

# Compliance and Reporting Committee (CRC)

**HYBRID MEETING – 24 June 2024**

## **ITEM 6 PAPER D**

### **Peer support offer – scoping discussion**

#### **Background**

1. One of the recommendations within the Scheme Advisory Board's (SAB) Good Governance [action plan](#) was for the '*LGA to consider establishing a peer review process for LGPS Funds*'. In line with that recommendation and as discussed at the last Committee and Board meetings, the Secretariat is looking at how a Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) peer support service could be implemented across the sector. Following representations made by the Board Chair, Councillor Roger Phillips, to the Minister, Simon Hoare MP, the Board has also been allocated extra sufficient budget to take on another member of staff who could help to work up a detailed proposal for discussion and assist with the coordination of a peer support service.

#### **Current position**

2. It is accepted that the LGA's peer support offering is highly valued within the sector and underpinned by key principles which are important to councils. Because of this, the Secretariat met with the LGA's Peer Challenge Programme Manager to find out more about the introduction and delivery of the LGA's offering to councils. For information, the [LGA's website](#) states

*'Our highly valued peer challenge programme supports continuous improvement by providing effective insight, guidance and challenge to enable continuous improvement, as well as assurance to local leaders and residents'.*

3. A LGPS specific peer challenge could learn from and (where appropriate) replicate the approach taken by the LGA in some of its peer support offering. Through the insight of LGA colleagues, a key attribute of the LGA's established peer support service is that is sector led and building upon an existing strong level of mutual support across the sector.
4. In 2022/23, the LGA's existing service undertook appropriately 55 corporate/finance challenges in 2022/2023 and also a further 88 challenges across areas such as governance, communications, adult social care and children's service. The LGA has taken over 10 years to build up its current offering, has a large team of staff and peer members who provide this extensive service, and the peer support

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activity is funded through the Sector Support Programme grant received from DLUHC.

5. To start the scoping of the work involved in creating a LGPS peer support offer with the existing Secretariat team, a job description has been created which is currently under internal review. It is also hoped that the new role would assist in the development of the Board's communication activities which is also crucial to developing the Board's work in this area.

## Next steps

6. The Secretariat intends to create a draft framework for Board approval which sets out options for models of a LGPS peer support service, with the specific focus on governance assurance for a LGPS fund. Three objectives have been drafted as an initial scope for what a governance peer support service could aim to achieve. The Committee is invited to comment on these high-level objectives and the development of a peer support service.
  - Allow LGPS funds to gain external assurance support of its governance activities
  - To share, promote and increase good governance practices
  - To facilitate access to an expert network of LGPS peer members.
7. To build a framework on the above objectives we are proposing to establish a working group under the CRC and add developing a Peer Support Offer to the workplan for this Committee.

## Recommendation

- To approve the high-level objectives set out under paragraph 6 of this report.
- Agree that a working group should be established reporting to this Committee and for a Peer Support Offer to be added to the CRC workplan.

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