



**East of England**  
Local Government Association

# 2015/16 Annual Report

May 2016

Improving the East

## Foreword

Over the past year local government has continued to face what are some of the toughest challenges in a generation. Finances continue to tighten, alongside a backdrop of rising demand at a local level for housing, infrastructure and transport, as well as a basic services such as health and social care.

The year has been largely dominated by the devolution agenda, bringing with it the potential for us all to take much greater control of our local areas and secure the future of our local economies. But devolution deal or not, we must fully embrace and deliver cross-boundary systems working if we are to tackle the mounting challenges.

The East of England LGA is committed to helping authorities pioneer public service reform and improve the sector. Over the next year we will continue to focus our activities on providing valuable support in the areas where you need it most.

Our Talent Bank, which provides in-depth support in priority areas, will continue to add value to our overall offer and is enabling our subscriptions to be frozen for another year by providing opportunities to generate income. This year also sees the launch of the Talent Bank Public Service Reform service to support our members radically redesign services and take on the challenge of systems leadership.

This Annual Report shows what has been achieved during 2015/16 and outlines the principal goals for 2016/17. As always, your comments and priorities are crucial in making sure the offer meets your needs. The Association's Management Team are keen to meet and discuss how you can take full advantage.

Please do get in touch with Cecilia Tredget, Managing Director or Michelle Kirk, Director, on 01284 758300 or email [Cecilia.tredget@eelga.gov.uk](mailto:Cecilia.tredget@eelga.gov.uk) or [Michelle.kirk@eelga.gov.uk](mailto:Michelle.kirk@eelga.gov.uk) to arrange a discussion on how we can continue to meet the needs of your council.

As I take up my new role as Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire, I will hand over the reins to a new Chairman at the East of England LGA AGM in July. I have taken real pleasure in leading the Association over the past year.

I hope you can, as I do, recognise the true value of all 52 councils in the East of England coming together under the East of England LGA to influence and secure the future of local government.

I take this opportunity to thank you all for the support you have shown during my tenure as Chairman.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Ablewhite". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Jason Ablewhite**

Chairman of the East of England LGA

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Themes	Outcomes	What we delivered in 2015/16	What we have planned for 2016/17	Funding
<b>Cross Cutting</b>	Local councils work together so they are better-placed to take strategic decisions, learn from each other, identify and test new and innovative ways of working.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All 52 Local authorities in membership.</li> <li>Meetings of the Regional CEX and Leaders meetings were held with greater links to the work of the national LGA established.</li> <li>30 high profile events were held with over 1400 delegates, with representatives from every authority in the region. Virtually all of these events were free for member authorities to attend.</li> <li>Information exchange through monthly e-bulletins and briefings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All 52 Local councils continue to be members of the East of England LGA.</li> <li>Leaders and CEXs Meetings with representatives from government and partner bodies.</li> <li>A comprehensive programme of events and master classes focussed on our key themes:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult Social Care, Health and Children's Services</li> <li>Economic Growth</li> <li>Europe</li> <li>Resources</li> <li>Innovation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Subscriptions
	Local councils are self-aware and ensure that any councils or services facing difficulty are supported by the sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worked with the national LGA to support a small number of councils in difficulty as part of the combined sector-led improvement offer.</li> <li>Hosted a quarterly Improvement and Efficiency Panel to review, in particular, the impact of the local government settlement and the financial resilience of local authorities in the East of England.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of the self-improvement offer is delivered by East of England LGA.</li> <li>Quarterly meeting of the Improvement and Efficiency Panel.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions
	Local councils shape the views of Ministers and partners and are recognised nationally for the work they do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosted a Parliamentary Reception to champion the role of local government in sustainable economic growth, as well as promote the work that councils in the East of England undertaking to progress and deliver on strategic infrastructure project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Host two Assembly meetings per year with relevant and high profile keynote speakers secured.</li> <li>Case studies from our members continue to be promoted nationally through relevant media.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Assembly meetings were held enabling Leaders to engage with Government on the Devolution agenda and the LGA's housing commission, as well as providing opportunities to share learning from across the region.</li> <li>• Showcase articles also featured in the Municipal Journal to demonstrate innovative activity in the East of England.</li> </ul>		
	Local councils understand, influence and make the most of partner bodies, such as the Local Government Association (LGA).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chairman and Vice-Chairman have represented the interests of councils at LGA Executive meetings.</li> <li>• Annual reception at 2015 LGA Conference was held, with sponsorship from Blue Marble, with over 75 CEXs, Leaders and lead members present.</li> <li>• Councillors and officers worked directly with Government and the LGA on issues like the Sustainability and Transformation Plan geographies, LGA's Housing Commission and the review of the London Plan.</li> <li>• The Strategic Migration Partnership, hosted by the Association, provided regional coordination of the regional response to the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairman attends and provides feedback from LGA Executive meetings.</li> <li>• Annual reception at LGA Conference 2016.</li> <li>• The political and executive leadership of the LGA meets with local councils in the East.</li> <li>• The membership of the Association engages with government on issues of mutual concern.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions / Sponsorship
	Local councils are able to shape the local debate around devolution and localism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two areas seeking devolution deals in the East of England have been supported through negotiations with support from the Talent Bank.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support councils and partners to explore options for local devolution, public service reform and increased localism.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions / Earned Income
	Local councils develop new and better ways of working to meet current and future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Association has entered into a partnership with the universities in the region, as part of the EU funded KEEP+ project, to identify and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Association continues as a delivery partner in the regional KEEP+ project. Six Innovation networks will take place in the</li> </ul>	Subscriptions / Innovation Funding

