



# National Graduate Development Programme **2017/18**

Council information pack



# Next generation leadership

Local government is the most trusted part of the public sector, with councils across the country providing the strong and ambitious leadership that ensures our communities thrive. The next generation of middle and senior level leaders will be essential to ensuring local government meets the challenges of today, and the possibilities of the future. At the heart of providing the strong public services that improve the lives of our residents' is attracting and developing the right people to lead our teams and organisations.

Over the last twenty years, the Local Government Association (LGA) has been bringing graduate talent into the sector through our national graduate development programme for local government (ngdp). The programme has been set up to provide local government with managers and leaders who are ambitious, passionate and committed to improving public services in the best interests of our communities.

The ngdp is highly regarded by both councils and graduates, and is ranked in The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers and Guardian UK 300. It promotes the benefits of a successful and rewarding career in local government, and has provided a flow of consistently high quality graduate trainees to over 160 authorities through 19 previous cohorts. Evidence shows that councils who take on our national management trainees can expect:

- individuals with leadership potential, who are able to rise to a challenge and make a valid contribution from the very start;
- increased capacity to deliver change and transformation; and
- good value for money.

I know from my own experience, both working in councils across the country and now here at the LGA, there are huge benefits in employing an ngdp graduate. This pack provides an overview of the programme and makes a compelling case for your council to be part of the scheme this year. If you are interested in signing up please get in touch. I hope we can help you attract and retain the brightest and best to the public sector.



**Mark Lloyd**  
Chief Executive  
Local Government Association

# What is the National Graduate Development Programme?

Known as the ngdp, the LGA's flagship management trainee programme offers councils a unique opportunity to grow their own local government leaders. Every year it provides the sector with high quality graduates ready to work on strategic projects which contribute to the delivery of your council's goals.

The ngdp is a two year programme, where graduates are employed by councils and undertake a minimum of three placements. Alongside their employment, the LGA has commissioned SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) to deliver a complementary learning and development offer. These are carried out in parallel so that the graduates can implement their learning whilst working on real projects.

At the end of their two year programme the graduates will have developed a range of skills across a variety of services. The ngdp acts as an opportunity for talented graduates to fast track their local government career and gives councils the opportunity to nurture and develop their own talent.

"Each year our intake of national management trainees (NMTs) bring energy, new insights and an enthusiasm that is infectious. As local government evolves this type of scheme becomes even more critical and give us the opportunity to develop a new brand of leader."

**Anne-Louise Clark**

Head of Transformation and Change  
London Borough of Bexley

"The ngdp is a fantastic route into a career in local government. This is Luton's second year as part of the programme, which has seen us secure four more top flight graduates. A critical part of our People Plan, the scheme is delivered extremely well – a must have for any forward-looking council."

**Trevor Holden**

Chief Executive  
Luton Borough Council

# The LGA's National Graduate Development Programme

The ngdp provides councils with management trainees who have leadership potential and the capacity to work enthusiastically on innovative and strategic projects. To help realise this potential, it also provides a bespoke and prestigious learning and development programme to all graduates recruited through ngdp.

## Why should my council take part in the ngdp?

### Future proofing

Being part of the ngdp allows councils to start thinking earlier about longer-term succession planning and future leadership potential. Growing your own talent is less costly than recruiting higher up in the management structure, and taking on a graduate through the ngdp ensures you will have additional corporate capacity and capability at a senior level. Our last survey of alumni (2016) showed that 88 per cent of ngdp alumni have remained in local authorities.

### Benefits to your council

By employing graduates as part of the ngdp programme, your management trainees will be provided with national networking and learning opportunities across sectors and have access to partners such as central government, from the private sector and other local authorities. This not only enriches the experience for the management trainee, but brings a wealth of best practice and knowledge back to your council.

### Recruiting for you

As a national scheme, the ngdp promotes local government to the graduate market on behalf of councils in England and Wales. Last year, ngdp attracted applications from over 2,500 graduates. The LGA runs a rigorous

assessment process to ensure that the most high-calibre graduates are then put forward to interview at your council. All applicants must have a minimum of a 2:2 degree and are subject to numerical, verbal, situational judgement and video assessments before taking part in a bespoke local government assessment centre. Graduate recruitment can be time-consuming and demanding on council resources, and that is why we run a national marketing and recruitment campaign to help identify the most promising future leaders for your council.

