

11 July 2017

Innovation Zone at the LGA Annual Conference

Purpose of the report

For discussion.

Summary

To update members, through this report and verbally, on the Innovation Zone at the LGA Annual Conference, and invite members' comments and feedback, which can be taken into account for future Zones.

Recommendation

That the Improvement & Innovation Board offer any comments on the Innovation Zone, which can be taken into account for the future.

Action

Officers to respond as necessary to any comments.

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Innovation Zone at LGA annual conference

Background

1. This year is our fifth Innovation Zone organised as an integral part of the LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition.
2. The Board agreed at its meeting in November 2016 to invite examples from the wider public sector, not to have subject specific themes in the Zone, and to set up an informal advisory group to provide strategic direction to the development of this year's Zone.
3. Officers progressed the Zone accordingly, taking on board comments from the advisory group, which comprised Councillors Peter Fleming OBE, Judi Billing MBE, Bob Jennings and Mayor Dave Hodgson.
4. The very latest version of the programme is available [here](#) until about a month after conference. It includes a range of examples of council related innovation, including those from the wider public, voluntary, community and private sectors, central government and the USA to improve residents' lives, policy outcomes and efficiencies.
5. The Zone has been widely publicised ahead of Annual Conference. Adverts and articles have been included in the June and July editions of First magazine. We are promoting the Zone via Twitter, our two related Knowledge Hub Groups, the annual conference app and handbook, the LGA Boards' and events monthly e-bulletins, Chairman, Chief Executive and CommsNet bulletins, and through internal means. Signage at conference will also direct delegates to the Zone as part of the LGA Hub stand.
6. Councillor William Nunn as Chairman of this Board will formally launch the Zone on 4 July at 12.40 when there will be contributions from: Essex County Council on its innovative card game to engage employees in commercial thinking and culture; DCLG, Warrington Borough Council and Grimsby on their ambitious, varied regeneration projects; Impact Hub's work with Birmingham City Council to create an Innovation Lab; Liverpool City Council's improvement of public health using behavioural insight to reduce sugar consumption, and Newton Europe as the Zone's official sponsor on their collaborative work with north of England health and care leaders to reduce delayed transfers of care.
7. Prior to the formal launch, Councillor Peter Fleming will introduce Stella Duffy, Co-director, Fun Palaces, who will present a hands-on taster of the workshops they organise to support local communities to create and curate their own hyper-local events, using culture (arts, science, tech, digital, crafts, sport) as a catalyst for community engagement.
8. The remainder of the Tuesday and Wednesday programme is dedicated to showcasing a wide range of innovations relevant to councils, loosely connected by the overarching Zone theme of 'disruption' as suggested by Councillor Fleming – doing things differently, from questioning the status quo, removing barriers, exploring limitless possibilities to taking bold steps to achieve better results.

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9. The Zone's third and final day will include a main session by New Urban Mechanics from Boston, USA, who will showcase how they are making civic life more meaningful for more people, working across departments and with communities, from encouraging safer driving to engaging people in the design of urban housing.
10. Over 34 innovations relevant to councils will have been directly showcased, with references to other councils and organisations involved in innovative work.
11. After conference, we will add council innovations from the Zone to the case studies section of our [website](#), which now includes over 1000 examples. Highlights from the Zone will also feature in the August edition of First magazine.
12. A verbal update on how the Zone actually went will be given at the meeting.

Implications for Wales ¹

13. None

Financial Implications

14. None

Next steps

15. Members are asked to:
 - 15.1. note this report
 - 15.2. share their views on how the Zone went from their perspective.

¹ The WLGA pays a membership fee to the LGA on behalf of all Welsh councils and we lobby for them on "non-devolved" issues - e.g. DWP work. The WLGA provides "top-slice" for workforce support, but none for "improvement".