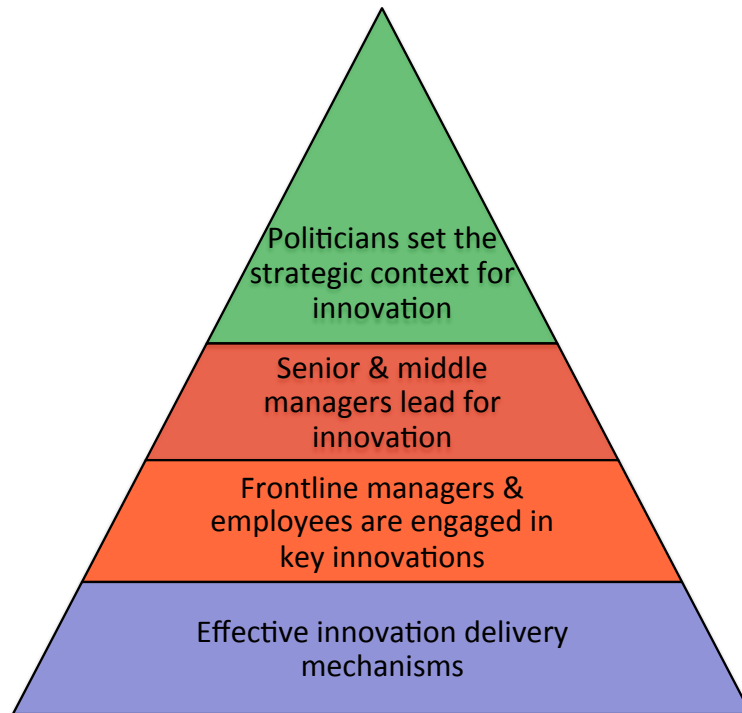


Developing a Strategy Approach to Innovation A Checklist for Councils



Does the council have clear political ambitions for innovation?

Have politicians agreed the council's priority areas for innovations, taking account of:

- Key potential future challenges?
- Residents' and other important stakeholders' top concerns and aspirations?
- Learning from elsewhere (including other types of organisations and abroad)?

In the priority areas for innovation:

- Are politicians' ambitions clear?
- Have politicians earmarked sufficient time and resources to support innovation processes?
- Are politicians supporting experimentation, including taking any necessary, well-considered risks?
- Are politicians maintaining their commitment to achieving the innovations despite many challenges, barriers, and failures along the way?

Do senior and middle managers lead for innovation?

Are senior and middle managers creating a culture that encourages innovation, for example through:

- Communicating repeatedly, and personally, about the importance of achieving key innovations?
- Their behaviours and what they pay attention to?
- Human resources policies and practices (e.g. appraisal, recruitment, development opportunities)?
- Celebrating achievements, and learning from failures?

Are senior and middle managers driving forward innovations in the priority areas, including by:

- Creating, managing, supporting and monitoring effective innovation delivery mechanisms?
- Engaging key stakeholders (e.g. partners and residents) in helping to achieve major innovations?
- Listening and responding to others' comments, ideas and concerns?

Are frontline managers and employees engaged in innovations?

Are frontline managers and employees:

- Listened to, involved, and committed to achieving major innovations?
- Supported in developing new skills, and in making new connections, that help to achieve major innovations?

Does the council have effective innovation delivery mechanisms?

Does the councils have:

- Creative, skilled, determined, powerful, innovation project leaders?
- Innovation projects with appropriate autonomy, scope and support?
- Partners, services users, frontline employees and other key stakeholders involved in major innovation processes?
- Innovation teams that:
 - Understand and operate innovation processes?
 - Deeply understand the main challenges before they begin to generate potential solutions?
 - Look for successful ideas they might adapt from elsewhere?
 - Are focused, and persist until they succeed?

This checklist complements and builds on the Local Councils' Innovation Framework (see http://creativity.city.ac.uk/accelerating_local_govt_innov.html).

It was created because our recent research suggests that many councils would benefit from taking a more strategic approach to innovation.

We welcome your comments on the checklist, please email these to:

joan.munro@btopenworld.com