

London Councils Business Plan 2014/15



**LONDON
COUNCILS**

Foreword

Those of us fortunate enough to live and work in London are familiar with the wealth of opportunities and benefits the capital offers its residents, businesses and visitors alike.

Those tasked with the governance of this great city are similarly well aware of the real challenges London faces. London needs more homes and more schools. London needs to help get more of its population into work and it needs to continue to help drive growth in the UK economy.

In recent years an unforgiving financial environment has posed a series of serious questions about a wide range of public services and how they can be delivered most effectively.

Londoners will shortly be heading for the polls to vote for their local borough councils and it is heartening to note a growing recognition of the fact that many of the answers to these questions are to be found within London local government.

Between 2010 and 2015, principal funding for local government will have reduced by close to 40 per cent in London. At the same time, London's growing and ageing population has increased pressure on local services and infrastructure.

But at a time of fiscal challenge, London local government has responded with commitment and innovation to prove itself one of the most efficient and effective parts of the public sector.

London local government is at the forefront of pioneering new ways of integrating public services at a local level in order to secure better outcomes for Londoners and manage the demand for future services in a time of severely reduced resources.

London Councils has also been playing a major part in the debate about the need for greater fiscal autonomy for London's government - the Mayor of London and the boroughs.

Working with the government, the Mayor of London, and a wide range of partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors, London's 33 local councils are taking the lead in instigating, coordinating, developing and delivering solutions to the challenges that the capital faces, on behalf of the communities they represent.

London Councils exists to support and promote their work and I am pleased to present this Business Plan setting out the priorities and work programmes that will shape our ambitions in the coming year.



John O'Brien
Chief Executive,
London Councils

Introduction and purpose

London Councils' core purpose is to help London local government successfully shape London both as a world class capital city and its localities. Specifically, London Councils aspires to be:

- a highly respected and influential lobbyist and advocate for boroughs, promoting their leadership of a broad range of local public services and communities, as well as fighting for them to get the resources, powers and freedoms necessary to play that role
- a catalyst for effective sharing between boroughs – people, practice, knowledge, information and services. London Councils seeks to be instrumental in both challenging and supporting London local government to improve performance and efficiency
- a provider of a clearly defined range of quality and responsive services to Londoners and London organisations on boroughs' behalf.

This plan sets out the four broad, over-arching themes for the year that set all of our work into context and describes the ways in which London Councils goes about its work – with members, member authorities and others.

On pages 5 and 6 we set out the individual projects and main work programme for the Policy and Public Affairs and Services Directorates, which underpin the overall work of the organisation, help deliver its core purpose and reflect its over-arching themes.

Context

In the context of 2014/15, London Councils needs to undertake this role against the backdrop of two significant challenges facing our member authorities. They are:

- supporting councils in their work to face up to fundamental changes in their operations in response to the public finance climate
- exploiting opportunities in our work with government, London's public services and the wider GLA family and offering to help place our members at the heart of shaping a wide range of better integrated and more cost effective public services locally.

Themes

Our over-arching themes for 2014/15 are as follows:

Resourcing London. In a period of acute financial retrenchment, we will work alongside our member boroughs and partners to:

- ensure the best possible public financing for London
- mitigate the impact of financial reductions upon London boroughs
- support councils seeking to drive savings and efficiency.

In this period heading towards the next general election, and the CSR that will follow, we will:

- develop and deploy a strong case for London boroughs to be key players in integrating local public services so as to help manage future demand for services. We will advocate the need for both a fair outcome for our member boroughs and London citizens, and build on the financial devolution case set out by the London Finance Commission.

Responding to the wishes of our member boroughs, we will also:

- establish the first local government common investment vehicle in England, providing London local government with a voluntary platform through which it can collaborate to deliver greater efficiency in the delivery of the local government pension scheme.

Securing devolution and localism. We will:

- continue to highlight the strong London argument for boroughs to be at the heart of commissioning a broader range of integrated local public services
- lead the argument for financial and wider devolution, including via the Growth Deal for London and wider public service reform, to help position London effectively for the future financing environment
- support London local government in its work to turn this into practice on the ground by providing shared learning and approaches and developing London frameworks that allow this devolution to take place at local level.