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	<p>challenges to service delivery.</p>	<p>develop innovative approaches to key societal challenges through collaborations between SMEs, academia and the public sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through our Innovation Programme all authorities have benefited either directly or as part of a collaborative funded project. We have developed and supported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The establishment of a Buurtzorg Test and Learn Site.</li> <li>- Support to the Wider South East Collaboration Programme on issues of strategic importance, such as infrastructure, growth and housing.</li> <li>- A programme to mitigate the impact of homeless household movement out of London.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A Networked Councillor Talent Bank offer was developed in liaison with the East of England Member Development group.</li> </ul>	<p>autumn to bring together academia, SMEs and public sector to develop cross-sector relationships to support innovation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two events are held on innovation and new ways of working.</li> <li>• An investment fund of £300,000 is available to member councils and their partner organisations.</li> <li>• A project “pump priming” fund of £200,000 is available to support member councils and their partner organisations.</li> <li>• A Networked Council Talent Bank offer is continued to support councils to look at the role of technology in delivering smarter, more efficient public services.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Adult Social Care, Children’s Services and Health</b></p>	<p>Local councils are supported in the high-cost areas of adult and children’s services, to share good practice, prevent duplication and provide peer support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly meetings of the Adult Social Care and Health and Children’s Services Portfolio-Holders network to shape the regional sector-led improvement programmes, provide peer support and lobby on issues of mutual concern.</li> <li>• Support to the East of England Integration network to deliver quarterly thematic seminars accompanied by research into new and emerging approaches to integration. The Association secured £20k grant to deliver the programme.</li> <li>• The Association has supported the Health Transition Task Group and the regional the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing a ‘Test and Learn Site’ to investigate the self-organised Dutch model of care at home, Buurtzorg, and its application within the UK context. The East is only one of a handful of sites across the UK testing out this innovative model.</li> <li>• Due to the success of the Integration programme in 2015/16 the Association will be delivering further events with supporting research in 2016/17.</li> <li>• Quarterly meetings of the East of England Integration network.</li> </ul>	<p>Subscriptions / External Funding</p>

