the Government seeks to balance its books.

Tough decisions are needed and efficiency gains will need to be driven by greater joined-up working at local level. Innovation must be released by putting users at the heart of service design and delivery.

By objective measures, including comprehensive performance assessment (CPA) scores, the effectiveness of local government has improved significantly over the past decade and councils are the best performers in the public sector when it comes to meeting the Government's efficiency targets. However the improvements of the last decade have taken place against the backdrop of real-terms increases in funding. The challenge of the next decade will be to sustain the gains that have been made and continue to improve, in the context of both public spending cuts and mounting cost pressures, particularly from an ageing population. LG Improvement and Development is supporting the delivery of a new, sustainable model for local public services, which is responsive to citizens but

with significantly reduced costs including management and overhead costs. This builds on the learning from Total Place focusing on redefining the role between the state and individual, a significant de-layering of the public sector with many more decisions taken locally, and maximising economies by more effective collaboration between public bodies.

In 2009/10 we:

worked with councils on Total Place and how a whole area approach can lead to better services at less cost

- launched web resources and a community of practice to support the learning from the Total Place pilots to make up-to-date progress reports and support, information and guidance available to councils
- supported CLG and Treasury in pulling together the final Total Place report by drawing together additional information from the 'parallel place' councils who were not part of the pilot scheme but who are also working on a whole area approach,

leading a workshop to analyse the evidence from the pilots

- held a seminar on Total Place High Level Count on different methodologies for counting the totality of public resources deployed in a locality
- held the Total Place and Third Sector Conference with the Office of the Third Sector to explore the role of the third sector and third sector commissioning in a whole area approach to service delivery
- led a joint LG Improvement and Development/Charities Evaluation Service (CES) Quality Outcomes conference with 200 participants from local government and the third sector, and published *New Routes to Better Outcomes* to help improve commissioning in councils
- published a review of current leadership of place activity identifying areas for future collaboration, with the Leadership Centre, National Health Service Institute for Innovation and Improvement and the NPIA
- published information on CAA processes and provided tools and materials to support with area self-evaluations and improving partnership delivery
- delivered five locality self assessment peer challenges and an area-based peer review of Warwickshire on behalf of the county public service board
- published case studies on two tier working along with the report *Working Together in Two and Three tier areas* to help address the unique challenges of two tier partnership working
- worked with the two Beacon councils for Better Outcomes for People and Places to share innovation and good practice with other councils.

We received positive feedback on our new approach of using area-based peer review to examine the effectiveness of partnership delivery in a county.

“Having a credible skilled team of colleagues from other parts of the country...brought a high degree of objectivity to bear in terms of identifying what worked and what did not...The way in which the team laid out its findings was extremely helpful and I hope will act as a catalyst to us finding shared solutions.”

Jim Graham, Chief Executive,
Warwickshire County Council



worked with councils on redesigning services round the customer

- supported councils in formulating bids to the Benefits Realisation Fund, as part of the Government Connect programme
- supported councils to ensure that they are compliant with the Government Connect Code of Connection and developed and published detailed guidance
- held the third annual Front Office Shared Services (FOSS) conference attended by over 200 delegates and launched the FOSS reports, *Delivering public service transformation 2009* and *Developing the business case* plus ten case studies
- provided support to the Total Place pilots on using customer insight including a joint conference with the Total Place programme and a report *Customer insight through the Total Place lens*
- shared the learning from projects funded from the CLG Customer led transformation programme on using customer insight and social media tools and techniques, through LG Improvement and Development's communities of practice
- worked with the four Beacon councils for Digital Inclusion to share innovation and good practice with other councils.

supported councils in learning from benchmarking

- set up the Efficiency Exchange, an online community of practice with over 600 members, and developed a value for money benchmarking tool which has been piloted with the London and South East RIEPs
- provided support to the London Efficiency Challenge, a peer challenge process led by finance directors, with nine efficiency peer challenges now completed

- achieved 75 per cent subscription take-up of all councils to the esd-toolkit programme with participation by at least one service in every council in England and 70 per cent in Scotland; this included launching new performance evidencing tools to allow local strategic partnerships to benchmark their performance against one another in a region.

