

Improvement & Innovation Board – report from Cllr Peter Fleming (Chairman)

IMPROVEMENT

1. In November, I wrote a feature for *First* detailing the findings of the latest LGA-commissioned research into resident satisfaction and public trust. 68% of people were pleased with the way their council is running things, similar to when the polling was last conducted in July. Waste collection remains the most popular service – with 83% of respondents saying they were happy with it. Understandably satisfaction was lower in service areas where there have been significant funding pressures but the tireless work of councils to find innovative ways to manage the impact of cuts on local services explains the consistently high levels of satisfaction and trust in local government.
2. I have continued to discuss in the national press the challenge facing councils trying to repair our roads and of fixing the backlog of pothole repairs, after a series of severe winters and devastating floods. The LGA's call for greater roads maintenance funding ran in the Times and Telegraph and across online outlets. My comments about the work of councils in the face of severe weather were also covered in the media.

INNOVATION

3. Earlier this month, I chaired a workshop session at the Annual Local Government Finance Conference on the opportunities for Councils to increase their income generation capacity.

PRODUCTIVITY

4. I have written to Matthew Hancock MP, Minister at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to raise concerns over proposals to centralise procurement in the Small Businesses Bill.
5. Cllr Shirley Flint, Deputy Chair of the Innovation and Improvement Board, attended the pilot of the Commissioning Academy for Elected Members (CAEM) in November 2014. The CAEM has been jointly developed by the LGA and the Cabinet Office to enable councillors involved in the commissioning of services to develop skills and gain a better understanding of the key issues through peer to peer learning. The programme which is jointly delivered by the Cabinet Office and the LGA helps councillors to improve and develop the commissioning activity of their council and explore the importance of political leadership within the commissioning cycle.
6. I wrote to the Rt. Hon Francis Maud MP in November regarding LGA plans to pilot a Digital Academy (based on the successful Commissioning Academy model). By way of reply, Kris Hopkins MP was supportive of our plans and keen to begin a conversation to shape a Digital Academy to increase digital capability and impact local government transformation. We look forward to working closely with colleagues in the Cabinet Office and DCLG to develop this exciting new venture.

Contact officer: Dennis Skinner
Position: Head of Leadership and Productivity
Phone no: 020 7664 3017
E-mail: dennis.skinner@local.gov.uk