

19 March 2013

Item 3

Update on LG Inform

Purpose of report

To update the Improvement and Innovation Board on progress with the new version of LG Inform.

Summary

Progress is being made on the build of new LG Inform, and the launch remains on track for the revised timeline of Spring 2013.

Recommendations

That the Board should:

- note the progress of the new version of LG Inform
- note the timing of launch of LG Inform.

Contact officer: Juliet Whitworth
Position: Research and Information Manager
Phone no: 020 76643287
E-mail: juliet.whitworth@local.gov.uk

19 March 2013

Item 3

Update on LG Inform

Background

1. LG Inform is the on-line data and benchmarking service developed by the LGA, as part of its support for councils. This free, online service allows anyone in councils and fire and rescue services to access and compare both contextual and performance data for their local area, covering around 1,800 individual items. Users can view data or pre-written reports, and create their own reports, using the most up to date published information.
2. The prototype was launched in Summer 2011, with a view to testing the principles of such a service, and getting feedback from councils about desired design and functions. In Spring 2012, the LGA commissioned Reading Room to develop the new version of LG Inform, taking on board the views and comments we had received from users of the prototype.

Update on LG Inform

3. At present, more than 90 per cent of councils have someone registered to access the LG Inform prototype, with a total of more than 1,800 users. However, we anticipate usage increasing rapidly once the new version of LG Inform is launched in the spring, which will be a better looking and better performing tool.
4. Progress is being made on the build of new LG Inform, and the launch remains on track for Spring 2013. It has been a complicated IT project and the developers have missed some milestone dates. We are currently in the final stage of user testing which has revealed a number of bugs and issues. This is always expected with IT projects of this type. Extra resources have been allocated by the developers at no extra cost to the LGA in order to minimise any delays. We are currently planning on a launch in May.
5. Alongside work on LG Inform, we have developed a communications plan to market the new version of LG Inform through the first seven months of 2013. This is intended to promote corporate adoption of the tool through support from chief executives, senior officers and councillors, as well as widespread use of the tool and the benchmarking amongst performance officers. We will make use of existing regional meetings of these audiences to demonstrate the tool to them, and will be using a range of communications tactics to target each audience group on its own terms. An important element of the communication objectives is to explain the implications of making LG Inform open to the public in the Summer.

19 March 2013

Item 3

6. The Board is asked to note the progress of the new version of LG Inform, which will have been launched by the time of the next Improvement and Innovation Board meeting, and comment where appropriate.

Financial Implications

7. There are no financial implications, over and above the contract cost of delivering LG Inform.