

## **Improvement and Innovation Board – report from Cllr Peter Fleming (Chair)**

### **INNOVATION**

#### **Innovation Zone: LGA Annual Conference**

1. I oversaw the dedicated **Innovation Zone** at this year's Annual Conference in Bournemouth over 8-10 July. The Zone was a visually vibrant and creative space, designed to facilitate multiple conversations, demonstrations and presentations from councils that have risen to the challenge of being more innovative – and in turn have reaped successes and savings for their communities. Some councils presented to a small seated audience, while others spoke to delegates around small tables and chairs on an ad hoc basis over a coffee or lunch about what they are doing. Thank you to all who attended!
2. I was interviewed on **BBC News, Sky News** and **Radio 4's Today programme** to discuss our response to ministers' announcement that councils will be banned from using CCTV cameras and "spy cars" to enforce parking restrictions. The LGA argued that cameras mainly act as a visual deterrent to stop dangerous and illegal parking on school crossings, in bus lanes and on pavements and loading bays. The interview also ran on **5 Live** and **ITV News**.

### **RESEARCH**

3. We recently published the seventh LGA [Councillors' census](#) in England. It provides the most comprehensive 'snapshot' of local government representation and trends analyses over time. In terms of working as a Councillor:
  - 3.1 Councillors spent, on average, 25 hours per week on council/political business, compared to around 22 hours over 2004-2010.
  - 3.2 53 per cent of councillors held one or more positions of leading responsibility within the council, and 36 per cent were members of local partnership groups or boards (such as Health and Wellbeing Boards).
  - 3.3 Councillors rated PCs or laptops, council e-mail addresses and smartphones as the most useful resources.

### **IMPROVEMENT**

4. In my regular column in the **Local Government Chronicle** last month, I outlined details to promote the Innovation Zone and the highly positive findings of the LGA's evaluation of sector-led improvement, which we launched in May. I particularly drew out the importance of political leadership in driving innovation and improvement in councils, and that sector-led improvement has saved money and been more effective than the previous top-down performance regime.

### **LEADERSHIP**

5. Deputy-Chair Claire Kober wrote an article in **first magazine** about our new **Leadership offer**. The Highlighting Political Leadership brochure provides an overview of all development programmes available for politicians and the new navigation tool at

[www.local.gov.uk/councillor-development](http://www.local.gov.uk/councillor-development) helps councillors find the most appropriate development opportunity on offer. I would like to encourage you to take a look at the refreshed offer and promote it with colleagues.

6. We have published the 2014/15 **guide for new councillors**. This guide is designed to provide new councillors with the key information that they need to know following their election in May. It explores some of the main issues and challenges facing local government today and includes useful hints and tips from experienced councillors. It has been sent to all newly elected councillors.

## **PRODUCTIVITY**

7. Further to our Deputy Chair of the Improvement and Innovation Board, Cllr Shirley Flint's procurement article in first magazine in April 2014, we launched the new National Procurement Strategy at the LGA Annual Conference on 10 July 2014. The strategy is accompanied by a new microsite, [www.lg-procurement.org.uk](http://www.lg-procurement.org.uk), for procurement-related materials, sets out a vision for local government procurement and encourages all councils in England to engage with the delivery of outcomes in four key areas: making savings, supporting local economies, leadership and modernising procurement.

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