

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

### **Improvement**

#### **A Brighter Future: National Graduate Development Programme**

1. You will recall that last month, I mentioned that we had made a number of improvements to the National Graduate Development Programme (ngdp). A report, published in February, has confirmed the significant advantages of local authorities participating in the scheme. The study, undertaken by the LGA with Solace Enterprises and iMPOWER, indicates that the ngdp has the potential to drive standards in town halls up even further as a result of greater development and innovation. For further information about the benefits of participating in the programme and how your authority can get involved, contact Ami Beeton on 0207 665 3851 or [ami.beeton@local.gov.uk](mailto:ami.beeton@local.gov.uk).

### **Transparency**

#### **Annual National Audit Office Performance Management Conference**

2. Councillor Jill Shortland OBE, Vice-Chair of the Board, represented the LGA at the eighth Annual National Audit Office Performance Management Conference. The conference drew together experts from the National Audit Office, central and local government, academia and industry to consider the impact of transparency and localism on performance measurement. Cllr Shortland spoke on 'Sector Led Performance measurement in local government'.

#### **LG Inform**

3. February saw significant developments in the next phase of LG Inform. A preferred supplier has been appointed, with work expected to commence at the end of the month, and the LG Inform Knowledge Hub group has been launched. I would recommend you visit the group - <https://knowledgehub.local.gov.uk/group/jwusoizshu>, as it provides an effective forum for the sector to discuss issues and shape future requirements.

### **Leadership**

#### **'Be a councillor' campaign launched**

4. On 1 February, I attended the successful launch of the 'Be a councillor' campaign held at the House of Commons. Over a hundred MPs and councillors attended the reception, including the LGA Chairman and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to support the LGA's campaign to celebrate the important work councillors do and encourage new candidates to come forward.

## Productivity

### Shared Services

5. To help Councils understand, explore and engage with the shared services agenda, the Leadership and Localism team are piloting Leadership Academy master classes. There is a national master class on 7 and 8 March for members as well as a regional master class for council leaders in the East of England on 12 and 13 March. For more information on these events please contact Grace Collins on 0207 664 3054 or [grace.collins@local.gov.uk](mailto:grace.collins@local.gov.uk).

### Category Management Pilots

6. We recently launched a Category Management Pilot programme to help kick-start development of real and practical projects that will result in replicable procurement efficiencies in the areas of social care, property, highways, waste and corporate services. There was a strong field, with 18 applications covering the full range of target spending areas. Eight councils (or groups of councils) have now been selected to develop category management pilots; we will be supporting them with £160,000 of grants and expertise over the coming months.

### Procurement

7. As you will be aware, the Government is seeking to improve economic growth through procurement activity. We are working with the Cabinet Office to identify how councils can support this initiative through the use of procurement hubs, category management and engaging earlier with suppliers. I am keen to hear from councils who are using procurement effectively to promote economic growth. If you have experience or ideas in the area then please email [productivity@local.gov.uk](mailto:productivity@local.gov.uk).

## Innovation

### Social media in local government

8. As part of international Social Media Week, Councillor Tim Cheetham took part in a two hour online discussion on the role of social media in local government. The discussion, called 'localgov gets social', took place on the [Knowledge Hub](#) and focused specifically on how social media is used for reputation management, engaging communities and disseminating information.

### Creative Councils: Inspired Learning Event

9. The second of four Creative Councils: Inspired learning events was held on 14 February. The successful conference was attended by over 40 local government delegates that included representatives from seven Creative Councils. For further information on future events visit the [Knowledge Hub](#).

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