

## Note of last Improvement & Innovation Board meeting

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<b>Title:</b>	Improvement & Innovation Board
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday 24 May 2018
<b>Venue:</b>	Smith Square 3&4, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

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### Attendance

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

Item	Decisions and actions
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#### 1. Welcome and Declarations of Interest

The Chairman welcomed Members to the Board.

The Chairman noted the Apologies given by Members.

Members made no Declaration of Interests.

The Chairman notified Members that of the external speaker from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Mr Paul Maltby.

Mr Maltby was attending the Board and planned deliver a presentation on item eight. The Chairman requested that item eight therefore be moved to the beginning of the agenda. Members agreed to this change.

#### 8. Digital Declaration - Confidential item

The Chairman introduced Paul to members, and invited him to introduce the item. Paul began with giving a brief overview of his role to Members,

Paul's presentation to Members expanded on:

- The recognition around challenges in delivery, as well as the cost limitations.
- The use of systems – Paul explained to members that the software used in this ambitious project will use component blocks of different technical systems and services, rather than big systems.
- The recognition of the challenge that local government face in this work; the project is ambitious, but aims to shift the local government sector into the digital age.
- Paul stated he wants local government to be a co-publisher of the Declaration; Paul emphasised the importance of this not being a top-down approach from MHCLG, but rather a partnership with local governments.

The Chairman thanked Paul for his presentation, and invited members to comment:

- Members raised concerns around the language of the Declaration, which indicates a top-down approach, despite Pauls reassurances. It was expressed that local government will feel burdened by the Declaration, and will take issue around this

language.

- Members expressed concern that work local government undertakes daily with other central government offices – such as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) – was not communicated clearly enough in the Declaration.
- Members asked Paul if there was a target for the number of councils to sign-up to the Declaration. Paul stated that his office is now aiming for around 100 councils to sign up to the Declaration, and that work undertaken with them will be through peer-support and the sharing of best practises.
- Members asked Paul if there was any standards of recognition or failure surrounding this work. Paul stated that the work undertaken will be primarily around revising and reviewing best practises.
- Members raised concerns around the Declaration adopting a one-size-fits-all approach, and the need to recognise the different ways councils work. Paul commented that there will be no set standard, as every council is different.
- Members expressed some concerns around the work impacting on commercial aspects of local government.
- Members welcomed the collaboration aspect of the Declaration, but mentioned that this will pose challenges.
- Members held discussions over data-gathering in households, and targeting engagement with the public.
- Members requested more information around the support available for local government in the roll-out of the Declaration. Paul stated that the process of the Declaration, as well as sharing of best practises, will provide some support for councils.
- Members raised concerns around the costs this will incur for local government.
- Members raised issues around rural digital connectivity.
- Members raised concerns around how this will affect residents that are not digitally enabled.
- Members discussed the complexity of mapping, in regards to the shared services with different organisations.
- Members discussed the issues around sharing information from partner organisations and how this could potentially pose a problem, particularly in relation to schools.
- Members discussed the current situation in Northamptonshire, and how there is potential for this area to be at the forefront of using digital systems for their services; Members requested more information from Paul around support for local government. (Paul's response was that he had a small team of ten and that it wasn't the best use of his teams time to support all councils in the roll-out of the declaration).

The Chairman thanked Paul for his time and Members for their comments.

## **2. LGA Perceptions Survey 2017/2018: Sector Led Improvement Questions**

The Chairman invited Juliet Whitworth, Research and Information Manager, to introduce the item. Juliet gave members an overview of the item, and delivered a presentation (circulated to Members before the board).

Juliet made particular reference to the Perceptions survey key findings, including keeping informed around LGA work; sector-led improvement; familiarity with the LGA; speaking positively about the LGA; satisfaction with LGA work; and value for money. Overall, the

findings were very positive and most findings up from the previous years.

The Chairman thanked Juliet for the update and invited members to comment:

- Members reflected on the positive findings.
- Members asked what further work could be done around speaking positively about the LGA, which seemed to remain flat. Juliet stated that the finding is up slightly from the previous year, and that this should be passed on to the Leadership Board for comment and reflection.
- Members held discussion over the term of 'frontline Councillors', and how the variation of understanding differs from the LGA and Councillors.
- Members requested further information into those who have answered 'Do not know' in questions relating to sector-led improvement. Juliet stated she will follow this up after the board.
- Members discussed the language used in the survey.
- Members requested that next year, the survey include sections to give reasons why people do or don't speak positively about the LGA.
- Members discussed the direct correlation between how good the LGA is perceived to be, and how well this is communicated.
- Members discussed the programme to visit other councils, and the need to advertise this internally more. Members also advised that visits to councils on this programme should be undertaken at night, as most Councillors have daytime jobs.
- The Chairman stated that there was a direct correlation between the more awareness there was of the LGA, with the better outcomes of all other findings.
- Members discussed the need to engage Councillors who lead on portfolios.

