

Non-confidential Note of last Improvement & Innovation Board meeting

Title: Improvement & Innovation Board
Date: Thursday 11 July 2019
Venue: Smith Square 3&4, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

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

Item Decisions and actions

1 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman welcomed members to meeting. Apologies and substitutions were noted (which can be found at **Appendix A**).

The Chairman welcomed Matthew Hamilton, who has recently been appointed as the Improvement Manager for the LGA. Matthew was previously the Director of the District Councils Network.

The following declaration of interest was made:

- Cllr Joy Allen declared an interest for item six, as they are part of the LGA's facilitation team.

Members had a brief discussion over how the decision was reached to make items confidential on the agenda. Dennis Skinner confirmed that confidential reports will be made public at the appropriate time, and suggested that this be discussed and agreed at each lead members meeting if future confidential items are on the Board meeting agenda.

Decisions

1. Members noted the declaration of interest.
2. Members agreed that lead members will discuss if an item at the Board should be confidential, during their meetings of the Improvement and Innovation Lead Members going forward.

2 MHCLG grant funding and next steps (verbal update)

Dennis Skinner introduced item two, and updated members on the grant funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and Memorandum of Understanding between MHCLG and the LGA.

Following this, a confidential discussion took place between members and officers.

Decision

- Members noted the update.

3 Effectively communicating sector-led improvement

Matthew Hamilton, together with David Holdstock, Director of Communications, introduced item three.

This item focused on the opportunity for members to set the direction for a sector-led improvement (SLI) communication and campaign strategy to be agreed at a future meeting.

Following the update, a confidential discussion took place between officers and members.

Decisions

1. Members noted the report.
2. Members agreed to the development of a SLI communications strategy over the summer.

The following **action** was noted:

1. Officers to draw up a communications plan for consideration at the next Board meeting in October.

4 Statutory public notices

David Holdstock introduced item four. This item discussed councils statutory responsibilities to undertake public notices (PN's).

Following the update, a confidential discussion took place between members and officers.

Decisions

Decisions for this item to be kept confidential, until such time members agree for these to be made public.

5 Productivity work programme

Item five was introduced by Susan Attard, Head of Productivity, alongside Lead Member Cllr Ron Woodley. The report provided gave the Board the business/work plan for the productivity team for 2019/20. Susan made reference to **Appendix A** in the agenda, which provides a summary of the business/work plan for 2019/20.

Susan's update included the following information:

- Update on the grant funding digital improvement programme, which is currently supporting councils.
- Contract management – the team are still carrying out the diagnosis exercises, as

- well as working with government on commercialisation functions in the sector.
- Susan thanked the Chairman for launching the transformation and innovation exchange conference this year, feedback of this was a great success.
- An update on our support for councils on cyber security.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised:

- Members agreed how important this work is, particularly in relation to climate change.
- The climate emergency declaration by the government and the LGA were also discussed, and how a SLI approach to tackle this would both be innovative and a great incentive for the take up within the sector.
- Discussions were had as to why the government is taxing new renewable technologies, still after declaring a climate change emergency. Members were notified that this was actually EU legislation.
- Such technologies discussed were solar panels/farms and wind farms, although it was agreed that any information on these expenses needed to be collected from the sector, as manufacturers could not be trusted.

Dennis Skinner and Matthew Hamilton concluded the conversation by updating members that improvement discussions in relation to the climate emergency had already started, including any SLI approaches. Dennis confirmed that currently, this area of policy is with the Leadership Board and discussions are still ongoing.

Decisions

1. Members noted the business/work plan for the productivity team for financial year of 2019/20.
2. Members provide guidance necessary to ensure that the programme meets its objectives in 2019/20.

6 Highlighting Political Leadership offer: 2019/20 work update

Helen Jenkins, Principal Adviser – Leadership, introduced item six, alongside Lead Member Cllr Judi Billing. The report provided members with a brief update of the LGA's Political Leadership and managerial leadership offers for 2019/20.

The update focused on an overview of this year's first quarter, which included 450 councillors booked on training programmes; an update on the suppliers for 2019/20; the application process of the next generation programmes; and grant funding for disabled councillors.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were raised by members:

- Discussions over the increasing number of safeguarding risks for councillors. Access to the programmes was discussed, such as clashes with the courses and child care, or members not being available over weekends. Members went on to discuss modern ways of accessing courses – such as skype, podcasts & e-learning tools.
 - o Helen fed-back that most programmes have a weekday option, as well as more interactive e-learning tools which are currently being developed. Cllr Billing also remarked that courses attended online take out the human

interaction aspect, which she commented as vital within development of leadership skills.

- Climate change, digital development, the commercialisation of councils and the role of effective backbenchers/the opposition were suggested by members as four possible new areas to look at.

Decisions

1. Improvement and Innovation Board members noted the progress so far in 2019/20.
2. Members commented and highlighted possible areas of development on the Highlighting Political Leadership or managerial leadership work.

7 Reflections after Innovation Zone at LGA Conference 2019 (verbal update)

Rhian Gladman, Productivity Programme Manager, introduced item seven. Rhian's update included details on very well attended seminars in the Innovation Zone:

- Lexi the dog, which aims to tackle social isolation.
- A cycling programme, which aims to help dementia patients.
- Innovation sketch boards - drawn by artists over the three days.
- The open microphone sessions; Rhian made a special thanks to the Chairman for his energy and leadership.

The Chairman in-turn, praised the staff and all those that attended, and added that it was one of the most successful years so far.

Members discussed possibly producing and recording the seminars online going forward, for those that could not make the Annual Conference. Officers took on board this idea, and the discussion was concluded by the Chairman who stated the sketch boards will be digitalised.

Decision

1. Members noted the update.

8 Annual report of the Improvement and Innovation Board

Matthew Hamilton introduced item eight. This report provides an overview of the activities and achievements of the Improvement and Innovation Board over the past year of 2018/19.

Discussions from members focused on the perception survey and timeframes of this from 2018/19.

Decision

1. Members noted the activities and achievements for 2018/19.

9 Note of the Previous Meeting

Members agreed to the notes of the previous meeting of the Improvement and Innovation Board, which took place on Thursday 23 May 2019.

10 Any Other Business

The Chairman gave praise to Lead Member Cllr Ron Woodley, who will be stepping down due to his term ending. The Chairman made particular reference to his hard work, enthusiasm, and contributions to the Board.

Appendix A - Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District 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 Paul Bettison OBE Cllr Steve Count Cllr Charlotte Haitham Taylor Cllr Donna Jones JP Cllr Laura Miller Cllr Phil North Cllr Joy Allen Cllr Tudor Evans OBE Cllr Abdul Jabbar MBE Cllr Vince Maple Cllr Alice Perry Cllr Liz Green Cllr Glen Sanderson JP Sir Stephen Houghton CBE Cllr Alan Connett Cllr Mike Haines Mr Richard Priestman Mr Philip Sellwood	Bracknell Forest Borough Council Cambridgeshire County Council Wokingham Borough Council Portsmouth City Council Purbeck District Council Test Valley Borough Council Durham County Council Plymouth City Council Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council Medway Council Islington 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 Damian White	Havering London Borough Council