supported councils with innovation

- launched the redesigned Local Innovation Awards Scheme, building on the best of the Beacon Scheme in recognising, celebrating and rewarding partnerships who can demonstrate they have innovative services, ideas and ways of working that bring real benefits to citizens
- with the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) published a collection of essays - *More than good ideas: the power of innovation in local government*, and also *Local by social* exploring how councils can use the web to work with local communities to achieve radical efficiency
- published the final report of the Local Wellbeing Project undertaken with the Young Foundation and the London School of Economics (LSE) at a seminar showcasing work undertaken by the project's three partner councils over the last three years: Hertfordshire County Council, Manchester City Council and South Tyneside Council; focusing on emotional resilience, parenting, neighbourliness, measurement, sustainability and a pathfinder project on apprenticeships.

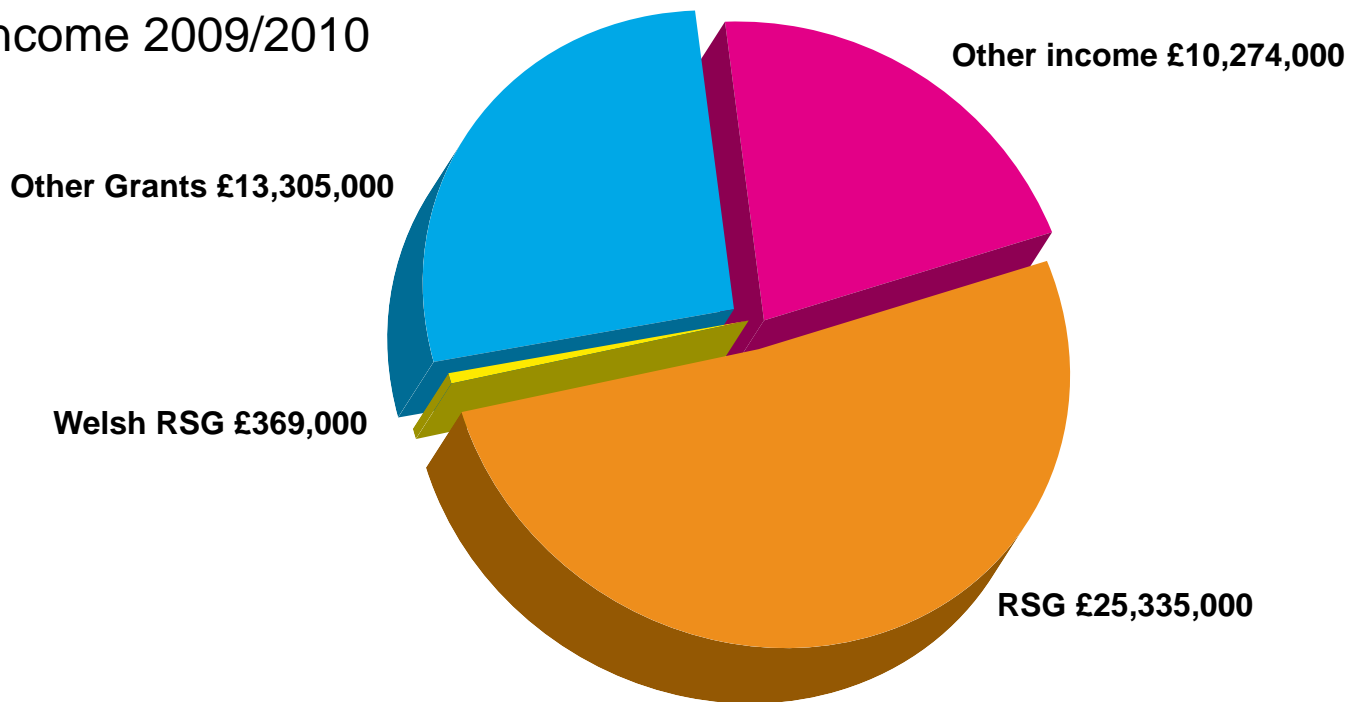
helped councils improve efficiency in other ways

- published the learning from the shared chief executives project
- with the RIEPs, developed new web resources with case studies, on organisational redesign and on increasing organisational productivity, and piloted three productivity peer challenges
- launched the second phase of the Third Sector Commissioning programme, focusing on training for over 1,000 commissioners, 400 third sector organisations, a pilot project with 50 elected members and an e-learning tool, with 70 new bursaries provided through partner universities
- worked with the four Beacon councils for Strategic Commissioning to share innovation and good practice with other councils.

