

## **Note of decisions taken and actions required**

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**Title:** Improvement and Innovation  
**Date:** Tuesday 21 January 2014  
**Venue:** Smith Square 3&4, Local Government House

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### **Attendance**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Council / Representing</b>
Chairman	Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks DC
Deputy-Chair	Claire Kober	Haringey LB
Vice-Chair	Jill Shortland OBE	North Kesteven DC
Deputy-Chair	Shirley Flint	Somerset CC
Members	Teresa O'Neill	Bexley LB
	Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Tony Jackson	East Herts DC
	Barry Wood	Cherwell DC
	David Mackintosh	Northampton BC
	Tony McDermott MBE	Halton BC
	Tim Cheetham	Barnsley MBC
	Helen Holland	Bristol CC
	Kate Hollern	Blackburn with Darwen BC
	Sir David Williams CBE	Richmond upon Thames LB
Apologies	Nicholas Rushton	Leicestershire CC
	Glen Miller	Bradford MDC
	Rory Palmer	Leicester CC
	Imran Hussain	Bradford MDC
	John Blackie	Richmondshire DC and North Yorkshire CC
Observers/Other attendees	Cllr Howard Sykes	LGA Liberal Democrat National Lead Peer
	Cllr Paul Bettison	LGA Conservative National Lead Peer
	Cllr Bryony Rudkin	LGA Labour National Lead Peer
	Philip Sellwood	Energy Savings Trust
	Richard Priestman	Lombard
LGA Officers	Michael Coughlin, Dennis Skinner, Verity Sinclair, Juliet Whitworth, Brian Reynolds.	

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
1.	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	
	<p>The Chairman welcomed everybody to the Improvement and Innovation Board meeting.</p>	
	<p>Cllr Richard Stay declared an interest in Item 7 as a trustee of the Leadership Centre.</p>	
2.	<b>Corporate Peer Challenges</b>	
	<p>Cllr Jill Shortland introduced the report on the Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) and invited Professor Steve Martin from Cardiff Business School to address the Board.</p>	
	<p>Professor Steve Martin presented the findings from the Cardiff Business School's evaluation into the effectiveness of the LGA's CPC programme. He explained that the School had been commissioned to perform an external, independent and authoritative evaluation of the effectiveness of the CPC programme and its overall impact in helping the sector to improve.</p>	
	<p>Councils reported that the CPC had a positive impact on their capacity to take responsibility for their own improvement with five key impacts around greater self-awareness, external reputation, behaviour change, organisational change and service transformation. More than two thirds reported that CPC had led to positive improvements in the way their council was run. Recommendations from the report included recruitment of peers from outside the sector, marketing of the benefits and strengthening the follow up process.</p>	
	<p>The discussion was opened up to the rest of the Board. Members asked for a list of councils that had completed Peer Challenges. The list can be found here:</p>	
	<p><a href="http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/peer-challenges/-/journal_content/56/10180/5502793/ARTICLE">http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/peer-challenges/-/journal_content/56/10180/5502793/ARTICLE</a> )</p>	
	<p>The Board also received a report analysing the next tranche of 30 CPC reports. The analysis found that councils chose to focus the flexible element of the peer challenge around future issues, transformation, partnership working, improvement and economic development.</p>	

Members raised a number points including amongst others:

- The evaluation was welcomed as an endorsement of the peer challenge programme
- The need to continue to expand the peer challenges to include peers from outside the sector including businesses as part of making sure the best and the brightest were included.
- How to make the link between peers and the councils post CPC more formalised with suggested follow up meetings to strengthen the advantages of the challenges and keep the positive impacts going.
- How to promote the advantages for the peers of taking part in the CPC.
- The possibility of expanding the challenges past their five core elements and making the challenges more bespoke for each council.
- The need to look across the peer challenge programme and being able to identify trends that then inform our support offer to the sector.

### **Decisions**

That the Board:

- Endorsed** the findings from the Cardiff evaluation report.
- Agreed**, subject to availability of resources, to keep the CPC as a key part of the LGA support offer.

### **Action**

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|------|---|------------|
| i.   | To publish and promote the findings from the Cardiff evaluation report.   | Andy Bates |
| ii.  | To take the Peer Challenge offer forward in light of members' discussion. | Andy Bates |
| iii. | To continue to promote the CPC offer to the sector.                       | Andy Bates |

## **3. Health and Social Care Sector Led Improvement Programmes**

Michael Coughlin introduced the report, which set out plans to combine health and social care improvement programmes, working with the Department of Health to create a more streamlined approach. Michael set out the range of activities that would be available and asked Board members to note the breadth of work and the involvement of peers.

Cllr Teresa O'Neill raised concerns about the apparent lack of understanding amongst Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) Chairs of their power and the opportunity they had to shape future service provision. She also mentioned the need for HWBs to sign off their Better Care Fund allocations. Her sentiments regarding

the significant implications of the Better Care Fund and the need for a better understanding of the agenda were echoed by a number of Board members.

Discussions followed on a number of topics including funding levels in comparison to previous years, the potential value of HWBs being a core part of the CPC offer, the need for HWBs to be more integrated into local government structures and for GPs to be better informed about how councils operate.

Michael Coughlin agreed with the observations. There were still a number of issues to iron out including boundaries, stakeholder interests and the links with HWBs but real progress was being made.

