

Note of last Improvement & Innovation Board meeting

Title:	Improvement & Innovation Board
Date:	Tuesday 29 November 2016
Venue:	South Room, 5th Floor, Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Declarations of Interest No declarations of interest were made.	
2	Updated Terms of Reference, Membership and Meeting Dates Dennis Skinner (Head of Improvement) introduced the item. He explained that the terms of reference required updating in order to reflect the recent change of funding mechanism to DCLG grant. Discussion The Board expressed a desire for paragraph 4 of the terms of reference to additionally reflect the priorities agreed by the Board. Decisions The Board; <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Agreed the terms of reference be amended to reflect the Board's priorities and brought back to the Board for approval.2. Noted the membership.3. Noted the future meeting dates. Action Officers to proceed as directed.	
3	Priorities, Portfolios and Regional Ambassadors Cllr William Nunn (Chairman) and Dennis Skinner introduced the item, drawing members' attention to the proposed Board priorities, identifying existing portfolio leads, and regional ambassadors.	

Discussion

The Board members raised the following issues;

- The way the role of regional ambassadors duplicates the role of regional lead member peers and principal advisers. All members have a role to play in promoting the LGA's support offer.
- Digitalisation, innovation and improvement should be seen as part of the Board's work.
- The potential value in developing stronger links between regional lead member peers and the Board.
- A desire for greater clarity over the purpose of the Board portfolios.
- The value of setting the priorities within a strategic context setting out the overall direction of the improvement offer from the LGA.
- The importance of proving the efficacy of corporate peer challenges by engaging stakeholders in feedback sessions, holding regular 'follow-up' sessions and continuing to encourage authorities to publish the findings.

Decisions

The Board;

1. **Directed** that Innovation be added as a priority and lead members consider the priorities in the light of the discussion and report back to the Board at the next meeting.
2. **Directed** lead members to consider the future of the portfolio system.
3. **Agreed** not to continue with the regional ambassador role.

Actions

1. Officers to **facilitate** a discussion between lead members on Board priorities, portfolios at an upcoming lead member meeting.
2. The regional ambassador role be discontinued.

4 Performance Report - for the period April 2016 to end of September 2016

Dennis Skinner introduced the item, he explained that of the 29 key deliverables identified in the Memorandum of Understanding with DCLG, 10 had already been met, 18 were on course and 1 was on track to slightly miss the target.

Discussion

The Board raised the following points;

- The need to clearly articulate the outcomes the LGA is trying to achieve from its large portfolio of valuable improvement work.

- The importance of tailoring peer recruitment specifically to the needs of the local government sector.
- The need to highlight the value of the LGA's improvement work in order to promote further take up.
- The value of the 'insights' section of the report as an example of the desired feedback in a performance reporting cycle.

Decision

The Board **noted** the report.

Action

Officers to take forward as directed.

5 Priorities for the LGA's Improvement programme for 2017/18 onwards

Cllr William Nunn and Dennis Skinner introduced the item and solicited input from members on priorities for the LGA in the future, especially considering the change of funding arrangements with DCLG, and to feed into discussions with DCLG about the improvement programme for 17/18.

Discussion

The Board members raised the following points;

- The need to explore an increased focus on commercialisation, for both the LGA and councils, especially in the light of uncertain funding arrangements and the need for fiscal security.
- Importance of prioritising our support around the core issues for councils, for example efficiency and productivity, as well as those services most under pressure, such as adult social care or housing/homelessness and current issues such as community cohesion.
- The possible value of offering DCLG some key commitments e.g. offering to seek to prevent incidences of organisational failure

Decision

The Board **noted** the report and **directed** officers as above.

Action

Officers to proceed as directed.

6 Member Peer Development

Cllr Judi Billing (Deputy Chair) introduced the item by summarising recent, current and planned activity to support the induction, training and development of member peers.

Discussion

The members of the Board raised the following issues;

- High quality peers are essential for the success of a sector led model of improvement.
- It is important to ensure there is a rigorous selection process for regional member peers and effective mechanisms for identifying and addressing inadequate performance.
- Feedback to date has generally been positive but it is timely to review how peers are selected and utilised and whether improvements can be made.

Decision

Members **agreed** the proposals for member peer development.

