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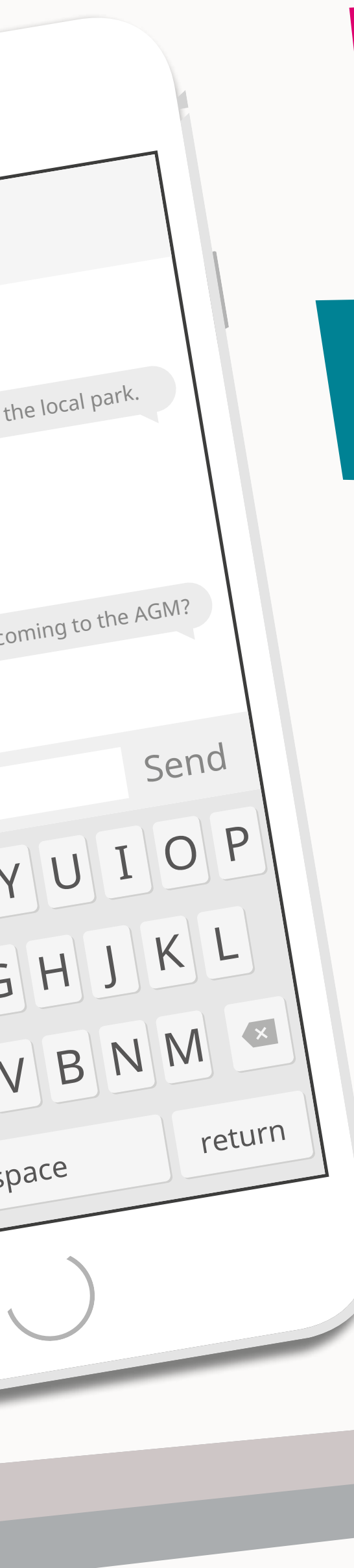
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Councillor Lynne Doherty, Conservative, West Berkshire Council

I studied history at Cardiff University before embarking on a sales and marketing career. Following the birth of my children, I joined the voluntary sector. I ran a family support charity for six years and it was this work that led me to stand for election in 2015.

As Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education, I am responsible for children's services to protect those in need, and for the provision of education to all. I am proud to have overseen the improvement journey following an 'inadequate' Ofsted rating, which resulted in a re-inspection finding of 'good'.

My advice for new councillors is:

- Don't be afraid to question: if it is running through your mind, it is most likely to be running through someone else's.
- Think 'so what?' on behalf of your residents – what do decisions actually mean to those you represent?
- Find a friend – find someone you trust to guide and support you in your early days as a councillor

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Campaigning on your behalf

For further information on the campaign www.local.gov.uk/spending-review-2019

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SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

Holders of public office should uphold the following seven principles:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

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www.local.gov.uk/devolution

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**Councillor Mike Bush, Independent,
Tendring District Council**

I live in the rural Essex village of Great Oakley and was elected as a district councillor in 2017. I am an active member-volunteer in our village community-run pub and, having listened to the issues raised by local residents, I wanted to be their voice in council and make a difference to our village life.

It has been a steep but rewarding learning curve and I have worked on a variety of cases, from potholes, fly-tipping and flooding through to anti-social behaviour and planning applications. I am also a parish councillor, which provides different challenges.

My advice for new councillors is:

- Introduce yourself to as many officers as possible – get to know their roles and how they can provide support and advice to assist with your casework.
- Get to know other councillors who have experience and knowledge to guide you through the council protocol.
- Always respond to your residents' issues promptly, keep them informed and ensure you get out in your community to let them know what you can do for them.

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Councillor Kelly Braund, Labour, London Borough of Merton

I became a councillor in 2017, having run the Merton campaign for Britain Stronger in Europe. I was a committed community organiser and loved nothing better than being on the doorstep talking to residents.

I have made a speech at every council meeting I have attended – and now I even look forward to it. Seeing as I was terrified of public speaking only a few years ago, it shows how becoming a councillor allows you to challenge yourself.

