



**LLG SPRING CONFERENCE 2025: DEMOCRACY, DEVOLUTION & DEVELOPMENT  
DAY 1 FRIDAY 6 JUNE**

**PROGRAMME A: The Ballroom**

**09.40 - 09.45 Conference seating and notices**

Deborah Evans, LLG CEO

**09.45 - 09.55 Welcome address: Why democracy, devolution & development**

Speaker: Paul Turner, LLG President

**(09.55 - 10.00 delegate room transfer)**

**10.00 - 11.10 Devolution and local government reorganisation panel:**

**Understanding the legislative framework**

Speakers: Tiffany Cloynes & Rebecca Gilbert, Capsticks

**Setting up a combined authority**

Speaker: Peter Ware, Browne Jacobson

**The practitioner's view: What will it be like going through the devolution process, working in the new authority and lessons learnt**

Speakers: Phil McCourt, Bevan Brittan

Linda Jones, Chief Legal & Monitoring Officer, Westmorland & Furness Council

Clare Liddle, Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer, Cumberland Council

**11.10 - 12.00 REFRESHMENT BREAK**

**12.00 - 12.45 Future Proofing Regeneration:** The evolution of regeneration and infrastructure in the UK

How regeneration and infrastructure projects need to evolve given changes in demographics and the economy.

- How to connect homes to growth – highlighting our new research "Ages and Stages"
- How demand patterns, demographic trends and economic engines shape the future of housing in the UK
- How local economies need to adapt to technological change and the rise of AI
- How can we unlock access to energy to deliver the 4<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution?

Speakers: Amardeep Gill & Chris Plumley, Trowers & Hamblins



#### **12.45 - 13.45 LUNCH BREAK**

#### **13.45 - 14.00 Legal Leadership in Local Government in the USA**

**Keynote address:** An exclusive deep-dive conversation on what it really means to lead legal services at the frontline of democracy. Jeff will be talking about a host of topics including the legal areas uniquely handled by municipal lawyers; how AI is transforming local legal practice; how to support elected officials facing online and in-person abuse, and the nub of the issue —what does legal services look like in the USA in 2025?

Speaker: Jeff Dana, President of IMLA & City Solicitor of Providence, Rhode Island, USA

#### **14.00 - 14.30 O Shaped - Closing the Gap Between Law and The Business of Local Government**

O Shaped founder and former General Counsel, Dan Kayne, will share how O Shaped came about and how it can help in-house legal functions become even more efficient and effective. Dan will share the O Shaped Mindset and Attributes frameworks and suggest ways that lawyers in local government can embrace them on a day-to-day basis enabling you to build stronger relationships with stakeholders and create and sustain more value for your organisations.

Speaker: Dan Kayne, founder of O Shaped

#### **14.30 - 15.15 All Change: What will a new Standards Regime bring?**

As the Government prepares to overhaul the standards regime, what could we expect? And what impact will it have on the management of the behaviour of elected members, and the functioning of the standard committee?

Speakers: Jonathan Goolden, Wilkin Chapman Rollits  
Perry Holmes, Wiltshire Council  
Paul Hoey, Hoey Ainscough Associates

#### **15.15- 15.45 REFRESHMENT BREAK**

#### **15.45 - 16.30 Public Procurement Transformation:**

Where are we now since the implementation with reflections on the new Act since launch. Is public sector purchasing for goods and services on its way to being streamlined and modernised?

Speaker: Stephanie Rickard, VWV



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**PROGRAMME B: Francis Greenway Room**

**10.00 – 11.10 How to innovate like a tech company**

**Generating ideas, harnessing design principles and reaching agreement  
on your concept/prototype**

An interactive workshop where you'll work as part of a team creating a legal services website home page (for a fictional authority), showcasing your signature skills and your teams' USP - pitching your finished prototype against your peers. No tech skills required.

Speakers: Tanya Corsie & Steven Wanless, IKEN

**11.10 - 12.00 REFRESHMENT BREAK**

**12.00 - 12.45 The importance of good working relationships with Democratic Services**

Junior session with others welcome

Speakers: Paul Turner LLG President &, Director Legal & Assurance, Essex  
County Council  
Joanna Boaler, Head of Democracy and Transparency, Essex Council

**12.45 - 13.45 LUNCH BREAK**

**13.45 – 14.30 Juniors: Flame proofing decision making and the lawfulness of decision making**

Junior session with others welcome

This is an introduction to the world of lawful decision making within councils for those unfamiliar with or new to this area of local government law.

The decisions of Councils affect the lives of individuals, groups of citizens and industry. Therefore, the law sets out how such decisions should be made. The overall purpose of this is to avoid government (at all levels) exercising power in an arbitrary way, which would be unlawful. Decisions of councils are rarely challenged on their merits. But such decisions can and are capable of challenge on the process followed. Council do not want to bear the expense and uncertainty of litigation. To avoid / mitigate the risk, Councils must make sure that they get their decision-making processes right so they make robust and lasting decisions.



