

Strategic Leadership Development

The second (cohort No. 1) ADEPT and Solace *Aspiring Place Directors Leadership Development Programme* workshop was ably hosted by #TeamPlace at Nottinghamshire County Council. This session centred on being an effective leader by planning, thinking and working strategically. The five points below are a summary of the reflections during the two days spent in Robin Hood's County.

Lesson number one – be political savvy

The group will never forget the advice provided by Councillor Cutts MBE, Leader of the Council, about the importance of remembering, irrespective of political party, councillors make the decisions. Politicians act as the voice of users, citizens and tax payers. When the roles of officers and councillors are reversed, things go wrong.

Lesson number two – speak truth to power



Adrian Smith, Deputy Chief Executive with Place-based responsibilities, emphasised the need to spend time learning how to 'speak truth to power' and creating conversational environments that make it easier. He impressed the importance of investing time to get to know members and to focus on what is agreed upon. Remembering to tell members of issues *first*, and then set about fixing things.

Lesson number three - get a mentor

Simon Neilson, former President of ADEPT, spoke candidly about the several mentors he'd had over the years and how he had learned a large amount of valuable lessons from each one of them – particularly for an unfiltered option.

Lesson number four – get involved in a peer review

Simon will be returning to Nottinghamshire (as it happens his former University Stamping ground too) in June as part of a peer review. He sees peer reviews as a core element to improving the sector. For Simon, being part of a small team of local government officers and councillors spending time at a council as peers to provide challenge and share learning, is a top priority for engaging with a wide range of people connected with a local authority.



Lesson number 5 – Personal branding

This was perhaps the 'wickedest' challenge Simon put forward but one which the group were open to practicing. The concept of cultivating a personal brand. The group are now left wondering what they wish people to associate them with when they think of their name.

So, after a full-on couple of days, and in search of something different which would add variation and a bit of competition, the workshop incorporated a behind-the-scenes

tour of the world's third oldest Test Match ground - Trent Bridge, followed by indoor cricket match. Next stop in July, the great waterfront city of Portsmouth

