

## Note of last Improvement & Innovation Board meeting

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**Title:** Improvement & Innovation Board

**Date:** Thursday 15 October 2020

**Venue:** Online via Zoom

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### Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	<p><b>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Cllrs Damian White and Miranda Williams.</p> <p>Cllr Liz Green declared an interest in Item 6 as she was part of the delivery team for the Leadership Academy and new Councillor coaching.</p>	
2	<p><b>Board Membership and Terms of Reference - 2020-21</b></p> <p>The Chairman asked members to note the Board membership for the new LGA municipal year (2020/21) and whether they were happy with the Board's Terms of Reference.</p> <p>The Chairman invited Dennis Skinner, Head of Improvement, to update members on the Equalities Advocate position. Dennis said that the Group Leaders had decided that the Equalities Advocate position for each Board should be allocated on a politically proportionate basis and that Cllr Liz Green had accepted the role for IIB.</p> <p><b>Decision</b></p> <p>Members of the Improvement and Innovation Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>noted</b> its membership for 2020-21;</li><li>2. <b>agreed</b> its Terms of Reference; and</li><li>3. <b>agreed</b> that Cllr Liz Green be appointed as the Board Equalities Advocate for 2020-21.</li></ol>	
3	<p><b>Confidential Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b></p> <p>Cllr Rory Love pointed out that he was in attendance at the last meeting as a substitute for Cllr Laura Miller and asked that this be reflected in the minutes.</p> <p>With this amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2020 were <b>agreed</b>.</p>	

#### 4 Ongoing SLI activity and future 2021-24 SLI offer

The Chairman thanked officers for putting on the “Shaping the Future of Sector-Led Improvement” webinar earlier in the week and said that it had been very helpful.

He then invited Dennis Skinner, Head of Improvement, and Matthew Hamilton, Head of Improvement Coordination and Strategy, to introduce the report. Following the introduction, members had a confidential discussion on the contents.

**Decision:**

- Members of the Improvement & Innovation Board **noted** the report.

#### 5 Predictive Analytics

The Chairman invited Cllr Neil Prior and Juliet Whitworth to introduce the report.

Neil said that he was very supportive of predictive analytics as a means of improving service delivery and that this report represented an opportunity for the LGA to set the agenda, and to address the legitimate questions around risk and ethics, before the technology was adopted more widely.

Juliet said that the LGA had commissioned Shared Intelligence to produce a guide for councils for using predictive analytics which would be launched on 10 November and would be shared with Board members. An advisory group had also been set up with external organisations with an interest in the subject and they had welcomed the LGA’s involvement.

Juliet also said that members needed to be aware of the potential negative implications for local government if predictive analytics was not used well, and cited recent instances of central Government use around planning reforms and exam results.

Juliet asked for members’ comments on the proposed workstream outlined in paragraph 7 and whether it should be taken forward for the remainder of 2020-21 and in the longer term.

Members were supportive of the proposed workstream and welcomed it as a means of improving outcomes and services, and targeting cost-effective solutions. It was pointed out that councils held large amounts of data that were largely untapped at present and some of the service areas that could potentially benefit were discussed. Members felt that part of the LGA’s work should be to share learning between authorities, help them use predictive analytics correctly (including ideas about how it might be used) and to ensure it is applied in an ethical manner.

**Decision:**

Members of the Improvement & Innovation Board **supported** the predictive analytics workstream and **agreed** the next steps outlined in

paragraph 10 of the report.

## **6 Highlighting Political Leadership offer: 2020/21 Work update**

The Chairman invited Cllr Judi Billing and Sophie Poole, Head of Leadership, to introduce the update.

Judi thanked officers for the speed with which they had adapted the leadership offer to fit around the Covid restrictions.

Sophie added that officers were trying to develop an offer that was flexible enough to enable all councillors to take part, regardless of their personal circumstances.

Grace Collins, Adviser – Leadership & Localism, provided an update live from the Leadership Essentials training that was taking place as a hybrid event at the University of Warwick. She reported that the event was going well so far and both facilitators and delegates were getting used to the new format. She praised the University for making the venue reassuringly covid-safe. Feedback would be collated from the delegates and improvements made if necessary. Grace shared [these photos](#) from the event.

Members raised the following points:

- Some reservations were expressed about the operation of 'hybrid' training events. Sophie said that with the ongoing Covid situation it was unlikely that the programme will fully return to Warwick for some time. Therefore, they are trying different ways to run the programme, so that sessions continue to be accessible to all, and would take on board any feedback.
- It was suggested that the Personal Leadership Challenge and coaching offers could be amalgamated.
- Members suggested using platforms such as Youtube and Spotify to promote events and the free SLI offer.