My advice for new councillors is:

- Ask questions. At one of my first scrutiny panels, everyone was using an acronym that I didn't recognise, so I asked. The other members sighed with relief – they didn't know what it stood for either.
- It's a steep learning curve: take advantage of all the training on offer, take time to meet the officers and find a mentor to show you the ropes.
- Say yes: positions are always coming up on committees, panels and task groups. Your fresh ideas might be exactly what are needed.

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HIGHLIGHTING POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

THE LGA DEVELOPMENT OFFER

Inspiring local communities, making a real difference and changing people's lives to help create a better future for the people and places we represent requires ambitious, bold leadership. Effective political leadership is the building block of a healthy and vibrant democracy.

The LGA's range of political leadership development programmes supports councillors to become more confident, capable and skilled and better prepared to make a difference. There is a programme for everyone, whether you are a brand new councillor or a seasoned veteran at the top of your political career.

As a local politician, finding the time to reflect, build your networks and learn can be tricky. The LGA development programmes provide opportunities to do just that, building the leadership capacity of individuals and the wider sector. For new councillors in

particular, our community leadership resources offer includes workbooks, e-learning tools and in-house training to support you in your role as a community leader, facilitator and broker.

The **Focus on Leadership** series provides seminars and workshops to help councillors in their existing roles and as they move towards challenging new leadership positions. These include the **Young Councillor's Weekender**, which helps councillors to build networks with their peers early on in their careers; the BAME (black, Asian and minority ethnic) programmes; programmes for women councillors; and the **Effective Opposition** programme.

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Themed learning opportunities for portfolio holders or service committee chairs are available in the Leadership Essentials programme, which concentrates on specific portfolio areas (such as planning or adult social care) or a specific theme such as scrutiny or effective community engagement.

Next Generation is a modular development programme which has been developed and designed within party political groups. It offers ambitious and talented councillors an unparalleled opportunity to develop their leadership, with a particular focus on their own party traditions.

For councillors already in leadership positions and looking to stretch their skills further (including group leaders, portfolio holders, portfolio shadows and committee chairs), we provide the highly respected **Leadership Academy**. This modular programme delivers accredited leadership development opportunities all year round.

And for those who have reached their ambition of council leader we offer, by invitation, the **Leaders programme**, aimed at new council leaders in their first term of leadership. Leaders may also choose to be involved in the **Leading Edge** series, which brings together leaders and chief executives to share ideas and look at the current challenges facing local government.

For further information
www.local.gov.uk/councillor-development

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www.local.gov.uk/future-comms

www.local.gov.uk/resident-communications

www.local.gov.uk/digital-communications

Local Government Association LGcomms

#FUTURECOMMS

Building local public services for the future through modern communications

www.local.gov.uk/future-comms

solace PRCA
The Power of Communication

Councillor viewpoint

Councillor Philippa Hart, Liberal Democrat, South Cambridgeshire District Council

I grew up in my ward and love representing its residents. Forty per cent of my council time is spent dealing with casework, often liaising with officers to ask them to assist with a particular matter. Twenty per cent is spent keeping residents informed: I write reports for meetings and magazines and, with fellow Lib Dem councillors, a monthly email newsletter.

The other 40 per cent of my time goes on being on the scrutiny and planning committees and attending monthly full council meetings.

My advice for new councillors is:

- For at least six months you will feel like you don't know anything. Democratic services were a lifeline during that time.
- Some councillors schedule meetings at school pick-up or evening meal times. Ask for meetings to be held at family-friendly times so that candidates from a wider age range can consider becoming a councillor.
- Face and name recall are very useful. The people you meet will remember your name, so it's nice to repay the compliment by remembering who they are.

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<http://transparency.opendata.esd.org.uk>

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The eLearning modules can be found at <http://lga.learndata.info>

Using data

[See page 60](#)

Councillor viewpoint

Councillor James Hill, Conservative, Northampton Borough Council

I became a councillor in 2015. It came somewhat out of blue, I wasn't expecting to be elected. I stood because I felt it was important to have younger people on the council to reflect the electorate.