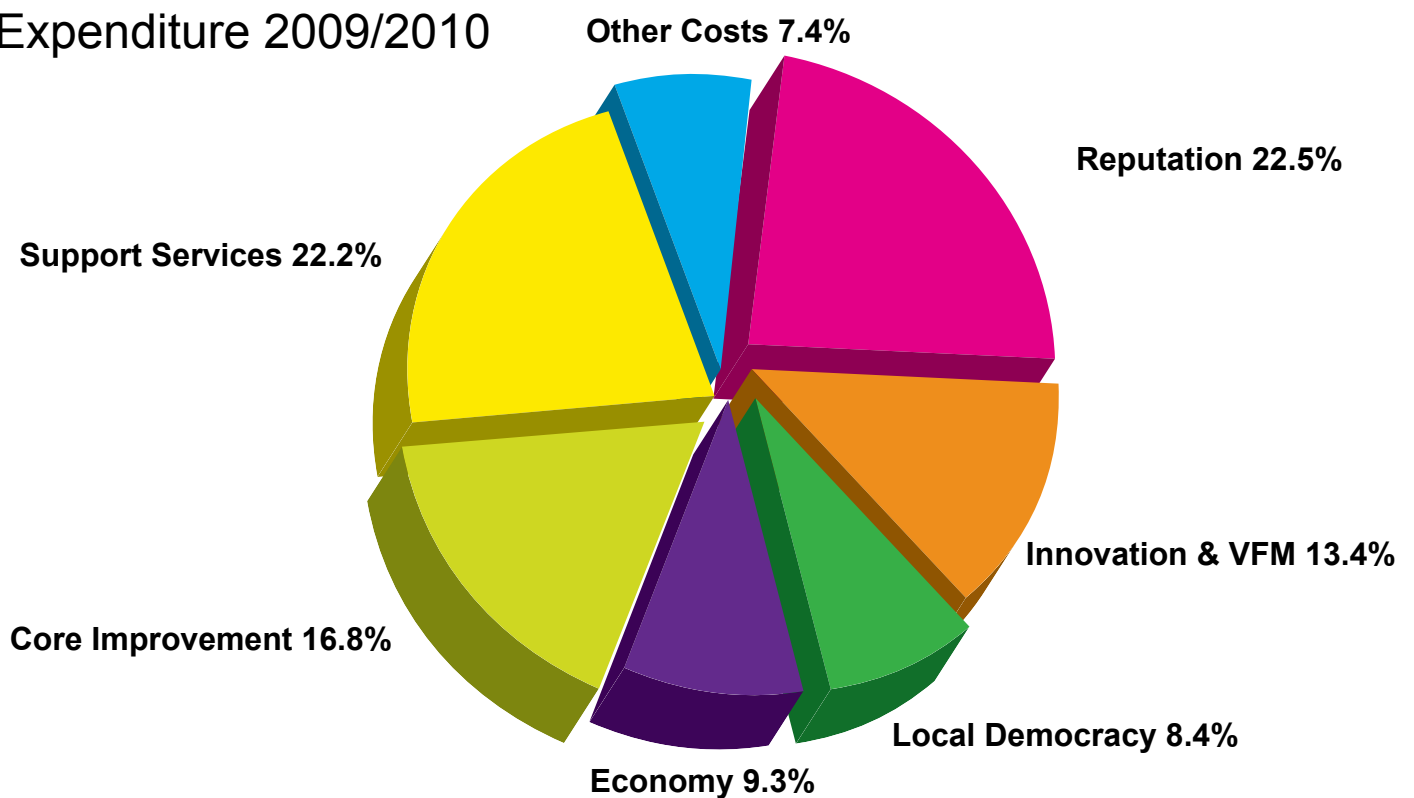


Innovation and value for money

Income 2009/2010



Expenditure 2009/2010



Other grant

programme	funder	£000's
Planning Advisory Service	Communities and Local Government	3,022
Transformational Government	Communities and Local Government	52
ESD Toolkit	Communities and Local Government	269
Efficiency Exchange / Knowledge Hub	Communities and Local Government	762
Beacons / Local Innovation Award Scheme	Communities and Local Government	408
Innovation	Communities and Local Government	12
Service Improvement	Communities and Local Government	60
Adult Social Care	Communities and Local Government	30
RIEP Programme Office	Communities and Local Government	405
National Graduate Development Programme	Communities and Local Government	84
Network of Empowering Authorities	Communities and Local Government	657
Partnership Working	Communities and Local Government	205
Equalities and Cohesion	Communities and Local Government	53
Leadership Support	Communities and Local Government	2,100
Strategic Housing	Communities and Local Government	66
Worklessness	Department for Work and Pensions	274
Ageing Society – Innovative Service Delivery	Department for Work and Pensions	229
Talent and Skills	DIUS & Tidy Britain Group	29
Health Improvement	Department of Health	3,209
Tobacco Control	Department of Health	371
Safer Communities	Home Office	33
Cultural Services	Department for Culture Media and Sport	217
Transport Good Practice	Department of Transport	179
Environment	Department of Transport & LGiU	9
Third Sector Commissioning: Phase 1	Office of the Third Sector	97
Third Sector Commissioning: Phase 2	Office of the Third Sector	257
Partnership Improvement Programme	Cabinet Office	216
Welsh RSG	Welsh Assembly	369
Total		13,674

Board of directors

LG Improvement and Development's Board of directors is made up of members from the **Local Government Association**, partner bodies and stakeholder groups.

Local Government Association

Councillor Ian Swithenbank, CBE, Chairman Northumberland County Council, Labour

Councillor Nick Skellett, CBE, Vice-Chairman to 31 August 2009, Surrey County Council, Conservative

Councillor Robert Gordon, DL, Vice-Chairman from 1 September 2009, Hertfordshire County Council, Conservative

Councillor Paul Clokie, OBE, Ashford Borough Council, Conservative

