

Improvement and Innovation Board – from Cllr Peter Fleming OBE (Chairman)

Improvement Update

1. Despite escalating issues related to the pandemic, the LGA has continued to work with councils to provide in-person Corporate Peer Challenges. Remote peer support does remain available as an option to councils also including recovery and renewal panels, remote corporate health checks and bespoke remote peer support.
2. The LGA Annual Conference, taking place in Harrogate Convention Centre, (running June 28th – June 30th 2022) will again feature our Innovation Zone offering a vibrant and creative space within the wider conference programme, where councils, partners and others will be able to showcase their innovative ideas and approaches. The Innovation Zone will feature engaging, interactive sessions and will encourage delegates to think differently about issues they may be facing in their own authorities.
3. The theme for this year's Innovation Zone will be Resilience and Renewal and presentations are to span topics including Place, Leadership, Environmental Sustainability and Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion. Councils who are keen to take the opportunity to showcase excellent practice, ideas and work are encouraged to make an application via the [LGA's website](#) by Friday 4th March.

Leadership and Localism

4. Cllr James Jamieson, LGA Chair, spoke at the NGDP 'Wrap up' graduation event for Cohort 21 in Warwick on 28th October. It was a celebratory event to mark the completion of their NGDP journey.
5. The Improvement & Innovation Board Chairman, Cllr Peter Fleming, was interviewed by **Sky News** about abuse and attacks on key workers including waste collection crews.
6. The LGA continued to offer a range of development opportunities and events to councillors. From November, we commenced our LGA Leaders Programme 2021/2022. Other programmes that started included: Leadership Essentials Adult Social Care; Leading Healthier Places; Sports; Cultural Services; Effective Scrutiny and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Our yearly Young Councillors Weekender took place on 13-14 November 2021 with over 30 young councillors attending.
7. [More programmes](#) are set to take place in the near future including Councillors weekenders for LGBTQ+ Councillors on 11-12 February; Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic Councillors on 19-20 February and Women Councillors on 26-27 February 2022.

Climate Change

8. **Local climate action planning webinar** - Chaired by Cllr Liz Green, Lead Member for Climate Change/Sharing Practice, 136 people attended this webinar. It focused on how councils are creating their climate action plans, engaging local partners and communities

in the process and how to monitor success. The slides and blog are available to view: [Local climate action planning, 6 October 2021 | Local Government Association](#)

9. The UK hosted, for the first time, the United Nations international climate change conference in Glasgow from 31 October – 13 November (COP26). The conference brought together international delegations to agree on a process to accelerate progress towards the goal of the Paris agreement. The LGA was pleased to lead local government's presence at COP26 and to deliver the core message that councils have a unique and powerful role in tackling climate change and are best placed to turn national climate ambitions into joint action on the ground.

Behavioural Insights

10. The LGA launched another episode of "Nudges for Social Good" in December. This podcast covered work completed with LB Barking and Dagenham on using behaviour change techniques to support debt services.
11. Our Behavioural Insights Conference will be taking place virtually on 22 February 2022. This conference will look at how we can use behavioural change techniques in our council services to work with communities and change their behaviour. It will feature councils who have used behavioural change techniques to tackle some of the biggest challenges of our day – climate emergency and health inequalities

Finance

12. The LGA is working with councils around the country to ensure that a forum for Audit Committee Chairs is established in each region. Each forum will provide an opportunity for Chairs to network, build relationships, share experiences and good practice and consider common issues. Inaugural events are being planned for March with further announcements to come.

Cyber, Digital and Technology

13. On 25 November the Cyber, Digital and Technology team hosted a webinar to promote awareness around connected places (Connected Places and the Future of the Public Sector). The webinar was chaired by Cllr Neil Prior, Lead Member for Transparency, Productivity & Efficiency, and included a panel of representatives from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, National Cyber Security Centre, Newcastle City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, and South London Partnership. The event illustrated the importance of security practices that are needed to design, build and manage innovative connectivity and technology in local areas. This webinar was attended by 37 people.
14. Owen Pritchard, Programme Manager, attended the Improvement & Innovation Board on 21 October 2021 and updated the board on the Cyber, Digital, and Technology programmes.
15. The LGA announced the nine successful councils in its new [Digital Pathfinders Programme](#). The programme will deliver pioneering solutions to improve digital inclusion, connectivity and cyber security. Each project will contribute to service transformation to

meet the needs of local communities. 75 councils in England were shortlisted through a competitive bidding process.

Housing

16. The LGA has announced the 30 successful projects, supporting 90 councils, for its Housing Advisors programme 2021/22. The scheme looks to support innovative approaches to help councils overcome housing challenges in their local areas, address the housing crisis and meet the housing needs of local communities.
17. The LGA has awarded up to £25,000 to each project for the purpose of securing expert advice to drive forward locally-led solutions to housing challenges. The successful projects include delivery and provision of housing, exploring new approaches to temporary accommodation, early intervention to prevent homelessness and support to achieve high quality social landlord services. The list of successful councils can be [seen here](#).

Publications

18. This section outlines the publications and media releases that have occurred since the previous Councillors' Forum.

Local Government First Magazine - First 665, dated Nov 21 - [Understanding cyber risk](#) - by [Councillor Neil Prior](#), (covering urgent need for councils to manage cyber risk)

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