The chance to make a small but important difference in people's lives is very satisfying. I am the Assistant Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning, a role which is essentially about the future regeneration of the town, which is really exciting.

My advice for new councillors is:

- The first six months are a whirlwind – it takes time to find your feet and learn how the council works, but don't worry, every new councillor feels like this.
- Involve your family and friends. As a married father of four I involve my family wherever possible. This might include bringing them to community activities such as litter picks and fun days.
- Use various ways to engage with residents: as well as social media I run surgeries, use email and am always available on the phone.

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**Councillor Anna Charles-Jones,
Independent, Stockport Metropolitan
Borough Council**

I have lived in Heald Green for more than 10 years, becoming increasingly involved in the local community. It is the only ward we know of with a 90-year unbroken record of all councillors being independent 'Ratepayers Association' councillors. This was a fantastic opportunity for someone like me, who is interested in politics but could never conform to a party-political whip.

My ward borders two other councils on the edge of Greater Manchester, which brings unique challenges, particularly around where to put new housing.

My advice for new councillors is:

- Don't be afraid to go straight to the top: I have had queries resolved much more quickly by approaching senior officers, rather than trying to work up through the ranks.
- Don't be afraid to take a day off. Being a councillor is a 24/7 role which can take over your life if you allow it to.
- Be yourself. Residents and officers appreciate a councillor who is honest, genuine and has a well-reasoned opinion, even if it differs from their own.

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For more information, visit www.lgo.org.uk

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

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For more information, visit www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

For more information, visit www.ombudsman.org.uk

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Find out more
www.local.gov.uk/bright-futures



www.local.gov.uk/enabling-school-improvement

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Careers advice and guidance

www.local.gov.uk/lga-position-paper-principles-underpinning-good-careers-advice-and-guidance

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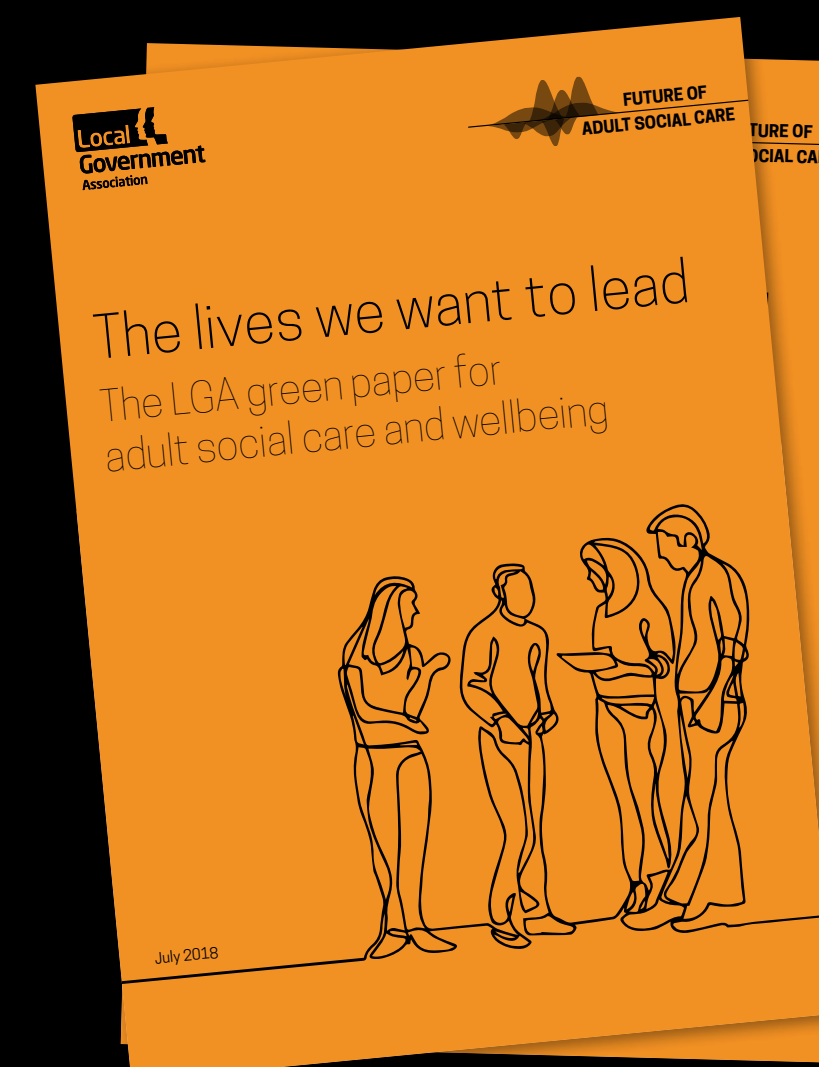
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More information on the Green Paper can be found on our website www.local.gov.uk/lives-we-want-lead-lga-green-paper-adult-social-care



