

Note of last Improvement & Innovation Board meeting

Title:	Improvement & Innovation Board
Date:	Tuesday 15 July 2014
Venue:	Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note.

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Declarations of interest None received.	
2	LGA Conference and Innovation Zone Members were asked to note the attached report and updates at the meeting from Cllr Fleming and other Board members, and provide feedback on the Innovation Zone. Members were very positive and constructive in their feedback and officers reported that the 60 councils that had contributed to the Innovation Zone had been overwhelmingly positive in their feedback on its effectiveness at sharing good practice. The Board discussed how best to take the feedback forward including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How best to share the lessons from the Zone's success with the wider LGA;• The importance of effective use of space - keeping the Zone intimate was an important factor;• The importance of finding effective ways to share innovation and good practice on an on-going basis.	
	Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To take away feedback and develop further for the 2015 conference in Harrogate;• To look at developing a piece of work, building on the successes of the Innovation Zone (preferably in an online format) to share examples of innovation and good practice with councils on an on-going basis.	Dennis Skinner and Officers

3 The Future of Sector Led Improvement

The report for this item suggested follow-up work to the workshop on 2 June. The workshop had focused on two main areas; the future of sector led improvement (in light of the evaluation's findings and the changing policy context ahead of the next general election) and integration between the Improvement & Innovation Board and other LGA Boards.

The key points that had come out of the workshop included:

- Whether to develop a tougher approach to sector led improvement;
- If not, how best to safeguard the sector from potential future central government interference.

Members discussed a number of issues, including:

- The importance of balancing our support to councils facing performance challenges with the need to also continue to support those doing well and drawing out the lessons from their experience;
- Since there is no appetite to return to CPA or CAA, whether there should be stronger expectations on councils to take up elements of the LGA sector led improvement offer.

Actions

Members agreed the recommendations from the report, to:

- Engage the sector on the future of sector-led improvement as outlined in the report;
- Implement the suggestions in the report regarding the Board's overarching role.

Dennis
Skinner

4 Productivity Update

Cllr Peter Fleming invited Professor John Bolton and Councillor Jonathan McShane, Lead Member for Adult & Community Social Services & Health at the London Borough of Hackney, to present their observations and feedback from the three year Adult Social Care Efficiency Programme.

Members noted the report and presentations, in particular the following key points:

- Councils that performed best during the programme had created performance management systems that allowed progress to be managed month by month;
- There are both opportunities and threats in the areas of integration with health and the development of social enterprises;
- An over paternalistic approach to adult social care can be damaging for service users;
- Managing demand is the biggest challenge to promoting independence;
- Hackney views its work to promote independence as a positive step and not a cost-cutting measure, having implemented its approach before the first round of local government cuts.
- Hackney had identified key opportunities for promoting

independence work, e.g. launching a new training programme for staff;

- Tools that sit alongside the programme are potentially transferable to other service areas.

Action

- To look at how the tools utilised in this programme can be developed/used in a wider context and whether there are any lessons that can be extracted from the programme for shire districts.

LGA Officers

5. Knowledge Navigator programme

The Board noted the report, which outlined the joint project between the LGA, SOLACE and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) that sponsor the Local Government Knowledge Navigator.

Cllr Paul Watson, Leader of Sunderland City Council and David Hill, Chief Executive of Milton Keynes Council presented on how their councils have benefited from research and local research partnerships. Both speakers outlined a number of innovative projects where they utilise knowledge, data and evidence derived from research to assist their councils improve their functions and services.

Action

- To look at how best to promote the good practice of councils in this area, such as Sunderland and Milton Keynes, to a wider audience.

David Pye
and LGA
officers

6 Improving education and children's services

The Board **noted** the report.

Members discussed the pace at which the Ofsted assessment criteria appear to be changing and variations in how the criteria are being applied by inspectors. Members did not feel that the criteria adequately demonstrated the extent of improvement in the sector and asked if the sector could develop an alternative evidence base to demonstrate improvement in children's services.

7 New Leadership Programme: Highlighting Leadership

The Board **noted** the report and welcomed the coherent leadership offer. Members noted that almost 200 councillors had already signed up to the programme and asked that, in the context of the overall promotion, it be brought to the attention of opposition leaders in councils

8 Peer Learning: the benefits of being a peer as part of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Programme

The Board **noted** the report.

Cllr Peter Fleming urged good councillors from all groups to put themselves forward for peer challenges noting that as much value is taken away by peers as by the councils themselves.

Members discussed issues relating to peer challenges, key points included:

- It is important to continue to be proactive in promoting and highlighting the benefits of the peer challenge programme;
- The composition of peer challenge teams is critical to the success of the programme;
- The process of recruiting and reviewing peers, including elected members, is a key part of the peer challenge programme. It is important to continually refresh the peer pool, but equally not to give peers unrealistic expectations.

9 Board Chair's review of the year

The Board **noted** the annual review report.

Cllr Peter Fleming particularly thanked members, senior officers, Principal Advisers, etc for their contributions in 2013/14. Members thanked Cllr Fleming for his chairmanship of the Board over the past three years.

10 Note of previous meeting - 18 March 2014

The minutes were agreed.

11 Note of the last meeting - workshop 2 June 2014

The minutes from the Improvement & Innovation Board Workshop were agreed.

Appendix A - Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks District Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Mrs Jill Shortland OBE	Somerset County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Mrs Shirley Flint	North Kesteven District Council
Members	Cllr Tony Jackson	East Herts Council
	Cllr Tony McDermott MBE	Halton Borough Council
	Cllr Tim Cheetham	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Kate Hollern	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
	Cllr Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
	Cllr John Blackie	North Yorkshire County Council
	Cllr Paul Middleborough	Wychavon District Council
	Cllr Theresa Higgins	Essex County Council
	Cllr Howard Sykes MBE	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Paul Bettison	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
	Mr Richard Priestman	Local Government Improvement and Development
	Mr Philip Sellwood	Energy Saving Trust (EST)
Apologies	Cllr Teresa O'Neill	Bexley Council
	Cllr Nicholas Rushton	Leicestershire County Council
	Cllr Richard Stay	Central Bedfordshire Council
	Cllr Glen Miller	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr David Mackintosh	Northampton Borough Council
	Cllr Claire Kober	Haringey Council
	Cllr Helen Holland	Bristol City Council
	Cllr Rory Palmer	Leicester City Council
	Cllr Imran Hussain	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
LGA Officers	Michael Coughlin, Dennis Skinner, Joseph Cormack	