

11 July 2017

Highlighting Leadership offer: 2016/17 final outturn and 2017/18 work priorities

Purpose

For information and decision.

Summary

This report updates members on final engagement figures for the 2016/17 Highlighting Political Leadership offer and provides, for decision, a proposed work programme for the 2017/18 session.

Recommendation

That the Improvement and Innovation Board notes the outturn figures for 2016/17, approves the work plan for 2017/18 and offers any comments on the Highlighting Leadership work.

Action

Officers to progress this work in light of the Board's comments.

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Background

1. The LGA's Highlighting Leadership offer forms part of our wider package of sector-led improvement. We offer a range of programmes, events and resources aimed at supporting and developing councillors at all levels. Attending our political leadership programmes gives councillors a unique opportunity to network with other Members from different tiered authorities and often across the political spectrum. Our managerial leadership development programme starts by growing future talent with the National Graduate Development Programme, through to opportunities for senior officers with the Institute of Directors.
2. With feedback from both government and the sector there is an identified need to increase our managerial leadership offer to a wider audience.
3. This report provides statistics relating to attendance at our leadership development programmes and commentary on the achievements of 2016/17 and sets out the work priorities for the 2017/18 session.

Highlighting Political Leadership

4. The LGA continues to offer a wide range of development opportunities for councillors. Alongside flagship programmes such as Leadership Academy and Next Generation, the LGA offers specialised masterclasses and residential courses on topics such as scrutiny, finance, children's services and sport. Our catalogue of programmes is regularly reviewed to ensure that it reflects what is relevant within the public sector and meets the needs of councillor attendees.
5. Highlights for 2016/17 included:
 - 5.1. The second highest total of participants in the last ten years of leadership programmes – 649
 - 5.2. Despite a lower overall number of participants compared with 2015/16, engagement with programmes has overall increased.
 - 5.3. There has been a small decrease in gender equality and a small increase in BAME participation when compared with last year.
 - 5.4. 95 per cent of participants said that our programmes 'fully achieved' or 'largely achieved' their objectives.
 - 5.5. 96 per cent of participants said that attending our programmes made them more confident in their leadership role 'to a great extent' or 'to a moderate extent'.

6. 2016/2017 participation figures on the Leadership Academy (LA), Leadership Essentials (LE), Focus on Leadership (FoL), the Leader's Programme (LEAD), Next Generation (NXG) and 'Leading Edge' are set out in the tables which follow.
7. Due to all out elections in Wales there was one less Leadership Academy and a reduced number of planning programmes. This was due to a charge being introduced for this previously fully funded programme.
8. In 2016/17 to date, we have had particular success in terms of increasing the diversity of councillors who attend our programme. This is detailed in the table below.

Political Leadership development programme bookings

	LA	LE	FoL	LEAD	NXG	LEDGE	Total
Labour	45	166	56	4	20	3	294
Conservative	33	143	23	4	15	10	228
Liberal Democrat	10	21	17	1	14	0	63
Independent	20	17	12	0	14	1	64
Total:	108	347	108	9	63	14	649

	LA	LE	FoL	LEAD	NXG	LEDGE	Total
East of England	13	37	13	2	8	8	81
East Midlands	10	26	8	0	6	1	51
Greater London	9	41	18	1	11	1	81
North East	3	12	1	1	4	0	21
North West	6	33	6	2	6	1	54
South West	15	49	11	0	5	1	81
South East	16	55	16	2	15	1	105
Wales	22	0	1	0	2	0	25
West Midlands	6	52	17	0	4	1	80
Yorkshire & Humber	8	42	17	1	2	0	70
Total:	108	347	108	9	63	14	649

	LA	LE	FoL	LEAD	NXG	LEDGE	Total
District	37	108	40	4	24	8	221
County	4	34	4	0	7	2	51
Metropolitan	14	71	28	1	10	0	124
London	9	41	18	1	11	0	80
Unitary	22	83	17	3	9	4	138
Welsh	22	0	1	0	2	0	25
Fire	0	10	0	0	0	0	10
Parks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total:	108	347	108	9	63	14	649

	LA	LE	FoI	LEAD	NXG	LEDGE	Total
Male	69	196	66	3	39	14	387
Female	39	151	42	6	24	0	262
Total:	108	347	108	9	63	14	649