Councillor Jeremy Webb, East Lindsey District Council, Independent

Councillor Tony McDermott, MBE, to 31 August 2009, Halton Borough Council, Labour

Councillor Dave Wilcox, from 1 September 2009, Derbyshire County Council, Labour

Councillor Derek Osbourne, Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames, Liberal Democrat

John Ransford, LG Improvement and Development Company Secretary, Chief Executive LGA

other directors

Councillor Russell Roberts, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Labour, representing the Welsh Local Government Association

Councillor Ian Fleetwood, West Lindsey District Council and Lincolnshire County Council, Conservative, representing the National Association of Regional Employers

Steve Martin, Professor of Public Policy and Management, Cardiff University, representing academic institutions

Philip Sellwood, Chief Executive, Energy Savings Trust, representing the private sector

Keith Sonnet, Deputy General Secretary, UNISON, representing the trades unions

Stephen Moir, Corporate Director, People, Policy and Law, Cambridgeshire County Council, representing the Public Sector People Managers' Association

David Walden, Business Director Strategy, Commission for Social Care Inspection, representing regulatory bodies to 21 October 2009

Gary Needle, Director of Methods, Care Quality Commission, representing regulatory bodies to 7 June 2010

Local Government Group

The LG Group is made up of six organisations:

- Local Government Association
- Local Government Improvement and Development
- Local Government Employers
- Local Government Regulation
- Local Government Leadership
- Local Partnerships.

We work together to support, promote and improve local government.

The LG Group has listened to councils and councillors to shape its five key priorities – all aimed at supporting local councils. These are:

- reputation
- innovation and value for money
- local democracy
- economy
- customer service.

By identifying and focusing on joint shared priorities we will ensure that the LG Group will be more efficient and effective in the way we serve local government.

Local Government Improvement and Development

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**Local
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We consider requests on an individual basis.