As well as looking at the fundamentals and practical examples where decisions made were not they should be, the session will address some of the wider implications arising from such problems.

Speaker: Mark Heath, VWV

#### **14.30 – 15.15 Understanding Local Government Finance**

Understanding local government finance is a key skill for lawyers, enabling them to work smarter on procurement projects or large contracts, ensuring they can provide legal oversight of financial decision making. It also helps in understanding the financial impact of policy decisions and is a key skill for good governance.

Speakers: Catherine Newman and Emyr Thomas, Sharpe Pritchard

#### **15.15 – 15.45 REFRESHMENT BREAK**

#### **15.45 - 16.20 Juniors: How to write a good piece of legal advice**

Junior session with others welcome

Can you write a clear piece of legal advice that breaks down legal jargon, clearly explains the options, highlights any risk, and helps the client make informed decisions? It's a key skill for lawyers in any discipline. Learn how to present professional advice in a way that enhances your reputation as a trusted advisor.

Speaker: Sophie McFie-Hyland and Emma Beynon, Anthony Collins

#### **16.20 – 17.00 Local Government form and function**

Junior session with others welcome

Do you know what a unitary does versus a combined authority? Could you say what functions a London Borough has? Understanding the different size and shape of local authorities (now and in the future) is no easy task, particularly as functions vary with each type of authority. This session will equip you to speak with authority about the differences and enable you to gain an overview of the size and shape of the sector.

Speakers: Hannah O'Brien & Sophie Mallon, Bevan Brittan



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**PROGRAMME C: William West Room**

**10.00 - 11.10 Planning Reforms and the creation of new planning authorities:**

We are at a pivotal moment in the evolution of the UK's planning system. The 2025 Planning and Infrastructure Bill marks one of the most ambitious overhauls in recent years – aimed at accelerating development, empowering local authorities, and tackling the housing crisis head-on.

Today's session will explore the creation of new planning authorities, the expansion of compulsory purchase powers, and the streamlining of statutory consultation process. These reforms are not just technical adjustments – they represent a fundamental shift in how we plan, build and shape our communities.

Whether you're navigating the implications for local governance, infrastructure delivery, or legal frameworks, this session will equip you with the insights needed to adapt and lead through change.

Speaker: Sarah White, WBD

**11.10 - 12.00 REFRESHMENT BREAK**

**12.00 - 12.45 Artificial Intelligence and its ethical use in legal services and local government decision making**

Richard Bailey is an Assistant Ombudsman at the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. He is leading their work on the integration of AI into their organisation, looking at strategy, ethical frameworks, and risk management. He can provide commentary on the use of AI by the public in drafting complaints to the ombudsman, and also the implications of the use of AI in local authorities.

Speaker: Richard Bailey, Assistant Ombudsman, Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman.

**12.45 - 13.45 LUNCH BREAK**

**13.45 – 14.30 Roundtable: The latest Supreme Court Judgement and what it means for local authorities**

In April 2025, the UK Supreme Court ruled that the terms “women” and “sex” in the Equality Act 2010 refer to biological sex. This landmark decision has



significant implications for how local authorities interpret and apply equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies – particularly in areas such as service provision, recruitment and access to single sex spaces.

This session will unpack the legal reasoning behind the judgement, explore its practical impact on local government operations, and consider how public bodies can remain compliant while continuing to foster inclusive environments

Roundtable with:  
Dee Sekar, LLG's EDI Non Executive Director  
Aneeka Muneer, LLG Past President

### **14.30 – 15.15 Workplace wellbeing and staying mentally healthy**

Our mental health is such an important part of our overall health and wellbeing. Meera is a mental health and wellbeing specialist, passionate about helping professionals feel their best.

When professionals feel mentally well, they have a more satisfying, productive working life. By integrating mental health awareness into your workplace, you can boost employee wellbeing and enhance the overall performance of yourself and your team

Speaker: Meera Phull, Brighter Minds

### **15.15 – 15.45 REFRESHMENT BREAK**

### **15.45 - 16.20 Safe space round table**

### **16.20 - 17.00 Growing Talent – The Value of Pupillage in Local Government Legal Teams**

Pupillage programmes within local authority legal services are not only shaping the next generation of barristers – they are strengthening the profession from within. This session explores how in-house training builds advocacy skills, deepens public law expertise, and fosters long term recruitment pipelines. Delegates will hear how councils are using pupillage to attract diverse talent, enhance service delivery, and raise the profile of local government law as a dynamic and rewarding career path.

Speaker: Michael Graham, Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services  
Reading Council