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		<p>ADASS improvement programme to ensure that the East influences the national agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An East of England Social Care Introspective event was held for senior officers and members to review the integration journey so far and plan for full integration by 2020.</li> <li>• 11 top tier local authorities signed a Memorandum of Cooperation on how to address the supply and demand challenges associated with acquiring and retaining Qualified Social Workers. The approach is being rolled out across the country.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly meetings of the Adult Social Care and Health and Children’s Services Portfolio-Holders network with links to senior officers groups.</li> <li>• Continue links to the East of England adult and children’s services improvement programmes.</li> </ul>	
<b>Economic Growth</b>	Local councils and their partners in Local Enterprise Partnerships have access to helpful economic and population data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The East of England Forecasting Model was hosted by the East of England LGA, providing economic intelligence to all local authorities and LEs on future housing, infrastructure and employment needs up to 2031. The Association managed the re-tendering of the service this year, with the contract awarded to Cambridge Econometrics. The model is hosted by Cambridgeshire County Council and the current forecasts can be accessed on-line at <a href="http://www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/EEFM">http://www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/EEFM</a>. <u>The new contract will see the forecast period extended out to 2045 and it also allows for the production of forecasts to cover London and the rest of the Wider South East</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to host the East of England Forecasting Model to provide data on the scenarios that are most important to local councils and disseminate findings, as well as assess the future development of the model within the context of the Wider South East Collaboration Programme.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions / Additional funding from authorities and two LEs

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	Local councils increase growth and develop more competitive local economies through collaborative working and championing the central role of councils in economic growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitated engagement with London and the Wider South East (WSE) on issues of strategic importance. Including hosting two East of England Roundtables and a joint WSE Summit to progress political discussion about future co-operation/co-ordination on strategic growth and infrastructure issues in the Wider South East. Officers have also supported the development of a programme of joint technical work.</li> <li>Established an East of England Housing Company Network to bring together authorities with established or planned trading arms to meet local housing demand and generate income.</li> <li>Brought together the relevant London Boroughs and affected East of England councils to plan a programme of activity to mitigate the impact of homeless household movement out of London.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to facilitate engagement within the wider south east about future co-operation/co-ordination on strategic growth and infrastructure issues in the Wider South East and deliver the joint technical programme.</li> <li>Support the Housing Company Network to share learning and practice between established and developing models to prevent duplication and utilise existing expertise within the region.</li> <li>Continue to support affected councils mitigate the impact of the movement of homeless households out of London.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions/ Earned Income
<b>Europe</b>	Local councils and their partners understand and influence European policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided updates on EU policy changes opportunities twice a month through an improved ebulletin, as well as providing direct support and advice to members.</li> <li>Hosted four meetings of the Europe and International Forum, bringing together partners involved in European policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the quarterly meetings of the European and International Forum in bringing Councils together with MEPs.</li> <li>Bi-monthly policy snapshots sent to member councils.</li> <li>Work with the lead member networks to influence and engage with EU policy making, where appropriate.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions
	The East of England benefits from an increasing level of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivered an EU Funding master class on energy and environment to allow key representatives to effectively place their organisational</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bi-monthly funding monitors to highlight specific funding opportunities.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions

