



East of England
Local Government Association

East of England LGA Business Plan

2018-21

The Business Plan sets out the over-arching themes for the year that set all of our work into context. It describes the ways in which the East of England LGA will work with its member councils and partners.

It is intended that this plan will be reviewed and refreshed as part of an annual review.

Document Reference Information

Version	Version 1.1
Author/Lead	Hannah Shah, Senior Manager, East of England LGA
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Date of Next Formal Review	March 2019

Version Control Record

Version	Description of Change(s)	Reason for Change	Author	Date
1.0	Draft Business Plan		HS	21/02/18
1.1	Final Business Plan	Ratified by the Assembly of Council Leaders.	HS	4/07/18

Forward

The East of England has a tremendous offer to make to the country, through our economic achievements and potential, our capacity for growth, and our wonderful environment.

The economic success of our local areas and region as a whole bears testament to our entrepreneurialism and innovation.

However, challenges remain which need national support and collective action. Future Investment is critical, not only in securing the future of our local economies and services, but also for national economic wellbeing.

Through the Association, we can build the case for the East and strengthen our offer to Government, as well as ensuring that our essential asks – for fairer funding, greater autonomy, more devolved approaches – are properly understood and appreciated.

We have a long and successful history of collaborative working across the 52 councils in the East; and, we are proud that all these authorities continue to be members of the Association.

As Chairman, my ambition is to build on this collaboration and capitalise on the opportunities that this unique forum offers in strengthening our voice nationally.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Finch'.

Cllr David Finch

Chairman of the East of England LGA
& Leader of Essex County Council

Purpose and Objectives

The East of England LGA is a politically-led, cross-party organisation which works on behalf of the 52 local councils in the East of England to harness their collective strength. It is a voluntary body and registered Employers' Association, funded by subscription.

The Association's over-riding purpose is:

“To support our member councils to be the best that they can be for their communities”

To achieve this purpose, we aim to be:

- ▶ a provider of innovative solutions and a catalyst for collaborative working.
- ▶ an honest broker bringing together partners to harness their collective strength and knowledge.
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ an invaluable resource of specialist expertise and capacity; providing advice and support to councils on key issues.
- ▶ the main interface between employers and trade unions at a regional level.



Context

This Business Plan comes at a time of tough and complex pressures on the sector and it must continue to undertake its role against the backdrop of the challenges below:

- The decision to leave the European Union has altered the political landscape and presents a number of challenges and opportunities; one of these challenges is the potential impact on workforce capacity in key areas (such as health and care) that are already under pressure.
- The East of England brings significant added value to the UK's economy, and there are opportunities for local authorities to build on this track record to tackle the most important economic challenges; those of housing delivery and infrastructure investment.
- Collaborating beyond boundaries, sectors and with partner organisations to maintain essential public service must now be embraced as "the new normal" in order to protect frontline services and ensure positive outcomes for communities.
- With traditional savings and efficiency activity reaching exhaustion, local authorities must increasingly adopt a more commercial and innovative approach to their activities to maintain financial sustainability.
- The environment of financial restraint and rising demand has implications on resource management and organisational development, as well as on the effective commissioning, procurement and management of external contracts.
- In order to sustain the transformation required, local authorities must ensure that they have a workforce with the new skills and qualities needed, as well as a clear strategy for attracting in new talent.

Themes for 2018-2021

In addressing the contextual challenges outlined above, our core services will focus on five priority themes:

▶ Economic Growth and Infrastructure

We will:

Harness the collective strength of the Wider South East Partners to make the case for strategic infrastructure investment and progress identified schemes of mutual benefit.

Ensure that our members and their partners have a strong voice in the development of the London Plan.

Support our members with meeting new and existing housing pressures, and tackling barriers to housing growth.

Support our members and strategic partners to work together to call for essential investment in strategic transport corridors.

▶ Public Service Resources and Reform

We will:

Support partnerships to make the most of the opportunities offered by public service reform.

Help partners navigate the process of asset management to improve service delivery and achieve efficiency gains.

Support our members to identify savings and enable ongoing added value from their procurement and contracting activities.

Equip our members with the skills and capabilities needed to pursue commercial services to improve financial resilience and to support the delivery of core council services.