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The LGA has produced a briefing which looks at the key proposals of the long-term plan, which can be found at www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/nhs-long-term-plan

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Children's mental health is part of the LGA's 'Bright Futures' campaign
www.local.gov.uk/bright-futures-camhs

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Councillor Adam Ellison, Labour, South Tyneside Council

I became a councillor in 2015 at the age of 19, becoming the youngest person ever elected to South Tyneside Council. I am Vice-Chair of the Safeguarding and Education Panel and as such play a role in scrutiny of education and children's services.

My day-to-day activities involve attending council and public meetings, visiting residents and responding to calls and enquiries from the community that I represent. It is a real honour to represent my home ward of Hebburn North.

My advice for new councillors is:

- Try to be organised from the start: it is easy to get lost in emails, letters and information if you don't keep on top of it.
- Go with your own gut. As a new councillor you hear lots of conflicting information from others about the role and what they're doing in their area. It's your own role to shape and embrace.
- You won't always achieve the outcome you would like, but don't be disheartened – there are lots of ways to make an impact.

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An introduction to the health system for councillors can be found at www.local.gov.uk/councillors-guide-health-system-england

More information, including resources to support implementation and improvement, can be found at www.local.gov.uk/adult-social-care/mental-capacity-act-including-dols

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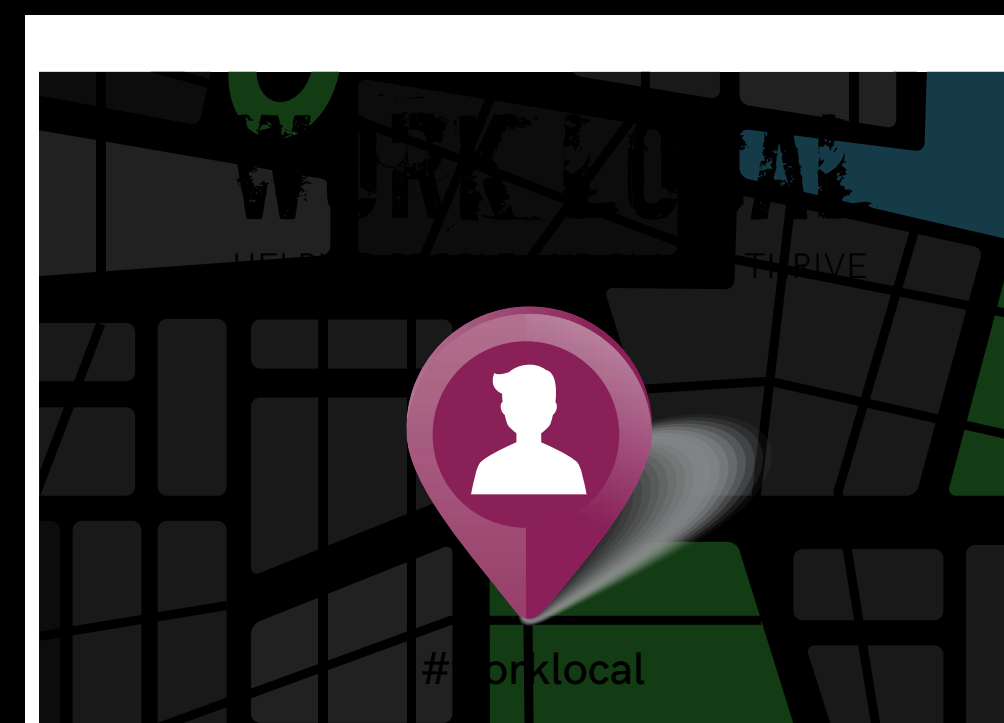
HOT TOPIC DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