Ethnic Origin		
White British /	83%	(-7%)
Black	5%	(+3%)
Asian	10%	(+3%)
Mixed Race	1%	(=)

LA = Leadership Academy
FoI = Focus on Leadership
NXG = Next Generation

LE = Leadership Essentials
LEAD = Leaders Programme
LEDGE = Leading Edge

Be a Councillor

- The LGA's Highlighting Political Leadership offer provides support and development to councillors throughout their local government political career. We also recognise that prospective councillors will benefit from access to advice, information and guidance before making a decision about whether or not to stand. The 'Be a Councillor' campaign focusses on raising the profile of the role of a councillor, with the aim that more people will choose to stand as a candidate.
- During 2016/17, the 'Be a Councillor' campaign was refreshed to ensure that it remains relevant and meaningful in a digital age. A package of resources has been devised and made available to councils, so they can create their own bespoke local campaign.
- We have been engaged with a number of councils over the past year with local campaigns run in Rotherham MBC, Lancashire CC, East Sussex CC, West Sussex CC and Isle of Wight Council as some examples. We are also in early discussions with a number of others.

Leading Edge

- A successful Leading Edge event was held in conjunction with British Telecom at their technology park in Suffolk where a number of leading councillors and senior officers came together to look at how the challenges facing local government might be tackled with digital and technology solutions. Unsurprisingly one of the major areas of focus was cyber security.

Online resources

- E-learning now has over 8,000 Members and the number of training options available continues to grow. In the last year new modules have been introduced on Influencing Skills, Planning and 'What it's like to be a Councillor', as part of the 'Be a Councillor' campaign. To ensure that our online resources reflect the ongoing changes in local

government they are regularly reviewed, and recent revisions have been made to the Leadership & Engagement Workbook to take account of devolution and its effects on councils and communities.

Highlighting Managerial Leadership

IGNITE

14. We successfully partnered with SOLACE, Collaborate and the RSA to devise the IGNITE programme. A programme that is for Chief Executives to help develop their own leadership in light of the changing operating context of local government.
15. A small group of Chief Executives have helped shape and develop the programme as it has been ongoing. As well as two residential summits, participants took part in collaborative learning sets for reflection and had themed sessions discussing health & social care, inclusive growth and children/early years services.
16. A further session with Chief Executives will take place at LGA Conference and will continue to shape the programme for the coming year.

Commercial Skills

17. Following a successful pilot programme for officers during 2016, the LGA ran a further commercial skills programme for senior officers in 2017 in partnership with the Institute of Directors. The eight day programme addresses the need for senior officers to understand the challenges resulting from the increasing commercialisation of council services and the development of local authority trading companies and joint ventures.

National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP)

18. NGDP has continued to grow in popularity and success over the past few years, with more councils taking part in the scheme and an increase in application numbers. In response to feedback from councils, the scheme has become more flexible to allow for recruitment from the local area and current graduates employed by a council. Work has also been undertaken to investigate secondment opportunities across different sectors, for example with the Civil Service fast track scheme.
19. Cohort 19 assessment centres took place in February and March and once again there was a very high calibre of candidates. Informal feedback from candidates has been that while the whole assessment process was extremely challenging, the LGA made that process as comfortable and efficient as possible, something that hopefully mimics the attitude and experiences of actually working within the sector.
20. We had 58 councils sign up to take graduates from Cohort 19 offering in excess of 150 placements. That is an additional 5 councils and over 50 extra placements.
21. Cohort 18 graduates started with their councils in September 2016 and there are a total of 94 graduates working across 53 councils (including the LGA).

2017/18 Work Programme

Highlighting Political Leadership

22. With new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) targets agreed with DCLG, the work programme will be shaped and focus on those.

Leadership Academy

23. We will increase the number of Leadership Academy programmes by at least one, possibly two (subject to demand).
24. Feedback from the Leadership Academy programmes has been good and suggests that no major changes to content are required.

Next Generation

25. We will increase the number that participate in Next Generation across the political groups. Following a collective discussion, the Leadership team and the Political Groups felt that it would be helpful to set a broad set of objectives/themes across all the Next Generation programmes that would give some common ground through the wider programme but still allow for the individual flexibility that allows each group to evolve their course in the most appropriate way for their members. We propose that the three themes should be 'Personal Leadership', 'Political Leadership' and 'Communication and media skills'.
26. We will also explore possible cost savings that might be found through economies of scale for sessions that most or all groups wish to run in their programme.