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	European funding.	<p>interests on the European funding landscape and channel their energy most appropriately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LEPs and DCLG representatives attended the European and International Panel to enable members to scrutinise uses of funding.</li> <li>Provided detailed briefings on EU funding calls through an improved ebulletin as well as providing direct advice and support to members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holds Government to account in its administration of EU Structural Funds.</li> <li>Provide advice and support to member authorities seeking EU funding.</li> <li>Deliver annual EU funding master class.</li> </ul>	
<b>Resources</b>	Additional, short-term capacity and expertise is available to local councils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talent Bank service fully established with area specialisms, including commercialisation, procurement, asset management and HR. In addition, the Talent Bank has supported a range of other projects, particularly in the areas of Devolution and Shared Services / Partnerships.</li> <li>Over the past Year the Talent Bank has supported 42 organisations and generated an income of over £1.8m. In total 110 different assignments have either been delivered or are still in progress by our associates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and coordinate the Talent Bank.</li> <li>Public Service Reform will be launched in 2016 as a new specialist area of the Talent Bank</li> </ul>	Earned Income
	Local councils are able to attract and retain a suitably skilled workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploration of the skills shortages in planning teams. A survey was undertaken to look at how this skills shortage impacts the ambitions of councils and their planning teams in the East, and to find potential solutions. The survey received a 79% response rate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working closely with the national LGA, support offer to councils to assist with further redesign work to deal with skills shortages.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions
	Local councils have constructive relationships with regional trade union bodies and influence national terms and conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Employers Panel worked with Trade Unions and influenced negotiations on pay, pensions and, terms and conditions.</li> <li>Canvassed views to feedback to LGA and Government on issues such as, the impact of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support Regional Council as a means of unions and councils to take action on important issues.</li> <li>Canvass local authority views and present them to the National Association of Regional</li> </ul>	Subscriptions

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		<p>the Trade Union Bill, redundancy/exit payments and recovery regulations and Tax treatment of termination payments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint secretarial visits to resolve local disputes and issues e.g facility time and recognition.</li> <li>• All authorities were consulted on the local government pay claim, working time directive and future working arrangements</li> </ul>	Employers/LGA.	
	<p>Expert and independent HR advice and support is provided to local councils when necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidential, strategic HR advice to Leaders, Cabinets and Chief Executives – with all authorities engaged at some level (e.g. pay and pensions debates).</li> <li>• 57 HR related Talent Bank assignments delivered, covering investigations, senior management restructure, job evaluation and recruitment.</li> <li>• Provided a full-time HR Helpline for advice on employment issues and examples from other authorities, with over 350 queries across the year.</li> <li>• Carried out HR surveys on behalf of councils.</li> <li>• Leadership development training programme was delivered for senior officers in member councils.</li> <li>• The e-paycheck benchmarking system has 28 authorities in membership.</li> <li>• Supported a regional coaching pool to build internal coaching capacity and enable people to access trained and experienced coaches from other local authorities and partner organisations to support performance,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full-time HR Helpline and survey service for timely advice on employment issues and examples from other councils.</li> <li>• Expert employers’ advice is delivered to councils, working on strategic HR and OD issues like shared services and TUPE, with complex projects delivered through Talent Bank.</li> <li>• In-house training programmes delivered to councils through Talent Bank, for example in management development, bullying and harassment, job evaluation and coaching.</li> <li>• Leadership development training programmes delivered to councils.</li> <li>• Continue support for e-Paycheck.</li> <li>• Continue development of the regional Coaching Pool.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions / Earned Income

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		<p>improvement and personal development at very low cost. ILM5 Coaching training delivered and an annual coaching conference was held.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivered in-house training sessions for members and officers on key skills and issues, such as skills development, HR and procurement and contract management.</li> </ul>		
	Local councils are supported to share practice and represent the interests of local government as employers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three meetings of the Local Government Employers Panel and one Forum bringing together all 52 authorities were held to address forthcoming legislation and key cases, pensions and pay updates.</li> <li>Supported a Heads of HR network and HR practitioner groups for HR professionals from across East of England authorities to act as a hub for the sharing of good practice and the identification of potential future opportunities.</li> <li>Four themed conferences for HR professionals were held to share best practice on development and productivity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver four meetings of the Employers' Group (3) and Employers' Forum (1) to discuss issues, and quarterly meetings of the Heads of HR group.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions
	Local councils realise savings through Talent Bank's efficiency and service re-design programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided support to authorities making best use of their assets including One Public Estate projects being led by Essex and Norfolk CC Property Services</li> <li>Supported authorities on the commercial development of their services, including Trade Waste, Building Control, CCTV, Cemetery / Crematoria and also on the development of an organisational commercial "culture"</li> <li>A free two-day Entrepreneurial Leadership programme delivered in April and September 2015 to local authority officers looking to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support partnerships in delivering ambitious and collaborative asset management projects through Talent Bank.</li> <li>Deliver annual master class in asset management to share approaches</li> <li>Support projects on commercialisation of services through the Talent Bank.</li> <li>Deliver annual master class in commercialisation to develop skills in this area with in the sector.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions / Earned Income

