

# East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership



**East Midlands**  
Improvement and  
Efficiency Partnership

## Achieving Whole Council IIP Recognition using Internal Review ▼

### East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership Case Studies

The East Midlands Improvement & Efficiency Partnership is committed to celebrating the successful, innovative and imaginative project work that exists in the East Midlands region.

The EM IEP Support Team publish case studies showing how East Midlands councils are improving services, and delivering significant improvements and efficiencies.

The case studies are intended to inspire councils in the region, and indeed nationally, to transform services and benefit from the processes developed by those councils that have pioneered the way forward.

### Summary:

Lincolnshire County Council have used an 'internal review' approach to achieving whole council Investors in People (IIP) status.

This approach to implementing the Investors in People standard across the whole Council involved focusing on critical areas for improvement and establishing buy-in and ownership from all parts of the Council.



*“The development of trained ‘internal champions’ to do self assessments and challenge us meant we were able to respond to issues quickly and work very constructively and positively with the external assessor. It has also given us more capacity to continue to take forward people strategy issues in an enthusiastic and professional way for the future.”*

Pete Moore  
Director of Resources

## The Issue ▾

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The Council’s ‘People Strategy’, launched in April 2006, set a three year vision for achieving a step change improvement, or ‘transformation’, in people management across the organisation.

The first couple of months were the most difficult. The task of getting everyone fully engaged proved to be very challenging as the council faced considerable resistance. Initially, there was an internal perception that it was just another job to do.

The council’s leadership was extremely supportive; they had true commitment from Members and their Senior Management Team who led them through an extremely difficult time of change to ensure that the council became a place where people are happy to work.

To achieve this, people were put at the heart of our new strategy to improve performance. Having already gained the standard in a couple of areas, a decision was taken to adopt Investors in People across the whole council.

## What You Did? ▾

An Investors in People Project Board was set up tasked with driving the process forward and buy-in to the standard was sought from the different directorates within the council. Directorate Implementation Groups (DIGs) were set up and tasked with identifying what was required of each directorate to achieve the standard. The DIGs members were dedicated and committed to making the necessary changes happen.

A 'Managers Scorecard' was introduced. This is a simple mechanism for measuring progress against the top 20 actions required to embed the key people management processes and achieve Investors in People

recognition for the Council. The scorecard enabled managers to monitor and report progress in their area of responsibility.

All scores were collated fortnightly to give an organisation wide score and Directorate score. This was used to update the Programme Board which monitored the progress towards the achievement of Investors in People recognition. The Council then began to unlock its potential through a programme of assessment, continuous review, support and development. Enthusiasm began to grow amongst managers and employees as they were able to see visible progress; this in itself built up momentum.



The council agreed with the East Midlands Quality Centre that it would commit to a process of internally reviewing its compliance with the standard. To do this an Internal Review Team, made up of 14 employees from across all service areas, was established. The team was trained to undertake the review under the guidance of an external assessor, thus enabling them to transfer knowledge and skills regarding the standard and the assessment process to their own employees. This represented a valuable development opportunity for the Internal Review Team and was a great success as the council

achieved whole council recognition in November 2008.

The external assessor put forward constructive and useful recommendations during the process to help the council achieve the standard and to encourage employees along the way.

The Internal Review Team remain in place and continue to work closely with the external assessor to ensure the council maintain its recognition, achieved by undertaking an annual rolling programme of “health checks” across the organisation.

## The Impact ▼

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Lincolnshire County Council are the first council in the East Midlands to achieve full recognition by using Internal Review and have already begun to share best practice with other authorities within the region. Sharing best practice helps to spread the Standard’s ethos and is essential in its development and commitment to continuous improvement.

Investors in People sends out a clear message to the council’s employees that their personal development is taken very seriously. This is assisting in building motivation, morale

and retaining employees. The Standard also sends out a clear message to potential employees that Lincolnshire County Council is a place where their talents and aspirations will be recognised and utilised and somewhere that is a rewarding place to work.

The Investors in People standard provides a framework for the continued development of the council’s employees to ensure that they are equipped to deliver the best possible service to the people of Lincolnshire, now and in the future.

## Lessons and Risks ▾

During the process Lincolnshire County Council was faced with a number of key risks and issues, which it overcame. One of these issues was a lack of engagement and ownership by managers at all levels to take the necessary actions to embed the key people management practices. This was overcome through a series of planned Human Resource (HR) briefing sessions which were rolled out across all directorates. The sessions were designed to improve understanding and ownership of key HR policies, procedures and guidelines.

One of the risks the Council foresaw was the risk that there would not be any legacy or sustainability once IIP was achieved. The Council overcame this through the 'Internal Review Team' which was developed into a "business as usual" team to regularly check the health of the organisation and report any actions required for to retain IIP status.

Here are some of the lessons Lincolnshire County Council learnt:

- **DO** Ensure that all the internal reviewers and their managers are fully aware of the time and commitment involved with carrying out an Internal Review
- **DO** Be open-minded and take on board the findings of the reviewer as they may report issues that you don't want to hear
- **DO** Link your people issues action plans e.g. Employee Survey, IIP, People Strategy
- **DO** Look to engage everyone at all levels in the process
- **DON'T** Approach IIP as a "tick box" exercise to get the badge on the wall

## Further Information ▾

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For further information about Investors in People go to:

[www.emqc.co.uk](http://www.emqc.co.uk)

For further information about Internal Review go to:

[www.reganconsulting.co.uk](http://www.reganconsulting.co.uk)

## Role of EM IEP ▾

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This achievement delivers on target nine, under the Capacity Building Theme of the EM IEP Business Delivery Plan 2008/09.

*“All authorities to have achieved full authority IIP status, and retained it, by 2010/11”*

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Notes ▾

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## Contacts ▾

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