

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

Improvement Update

1. The LGA has continued to work with councils to provide in-person Corporate Peer Challenges, mitigating effectively against the challenges posed by the pandemic. Remote peer support remains available as an option to councils also including recovery and renewal panels, remote corporate health checks and bespoke remote peer support.
2. In January 2022, the LGA was awarded an additional £1.5m from DLUHC of in year funding to deliver a range of improvement support across its programmes. Additional funding was allocated with appreciation of the significant needs and issues councils are facing.
3. The Improvement and Innovation Board hosted a development session for Councillors on Improvement, facilitated by the chair of the board Cllr Peter Fleming and attended by Lead Members. The session outlined the range of support on offer for all councils across a variety of programmes including our Leadership, Workforce, Corporate Peer Challenge/Regional Team Support, Productivity, Research, Children's, Planning Advisory Service, One Public Estate and Care and Health teams
4. The LGA Annual Conference (running June 28th – June 30th 2022) will 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. 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.

Leadership and Localism

Leadership Essentials: Effective Audit Committees

5. Councillor Liz Green, Lead Member for Climate Change/Sharing Practice, spoke at the Effective Audit Committee Programme for chairs and vice-chairs of audit committees. The session provided a personal perspective on the role of the Audit Committee and Cllr Green shared her thoughts and experiences in leading the committee at her authority.

Climate Change

6. The UK's housing stock will need to be carbon neutral by 2050. Whole-house retrofit aims to improve the energy efficiency of a property. Councils are working hard to retrofit their own housing stock, whilst building construction skills in the community to create new jobs. The LGA brought councils together, through facilitation of a action learning sets made up of a cohort of councillors, to help create the skills required to meet this challenge and find common solutions. Whilst each local situation will be different and have its own challenges, these collective experiences will be invaluable to the sector to

inform practice. Councillor Laura Miller is recording a video which will share learnings from the LGA housing retrofit sector support project.

7. Councillor Andrew Cooper will chair a [webinar](#) on 15th March about how councils and businesses are collaborating on the climate emergency response. In collaboration with the Business Services Association (BSA), the LGA will be hosting a webinar on the main conditions for effective collaboration between councils and private service and infrastructure providers to address the climate emergency. Some themes to be explored will include commissioning processes, procurement tools, working relationships as well as challenges and opportunities.

Cyber, Digital and Technology

8. An [article](#) looking at the LGA support and guidance through the [Digital Pathfinders Programme](#) has been published in Public Sector Executive. In this article, Councillor Peter Fleming has outlined and conveyed some of the project journey's of the nine councils who are included in this programme. This programme has been designed to help councils develop innovative projects that focus on Digital inclusion, Digital Connectivity and Cyber Security. The nine councils that received funding aim to deliver transformative solutions that will meet the needs of their communities and have the potential to be shared as best practice across Local Government.
9. Councillor Peter Fleming presented in his role as Chair of the Improvement Innovation Board at the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) meeting on 1st March. The meeting looked at 'Effective community, local and regional interventions' that will focus on the group's priorities to promote the importance of digital skills in hyper local environments.' The purpose of the APPG on Digital Skills is to provide a forum for parliamentarians, educators, and employers to promote the importance of digital skills and to encourage a greater understanding of digital skills for personal, educational and career development. Key objectives of the group include raising awareness of the criticality of digital skills to policymakers and parliamentarians, communicate the urgency and importance of upskilling digital ability and to work with MPs to champion digital skills in communities, education and workplaces.

Behavioural Insights

10. Councillor Peter Fleming chaired the annual Behavioural Insights (BI) Conference on the 22nd February attended by over 540 delegates. The conference focused on utilising BI techniques to make real impact in response to the climate emergency, health inequalities and to encourage sustainable travel.

Publications

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

Local Government First Magazine Activity

First Issue Number 668, dated Feb 22

["Representative of our Community"](#) by Councillor Judi Billing, Lead Member for Leadership (highlighting that the LGA has commissioned The Young Foundation to capture the views and experiences of under-represented groups)

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