▶ Future of Health and Social Care

We will:

Provide leaders with a forum to debate and tackle matters of common concern and share best practice.

Support collaboration in developing new and innovative ways of working to tackle the social care crisis.

► Workforce and skills

We will:

Deliver guidance and advice on strategic HR and employment issues.

Help our members recruit, equip and retain a workforce with the skills and behaviours which are integral to the future of the public sector.

Develop a coordinated approach to tackling skills shortages in priority areas.

Support constructive relationships with regional trade union bodies and influence national terms and conditions.

► The Impact of Exiting the EU

We will:

Support partners in understanding and navigating the Brexit process, including gaining clarity on the future of EU funding and implications for the workforce.

During the transition period, support partners to engage with and make the most of all the opportunities in the EU.

Facilitate discussions with regions, countries and international organisations represented in Brussels to discuss future cooperation outside the EU.

Engage with the Government and European Commission to highlight East of England priority issues arising from Brexit.

The way we work

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

- We are a cross-party, politically led organisation with 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 to shape national policy.
- We act as an advocate for our member councils to ensure that they are recognised for their role and work.
- We work in partnership with the national Local Government Association and seek mutually to reinforce our respective work on local government's overall behalf.
- As one of the nine regional employers' organisations, we provide a strong regional voice to influence negotiations on pay, workforce issues and terms and conditions.
- 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 and the development of new and better ways of working to meet current and future challenges to service delivery.
- We deliver effective activities that offer good value for money.

Our Offer

This Business Plan is supported by a detailed Action Plan outlining intended outcomes, activities, responsibilities, timescales and resources, providing a framework for monitoring and evaluating progress against key priorities and objectives.

The Action Plan will be reviewed annually, alongside the Business Plan.

Our offer to our members is delivered on the following basis:

► Core Services

Our core services are funded by member subscriptions and are available to all 52 members of the East of England LGA.

Our Core Services are a universal offer available to all subscribing members and provided free at the point of access. They include programmes of activity in priority areas, support for regional member and officer networks, a range of free events, specific helpdesk and advice services, as well as activity undertaken jointly with Trade Unions in our role as the Regional Employers Organisation.

► Commercial Services

Our range of Commercial Services provide additional high-quality support, which are accessible on a "paid for" basis at the point of delivery.

Our Commercial Services have been developed to support and enhance our core services by providing additional value to our members which is paid for at the point of delivery. These services add value to our overall offer, generate additional income for the Association, help us to keep down our annual subscription cost and contribute to the ongoing financial sustainability of the East of England LGA.

The Talent Bank is our most prominent commercial service, whereby associates are provided to our customers on either a day rate or project package basis across a number of specialist areas of activity, including the commercialisation of services, housing, asset management, HR and OD (including executive recruitment), as well as more generic services like project and programme management, and service reviews.

Other commercial services are developed and made available which complement ongoing activity associated with the priority themes.

Governance and Staffing

The 52 local councils in the East of England are all members of East of England LGA.

The organisation is governed by the Leader or elected Mayor of each of the 52 councils in the region and the full Assembly of Council Leaders meets twice a year. This is a forum for discussion on common issues, but importantly provides a platform for all leaders to meet and debate key issues affecting our members.

Day to day management is provided by a management committee of five Leaders.

Chief Executives from across the region also come together quarterly to bring together the county and unitary councils plus one district representative from each county area to tackle the strategic issues facing councils across the East of England.

A series of panels and networks also bring together the Lead Members around the key priority areas who come together to share experience and work collaboratively by thematic area. These networks are also supported by officer groups with expertise in these same priority areas.

A structure chart is included as Appendix A.

