

## Local Authority Challenge

Thursday 18 October 2018

### Quotes

What a challenging but fantastic day. An excellent insight into strategic thinking. I would recommend the day to anyone who wants to push themselves beyond their comfort zone and learn something new about your capabilities and team working skills.” - **Shaun Trevor, Fair Trading Officer, Darlington Borough Council**

“As much as we tried to prepare for the day, we weren’t and couldn’t be prepared for what was thrown at us. This day is a test of your instincts, professional training and how well you can keep your head under pressure. The scenarios are all familiar, but the barrage and the range of things that happen would happen in a whole years’ worth of your busiest days.

“This is well worth a day out of the office to truly test your mettle as a prospective manager within local authorities. It’s exhausting, but the buzz you feel at the end of the day and the amount you learn in a few short hours cannot be replicated.” - **Caroline Hargreaves, Urban Design and Conservation Officer, Gateshead Council**

“A really “full on” day!

“For a team whose members did not necessarily know each other prior to the challenge I feel we “gelled” from the start. The amount of skill and knowledge in the team was outstanding. I think I can say on behalf of the team that the challenge was not what we expected (although I am not sure what we expected!)

“This takes you out of your comfort zone and although it is mentally tiring it really is a good experience. I think we all have taken some learning away from the event.

I would like to end by saying it was a pleasure working with this team of people who I believe did Gateshead proud.” – **Jean Kielty, Service Manager, Gateshead Council**

“A fantastic fast paced day that took each of us out of our comfort zone. A brilliant way to challenge us and put a number of key management qualities to the test; communication, engagement, negotiation and presentation skills.

“A great way to build working relationships with colleagues from across the organisation who you may not necessarily deal with on a day-to-day basis.

**“It was an enjoyable experience with lots of lessons learned.” – Victoria Lamb, Commercial Manager, Gateshead Council – on behalf of team**

**“Karen Linton, who took the mantle of being the Chief Executive, explained some of the day: “from arriving at 8am to the end of the challenge at 5pm (on the dot), we were challenged, stretched (mentally and physically), put in situations we’d never normally find ourselves in, and tasked with coming up with creative solutions to tackle the problems faced. It was an utterly exhausting, but enjoyable day.”” – Liz Marsden, Communications Advisor, North East Lincolnshire Council**

**“It was a great day that has left a lasting positive impression on all of us. From a slow and confusing start, we gradually grew in confidence throughout the day and finished strongly. As our understanding of each other's strengths and aptitudes developed through the tasks presented, our teamworking and trust in each other also grew rapidly. Our advice - don't set out to be competitive or the 'winners' - just give it your best shot, look after each other, carry out every job to the best of your ability and the prizes at the end of the day will follow! – Dean Jackson, Service Director – Education and Skills, Northumberland County Council**

**“I found the event challenging but fun and tested abilities in a variety of skills. Although intense it does give a flavour of the challenges a local authority faces although not usually in one day. You have to work as a team to cover all the challenges and I felt our team rose to the occasion.” – Estelle White, HR Adviser, Northumberland County Council**

**“Fast, dynamic, challenging, vibrant, busy all words that spring to mind when looking back on the day. But most of all we have come away with a stronger more resilient group of officers who are even more equipped to continue to provide support to our SMT and to provide a great service to our customers.” - Bart Milburn, Planning Manager, Richmondshire District Council**

**“I would really recommend attendance at this event to anyone who wishes to challenge themselves and gain an insight into the pressures of strategic management within Local Authorities. I felt that the whole team got a lot from the exercise; as well as thoroughly enjoying the day, we worked well together as a team. The added achievement of winning an award finished off the day nicely; really looking forward to receiving our team feedback and identifying areas for improvement.” – Anna Milner, Operations Manager – Housing Strategy, South Tyneside Council**

**“The LA Challenge is a unique experience that puts you at the heart of strategic decision making, in a pressured situation. We thoroughly enjoyed the challenges on day, the chance to step outside of your comfort zone, and the opportunity to come together in a way that wouldn’t have been possible without the LA Challenge.” – Jonathan Burrows, Quality Improvement and Support Manager, South Tyneside Council**

“It was my second year as a partner in LA Challenge. It’s a pacey, adrenaline-fuelled day, which I really enjoy” – **Emily Sweetman, Role Player - Partner**

“I really enjoyed the day, and with it, the chance to catch up with some old colleagues. The event was very well organised – it had to be, given the avalanche of activity – and the scenarios seemed realistic enough for programme delegates and partners to slip readily into the various roles. All good fun, and good learning too, I hope!” – **Jeff Dean, Role Player - Partner**

“The Local Authority Challenge is different from anything else you will experience as a public-sector employee. It’s fast and furious; completely exhausting; and immense fun! As a “Partner” role player, it’s certainly challenging - you have to think on your feet and be prepared for anything, from being a foreign dignitary to a refuse collector. I can’t wait to do it again next year!” – **Jill Rouse, Role Player – Partner**

“Another fantastic LA Challenge Day. Playing the role of a Partner, it is fun exciting and a little hectic at times! From beginning to end everyone is on the go. Overall it is a great event to get involved in.” – **Lorna Jeromson, Role Player – Partner**

“The Local Authority Challenge really demonstrates the variety and often conflicting pressures faced by NEPO Member Authorities. Taking people into new positions, with new demanding responsibilities really helps people understand how all roles must work together to create success. What a valuable day.” – **Steven Sinclair, Role Player - Media**