The Chairman thanked Juliet for the presentation, and Members for their comments.

### **3. LGA Cyber Security Funded Programme**

The Chairman invited Susan Attard, Head of Productivity, and Helen Reeves, Cyber Security Adviser, to introduce the item.

Members received an update that the LGA have formal confirmation of the funding to undertake a comprehensive stocktake and analysis of the current cyber security arrangements across all councils in England, which will capture cyber security arrangements, identify good practises, as well as risks. There will be a comprehensive engagement plan with the sector, which will lead to a plan of support.

The Chairman thanked Susan and Helen for the presentation, and invited Members for their comments:

- Member made particular reference to paragraphs two and seven, and if the funding will cover this streamline of work. Helen confirmed that the funding will cover this.
- Members discussed the LGA's own cyber security arrangements, and made reference to GDPR. Helen stated that this is currently under review. Dennis Skinner, Head of improvement, Workforce, Leadership and Productivity, also confirmed that the LGA had had external auditors in, who gave reasonable assurances regarding the LGA's handling of private information, and had made some recommendations which were being implemented.
- Members asked how much engagement was being aimed for. Helen stated that they were aiming for a 100 per cent response.
- Members discussed the need for a single point of contact within the LGA.

The Chairman thanked Susan and Helen for the update, and members for their comments.

#### **4. Productivity programme**

The Chairman invited Susan Attard, Head of Productivity, to introduce the item. Susan then proceeded to update Members on the following:

- The recent behavioural insights Event – Chaired by Cllr Peter Fleming – received excellent feedback and was an open forum where best practises were shared and key lessons learnt.
- An update around smarter sourcing and the fall of Carillion; Susan updated members that services continue to be delivered, with a few more contracts due to transition to new providers. The LGA continues to be represented on the Carillion Task Force chaired by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.
- An update on the two Commercial Skills Masterclasses and upcoming dates:
  - Cambridge – 24 September 2018
  - Winchester – 5 November 2018
  - Leeds – 27 January 2018

Members had no comments for this update.

The Chairman requested that the dates be circulated to Members after the Board, and concluded that any Councillors looking to become a peer should apply as soon as possible.

#### **5. Performance Report and Memorandum of Understanding for 18/19**

The Chairman invited Dennis Skinner, Head of Improvement, Workforce, Leadership and Productivity to introduce the item. Dennis gave an overview of the paper, which updated Members of performance against the Memorandum of understanding (MoU) the LGA/IDeA have with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) about the use of grant for 2017/18, and the finalised MoU agreed with MHCLG for 2018/19. Dennis made reference to paragraph five from the report, along with the End of Year report which will provide more detail. Dennis concluded that the MoU for 2018/19 has now received agreement from MHCLG.

The Chairman thanked Dennis for the update and invited Members to comment:

- Members stated that the LGA is undertaking more work, with less funding (a 7.5 per cent reduction). Members requested that this is a significant funding gap, and that the word 'small' should not be used.
- Member held discussions around the new Secretary of state for MHCLG, and his awareness of the LGA's work and achievements, along with discussions the LGA has had with his office.

The Chairman thanked Dennis for the update, and Members for their comments.

**6. LGA Boards' Improvement Activity**

The Chairman invited Vicki Goddard, Improvement Support Adviser, to introduce the item. Vicki updated Members that following feedback and requests from the last Board, the report's submissions were similar in length, as well as including examples of best practises.

The Chairman thanked Vicki for the update. Members noted the item and made no subsequent comments.

**7. Note of the Previous Meeting**

Notes from the previous Improvement and Innovation board, on Thursday 22 March 2018, were agreed.

## **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	North Hertfordshire District Council
	Cllr Ron Woodley	Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
Members	Cllr Janet Blake	Aylesbury Vale District Council
	Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District Council
	Cllr Angelique Foster	Derbyshire County Council
	Cllr Catherine Rankin	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
	Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
	Cllr Laura Miller	Purbeck District Council
	Cllr Phil Davies	Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Joy Allen	Durham County Council
	Cllr Tudor Evans OBE	Plymouth City Council
	Cllr Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
	Cllr Glen Sanderson JP	Northumberland Council
	Cllr Alan Connett	Teignbridge District Council
	Cllr Mike Haines	Teignbridge District Council
	Mr Philip Sellwood	Energy Saving Trust (EST)
Apologies	Cllr James Jamieson	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Cllr Abdul Jabbar MBE	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Sue Woodward	Staffordshire County Council
	Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
	Mr Richard Priestman	Local Government Improvement and Development