This month’s top Innovation & Commissioning Network (ICN) news:

Outside in commissioning report - launch news!

Next week the ICN is publishing a new report on how to ensure our commissioning practices actively engage and empower communities and citizens, showing that it’s not just about consultation. We are very grateful to all those who have come forward to share their experience and ideas with us – we look forward to sharing our findings.

Due to be launched at this month’s SOLACE Summit in Bournemouth, the report will be the first policy report the new ICN network has produced, addressing one of the key priorities for the network: “Engagement with citizens to lead change from the ‘outside in’”. Within the report, the ICN explores how this is best achieved, based on four key principles:

1: Demand disruption: it is not enough to talk about the need for innovation and new ideas - it will need to be an imperative that leaders actively and visibly champion and defend.

2: Build a new organisation: organisations will need to learn a new language and culture - and remodel themselves - if deeper engagement and innovation are to become second nature.

3: Use the right tools: organisations will need to develop new skills and new techniques if they are serious about encouraging divergent thinking.

4: Don’t stop: engagement and radical rethinking need continuous commitment and attention: once you start, you can’t stop.

Other areas covered within the report will include key questions, checklists and case studies, demonstrating successful examples of engagement and co-creation with citizens and communities.

If you’re going to the Summit in Bournemouth, join us for the launch and discussion on Thursday 8th October, 1.30pm-2.45pm. We look forward to seeing you there!!

When Commissioning Tribes Go to War

Last year, polymath Catherine Howe wrote about the ‘tribes of digital’ to help explain why people find it hard to agree what on earth ‘digital’ means. So, borrowing from Catherine, who are our tribes of commissioning?

On their own, each tribe is wrong – commissioning is much too big a territory to be seized by just one tribe. We need to work our way through our language differences and unpick our assumptions so that we can find some common denominators, while understanding the differences in philosophy that will remain.

Eric Bohl’s article on the commissioning tribes will appear in the MJ in the next week or two, arguing that if commissioning is to deliver a new future for public services, we need to make sense of the competing ideas about what it means.

Join our new ICN LinkedIn Group!

We have recently created a LinkedIn Group for network colleagues to join us and share knowledge and insight online.

The Group is here to encourage discussion and raise awareness of issues and topics relevant to the interests of the SOLACE Innovation and Commissioning Network. It is open to SOLACE ICN members only – contact Helen Reeves to join the ICN, then click here to join the LinkedIn Group.

SOLACE Innovation & Commissioning Network

The SOLACE Innovation & Commissioning Network brings together experts and practitioners committed to strengthening commissioning and sourcing practice and sharing learning. The network is supported by Activist Group.

To join the network, email helen.reeves@solace.org.uk

Email your commissioning news to mike.wynn@activistgroup.co.uk