A digital connection is now widely considered 'the fourth utility', in the same league as a water, gas and electricity supply. Councillors are increasingly campaigning to improve the speed and reliability of connection for residents and businesses, whether fixed-line broadband to the home or office or mobile on-the-go coverage.

Councillors also have an important role to play in helping to find the best location for new digital infrastructure. Improving a local area's mobile coverage often requires the building or upgrading of mobile phone masts. Councillors can represent the views of their community to mobile operators, and can help balance the needs of those wanting better coverage with those who might disagree with the placement of a mast. Mobile operators have signed up to a code of practice obligating them to make councillors aware when a new mast is to be erected in their ward. As a local representative, you can request that they liaise with you and your community on the best placement of new mobile infrastructure.

For further information on the campaign
www.local.gov.uk/work-local

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The council-led superfast broadband programme has already enabled 95 per cent of premises in the UK to have superfast speed. On top of this, the Government recently committed to deliver nationwide full-fibre coverage (which can deliver up to 1Gbps of download speed) to all areas by 2033. Until then, for the final five per cent of areas without adequate download speeds, the Government is introducing a 'universal service obligation', so that by 2020 everyone in the UK will have a right to request high-speed broadband of at least 10Mbps download speed. Following lobbying from the LGA, the Government has committed to introduce legislation to ensure all new-build homes are connected to full-fibre connectivity as standard. The LGA is currently producing a councillors' handbook on digital connectivity.

**Culture, tourism, leisure
and sport**

For more information and best practice
www.local.gov.uk/topics/culture-tourism-leisure-and-sport

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Councillor Rhys Taylor, Liberal Democrat, Cardiff City Council

I was elected in 2017, and it's a privilege to represent residents and help shape city-wide priorities. Being a councillor is a hugely varied role. The issues residents have raised with me have ranged from the state of pavements and roads to missed waste collections, planning applications, school admissions and the air quality around our schools.

I serve on the children and young people scrutiny committee, which oversees education, children's services and play services, and the public protection and licensing committee, with oversight of taxi and premises licensing and air quality across the city.

My advice for new councillors is:

- Get to know officers in key departments and get to grips with any enquiry or information systems your council has – it will make dealing with issues far easier.
- Give yourself time to switch off on a regular basis – it will be good for you and your residents.
- Enjoy your time, the people you meet and help and the experience you gain as a councillor.

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www.local.gov.uk/pas

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HOT TOPIC MANAGING AIR QUALITY

The state of air quality in our towns and cities is a high-profile issue for local and national politicians. As a result of the UK being in breach of nitrogen dioxide limit values under the EU Air Quality Directive, the Government and many councils are prioritising air quality more than they used to. Councils have a responsibility under Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) legislation to review air quality. Where concentrations exceed national objectives, measures should be put in place to reduce emissions, and this should be reported in the local air quality action plan.

Transport is responsible for 80 per cent of harmful roadside emissions. Typical measures to reduce emissions from local sources include traffic management, encouraging the uptake of cleaner vehicles, and increased use of public transport – along with more sustainable transport methods such as walking and cycling. The Government’s latest air quality plan set out further measures to help councils manage air quality and bring the UK to within national air quality standards.

