



HIS CUP OVERFLOWETH

PHOTO CHRIS WOOD

A man using a metal detector has helped discover one of Britain's earliest gold utensils. The man discovered the cup, from the same period as Stonehenge, while 'detecting' in a field near Sandwich, Kent. Kent CC and English Heritage are now funding the excavation of the Bronze Age burial barrow where the cup was discovered.

The government has set deadlines for the implementation of measures in the local government white paper and named the officials responsible for them, in a move which, it claims, reverses its performance management approach to councils.

An implementation plan, first promised by local government secretary Stephen Byers in January and finally published this week, contains completion dates for 121 commitments in the white paper.

It details senior civil servants in nine departments with overall responsibility for the white paper, plus DTLR civil servants with day-to-day responsibility.

VARYA SHAW

Political correspondent

Local government minister Nick Raynsford said the naming of officials was unprecedented.

He said: "It's about trying to raise standards and ensure we deliver services to the best of our ability. We're applying to ourselves the same high standards we think it's right to apply to local government."

But he added: "It's not a gimmick. It's not about people phoning our officials wasting their time on the slightest pretext. If people [in a council] have concerns, I would expect

Features from Education

Birmingham City Council's chief education officer has announced his retirement, just as the council has received a glowing Ofsted report.

Professor Tim Brighouse has been with the council since 1993 and will leave in the autumn, giving time for a successor to be appointed. His next project will be researching urban schools.

Prof Brighouse said: "This has not been an easy decision, but I am 63 and this job needs more energy than I can give it."

The Ofsted report praised the professor's leadership as "energising and inspirational" and said it was an example of "what can be done even in the most demanding of urban environments".

Question of the week

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ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S QUESTION IS MORE PAY THE SOLUTION TO KEY WORKER SHORTAGE?



White paper timetable set out

SENIOR WHITE PAPER CONTACTS

- Number 10 policy unit
Mike Emmerich
- Office of Public Service Reform
Wendy Thomson, Peter Kane
- HM Treasury
Lucy de Groot, Paul Johnston
- Department for Education & Skills
Andrew Wye
- Department of Health
Caroline Brock
- Department for Work & Pensions
Paul Howarth
- Home Office
Richard Hughes
- Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
Martin Cox
- Department for Culture, Media & Sport
Brian Leonard
- Regional Co-ordination Unit
Andrew Wells

WHITE PAPER DEADLINES

- April Agree methodology for the CPA
- May Consult on a draft intervention strategy and models for failing authorities
- May Draft national priorities for local government
- May Reduce plans by 50%
- May Details on the balance of funding review announced
- July Final intervention strategy
- Summer Review of grant distribution formulae — consultation
- October Consistent performance standards for inspectorates
- November Provisional settlement for 2004/4
- Needing primary legislation
Removal of 61 items of red tape
- Ongoing to April 2004 Consent regimes taken off statute book

OPINION

Gerry Stoker fir participation 11
Letters 10
E-strategy laun indifference No without a comr

WORK LIFE

Stretching the t performance fi
Scottish Labour off over PFI 12
Tomorrow's pe Alan Menzies 1
People This we moves in local government 13

FEATURES

Time for a pain government st
Cultural runner City of Culture
Acts and omis much to be de and goes for excessive cent control 16
The big picture Giant adverts c planners 18

FRONT LINE FI

Education Bott London's struc
Law Model cas protection 20
Social services enough 20
Finance Chang Dennis Reed w commission 21

E-GOV.UK

Chatroom Pen how it was 20
The case for sta Common stan works together

SCRUTINEER

Vocal point Pet treatment of p
MORI The yout
An inspector ca one star, and t Richmond 22

TOULMIN SMF

Hartlepool's monkey goes mayor and the DTLR gets it a wrong with their e-gov website 23

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Launch of Tor campaigns . . . future of citie proposes rad secondary ed tourism . . . A inquiry . . . Ho income . . . L issues aroun