

LGA Learning and Development Strategy 2023-2025

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Responsible Officer: Head of HR & Payroll

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1. Introduction

The 2023-2025 Corporate LGA Learning and Development (L&D) Strategy has been developed to support the LGA's strategic business plan, to promote, improve and support local government, and is aligned with our People Plan.

To ensure strong delivery against these priorities, the L&D strategy commits to supporting the continued growth and development of our biggest asset – our people - through engaging, innovative, and interactive learning opportunities. The LGA's success rests on the knowledge, skills and expertise of our people along with our ability to learn and grow as an organisation.

To achieve this, we need a learning culture and environment that supports people to continuously develop the knowledge and skills they need, when they need them whilst living the LGA values and behaviours.

This strategy aims to set out the LGA's commitment to develop as a learning organisation and to support our people to take ownership of their own learning and development enabled by people managers, the corporate leadership team (CLT) and the strategic management team (SMT).

2. Integrated Approach

The LGA's People Plan commits to “develop and support the workforce to provide the best possible support to our members and help people fulfil their career potential.”

This strategy will therefore align focus and activities to ensure that they meet these commitments and work towards becoming a learning organisation.

“A learning organisation is a group of people working together collectively to enhance their capabilities to create results they really care about.” Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline*. In 1997, Harvard Business Review named *The Fifth*

Discipline as one of the most significant management books of the past 75 years. Living in a period of unprecedented change has amplified the importance of continuous learning and development at an organisational, team and individual level.

3. Shared Vision

Our shared vision is to adopt an integrated approach to continuous learning and growth that is included in all planning processes – project plans, team plans and work plans. This will enable a more informed approach to training needs identification aligned with individual, team and business objectives.

Research shows that learning that has a clear and direct link to individual, team and organisational growth, creativity, motivation, problem-solving and productivity.

Access to accurate training needs and input from business leaders and colleagues at all levels will help offer a modernised and self-directed approach to learning and development at the LGA that is engaging, relevant and purposeful.

We would like to move away from:

- L&D being considered desirable rather than essential
- The default course/classroom-led approach to learning, develop skills and capabilities
- A one size fits all leadership and management development
- An inconsistent approach to managing induction, probation and ongoing team and individual development
- Inconsistent evaluation of learning and development

With a move towards:

- A learning organisation where L&D is considered integral to business needs, and factored into change management and team and department and directorate plans including grant/commercially funded activity
- Sourcing modern engaging learning opportunities to support self-directed learning, virtual and in-person training delivery
- A planned, yet agile approach to learning, training and development planning to provide targeted, purposeful at the point it is needed
- Bitesize learning opportunities to strengthen retention and application of learning
- Tailored leadership and management development linked to the LGA values, leadership competencies and capabilities needed to deliver the business and team plans

- An appraisal process that enables individuals to have ownership of personal, professional and career development with a clear link to operational and strategic plans and priorities of the LGA
- Emphasising a self-directed approach to learning and holding people managers accountable for raising the importance of this
- Evaluation of learning is planned and linked to organisational outcomes and expectations

4. Our Ambition – what do we want to achieve?

Our ambition is to change how we work with our managers and people – an intentional shift in our approach to supporting a wider LGA ambition to be an organisation that is committed to learning and organisational development.

Our ambition is to:

- Offer a proactive, agile and creative approach to learning and development that meets the needs of the organisation
- Support the continuous development of inclusive and collaborative leadership and management practices
- Promote opportunities to learn at an organisational, team and individual level
- Develop as a learning organisation and support our people to take ownership of their own learning and development enabled by people managers, the corporate leadership team (CLT) and the strategic management team (SMT).

We are therefore committed to:

- Creating a safe learning environment where equity, transparency and fairness are pivotal.
- Facilitating the continuous development of leadership and management practices that embody equity, inclusivity, inspiring leadership, and continuous learning
- Working collaboratively with business leaders and people managers to identify and respond to learning needs aligned with business objectives.
- Providing line managers with the knowledge, skills, and resources to create a team environment where colleagues understand what is expected of them and can link their learning needs to their objectives and career aspirations.
- Moving from a course-led approach to a more modern, collaborative, accessible and agile approach to work-based learning at all levels, whilst appreciating the need for in-person and instructor-led training sessions.
- Providing appropriately paced, bite-sized, self-directed learning opportunities that inspire motivation and growth.