Action

1. Political groups to review arrangements for the recruitment, training and management of member peers and to report back to the next Board meeting.

7 LGA Commercial Skills Offer for Councillors

Cllr Judi Billing (Deputy Chair) introduced the item proposing the development of a commercial skills training offer for members.

Discussion

The Board expressed their general approval of developing a commercial skills offer for councillors. The members discussed the following issues;

- Widening the offer to include co-working with officers.
- Including training to deal with conflicts of interest.
- Delivering workshops via webinars or other electronic means in order to reduce cost and increase attendance
- Using the offer to share existing best-practice from councils.
- Delivering in-person workshops in a broad range of regions outside of London.

Decisions

The Board;

1. **Agreed** the delivery of two one-day pilot workshops.
2. **Identified** members willing to contribute to the further development of the offer

Action

1. Officers to **carry out** two one-day pilot workshops and invite members to contribute to the development of the offer.

8 Progressing Next Year's Innovation Zone

Vicki Goddard (Improvement Support Advisor) introduced the item which raised some issues around the development of the Innovation Zone for 2017, including the question of themes.

Discussion

The Board discussed the following;

1. The pros and cons of having themes in the Zone. Themes may conflict with a focus on innovation which is inherently resistant to categorisation.
2. The benefit of including innovative examples from the wider local public sector and not just councils alone.
3. The value of vetting potential contributions to ensure they are genuinely innovative.

Decisions

The Board

1. **Agreed** to invite examples from the wider public sector and not to theme the Zone.
2. **Directed** lead members to nominate members to form an informal advisory group to provide strategic direction to the development of the Innovation Zone 2017.

Action

Officers to;

1. **Liaise** with Political Group Offices to secure members to oversee the Zone.
2. **Progress** work on the innovation zone as directed above.

9 LGA Boards' Improvement Activity

Dennis Skinner introduced the item which summarised the improvement activity of other Boards within the LGA governance structure.

Decision

The Board **noted** the update.

10 Brexit Update

Alan Finch (Principal Advisor, Finance) introduced the item, explained the corporate strategy for Brexit and asked the Board to identify those issues they felt were most important within areas procurement, commissioning, state aid and data management, which could be affected by Brexit.

Decision

Members;

1. **Agreed** the proposed EU directives and regulations identified in **Appendices A** and **B** as priorities.

Action

Officers to **progress** work as directed.

11 Note of the Previous Meeting

Members **noted** the minutes of the previous meeting.

Appendix A - Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr William Nunn	Breckland Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Judi Billing MBE Cllr Ron Woodley	North Hertfordshire District Council Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Members	Cllr Peter Fleming OBE Cllr Robert Gould Cllr Linda Robinson Cllr Harvey Siggs Cllr Michael Wilcox Cllr Barry Wood Cllr Bob Price Cllr Phil Davies Cllr Andy Moorhead Cllr Tudor Evans OBE Cllr Sue Woodward Cllr Sue Whitaker Cllr Bob Jennings Cllr Cherry Beath Cllr Glen Sanderson JP Sir Stephen Houghton CBE Cllr Mike Haines Cllr Howard Sykes MBE Mr Richard Priestman Mr Philip Sellwood	Sevenoaks District Council Dorset County Council Wychavon District Council Somerset County Council Lichfield District Council Cherwell District Council Oxford City Council Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council Plymouth City Council Staffordshire County Council Norfolk County Council Epping Forest District Council Bath & North East Somerset Council Northumberland Council Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Teignbridge District Council Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Local Government Improvement and Development Energy Saving Trust (EST)
Apologies	Mayor Dave Hodgson MBE	Bedford Borough Council

In Attendance	Edwina Grant OBE	Edwina Grant Associates
Board Substitutes	Cllr Andrew Stringer Cllr Amy Cross Cllr Nicole Meardon	Mid Suffolk District Council Blackpool Council Cheshire West and Chester Council
Regional Lead Member Peers	Cllr Paul Middlebrough Cllr Colin Noble Cllr Colin Mann Cllr Graham Brown Cllr Shirley Pannell Cllr Phelim McCafferty Cllr Helen Holland	Wychavon District Council Suffolk County Council Caerphilly County Borough Council Powys County Council North Kesteven District Council Bright & Hove City Council Bristol City Council