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		develop their skills in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Commercial Directors Network</li> </ul>	
	Local councils have an intelligent approach to procurement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 procurement projects were supported through the Talent Bank</li> <li>• The free regional contracts register, containing contracts from 47 authorities.</li> <li>• Delivered annual master class in procurement bringing together 37 authorities.</li> <li>• Bi-annual Procurement East Network held to share practice and prevent duplication.</li> <li>• Represented the region on the LGA's National Advisory Group for Local Government Procurement.</li> <li>• Development of a new "Advanced Contract and Relationship Management" programme to support councils with management of their external contracts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to support procurement improvement in councils through Talent Bank.</li> <li>• Bi-annual Procurement East Networks are held to share practice and prevent duplication.</li> <li>• Maintain a contracts database service</li> <li>• Deliver annual master class in procurement.</li> <li>• Support the LGA to develop and implement a "Self-Assessment Tool" for councils to measure themselves against good practice as outlined in the National Procurement Strategy</li> </ul>	Subscriptions / Earned Income
	Local councils work together to meet the financial challenges facing the sector by learning from each other, new and innovative ways of working and using their collective power to influence nationally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The financial resilience of the councils in the East has been mapped using publicly available data.</li> <li>• A survey on the impact of the local government settlement was issued with the results feeding into the finance networks.</li> <li>• A finance summit was held for officers and members.</li> <li>• Hosted three meetings of the Finance and Resources Lead Member network.</li> <li>• Hosted three meetings available to all Finance Directors of the 52 local authorities in the East of England.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver quarterly meetings of the Finance and Resources Portfolio-Holder group and Director of Finance Group.</li> <li>• Deliver a Local Government Finance "Summit" which brings together senior Finance officers and Portfolio Holders in a single forum to share good practice and increase co-operation.</li> </ul>	Subscriptions

## **ABOUT THE EAST OF ENGLAND LGA**

We are a politically-led, cross party voluntary organisation, funded by a combination of subscriptions and earned income, which works on behalf of the 52 local councils in the East of England to harness their collective strength to shape and serve their communities and localities.

We aspire to be:

- a provider of innovative solutions to partners; delivering projects and services around key issues such as integration, commercialisation and organisational review.
- a highly respected and influential advocate for our members; promoting their leadership of their locality, as well as fighting for them to get the resources, powers and freedoms necessary to perform that role successfully.
- a catalyst for collaborative working; bringing together groups of councils to harness their collective strength and knowledge.
- an invaluable resource of specialist expertise and capacity; providing advice and support to councils on key issues.

Our offer to authorities is driven by your priorities and is designed to help you thrive and adapt to the changes and challenges ahead. We know that our members really value the support offered by the Association. But all councils have to continually review their financial commitments so it's important the Association remains slim, focused and relevant.

The way we work is supported by the following set of principles:

- We place our members at the heart of decision making and development.
- We harness the expertise, experience and resources of our member councils
- We seek new opportunities for extending and strengthening the influence of councils.
- We work in partnership with the national Local Government Association and seek mutually to reinforce our respective work on local government's overall behalf.
- We recognise the different spatial levels that councils operate at, individually, at county and LEP level and regionally, for different objectives and purposes.
- We work across the public sector to support integrated working.
- We focus on the delivery of activities that offer good value for money and are effective.

For more information about our offer visit: [www.eelga.gov.uk](http://www.eelga.gov.uk)