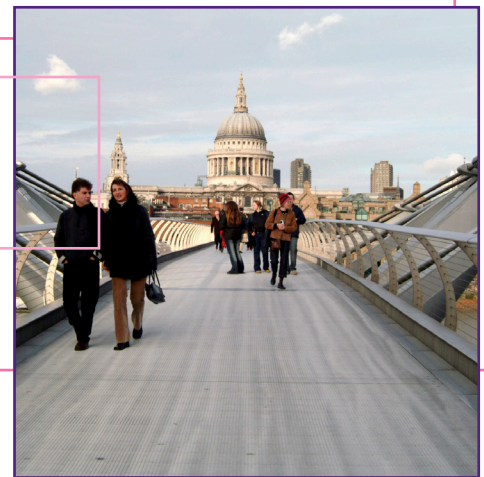


Supporting London Delivery. We will:

- provide a defined range of direct services to Londoners and London organisations directly on the collective behalf of boroughs
- support London local government's collective efforts to enhance the effectiveness of public services across the capital
- act as a focal point for brokerage and co-ordination between different London public services, the GLA group and boroughs on key delivery issues
- work with key political, professional and managerial groupings across London local government to help strengthen the capacity of our membership to deliver high quality and cost effective services.

Organisational Change. In the context of significant organisational changes in the last four years, we will focus on:

- managing our resources and asset base effectively to sustain the value for money improvements delivered to member authorities in the past four years
- equipping ourselves with the skills, knowledge and competences required to support London local government in this critical period
- continuing our drive to manage and deploy our resources flexibly in order to achieve maximum benefit for our member authorities
- driving down the overhead costs of our direct services
- creating an environment in which we attract talented people and challenge them to deliver outstanding performance.



Directorate work programmes

Our directorate programmes detail the range of work that will support our overall objectives, all of which relate in some way to our over-arching themes of resourcing London, securing devolution and localism, supporting London delivery and organisational change.

These directorate programmes are set out in detail on pages 5 and 6.

The way we work

Underpinning the way we work is the following set of principles:

- we are a cross party, politically led organisation motivated by our common commitment to the interests of London and London local government
- we seek to harness the power that comes from the practice and the people of our member authorities
- we work closely with a range of public, private and third sector partners across London and more broadly to secure our aims - in particular, we are a key point of connection between boroughs collectively and the Mayor and GLA family as well as wider public services in London
- 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 strive continuously to improve the effectiveness of our organisation on behalf of our member authorities and seek to make London Councils an attractive and challenging place for people to develop their careers.

Equalities

In line with our obligations under the Equalities Act 2010, London Councils has identified a number of equalities objectives where we will strive to improve what we do and review the impact this has had on our performance and outcomes.

These objectives are:

- tackling community disadvantage effectively
- improving accessibility to London Councils' website
- improving accessibility to Freedom Pass and Taxicard
- improving Freedom Pass take up
- ensuring that the work of the London Health Board works to improve the health of all Londoners, aiming for greater improvements in more disadvantaged communities
- improving accessibility to PATAS website
- improving the accessibility to Southwark Street.

Full details can be found on our website at: <http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/aboutus/equalities/equalities.htm>

Policy and Public Affairs Directorate

2014/15 BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES

Cross Cutting

- making the business case for financial devolution across all London public services
- managing the impact of welfare reform: encouraging work
- shaping the development of an enhanced Troubled Families programme.

Finance and Performance

- delivering a fairer share of central government grant funding for London
- making the business cases for financial devolution across all London public services
- supporting London to drive its own assurance, performance and improvement
- delivering a collaborative pensions vehicle for London local government.

Housing

- accelerating housing investment policies to meet London's needs
- developing solutions to address homelessness in London.

Transport and Environment

- enabling infrastructure for a growing city
- assessing the opportunity for improved waste management
- reducing London utilities poverty.

Economic Growth and Regeneration

- collaborating to accelerate London's economic growth
- supporting local economic growth
- devolving the levers to enhance individual opportunity, employment and skills.

Education and Children

- providing strategic leadership for the London schools system
- enabling leadership and partnership working which keeps children safe and improves services
- making the case for childcare which supports opportunities for children and parents.

Health and Social care

- developing health leadership with local government partners
- leveraging well-being through public health
- accelerating health integration to improve outcomes and efficiency
- securing a viable future for adult social care in London.

Policing and Crime

- shaping London's local policing, crime reduction and rehabilitation.

Services Directorate

2014/15 BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES

Transport and Mobility

- to plan for and reissue around 1 million Freedom Passes by March 2015
- to negotiate the Freedom Pass annual settlements with Transport for London (TfL) and other bus operators to keep increases to a minimum in 2015/16
- to negotiate a new settlement agreement for 2015/16 onwards with the Association of Train Operators (ATOC)
- to continue to streamline Taxicard procedures and improve the service
- develop an effective solution through amendments to the London Lorry Control Scheme (LLCS) to help improve cyclist safety
- work with the LLCS enforcement contractor to improve enforcement and therefore compliance, as well as improving penalty charge recovery with the aim of making the scheme self-financing
- ensuring the impact of government proposed parking reforms on London authorities, especially restrictions on the use of CCTV enforcement and appellant compensation, are properly considered before any changes are agreed.

