

## **Creative Councils**

### **Purpose**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

This report updates the Board on progress with the Creative Councils innovation programme.

The Creative Councils selection panel met on 16 May to select the proposals to receive further support from the programme. This report provides details.

### **Recommendation**

Members are invited to comment on the update.

### **Action**

Officers to reflect Members' suggestions in the design and delivery of future support to councils, communications and lobbying activity derived from the Creative Councils programme.

### **Contact officers:**

Mike Short

Teresa Payne

### **Position:**

Senior Adviser

Adviser

### **Phone nos:**

07799 038432

07879 640823

### **E-mail:**

[mike.short@local.gov.uk](mailto:mike.short@local.gov.uk)

[teresa.payne@local.gov.uk](mailto:teresa.payne@local.gov.uk)

## **Creative Councils**

### **Background**

1. The Creative Councils programme is a joint programme between NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts) and the LGA. As reported at previous meetings of the Improvement Board, the ambition is to work with a small group of creative, pioneering councils and their partners throughout England and Wales in developing, implementing and spreading transformational new approaches to meeting some of the biggest medium and long-term challenges facing communities and local services.

### **Programme Progress to date**

2. In April 2012 15 Creative Councils (Brighton, Bristol, Cambridgeshire, Cornwall, Derbyshire, Essex, Havering, Islington, Monmouthshire, Reading, Rotherham, Stoke, Wigan, Westminster and York) submitted their final action plan. Both Leicester and Rossendale decided not to proceed with their application and did not submit an action plan. The Selection Panel met on 16 May and made the decision to offer the following 6 Creative Councils further financial support of up to £150,000 under Phase 2 up to March 2013:

**a) Cornwall:** which is implementing 'Shaped by Us', a technology platform and open innovation approach which makes it easier for local communities to put forward creative ideas to solve the county's biggest challenges, a number of which will be co-produced with the council.

**b) Derbyshire:** which is developing 'Uni-fi' a bespoke package of support aimed at developing aspiration amongst young people in care. This will include a guaranteed entitlement to financial support on leaving care to be spent on the pursuit of self-selected goals, which might include further education or training.

**c) Monmouthshire:** which, through the practical 'Your County Your Way' programme, is implementing a cultural transformation within the council to listen and respond more creatively to the needs of its communities. Central to this approach is an internal training programme, the Intrapreneurship School, which seeks to introduce council employees to the concept of innovation and what it means for service delivery.

**d) Rotherham:** which is developing 'Rotherham Ready', a council-backed social enterprise that works with the teachers of students aged 4-19 to engage them and their schools in the development of an enterprise-based curriculum, ensuring young people have skills relevant for the future.

**e) Stoke:** which is developing its goal to become an energy sufficient 'Great Working City', pushing the boundaries of energy regulation and localism by moving towards local ownership of energy supply and reimagining the role of the council as a strategic broker of resources.

**f) Wigan:** which is creating a new economic model for social care to meet their service and financial challenges, by harnessing underutilised and untapped resources within the local community through volunteering and the development of micro-enterprises.

3. There was also a workshop at the LGA Annual Conference on 26 June – Creative Councils: The Discipline of Innovation. Geoff Mulgan, NESTA and Cllr Fleming, Chair of Improvement Board made contributions alongside representatives of Cornwall and Derbyshire. In addition the 6 were invited to the third Creative Councils Camp on 11/12 July to explain how, when, where and how their further financial and non-financial support will be provided.

### **Planned activities**

4. Cornwall and Monmouthshire are being invited to attend Improvement Board on 17 September. In addition invites are to be offered to Derbyshire to attend Children and Young People Board, to Rotherham for Economy and Transport Board, to Stoke for Environment and Housing Board and to Wigan for Community and Well-Being Board. Further opportunities for dissemination by all 17 Creative Councils are also being sought within other appropriate theme networks/events across the country. In particular opportunities will be sought to match them to LGA campaigns, as for example Rotherham and the 'Hidden Talents' campaign. The Creative Councils group on Knowledge hub is providing a platform to engage the wider sector and to match opportunities for wider dissemination within 'thematic clusters of councils' as a contribution to the implementation of the LGA Business Plan - *"councils share and develop new, innovative ways of reforming public services through a 25 per cent increase in the use of the LGA's Knowledge Hub."*
5. As a further part of the implementation of the LGA Business Plan - *"at least 15 councils each year are able to explore new ideas, test out new ways of working and share the lessons through a range of innovative pathfinder programmes including the Creative Councils programme"* - discussions are in progress with the Creative Councils, in particular those not being taken forward under Phase 3, as to how they can be supported to further develop their ideas working alongside other interested councils. For example by examining linkages with those Councils who have had a Peer Challenge in order to determine how best the LGA can support innovative approaches in their 'action planning' alongside the specific knowledge, skills or competencies that can be drawn from all 17 Creative Councils and develop mutually beneficial solutions from innovation

processes/practices such as, for example, the 'Local Councils Innovation Framework'.

### **Conclusion**

6. This is an exciting and interesting programme that offers many lessons for the local government sector in how best to innovate in meeting the requirements of Public Services Reform agenda.

### **Financial Implications**

7. NESTA is providing £2 million and LGA £1 million as their respective contributions to the Creative Councils programme.