### **Decision**

Members of the Improvement & Innovation Board **noted** the progress of the adaptations and new offers within the reshaped Leadership offer.

## **7 Cyber Security Programme Update**

The Chairman invited Cllr Neil Prior and Jamie Cross, Adviser – Cyber Security, to introduce the update.

Neil said that cyber security was now more important than ever for councils as increasing amounts of their business were being conducted online. In addition, there had been several high-profile breaches in recent months. The LGA was well-placed to develop good practice in this area and members also had a duty to ensure their councils were prepared. He highlighted an article in the LGA First magazine which contained a list of questions for members to ask their officers on cyber security preparedness.

Jamie gave a presentation on the LGA's cyber security programme and highlighted that the current 3-year funding package would come to an end in March 2021. The forthcoming Government Spending Review would hopefully provide clarity on future funding beyond March.

Jamie briefed members on the current testing project, which had been adapted to address cyber security issues arising from Covid. The project will work with 10% of councils, offering each an NCSC approved vulnerability test. He then outlined plans for future expansion of the programme, assuming continued funding.

Members would receive a further update in 2021 once the funding situation was clearer.

Following the introduction, Members raised the following points:

- Is there a vulnerability for councils associated with their arms-length organisations? Jamie said that there was a big piece of work to do with councils' procurement teams on this.
- Were there any plans to have an article in First magazine about the recent security breaches? Jamie said that follow up guidance to Neil's article could be issued.
- Were any conversations taking place with other public sector bodies to share experiences? Jamie said that there is ongoing collaboration with partner organisations and it was important not to work in silos.
- A request was made to share information and resources with council leaders, not just Chief Executives. Jamie agreed and said that it was important to engage councillors as widely as possible.
- The issue of the impact of ransomware attacks on councils and their data was raised. Jamie said that this was a growing issue and the best way to counter it was for councils to make regular data back-ups which are segregated from the network and held off-site.
- It was suggested that council policies, for example around the requirement for complex passwords, could be counterproductive. Jamie agreed that policies needed to be user-friendly and designed with people in mind if they were to be complied with effectively.
- The concept of 'techno-diversity' was felt to be important in fighting cyber-crime as it increased an organisation's resilience.
- How have councils progressed after the initial stocktake was carried out? Can we show that the LGA's intervention has had a positive effect? Jamie said that whilst the stocktake was successful it was undertaken at a time when the threats were less complex. It was important to embed a culture of honest self-assessment amongst councils.
- Most councils now encouraged residents to access services online – would this approach need to change if the cyber threats kept

growing? Concern was also expressed that the NHS might be less willing to integrate services with councils if they felt that there was a weakness in council IT systems. Jamie reassured members that everything was being done to avoid these scenarios.

**Decision:**

Members of the Improvement & Innovation Board **noted:**

- The progress of the programme to date.
- The future of the programme.

**Actions:**

- Jamie to share 'questions to ask officers' graphic and powerpoint presentation with members.

**8 Any Other Business**

The Chairman requested volunteers to help with co-designing the Councillor Commercial Skills training programme. Cllr Neil Prior and Philip Sellwood offered their assistance.

**Appendix A -Attendance**

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Peter Fleming OBE	Sevenoaks District Council
Vice-Chair	Cllr Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
Deputy-chair	Cllr Judi Billing MBE	Hertfordshire County Council
Deputy-chair	Cllr Neil Prior	Pembrokeshire County Council
Members	Cllr Nigel Ashton	North Somerset Council
	Cllr Philip Broadhead	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council
	Cllr Laura Miller	Dorset Council
	Cllr Phil North	Test Valley Borough Council
	Cllr Alice Perry	Islington Council
	Cllr Joy Allen	Durham County Council
	Cllr Asma Begum	Tower Hamlets Council
	Cllr Vince Maple	Medway Council
	Cllr Oliver Ryan	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Andrew Western	Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
	Mayor Dave Hodgson MBE	Bedford Borough Council
	Sir Stephen Houghton CBE	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Alan Connett	Teignbridge District Council
	Cllr Mike Haines	Teignbridge District Council
	Mr Richard Priestman	Independent Observer
	Mr Philip Sellwood CBE	Independent Observer
Apologies	Cllr Carl Les	North Yorkshire County Council
	Cllr Damian White	Havering London Borough Council
	Cllr Wayne Davies	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
	Cllr Miranda Williams	Royal Borough of Greenwich

Lord Gary Porter CBE

South Holland District Council

Substitutes

Cllr Rory Love OBE  
Cllr Kelham Cooke  
Cllr Tom Coole  
Cllr Anthony McKeown  
Cllr Alex Coley

Kent County Council  
South Kesteven District Council  
Gloucester City Council  
High Peak Borough Council  
Epsom & Ewell Council