- Encouraging an environment where peer-to-peer learning and sharing of knowledge and ideas are valued.
- Cultivating a learning culture where colleagues are encouraged to set stretch goals and are supported to reach their potential
- Developing informative learning and development reporting of impact and success measures

Table 1 below shows in detail the areas of focus and priorities for the next three years.

5. Implementing the Strategy

To successfully implement the strategy, we need to do the following:

- Partner with the internal communications function to improve the marketing of the L&D offer including the development of the L&D newsletter
- Improve line manager expectations and engagement for the support of application and transfer of learning
- Provide resources and guidance to support managers to own and facilitate the transfer of learning
- Allocate time to learning –potentially using Outlook to help with diary management (e.g., an hour a week to learn – reading, e-learning etc)
- Report on agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Commit to obtaining evaluation and feedback after experiencing learning provision
- Embed a modern approach to evaluation with a focus on return on expectations in place of return on investment using measures from the staff survey and regular temperature checks to inform those expectations
- Introduction of a digital system to record appraisal conversations, objectives and development needs online

6. Supporting the Strategy

- We will review our strategy in line with the strategic and business planning process to ensure that it supports managers in achieving their goals.
- We will develop annual delivery plans to support the strategy, balancing the development work that needs to take place with the ongoing delivery of the essential learning needs identified in the training needs analysis process and agreed upon with SMT.

- We will report regularly on progress, the opportunities we have taken, and any barriers encountered.

Table 1 – Priorities and focus 2023-2025

Area to be developed	Proposed activity
Clarity of business need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic alignment and integrated planning of L&D activity • Work collaboratively to identify future and emerging corporate training need • Strategic-level People sponsor (one element of which will be to support our L&D approach) outside of direct reporting to support embedding the L&D strategy organisation -wide • Developing People Managers to understand their role in identifying team and individual learning and development needs to deliver team objectives • Embed LGA values and behaviours into learning and development offer
Training Delivery Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek appropriate learning and development solutions in response to corporate training needs analysis • Provide blended learning opportunities for people so they can access learning and development activities flexibly and at a time that is right for them – this could be self-directed learning, knowledge sharing, collaborative learning, work-based learning etc • Research and commission training providers that can deliver appropriate, inclusive training • Utilise internal subject matter leads to deliver/collaborate/share knowledge and expertise where appropriate • Begin to create a clear career development link/pathway – recognising that the LGA is a small employer and therefore people may take their careers away from the LGA, hopefully into the wider Local Government sector.
Digital Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern and agile digitally enabled infrastructure (whilst not losing in-person contact) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A learning management system that facilitated self-directed learning content provided internally and externally ○ Provide access to inspiring and relevant online learning content ○ Access to a performance management system for slicker and less admin-heavy processes for appraisal and supervision ○ Encourage self-directed learning and ownership for personal and professional

Area to be developed	Proposed activity
	<p>development enabled by line managers, CLT and SMT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encourage ongoing conversations relating to development needs rather than just appraisal time
Core Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with stakeholders and internal subject matter leads to understand training needs to respond appropriately • Induction and probation – linked to recruitment • Embody practices that demonstrate equity, transparency, and inclusion • Core training – mandatory (business critical), role-specific and business initiatives well-spaced across the calendar • Subject Matter Leads sessions e.g., Finance, IT, Procurement etc • Personal development and personal effectiveness training • Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) training
Leadership, Management and Team Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building capability with a focus on Conscious Inclusion management and leadership practices, mindset, and behaviours • Support the wider people strategy and action plans
Work-based learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work-based learning - Use of the Apprenticeship Levy (improved awareness and transparency), secondments, shadowing, peer-to-peer learning/training • The recruitment of early career apprentices into the LGA
Collaborative learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal coaching community • Internal and external mentoring • Encourage and explore opportunities for knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning
Instructor-led Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant, effective, and motivational instructor-led bitesize sessions, where appropriate to enable

Area to be developed	Proposed activity
	learning application and transfer <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engaging in-person sessions/training