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This can include 'clean air zones', with measures such as charging high-polluting vehicles to enter areas where the council is trying to tackle air pollution.

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Resources to support councils in the delivery of this Act are available on the Social Value Portal www.socialvalueportal.com

For more information www.local.gov.uk/community-action and www.local.gov.uk/new-conversations-lga-guide-engagement

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New improvement hub

Peer challenge

We are currently working with councils to make sure we get this right. If you would like to find out more and try the prototype please visit www.local.gov.uk/improvement-hub

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The LGA's productivity offer

Supporting your council to innovate, save money and generate income

We work with councils to show what is possible, with projects to demonstrate how authorities can save money, generate income and become more efficient and effective. Using a range of approaches, including brokering and sponsoring expert interventions, training, providing small grants and commissioning research.

Redesigning public services (case studies, grant funding)

Together with the Design Council we offer support to councils and health partners wanting to apply design processes and methods to their public health challenges. If your organisation requires some fresh thinking or a different approach, this could be your opportunity to receive training and support. www.local.gov.uk/design-public-sector

Changing behaviour to make a difference (case studies, experts, grant funding)

Behavioural insights is a technique used to generate better outcomes for communities by encouraging changes in the way we act. www.local.gov.uk/behavioural-insights

Cyber security (case studies, grant funding)

Cyber security is an increasing risk to the public sector and the services we run. As part of the National Cyber Security Strategy, the LGA has been granted funding by the Cabinet Office to ensure that councils are as resilient against cyber-attacks as possible. A sector-led improvement programme with grant funding is now available to councils to strengthen their cyber security arrangements and the overall resilience of local government. www.local.gov.uk/cyber-security

Commercialisation (case studies)

As funding shrinks, councils are exploring new ways of generating an income. Many councils are using their assets wisely, trading services with others across the public and private sectors, and selling commodities to generate income. www.local.gov.uk/commercialisation



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Modern slavery
(guidance, case studies)

Councils are not currently required by law to submit Modern Slavery transparency statements but nearly 100 councils have already demonstrated ethical leadership by doing so voluntarily.

www.local.gov.uk/modern-slavery

The National Procurement Strategy and resources (guidance, toolkits)

Councils spend some £55 billion a year on bought in goods, works and services. Following requests from the sector we have updated our National Procurement Strategy to meet the changing needs of local government.

www.local.gov.uk/nationalprocurement-strategy

Shared services map and Shared Service Expert programme (case studies, experts, grant funding)

Local government leads the way in the public sector when it comes to service delivery and implementation through shared service arrangements, saving the taxpayer over £971 million in cumulative efficiency savings from over 559 partnerships.

www.local.gov.uk/shared-services

Transforming local public services using digital tools and solutions (case studies, experts, grant funding)

Helping councils to significantly improve how services are designed and delivered online for communities, enabling staff to work more effectively both in and out of the office. We have worked with over 60 councils so far, with estimated savings of more than £5.6 million.