### Recruiting locally

Taking part in the ngdp offers councils access to a national pool of high calibre graduates, however we recognise that some councils may wish to recruit from their own communities. We are able to provide a range of options for councils who wish to participate in the programme at a local level. We can work with you to support your own local recruitment campaign, where you would market the opportunity to candidates from the local area. This is undertaken in the same timeframes at the national recruitment campaign, which means that successful candidates become part of the national programme and have access to the same learning and development opportunities as the other trainees.

## Developing your talent

The ngdp can offer an exciting and appealing development opportunity to internal staff who you have identified as the future managerial leaders of your council. We can support you to grow your own talent, by offering your existing graduate employees the opportunity to join the ngdp and access the learning and development offer.

## What is the learning and development offer?

The learning and development programme has been designed to develop future leaders and senior managers for local government. Working in partnership with SOLACE, trainees will be provided with a mixture of residential training modules, regional events, online learning and action learning opportunities. As part of our offer to councils, trainees will complete an ILM Level 7 Certificate, while on the programme. The learning and development offer is designed to ensure that your council gets significant return on investment when employing a trainee through ngdp. The objectives of the learning and development are:

- to enable participants to critically evaluate the challenges facing local government
- to provide participants with high level capabilities in management and leadership, grounded in a public sector context
- to provide participants with a strong understanding of key local government areas of work and management
- to enhance personal effectiveness as a leader and manager
- to increase self-awareness and awareness of others.

## What's expected of my council?

The full list of council commitments is available in the ngdp partnership agreement, however at a glance we ask councils to:

- Conduct a local interview at the end of the recruitment process. At this stage the candidates will have been through a rigorous series of assessments, but we want to give you the opportunity to ensure they are the best fit for your council.
- Employ national management trainees on a minimum two-year fixed term contract.
- Pay national management trainee salaries at National Local Government Spinal Column Point (SCP) 27 (£24,174 excluding London Weighting). This is expected to rise to SCP 29 (or equivalent) over the course of the programme.
- Nominate a member of staff to be the placement coordinator for the programme, once the council's national management trainee(s) is in place.
- Organise a minimum of three placements for each national management trainee over the two years.

## What kind of placements should be offered?

Your council will have full control over what placements to offer the trainees, based on where the need is most prevalent and their skills can be developed and utilised. Placements have included but are not limited to roles within adults or children's social care policy teams, innovation and transformation teams, communications, democratic services, executive support and regeneration. Some councils ask services to bid competitively for a graduate trainee and others allow trainees to steer which kind of placements they might want to take on, as they progress through the scheme. We can provide advice and guidance on appropriate placements to ensure that trainees work at a high competency level.

## What will the LGA do?

- Annually subsidise the programme on behalf of councils in England and Wales.
- Market the programme to high-calibre graduates across the UK.
- Assess candidates' suitability through a rigorous and established multi-stage recruitment process.
- Support councils to access and market their councils to candidates.
- Fund and organise a national programme of learning, development and networking.

## What does it cost my council?

- The salary of the graduate over the term of their two year contract is set at a minimum of £24,174. Each option outlined below comes with a one-off fee paid to the LGA once the national management trainee has started.

## How can my council get involved?

### **Talk to the LGA about signing up to the scheme**

Discuss participation in the programme and how you can benefit from the next cohort of high-calibre national management trainees

### **We can come to you**

We can come and meet your team to talk in more detail about the ngdp and how it can work for you

### **Speak to a council that is already involved**

If you'd like to hear some first-hand experience of the ngdp and how it has worked in another council, please let us know. The LGA can put you in touch with another authority that can tell you all you need to know about participating.

Please contact Helen Jenkins, Programme Manager for Leadership and Localism

Telephone: 020 7664 3068

Email: [helen.jenkins@local.gov.uk](mailto:helen.jenkins@local.gov.uk)  
or [ngdp@local.gov.uk](mailto:ngdp@local.gov.uk)



# The options

## 1. National management trainee

### **Full participation in the ngdp: Promoting local government**

We market local government as a premier career choice for graduates across the UK and promote the ngdp roles available in your council.

### **Meeting the standard**

We recruit and select the highest calibre graduates for you to interview.

### **Growing capacity**

We support each NMT on the programme with a high quality learning and development programme and provide access to national networking and knowledge events.

You employ your chosen NMT(s) for two years ensuring a minimum of three different placements with your council.

