

Browne Jacobson signs strategic partnership with Local Government Information Unit

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UK and Ireland law firm Browne Jacobson will collaborate with the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) to support councils through change and disruption after becoming the membership organisation's founding strategic partner.

The organisations will develop joint research projects that aim to gain an understanding of the structural challenges facing local authorities during reforms such as local government reorganisation and devolution – at a time when they face deep financial and demographic pressures.

Over the coming year, Browne Jacobson and the LGIU aim to help local authorities on some of their most important issues, and work on projects that support and enable participation, accountability, leadership, collaboration and prevention.

Peter Ware, Head of Government at Browne Jacobson, said: *"As we look towards an uncertain future, there are many challenges as well as opportunities. Reorganisation on the scale we will soon see will, of course, involve a great deal of structural change.*

"The challenge is to ensure that these structures are shaped around, and enable, the positive change that is needed to improve services and strengthen places. The opportunities, if we can do that, could be huge and transformative for many people.

"Over the coming year, Browne Jacobson and the LGIU will collaborate closely on research projects that will provide deep insights into the inner workings of local government, enabling us to respond accordingly in how we support councils in delivering for their people."

The long-term strategic partnership builds on previous collaborations between Browne Jacobson and the LGIU, which has more than 200 local authority members from across the UK and Ireland. Published reports have explored:

- How local government can build relationships across disconnected institutions to support public health and wellbeing initiatives, following interviews and workshops with teams linked to integrated care systems.
- How councils are approaching net zero transformation from a democratic perspective, arguing that only with embedded public support, via citizens assemblies and other democratic initiatives, can ambitious goals be achieved.
- The role of monitoring officers and risk managers in providing good governance, healthy local democracy and high-quality public service.

Jonathan Carr-West, Chief Executive at the LGIU, said: *"Browne Jacobson has been a long-standing partner that we have enjoyed working with over the years on exciting and distinctive projects. We share a passion for local democracy, commitment to local government, innovation in public services and helping councils to be good places to work, fit and ready for the important challenges of the future.*

"That is why we're so pleased to announce that we are forming an ongoing strategic partnership to focus in depth and over the longer term on the key challenges that local government is grappling with.

"These are big, important challenges, developing at a serious pace. Chiefly, the change and disruption within the reorganisation and devolution agendas is happening so fast and at such scale, that we were determined to get our heads together with the team at Browne Jacobson, and devise an exciting research programme that draws on its legal expertise, direct experience working with councils across the country, and LGIU's knowledge of the sector coupled with our membership networks across England and internationally."

Contact



Kara Shadbolt

Senior PR & Communication Manager

kara.shadbolt@brownejacobson.com

+44 (0)330 045 1111

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