

## **Improvement and Innovation Board - from Cllr Peter Fleming (Chairman)**

### **Press and External Communications**

1. I wrote an editorial article for the Local Government Chronicle on the [LGC website on 25 February](#), focusing on the reports from the National Audit Office on the quality of local governance and audit, arguing that despite significant cuts in funding from government, councils continue to have high standards of governance.
2. I was interviewed on TalkRadio on the 30 January regarding council's preparations for the extended snow and ice weather warnings that had been issued at the time.
3. I was also interviewed on BBC breakfast regarding the cheap, illegal cigarettes which are entering the market and costing the UK economy an estimated £2 billion a year.
4. I appeared on TalkRadio speaking about council waste collection services, following Freedom of Information figures showing there were more than 1.8 million complaints made to UK councils last year about missed bin collections. I raised the fact that, given the totality of all the collections local authorities make, the number of complaints about missed collections are a tiny fraction. I also recorded an interview with BBC News Channel on the story.

### **New Conversations 2.0**

5. On 12 February, Cllr Joy Allen launched [New Conversations 2.0](#) – a comprehensive LGA guide to community engagement, which was developed in partnership with the Campaign Company. This was a well-received event, attended by over 50 delegates from various councils. The guide is available for use by all councils alongside a new [Asset Library](#), with over 60 useful documents to browse through.

### **Innovation Zone**

6. The Innovation Working Group, comprised of Improvement and Innovation Board members, met on the 14 February to provide a strategic direction for the 2019 Innovation Zone. The group discussed key statistics from the 2019 round of applications which have now closed with just under 70 applications. The group also came up with a number of ideas for promoting the Innovation Zone over the next few months

7 March 2019

**Efficient and Intelligent Councils**

7. Members of the Board will be attending one of two half day briefing workshops in March, based in either Leeds or London, on the 12 March and 14 March respectively, which explore the LGA's development of the Efficient and Intelligent Councils Tool. This is a self-assessment tool to help councils identify where they currently are and where they would like to improve in the next 18 months/two years. Members are being consulted on the work to make sure the tool will be useful to councils.

**National Graduate Development Programme Cohort 21**

8. Cllr Judi Billing OBE, Deputy Chair of the Board, leads on the Board's Leadership work. Council registrations for the next intake of graduates close on 31 March 2019. Councils who apply early gain additional exposure to the pool of graduates, increasing their chances of securing top talent. The programme will be bringing a record number of candidates through the application process this year, and can continue to facilitate internal recruitment campaigns until the end of March.

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