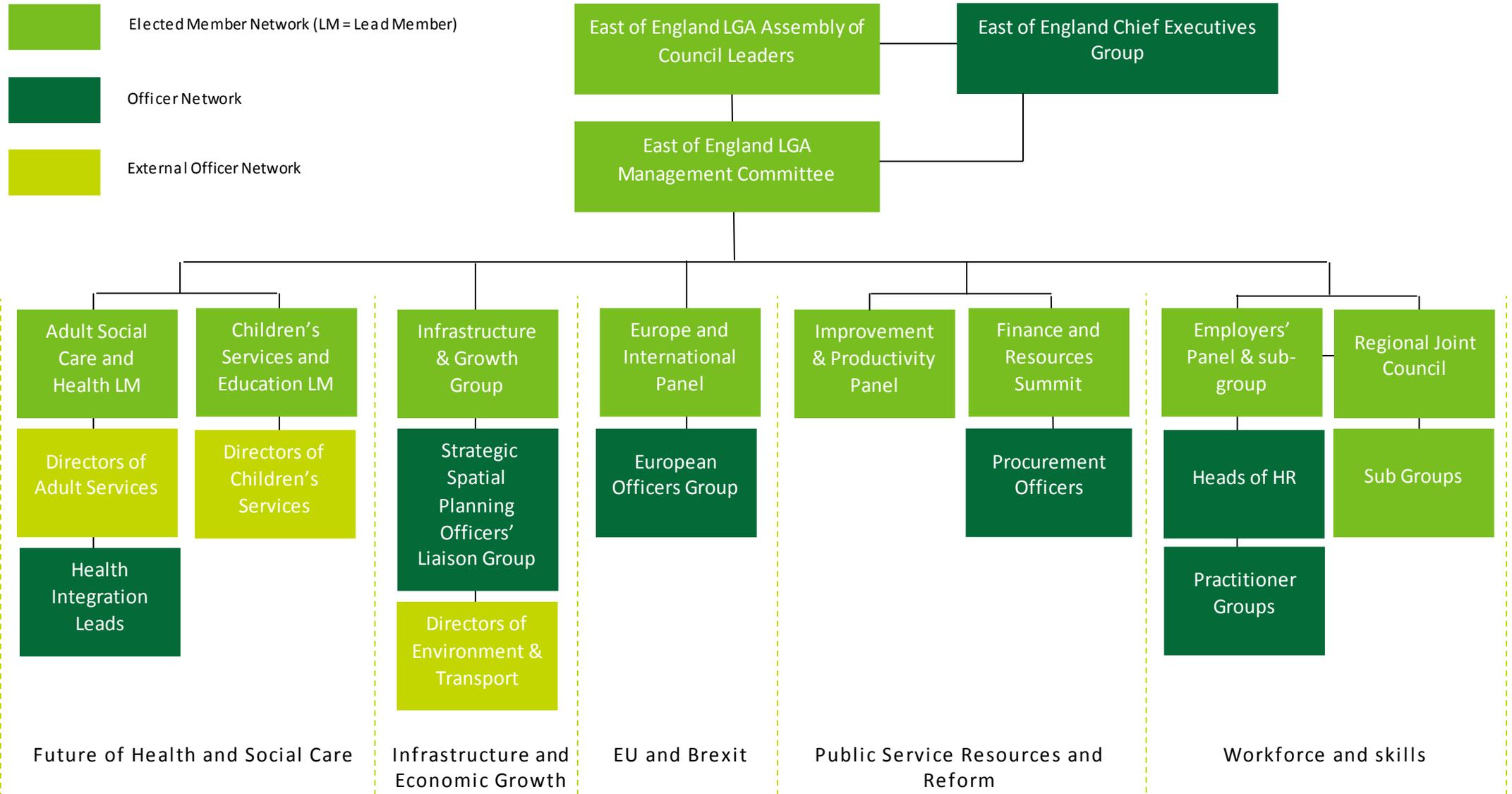
The organisation is staffed by a small core of highly experienced and committed officers.

Communications and Advocacy

The Business Plan is underpinned by a strong communications, marketing and advocacy strategy which assist us to:

- ▶ Provide two way communication between the East of England LGA and our member councils to ensure that the support we provide is relevant and appropriate.
- ▶ Ensure awareness and understanding amongst our member councils of the role, services and added value of the East of England LGA.
- ▶ Be an influential advocate and to enhance the reputation of local government in the East of England for innovation, achievement, independence and resilience.
- ▶ Enable the sharing of knowledge, ideas and good practice.
- ▶ Continue to work with partners, including the Local Government Association, to collaborate on issue led campaigns and to strengthen the voice of local government.

Appendix A - Organisation Structure





Get in touch

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Find out more about the East of England LGA

www.eelga.gov.uk