Leadership Essentials

27. Feedback from member councils and also directly from Principal Advisors suggested that while our modular and residential programmes are of high quality and both well received and supported, they take a significant commitment of time and effort from councillors in their already very hectic workload. It was suggested that some intense, but practical, one day sessions would be welcomed.
28. We have devised a format which would be an intense, day long, programme, but with a focus on practical learning, highly interactive and with a set of tools that members can take away at the end of the day and use in their own locality.
29. In order to get the maximum benefit to members and reduce travel time this format of programme would be run in various locations around the country and specifically target members from that local area, although any member from wherever in the country would be able to attend.
30. With further investigation we have also identified two areas of development that would be desired by members and where there is a current gap in our offer. These are 'consultation and engagement' and 'collaboration and partnerships'.
31. We therefore propose to pilot a new Masterclass programme in these two work areas. We would run three events in differing locations for each of the themes. For consultation and engagement we have already designed the 'New Conversations Political Leadership Masterclass' and we are still working on developing the Masterclass on 'collaboration and partnerships'.

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32. Following recent events in both Manchester and London, we will be continuing to offer our Leadership Essential programme on Counter Extremism this year.
33. In addition we will be offering a new Leadership Essentials programme on 'Prevent'. Prevent forms one part of the government's counter-terrorism strategy (Contest) and the Prevent duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 requires all local authorities to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This programme complements the successful Counter Extremism course, and will look in more detail at councils' role in countering terrorism.

Be a Councillor

34. We will be aiming to work in conjunction with at least 20 councils over the coming year in developing their own 'Be a Councillor' campaign using the basket of resources we refreshed over the past year.
35. We will specifically be looking to work with London Boroughs over the coming months in the lead up to their elections in May 2018 and also start work with councils with elections in May 2019 as many candidates, particularly in "target campaigning areas" will be selected earlier rather than later.

Online resources and E-Learning

36. We will be looking to refresh our whole e-learning and online offer. We will be revising, updating or removing all our current workbooks to reflect the current mood. At the same time we will be increasing our interactive e-learning modules and linking where appropriate with our workbooks and other resources.

Highlighting Managerial Leadership

37. As well as continuing with the current programmes we provide, as mentioned in paragraphs 14-21, we will be increasing our offer on Managerial Leadership as mentioned in paragraph 2.

IGNITE

38. Following the successful pilot of the IGNITE programme, we will continue to fund and work in partnership with SOLACE to further develop and evolve the programme. In discussion with SOLACE we propose to work with around 20 Chief Executives in forthcoming programmes and target those that are in the first few years of the role but have sufficiently settled into their particular locality and grasped the unique challenges they personally face.
39. It would be a one year programme which combines early diagnostic work, a residential summit meeting, then collaborative and policy action learning sets plus, the development of Chief Executive led thought leadership.

National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP)

40. We will continue to offer the same high quality scheme over the coming, but having had to recently retender the learning and development aspect of the NGDP scheme, we have taken the opportunity to move the focus to more online learning and regional groupings to both allow more scalability to meet future council demand and to also reduce overall costs. We will continue to monitor this new learning & development aspect to ensure that we maintain standards and do not lose aspects of the scheme that have made it successful this far.

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Other programmes

41. We have set aside resources to further collaborate with SOLACE on the delivery of managerial leadership programmes. Discussions are ongoing but current thoughts of programme development are:

41.1. To expand and allow more senior officers to take part in the 'Total Leadership'. This programme is pitched at Directors who are looking develop their leadership to move up to Chief Executive and would run a cohort of approximately 15.

41.2. To expand the 'Transform' programme. This is a four module programme that is aimed at officers that are leading a change programme in their own council. It is practically based and helps support them to ensure their real time project is successfully delivered.

41.3. To run a 'Springboard' programme that targets under represented people working at the top level of local government. The 'Springboard' programme already runs to identify and develop the managerial rising talent of local government. There is an opportunity to simply take more people through that course or to look to develop a course that would specifically target for example BAME or female rising talent.

Implications for Wales

42. There are no implications.

Financial implications

43. All programmes will be met from existing budgets.

Next Steps

44. Officers will pursue the activities outlined in the light of member guidance.