### **It costs you:**

£24,174 per annum NMT salary  
+ £2,400 per graduate participation fee payable to the LGA

## 2. Shared national management trainee

### **All the benefits of participating in the full programme but NMT(s) and their placements are shared between councils.**

Partnerships and practical arrangements are the responsibility of councils involved.

### **Cost is divided proportionally between participating councils:**

£24,174 per annum NMT salary  
+ £2,400 participation fee payable to the LGA

## 3. Local recruitment for management trainees

### **Supported recruitment and equal access to the ngdp's learning and development programme.**

Your council markets its NMT position(s) to candidates from your local area in the same timeframe as the ngdp's national campaign. You can shortlist applications if you wish. The ngdp then facilitates the assessment of your nominated local candidates in line with national candidates to ensure they meet the same standard. Successful candidates will become part of the national cohort with access to ngdp learning and development, networks and knowledge events.\*

### **It costs you:**

£24,174 per annum NMT salary  
+ £2,400 per graduate participation fee payable to the LGA

## 4. Grow your own management trainee

### **Giving qualified graduates you employ access to the ngdp's learning and development programme.**

Your council markets its NMT position(s) to new or existing graduate employee(s) in the same timeframe as the ngdp's national campaign. You can shortlist applications if you wish. The ngdp then facilitates the assessment of your nominated internal candidates in line with national candidates to ensure they meet the same standard. Successful candidates will become part of the national cohort with access to ngdp learning and development, networks and knowledge events.

### **It costs you:**

£2,400 per graduate participation fee payable to the LGA

As each NMT is already your employee, salary remains at your discretion.

## 5. Learning and development programme

Graduates employed by your council who have not been recruited through NGDP can be enrolled onto our learning and development programme for £3,500.

\*All candidates must pass the ngdp's assessment benchmarks to take part in this initiative. Recruitment and assessment will be supported in line with the national timetable. For more information please contact our team: [ngdp@local.gov.uk](mailto:ngdp@local.gov.uk)

## Key dates for 2017/18

### 9 October 2017

Cohort 20 applications open and council registration opens.

### 4 January 2018

Deadlines for candidate assessment for national, local and internal routes.

### March 2018

Candidate Assessment Centres held. There is an opportunity here for volunteer assessors, which can be of great benefit to your council.

### 30 March

Deadline for councils to sign up to the programme.

### May/June

Council interviews held.

### September and October

National management trainees start placements. All trainees must have started work before the first day of the ngdp National Induction.

October/November (tbc): ngdp National Induction.



# Council participation form 2018

**Please complete all sections of this form and return to the ngdp team at the LGA.**

Your form must be received by **Wednesday 3 January 2018** to qualify for local recruitment or growing your own management trainee. The deadline to return your form for participation in the national programme (as an individual council or with a shared trainee) is Friday 30 March 2018.

**Name of council/s:**

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How many graduates are you applying to take from the 2018 intake?

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## Options and LGA fees

1. National management trainee – Full participation in the ngdp £2,400
  2. Shared national management trainee – Full participation in the ngdp £2,400 (shared proportionally)
  3. Local recruitment for a management trainee – ngdp learning and development programme £2,400
  4. Growing your own management trainee – access to ngdp learning and development £2,400
  5. Learning and development programme £3,500
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## Contact

Please provide details of a member of staff who will be the single point of contact that the ngdp team can deal with on programme matters at this stage. This doesn't necessarily have to be the person who will be the placement coordinator once the programme starts.

Name:

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Position:

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Department:

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Telephone:

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Email:

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## Chief Executive commitment

Name/s\*:

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Date\*:

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## Thank you for completing the form

Please email the completed form to: [ngdp@local.gov.uk](mailto:ngdp@local.gov.uk)

or send to: The ngdp team, Leadership and Localism, Local Government Association, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

An online version of this form can be accessed directly from the LGA website: [www.local.gov.uk/graduate-programme](http://www.local.gov.uk/graduate-programme). Once you have appointed your national management trainee/s we will ask for contact details of your placement coordinator and senior champion of the ngdp within your council.

\* The LGA may distribute places at their discretion between participating authorities to ensure that a maximum number of councils benefit and that the distribution of places remains geographically diverse.



**Local Government Association**

Local Government House  
Smith Square  
London SW1P 3HZ

Telephone 020 7664 3000  
Fax 020 7664 3030  
Email [info@local.gov.uk](mailto:info@local.gov.uk)  
[www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

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please contact us on 020 7664 3000.  
We consider requests on an individual basis.

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