



corporate peer review

Nottinghamshire County Council

15–19 October 2007

During the week beginning 15 October 2007 the council is hosting a visit by a local government improvement team. The team will be here at the invitation of the council.

The members of the team are:

David Jenkins

Chief Executive, Dorset County Council

Councillor Hazel Harding

Leader, Lancashire County Council

Councillor Richard Stay

Deputy Leader, Bedfordshire County Council

Melanie Laws

Director, Association of North East Councils

Ann Baxter

Corporate Director

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Leatham Green

*Assistant Director of Personnel and Training
East Sussex County Council*

Jill Emery

Principal Consultant, IDeA

Peter Rentell

Review Manager, IDeA

why?

There is considerable change in local government and most local authorities are trying to work out how best to respond. The aim of peer review is to help councils to assess their current achievements and to identify those areas in which they are doing well and those where they could improve. The approach has been delivered successfully by the IDeA in over 160 local authorities on more than 300 occasions and is now frequently used by authorities to assess progress since Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).

how?

The review of an individual local authority involves the gathering of information by the team from a range of sources that then enables comparison of the council against the IDeA benchmark of the 'ideal local authority'. The benchmark comprises four main themes: leadership and governance, customer focus and community engagement, resource and performance management and organisation and people.

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what will happen?

The team will undertake a review, not an inspection. They will be seeking to help the council recognise and celebrate its strengths as much as identifying its areas for improvement. All members of the team are knowledgeable about, and experienced in, local government. They are visiting as friends, albeit 'critical friends'.

The key purpose is to stimulate widespread discussion within the local authority about how it can become more effective. This is because lasting change and improvement will only happen from within, it cannot be imposed from outside.

During the week-long visit members of the review team will meet and talk with a cross-section of elected members and staff within the council and also with representatives of partner organisations and the general public. At the end of the week, on the Friday morning, the team will feed back their conclusions and recommendations. This is followed a few weeks later by a written report that the council will have the opportunity to consider and respond to.

who is responsible?

Central government is highly supportive of peer review, although it is not a central government initiative. It is also promoted by the Local Government Association (LGA) with the aim of encouraging high standards of achievement in all local authorities. This is local government helping itself.

The actual review itself is arranged in conjunction with the council by the IDeA. The members of the team are sourced through the Peer Clearing House, which is responsible for the recruitment, accreditation and placement of peers not only for IDeA activities but also right across the local government sector.

how to contact us

If you would like more information or the opportunity to speak to the team, please contact:

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