Cllr Fleming said that if the General Assembly agreed to the governance changes, a report would be brought back on how the Board would be handling its new improvement responsibilities including in health and social care.

### **Decisions**

The Board **noted** the report and proposals for 2014-15.

### **Action**

Officers to take forward in line with members' recommendations.

Caroline Bosdet

## **4. Update on Transparency**

Cllr Tim Cheetham presented the report, discussing the government's recent announcement on open data, transparency and the 'Local Authorities Data Transparency Code' published by DCLG. He expressed disappointment that the government had felt the need to impose so many new rules on transparency as local government was already very transparent. He questioned the lack of local government presence on the government's Public Sector Transparency Board and expressed concern that the government was not allowing local government to have an active voice.

A draft letter from the LGA to DCLG in response to the Data Transparency Code was circulated to the Board for approval. Members asked if this could be circulated to councils and this was agreed. Funding for the new plans was discussed and members raised concerns about councils not being financially able to support the changes.

Funding for other projects was mentioned including the Open Data Breakthrough Funding of over £1Million from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and the £2.7m

from Defra to help councils with the infrastructure for spatial information in the European Community Regulations 2009.

### **Decisions**

- i. The Board **noted** the recent government announcements on open data and transparency.
- ii. The Board **approved** the LGA response to the transparency code for local government.
- iii. The Board **noted** the progress on the open data Breakthrough Fund Programme.
- iv. The Board **noted** that the LGA had secured £5.487Million in funding for the sector over the last two years to publish data under INSPIRE and open data initiatives.

### **Action**

Officers to take forward in line with members' recommendations.

Gesche Schmid

## **5. Productivity Programme Update**

Brian Reynolds updated members on the productivity programme as outlined in his report. He started with health and social care integration, explaining that the Care Bill placed a duty on local authorities to promote integration. The LGA would be looking at the effectiveness of this, with 12 authorities taking part in the LGA Adult Social Care Efficiency programme, evaluating the productivity and efficiency of the integration models being adopted over a period of 2 years.

Brian reported issues with the Public Service Network including a lack of engagement with the sector combined with a new zero tolerance approach.

The new growth advisors scheme was discussed with 29 councils being funded in this round and resources identified to fund a further 32 councils. There was also an update on the housing offer and the collective energy switching scheme, which would be going to auction on 18 February.

Members discussed the Public Service Network including problems with councils being compliant by the deadline. Concerns were raised that councils would have to pay thousands of pounds to buy new equipment if they were going to meet the requirements. It was suggested that councils should not be concentrating on the threat of being cut off as this was unlikely, however they should be looking at the threshold of compliance and how this could be achieved.

### Decisions

- i. The Board **noted** the updates to the Productivity Programme.
- ii. The Board **noted** the work being carried out to lobby the Cabinet Office about the Public Service Network.
- iii. The Board **approved** the list of authorities in the next tranche of Growth Advisor awards.

### Action

Officers to take forward in line with members' recommendations. Brian Reynolds

## 6. Innovation work programme

The Board received a report proposing initial ideas and potential work areas for the next phase of the LGA's innovation work. The aim of the next phase was to develop a more coordinated approach across the organisation with a greater focus on dissemination of good practice.

The LGA would continue to work with national partner organisations and it was reported that Cllr Peter Fleming and Cllr David Simmonds from the Children and Young People Board would be meeting with the Design Council to explore possibilities for joint work on new approaches to delivering different aspects of children's social care.

An informal innovation meeting would be taking place between LGA officers every month with the focus on arranging speakers and sessions for the Innovation Zone at the LGA conference, producing an interactive innovation map and shaping LGA communications on innovation.

### Decisions

The Board **agreed** the proposed approach to innovation.

### Action

Officers to take forward in line with members' recommendations. Rhian Gladman

## 7. Leadership and Localism: Update on progress

Pascoe Sawyers gave a brief update to the Board on the current Leadership offer in advance of the new offer being formally launched later in the year.

The NGDP had had another successful year with a total of 94 graduates being recruited for Cohort 15 and placed in 40 councils across England and Wales. Despite efforts to promote interest outside London a significant number of graduates would be placed in London Boroughs.

### **Decisions**

The Board **noted** the Leadership and Localism team's programme of work and the progress that has been made to date.

### **Action**

Officers to take forward in line with members' recommendations. Pascoe Sawyers

## **8. Board Away Day**

The date of the May Board meeting would have to be moved from 20 May as this was too close to the local government and European elections. It was suggested that the meeting be held sometime in mid-June as the away day, from 10am until 3pm, in a location away from Local Government House.

Members suggested the Board looked at new sector-led improvement activities, looking at the effectiveness of what the LGA was providing especially with children and adult health and social care, potential demands post the next General Election and the implications for the Board of the changes to the LGA's Governance arrangements.

Cllr Peter Fleming asked members to submit their ideas for the away day to their lead members who would be discussing this at their February meeting.

It was agreed that the away day would be open to substitutes, and would try to minimise costs through trying to get a free venue and making sure catering was cost effective.

### **Decisions**

Members noted the date and time change for the Board meeting in May and the proposal to have an away day in June, the date of which to be confirmed.

### **Action**

Officers and Lead members to discuss the away day and bring back the plans to the Board meeting in March.

Michael  
Coughlin/Dennis  
Skinner/ Nick  
Easton

**9. Note of the last meeting**

The notes were accepted as a true record.

**Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 18 March 2014.