

Note of last Improvement & Innovation Board meeting

Title:	Improvement & Innovation Board
Date:	Tuesday 30 January 2018
Venue:	Westminster Room, 8th Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies. Members requested that the layout of the board meeting revert to the previous arrangement (with lead members seated together). There was a declaration of interest from Cllr Alan Connett, who held a contract with the LGA to deliver the Leadership Academy.	
2	Brexit Ian Hughes, Head of Policy, introduced the item, advising members that the report set out LGA work on Brexit. He discussed the structural fund and whether there would be replacement funds (possibly localised) once the UK had left the EU. The skills crisis in Britain and the numbers employed from the EU were also discussed, as was the LGA's alternative proposal – work local. Local government leaders would be meeting with Dexeu Ministers on a quarterly basis. It was highlighted that Brexit would affect places differently. Ian asked whether there were particular issues in the localities that the LGA could raise with the Government. In the discussion which followed, members made the following points: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A point was made on whether there would be a Government consultation on replacement funds after 2020. It was highlighted that in order to plan council budgets, this would be need to be addressed by 2019.• It was felt the opportunities Brexit presented were not currently being addressed.• Members asked if there was anything to be learnt from either Iceland or Norway.	

Decision

1. The board **noted** the report.

Action

1. Officers to take forward work in line with the comments made by members.

3 Corporate Peer Challenge: learning and evaluation

Paul Clarke, National Programme Manager, introduced the item. He discussed how the LGA could utilise the learning from peer challenges following comments made at the previous board meetings. He advised that officers had conducted analysis of the peer learning report and had set out examples of good practice.

In the discussion which followed, members made the following points:

- There was a discussion on feedback surveys and how the system supported councils after they had taken part in a peer challenge. Members also referred to other LGA programmes and how they fed into this, and what the LGA could do to connect different support programmes.
- Members emphasised that the role of the opposition needed to be acknowledged.
- There was a discussion around the publication of Corporate Peer Challenge documents and it was suggested that these should be available publicly as they would be subject to Freedom of Information requests.
- Members discussed councils who were attempting to develop commercial income and asked whether it was possible to assist those struggling to launch these ideas.
- It was suggested that members and officers that participated in CPCs should be invited to feedback meetings.
- There was a discussion about the impact of a CPC and how this was measured. It was highlighted that there could be more emphasis on lessons learnt and what councils had done well.
- Members emphasised it would be particularly useful to know which councils were good at which areas (e.g. if someone had a particularly good planning department).

In response, officers made the following points:

- LGA Principal Advisers took the relationship forward with councils who had participated in a Corporate Peer Challenge.
- Corporate Peer Challenge reports were always published at the end of the process.
- Feedback from the process was shared.
- It was emphasised that the peer challenge improvement tool was not an inspectorate tool, and that the LGA did not control councils through this process.
- Members could contact Principal Advisers or Member Peers in their areas about contacts within councils.

Decision:

1. The Improvement and Innovation Board **noted** the feedback/learning provided in the report.

Action:

1. Officers to proceed with work in line with members' comments.

4 LG Inform and LG Inform VfM

Juliet Whitworth, Research and Information Manager, introduced the item. She discussed the online data and bench marking service. 150 local authorities were currently taking part in the bench-marking. She gave a

demonstration.

In the discussion which followed, members made the following points:

- It was emphasised that this was a valuable tool. Members asked if there were training sessions available.
- Members suggested that the tool was further promoted, and that a letter to council cabinet members was issued advising them about it.
- Members asked how up-to-date the data was and whether it would assist with identifying the best council departments.
- It was suggested that there should be a demonstration of the tool at the LGA Conference Innovation Zone.

Decision

1. The Improvement and Innovation Board **noted** developments and progress.

Action

1. Officers to proceed with work in line with members' steer.

5 National Graduate Development Programme

William Brooks, Principal Adviser, introduced the item. He advised members about the changes to the NGDP (the LGA's flagship management trainee), providing them with an update on the progress of the scheme. He discussed the need to encourage more to join the scheme, and the possibility of developing an option to recruit locally. Councils were currently charged a fee of £2,400 to participate, although there would be a new pricing regime soon. The deadline for signing up was the 30 March.

In the discussion which followed, members made the following points:

- There was a discussion around officer and councillor interface, and it was highlighted that the contact junior officers had with the political dimension within councils was limited. This needed addressing.
- Concerns were raised that there was a lack of understanding of the work of an effective opposition.
- Members asked whether there would be an option for smaller councils to join together and share the cost of the fee for participating.
- There was a discussion around when the new pricing regime would begin, and how much money the LGA should use to

subsidise the scheme.

- Members asked whether it would be possible to track the trainees and their careers to measure the scheme's success, and whether there was a mechanism to show if the fees for the training programme could be recaptured. It was highlighted that recent figures illustrated that 88% of people went on to work in a local authority.

