

LGA Conference and Innovation Zone

Purpose

For discussion and direction.

Summary

For the second year running, an Innovation Zone was run at the LGA conference. Cllr Peter Fleming, other Board members and many other councils participated extensively in the Zone's programme. Cllr Fleming will provide a verbal report on the Zone to the Board and invite discussion. This report therefore provides Board members with key background details to set the context for that discussion.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report and Cllr Fleming's update.

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Innovation Zone report from the LGA conference

Background

1. Innovation is key for councils, who are shouldering the biggest public sector spending cuts. Innovation in areas such as technology, demand management and public service reform is therefore key to improve outcomes for local communities, make services more efficient and deliver substantial savings.
2. Consequently, the Improvement and Innovation Board's work includes supporting councils to drive innovation and share best practice. Through strong local leadership as well as through services, innovation will continue to help councils become more efficient and effective, and in doing so, improve local areas and enhance the lives of local people.
3. The LGA therefore introduced the Innovation Zone to the LGA conference programme in July 2013. This was in partnership with Nesta, with whom the LGA was working on the Creative Councils programme.
4. The purpose of the Zone, last year and this year, was to facilitate multiple conversations, demonstrations and presentations from councils that have risen to the challenge of being more innovative and reaped successes and savings for their communities.
5. The Zone's three day programme (see [Appendix 1](#)), integral to the LGA conference programme as a whole, included many innovative council members and officers, showcasing innovations from a wide variety of councils across six themes: political leadership, service redesign, transformation, demand management, data, and digital and technology. The focus of the Zone this year was on the "how" as well as the "what" of innovation.
6. Key to the spirit of the Zone was its informal, flexible and lively nature to inspire colleagues, put them in contact with one another, for instance through our 'asks and offers' board, and enable them to take ideas and lessons back to their councils that they can carry forward. It was set in a visually vibrant and creative space where delegates could come, go and change sessions as they pleased. Several councils showcased their innovation's successes via bigger presentation areas as well as through smaller table and 'open mic' discussions.

Financial Implications

7. None.