www.local.gov.uk/digital-funded-programmes-and-case-studies

Commercial skills masterclass for councillors

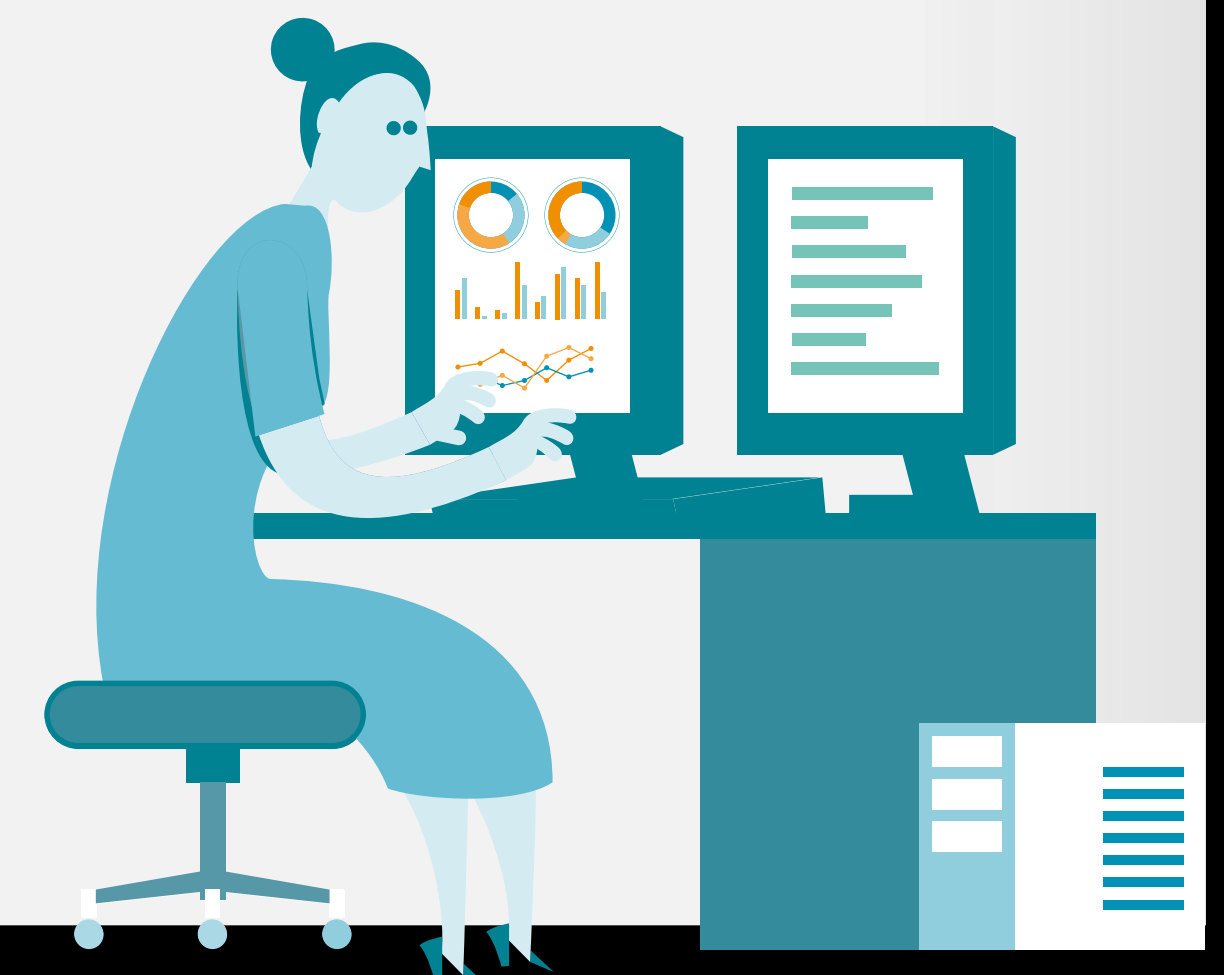
Commercialisation and entrepreneurialism are becoming increasingly key to the role of the modern councillor. The commercial skills masterclass is a free masterclass hosted by an LGA member peer and an experienced commercial trainer. The host shares practical commercial skills, including a case study from the LGA member peers about how they have put their commercial skills into practice.

commercialskills@local.gov.uk

Access an expert to help with your productivity (case studies, experts, grant funding)

The Productivity Experts programme aims to create efficiency savings and/or income generation for councils in any service area. So far, the programme has worked with more than 100 councils, together totalling £180 million worth of savings and/or income generation.

