

Leadership Centre Update

Purpose of report

In the summer the Leadership Board received a report on the future options for the Leadership Centre and endorsed the proposed strategy. This report updates members on the progress made since then, particularly regarding wider public sector leadership development.

Recommendation

The Leadership Board is asked to note progress.

Action

Officers to action in accordance with Members' decisions.

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Leadership Centre - Update

Background

1. In the summer the Leadership Board received a report on the future options for the Leadership Centre and endorsed the proposed strategy. This report updates members on the progress made since then, particularly regarding wider public sector leadership development.
2. One of the clear messages arising to date from the four Whole Place Community Budget pilots is that we should not see the challenges as purely technical, nor just centred on the local authority. It is vital that we develop public sector leaders who will work as a team across the locality, and not merely within their particular organisation and/or sector. The Leadership Board agreed that as a registered charity the Leadership Centre might be best placed to be seen as able to work across different sectors.
3. There has been a very positive response from senior public sector leaders to proposals to establish a national 'place-based leadership' development offer, interlinked with a parallel local offer. The programme would combine a national leadership offer, which would have many of the elements of the former Leeds Castle programme (save that Chief Executives would come from across the public sector and not just local government, and that there would also be some Police and Crime Commissioners as well as local government Leaders), together with a local programme offer that would engage political and managerial public sector leaders from across their 'place'.
4. To establish the programme, the Leadership Centre will use some of its reserves, but will also receive some support from private sector partners. However it is vital that local government is not the sole funder of public service leadership development, so in due course funding from other parts of the public sector will be sought and secured.
5. The proposals are that the national programme will probably comprise a launch cohort of up to 25 individuals. Members of the national cohort would themselves be key players in system change in their localities, or parts of the public sector. This mix of a national offer and a series of local offers would thus aim to combine a high-quality offer, with the ability to impact on a large number of localities. The participants would therefore be key players in creating the local programme offers in their localities. The summary programme is **attached**.
6. The proposed national launch event would be in January 2013 (provisionally 14 January), with the national programme itself running through 2013. Necessarily the national programme would have fixed dates for the programme. However the local offer will have much greater flexibility. We would also envisage that the local programme would be co funded- in part by the Leadership Centre from its reserves but in part also by the localities – and importantly across the organisations and sectors from which participants are drawn.

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7. In addition to the wider public sector participation there is one significant difference between the former Leeds Castle offer and the new programme. Leeds Castle was devised as a personal leadership development programme per se, whereas this offer is focused on helping achieve system change through leadership development. Participants are thus signing up to champion change in their locality, and the national programme is some added support for that (alongside the local offer). Designing and positioning the offer in this way, along with the attraction of private sector funding, provides a strong rationale and robust defence against any challenges about the affordability of the programme and commitment of individuals to it, in a time of austerity. It also addresses the question of why people have been selected (namely that they have signed up to help drive change in their area). We would be judging the programme not on the benefits derived by the participants but how the programme helped participants lead change in their place.
8. We would envisage the cost of the new national programme to be broadly in line with similar schemes (direct net costs of around £125,000 per cohort, per year). The national programme would have a cost per participant (broadly equivalent to accommodation and travel costs), whilst the local programmes would cost around £40,000 maximum (with the places contributing at least half the cost).
9. In parallel with this initiative other parts of the public sector are looking at new leadership development activities. The NHS Leadership Academy Programme Board is looking to develop leadership development programmes on an "industrial scale" to help equip NHS leaders for change. Meanwhile the new police professional body will also be looking at new programmes for the police. In both cases, we are either working with or tracking closely their intentions in order that our proposals and 'offer' can lead on behalf of local government interests where appropriate and be co-ordinated with other programmes that go beyond the sector. As a consequence of the above developments and good progress that has been made, along with the natural timescales for Trustees' appointments, we are also in early discussion with the Leadership Centre about giving consideration to the composition of their Board and possibly some slight extension of the Board membership to include some senior figures from different parts of the public sector.