

## Strategic Political Leadership for New Cabinets

**A challenge workshop for leading members to focus their strategic options through their cabinet/executive or political group**

**It will be particularly appropriate where cabinets/executives are changing (whether changing political control or not), coming in with a new agenda and also where councils are moving to share management and services.**

### What is new?

Four major challenges face the council:

- implementing the local political priorities
- the budget reductions 2011-14
- the Localism Bill
- other Government changes e.g. welfare, health

Members need to provide local leadership using the first as a framework for the imposed challenges of the other three and get the best results for their place and communities.

### What is this challenge workshop?

A challenge workshop enables the leading politicians of a council to consider their own strategic priorities alongside the three Governmental challenges, the realistic options available to them and begin politically shaping a strategy best suited to their authority.

### Preparation

Two short papers:

- one summarising the administration's priorities – drawn from the manifesto(s)
- a short position paper focusing on the implications of the other three challenges in the Council's area

### Programme

#### 9.00 **Introduction to the Workshop and how it will work**

The workshop is more than a briefing in that it asks leading members to assess the challenges and opportunities **and** begin (or continue) prioritising what action the Council should take. Work will be in small task teams if numbers make this appropriate.

#### 9.10 **Input: What will change? – briefing on the challenges you face**

- a) What are the **key local political priorities**, possibly expressed in the manifesto?
- b) Defining the **level of cuts** – what choices have you made and have yet to make?

- c) What does the **Localism Bill** imply for your council and what examples of the six 'decentralisation essentials' are likely to be appropriate:
1. **less bureaucracy** – less regional bodies, regulation and pre-determination rules
  2. **empowering communities** – power of general competence, community right to buy, neighbourhood plans
  3. **increased local finance control** – council tax referendum, community infrastructure levy and a drive to self-financing (through new housing bonus/new business rate rebate)
  4. **diversifying public service providers** – community right to challenge, community right to buy
  5. **open up to scrutiny** – publishing over £500, transparency from public bodies on contracts, salaries and staffing
  6. **accountability to local people** – local referendums, service users voting with their feet
- d) What are the key challenges becoming clear from **other Government Bills** in welfare, health and other policy areas?  
Clarification and discussion.

10.00 **Team task 1: What should the Council tackle?**

Given the many ideas in the previous section what do you want to pursue? Mapping the priorities and working up. (This will be as one or more teams, depending on the numbers)

10.45 Coffee

11.00 **Input: How you will change? – briefing on the different types of change and service providers**

A session setting out the:

- levels of change from 'easy wins' to 'organisational transformation' and 'total place' solutions
- different kinds of service providers from 'private contracts' to 'staff mutuals' and 'social enterprises'
- stronger agendas for shared services and management

Clarification and discussion

11.30 **Team task 2: Work up initial options**

The team (or teams) use the ideas from the previous sessions and work up initial solutions.

12.10 **Team task 3: Working up the propositions and ritual dissent**

A process of testing these proposals through ritual dissent.

12.40 **Presentation, discussion and action planning**

Presentation of proposals for discussion and agreement on the follow-up action; chaired by the Leader.

1.00 **Finish**