

## **Improvement Programme Board – report from Cllr Peter Fleming (Chairman)**

1. The **Improvement Programme Board** is due to meet 8 September for its first meeting in this LG Group year. The agenda includes the proposed priorities for the Board in the coming year and next steps for the Group's ***Taking the Lead*** offer. Whilst much remains to be done, good progress is being made in developing and delivering the LG Group's seven point support offer to the sector. In connection with this, Members will also be asked to discuss the next steps and links to the Group's proposals for a sector led approach to improvement in children's services, a key piece of work for the Group being led by the Children and Young People Board.
2. The LG Group ran a successful series of '**Taking the Lead**' roadshows in July designed to promote understanding and awareness of the tools and support the Group is making available to councils on sector self regulation and improvement. The roadshows also featured workshops highlighting practical examples of shared services and shared management arrangements. These were delivered by the members and officers directly involved in existing shared services initiatives.
3. The **LG Inform prototype** – the new service enabling councils to share and compare key performance information – has been well received by members and officers alike. Feedback from trial users will help inform the final shape of the service to councils.
4. The Board has also received the first report from the new **independent Advisory Board** established to provide oversight of the new approach to sector self regulation and improvement and advise the LG Group as appropriate. The Advisory Board has identified the task of detecting, highlighting and taking action in respect of poor performance by individual authorities as one of the most challenging issues facing the LG Group. Members agreed with the need to develop a more systematic approach and we are currently exploring how we achieve this by exploiting the opportunities provided by our strengthened team of Principal and Senior Advisers; the on-going information LG Inform will provide and links to other parts of the sector. We are also meeting with Government Departments and the Inspectorates to explore how we can exploit the intelligence they hold about performance. Proposals for strengthening this approach will be discussed with Lead Members through the Performance Support Panel.
5. The Group hosted a highly interactive **Futures Summits** in July to explore new models of service delivery that will save money and keep local citizens at the heart of services. These summits involved over 80 local government leaders, chief executives, partners, private sector and voluntary sector leaders in building a series of potential 'future models'.

6. The summits suggested that there could be no universal model of service delivery and different models would need to be developed to meet local needs and circumstances. They highlighted that few local authorities are likely to adopt an 'ideal type' model; instead opting for a pragmatic approach, combining elements of different models to create local hybrids. Structures and working arrangements were considered to be less important than how the organisation adapted with a focus on different cultures, behaviours and ways of working.
7. The Board is due to receive a presentation from the Design Council about their "**Public Services by Design**" programme and the potential links to the LG Group's productivity programme. Public Services by Design is intended to support improvement by using design-led approaches, developed by the Design Council, to help public sector managers facing complex service provision issues to develop new ways of approaching their work.
8. The Board is also due to receive a presentation from the National Fraud Authority. Fraud occurs across the public and private sectors and the NFA is developing a proposed strategy for **fighting fraud in local government**, which they plan to follow with good practice and tool kits. The NFA is seeking the LG Group's endorsement to their proposed strategy.

**Contact officer:** Dennis Skinner

**Position:** Head of Leadership and Productivity

**Telephone:** 020 7664 3017

**E-mail:** [dennis.skinner@local.gov.uk](mailto:dennis.skinner@local.gov.uk)