



Accelerating Innovation in Local Government Research

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Overall research objectives

Aims

- Identify what chief executives can do to accelerate innovation council-wide
- Disseminate and promote this learning to local councils
- Further the research evidence on leadership actions that help to achieve innovation in public services

Innovation definition used

Innovations are changes to services, products, organisational arrangements or democratic approaches that are both:

- New to the council
- Deliver additional value for service users & citizens

Innovation continuum from small scale improvements to radical disruptive, game changing, breakthrough changes

Research undertaken

- Individual interviews with 18 chief executives
- 3 discussion groups of chief executives
- Development and testing of Local Councils' Innovation Framework
- 19 employee focus groups in 6 councils
- Inviting comments on findings

Local Councils' Innovation Framework



Key findings: chief executives

- Political leadership & attitudes key
- Few councils have comprehensive approach to innovation e.g.:
 - Few focusing on, investing in & protecting key long term priority areas for radical innovations
 - Few have expertise in innovation nor understanding of latest technology
 - Little in-depth work on innovation with service users & residents
- Private sector contracts don't necessarily bring innovation
- Project management helping to deliver innovations

**Key findings:
Employees**

SENIOR MANAGERS
COMMUNICATE
THE COUNCIL'S
AMBITIONS FOR
INNOVATION
CONVINCINGLY

SENIOR & MIDDLE
MANAGERS
GENUINELY LISTEN
TO & INVOLVE
EMPLOYEES

MIDDLE &
FRONTLINE
MANAGERS
PROACTIVELY
ENCOURAGE
INNOVATION

MANAGERS
SAFEGUARD
TIME &
RESOURCES FOR
INNOVATION

MANAGERS
BUILD CROSS
COUNCIL
LINKS FOR
INNOVATION

Possible LGA actions?

More to:

- Develop councils' knowledge of:
 - Strategic approaches innovation
 - Operating innovation processes
 - Contracting for innovation
 - Ideas for innovation from outside the sector & abroad
- Encourage experimentation & spreading of promising ideas faster
- Persuade the government to create better conditions for innovation
- Understand what makes a difference e.g. research innovation and politicians; middle managers & whole council approaches