www.local.gov.uk/productivity-experts-programme



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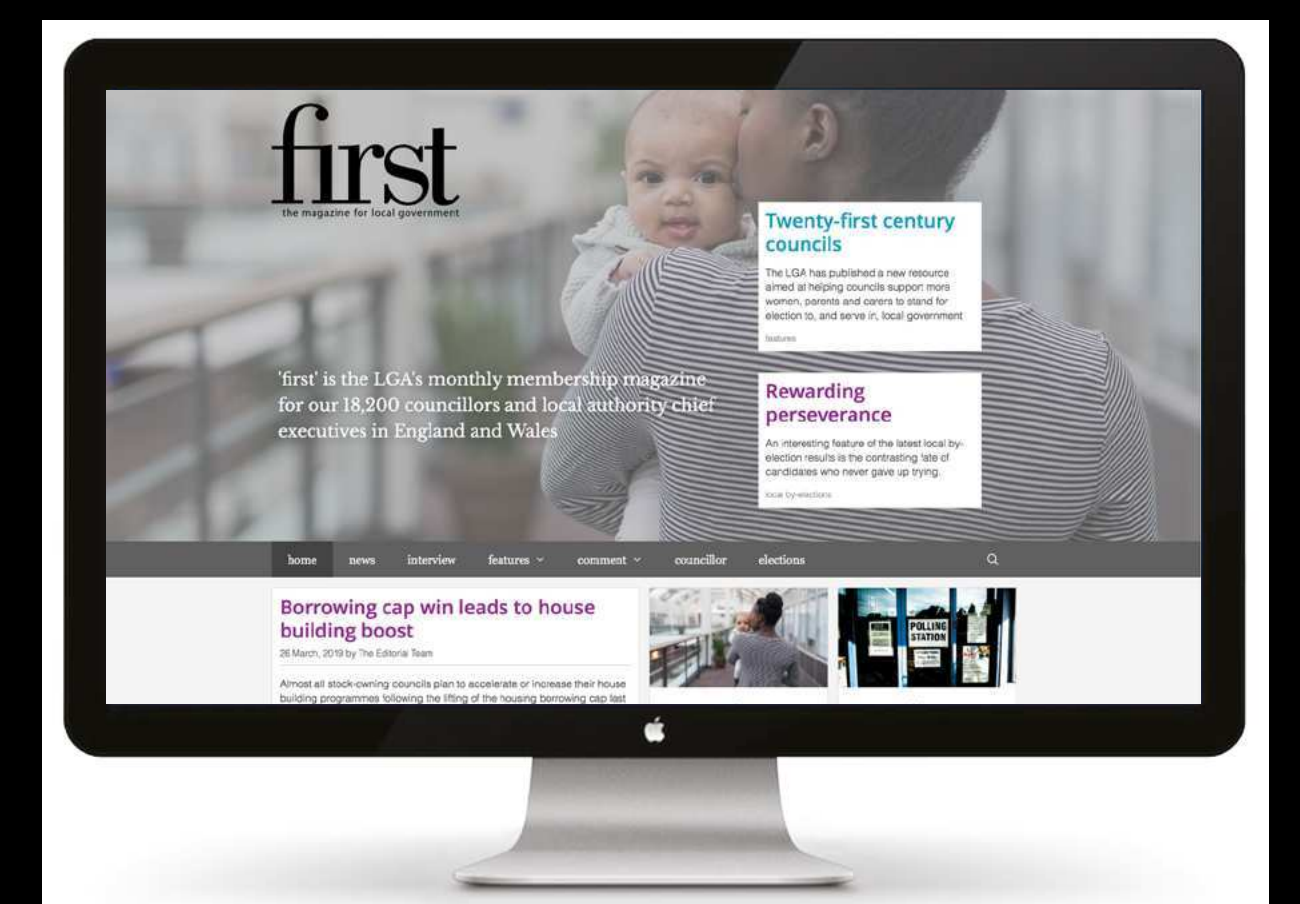
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www.local.gov.uk

first is the LGA's free membership magazine, sent each month to around 18,200 councillors and local authority chief executives in England Wales. It's the primary way that our members – particularly councillors – find out about the work of the LGA. It also provides updates on local government news, policy issues, Parliament and local elections.

All the content is available on our revamped and searchable website, www.local.gov.uk/first, where you can also subscribe to the first e-bulletin – which is published ahead of the magazine and provides a sneak preview of our top stories.



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