Next Generation Programme 2027 FAQs

What is the Next Generation Programme?

Our coaching programme brings together the rising stars from councils to collaborate on real-world challenges they encounter in their roles. It's an invaluable opportunity for professional growth, while also fostering innovative solutions that can benefit your council.

Why should I take part?

The programme offers dedicated time to step back from your day-to-day role, reflect on challenges and learn alongside peers from across local government. You'll gain new perspectives, share ideas, learn from experienced senior officers and build connections to support your professional development beyond the programme.

How many sessions will there be?

The programme includes four core mentor group sessions, peer exchanges and opportunities to connect with the wider cohort.

- Thurs 4th Feb, 10am – Kick-off session
- Thurs 25th Feb, 10am – Mentor session
- Thursday 4 March 2027, 12:30–1:15pm — Peer Exchange
- Thurs 18th March, 10am – Mentor session
- Thurs, 15th April, 10am – Mentor session
- Thursday 29 April 2027, 12:30–1:15pm — Peer Exchange
- Thurs 20th May, 10am – Mentor session
- Tues 15th June, full day – Stronger Things meet-up
- Thurs 24 June , 10am – Final Celebration

How can I get the most out of the programme?

We recommend that you attend all mentor-led sessions, as these are central to the programme and help you learn from peers and explore challenges together. Peer Exchanges offer additional opportunities to connect with fellow mentees and share experiences, and you're welcome to join those that interest you.

We appreciate that some sessions may clash with important diary events so please let us know if you can't join a specific session. If you are unable to commit to the programme, please let us know as soon as possible.

What is expected of me at the sessions?

At each session a member of your group (challenge sharer) will share a live problem that they face. The rest of the group will then discuss the issue, reflecting on their own similar experiences offer their own insights and approaches. The discussion will be guided by a coach, a senior strategic council officer, hand-picked from our network.

What is the format of each session?

- **Welcome and introduction** to all Next Generation participants and time to set the context for the session.
- **Group work** – you will move into your groups, coaches will guide your group's discussion, covering the following sections:
- **Presentation:** A member of the group, 'challenge sharer', will present a 'live' challenge that they are facing. They will share –
    - 👉🏻 The current situation
    - 👉🏻 The change they want to achieve
    - 👉🏻 The practical obstacles in getting there

How do I nominate myself as a challenge sharer?

At the end of each session, mentors will ask for volunteers to share at the next session.

How do I keep in touch with my group between sessions?

New Local will circulate the email addresses and names of your group before the first session.

What happens in a Peer Exchange?

Peer Exchanges are informal, 45-minute lunchtime sessions that give you dedicated time to connect with fellow mentees and explore a topic together. You'll join a small group of three mentees and use a set of prompt questions linked to the session's theme to share experiences, discuss current challenges and learn from one another. They're a chance to hear different perspectives and make connections across the wider cohort.

How do I know what I share will be kept confidential?

Sessions are not recorded, and we ask all members of the programme to be aware of keeping conversations from sessions confidential. Members will not be in the same group as other colleagues from their local authority.

What other activities can I be involved in as part of this programme?

We have a Next Generation programme LinkedIn group where you can connect with the rest of the cohort and share useful resources, events etc. All our sessions are open to you as members of the New Local network.

Who do I contact if I have any questions about the programme?

You can contact us at **events@newlocal.org.uk**