Decision

1. The Improvement and Innovation Board **endorsed** the programme, agreeing to promote it to the sector and within their own organisations

Action

1. Officers to proceed with work as directed by members.

6 Appendix A

7 Appendix B

8 Productivity Programme

Cllr Ron Woodley, Deputy-Chair of the Board, briefly updated members on Productivity Programme, advising that good progress was being made toward 2017/2018 targets.

Susan Attard, Head of Productivity, advised that the Cyber Security Programme had recently been updated, and the Procurement and Commission Programme would be launched in the spring. She also advised that the team were working with councils on the impact of the collapse of Carillion, and were continuing to support councils with financial issues.

In the discussion which followed, members made the following points:

- Members asked when councils would find out if they had been successful in their applications for cyber funding. They were advised this would be announced at the end of January.
- Members queried what communications methods were in place to help publicise these offers. It was emphasised that the Innovation Zone at conference had worked well in getting LGA networks involved.

- Carillion was discussed, and it was suggested that the LGA could produce a report/ guidance on how contracts were being distributed. Members were advised that a draft report was currently being worked on.

Decision

1. The Improvement and Innovation Board **noted** the update and progress on the Productivity Programme.

Action

1. Officers to take forward work in line with members' steer.

9 LGA Annual Conference, Exhibition and the Innovation Zone

Vicki Goddard, Improvement Support Adviser, introduced the item, updating on key developments for conference. 130 ideas were now being processed, including for Innovation Zone, contributions to wider workshops and Chief Executive's sessions. Short listing would commence on the 23 February.

Decision

1. The Improvement and Innovation Board **noted** the key developments to date.

Action

1. Officers to take work forward in line with members' steer.

10 Sector led Improvement: performance report

Dennis Skinner, Head of Improvement, introduced the item. He updated members on the funding from MHDCLG and the MoU agreement on this. He advised that good progress had been made on targets. The LGA was on target to deliver 110 peer challenges. Discussion were currently taking place on the MoU, and it was expected the Government would continue to support the improvement programme.

In the discussion which followed, members made the following points:

- Councillors in opposition felt they did not have as many choices in terms of programmes availability.

Decision

1. Members **noted** the key developments to date.

Action

1. Officers to proceed with work in line with members' comments.

11 LGA Boards' improvement activity

Vicki Goddard, Improvement Support Adviser, introduced the item, advising that the report outlined progress on improvement activity undertaken by other LGA Boards.

In the discussion which followed, members made the following points:

- Members asked if there were any examples of innovative practice which could be highlighted in future meetings.

Decision

1. The Improvement and Innovation Board **noted** the report.

Action

1. Officers to take forward work in line with members' comments.

12 Note of the Previous Meeting

Members **noted** the minutes of the previous meeting and **agreed** they were an accurate summary of the discussion.

13 Sector led improvement in children's services and early years

Andy Bates, Principal Adviser, introduced the item. The report was confidential should specifics on the financial negotiations with the Department of Education (DfE) be discussed. He updated members on ongoing negotiations with DfE, as the funding for the Children's Improvement Board had now come to an end. DfE were currently considering this. He discussed ways to identify councils that were struggling, emphasising children's leadership capacity and supporting effective scrutiny.

In the discussion which followed, members made the following points:

- There was a discussion around the long-term implications of the loss of funding.
- Members briefly discussed how to identify those that needed help.

Decision

1. The Improvement and Innovation Board **noted** the discussions between DfE and the LGA on the development of an early years

peer review programme and wider children's sector-led improvement system.

Action

1. Members agreed that officers should seek to conclude the negotiations with DfE for funding both programmes, in consultation with Board Office Holders as necessary.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Paul Bettison OBE	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Vice-Chairman	Mayor Dave Hodgson MBE	Bedford Borough Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Judi Billing MBE Cllr Ron Woodley	North Hertfordshire District Council Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Members	Cllr Janet Blake Cllr Peter Fleming OBE Cllr Angelique Foster Cllr James Jamieson Cllr Catherine Rankin Cllr Barry Wood Cllr Laura Miller Cllr Bob Price Cllr Phil Davies Cllr Joy Allen Cllr Abdul Jabbar MBE Cllr Sue Woodward Cllr Liz Green Cllr Glen Sanderson JP Sir Stephen Houghton CBE Cllr Alan Connett Cllr Mike Haines Mr Richard Priestman Mr Philip Sellwood	Aylesbury Vale District Council Sevenoaks District Council North East Derbyshire District Council Central Bedfordshire Council Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Cherwell District Council Purbeck District Council Oxford City Council Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council Durham County Council Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Staffordshire County Council Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council Northumberland Council Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Teignbridge District Council Teignbridge District Council Local Government Improvement and Development Energy Saving Trust (EST)
Apologies	Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Plymouth City Council
In Attendance		
LGA Officers		

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