Parking and Traffic Appeals Service (PATAS)

- to operate the parking, traffic and road user charging appeals service
- to procure a new contract for the administrative support to PATAS
- to operate the Parking on Private Land Appeals (POPLA) service
- to work with the Greater London Authority (GLA) on continued support for the road user charging appeals service.

Young People's Education and Skills (YPES)

- provide regional leadership and influence, specifically to: lobby for London, shape London's response to national policies, manage relationships with stakeholders and strategic partners
- support the strategies through which partners and stakeholders work together to implement the YPES strategy, including publishing an evidence base and an Annual Statement of Priorities, managing a data and research programme and supporting collaborative working
- lead strategic services and activities, specifically to: support local authorities in their plans to implement Raising the Participation Age (RPA) and major reform for young people with Special Educational Needs
- secure additional resources for London and work with partners to maximise the impact of investment, including shaping the 2014-20 European Structural and Investment Fund youth programmes
- explore the options for future governance and leadership of the service in the light of no funding commitment beyond 2014/15.

Capital Ambition

- oversee the development and refinement of London Venture's strategic brokerage work and cross-sectoral relationship-building towards clear and viable improvement and efficiency partnership ventures
- maintain effective governance and develop London Councils' role in advocating ventures and promoting emerging innovation and transformation opportunities amongst London's authorities
- continue to direct the advanced stages of the regional efficiency programme to monitor and manage the risks and to successfully close and realise defined outputs, outcomes and benefits expected from the remaining partnership projects.

Community Services and Grants

- continue to develop and refine our approach to grants management with the aim of ensuring the programme meets its objectives
- review the current programme in preparation for the 2015/16 - 2016/17 cycle
- communicate the impact of the programme
- continue to run London Care Services on behalf of partner boroughs, including processing provider applications, annual fee negotiations (benchmark – 2 per cent), and ensure the board is fully serviced
- complete a review of the Notify system to ensure it is fit for purpose.



About London Councils

London Councils represents London's 32 borough councils and the City of London.

It is a cross-party organisation that works on behalf of all of its member authorities regardless of political persuasion.

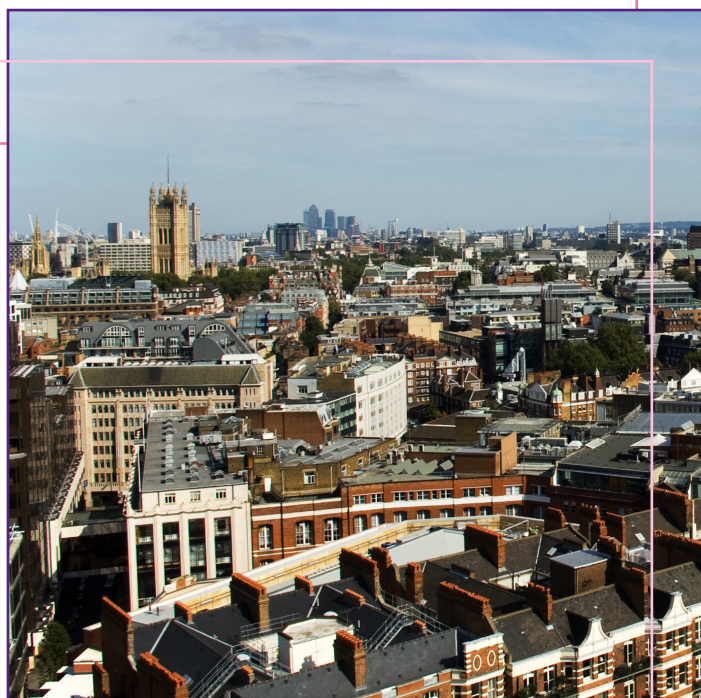
London Councils makes the case to government, the Mayor and others to get the best deal for Londoners and to ensure that our member authorities have the resources, freedoms and powers to do the best possible job for their residents and local businesses.

London Councils runs a number of direct services for member authorities including the Freedom Pass, Taxicard and Health Emergency Badge. It also runs an independent parking appeals service and a pan-London grants programme for voluntary organisations.

London Councils acts as a catalyst for effective sharing among boroughs – be that ideas, good practice, people, resources, or policies and new approaches.

The strategic direction of London Councils is set by the Leaders' Committee, which comprises the Leaders of all of London's local authorities. There is also a cross-party Executive which guides the organisation's day-to-day work.

The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and the Mayor's Office of Policing and Crime are also in membership.



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