

Welland Shared Services Newsletter



Newsletter—Volume 1, Issue 11

April 2008



Region set to RIEP new rewards!

Special points of interest

- New organisation set up to oversee the development of improvement and efficiency in Local Authorities
- More councils sharing services
- Sustainable Procurement in 2008

Welland Shared Services

Inside this issue:

<i>Head of Legal Services Interview</i>	2
<i>Councils will Share Financial Services</i>	2
<i>Legal Services Update</i>	2
<i>Sustainability Agenda Takes Off in East Midlands</i>	3
<i>Welland Internal Audit Update</i>	4
<i>Website Addresses</i>	4
<i>Contact Details</i>	4

The Welland Shared Services owe much to the support of the East Midlands Centre of Excellence (EMCE), which has played a key role in supporting the initial project to get the shared services off the ground.

So it is of particular importance to councils in this part of the region to see the fundamental changes to the region which are now taking effect.

All nine of the English Centres of Excellence are being transformed into **Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs)**, sponsored by the Department for Communities and Local Government but run by local government for local government, focusing on learning from each other and promoting best practice.

This is no simple name change. The RIEPs are seen by government

as a key tool to deliver efficiencies as required by the funding constraints of CSR07. This Comprehensive Spending Review requires 3% year on year cashable efficiency savings.

RIEPs will receive substantial funding in order to commission improvement and efficiency projects in the regions, including key priority targets set out in Local Area Agreements. The East Midlands RIEP will receive around four times as much funding for investment as the old Centre of Excellence.

Central government expects that nearly 60% of the efficiency gains will be made through procurement. Many of the relatively straightforward efficiency gains have already been made, so new levels of innovation and ambition will be needed to enable councils to operate within their means.

CIPFA turns to Welland for Performance Improvement

The CIPFA Performance Improvement Network (PIN) is a well regarded learning forum for public finance professionals and others to keep up with key issues of the day.

The PIN recently held a well attended workshop at CIPFA headquarters in London to explore the issues involved in setting up and operating shared services. Tony Hall, Head of Welland Procurement, gave a keynote presentation on the Welland shared service experience. He answered a variety of questions, ranging from finding potential partners to the priorities and pitfalls of running an effective shared service activity.

Shared Head of Legal Services

Diane Clayton-Smith recently caught up with **Verina Wenham**, who started in her new shared post of Head of Legal Services for Harborough and Melton on 13th February 2008.

Verina splits her time between the two councils, working Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at Harborough and Tuesdays and Thursdays at Melton.

Verina is on hand to advise staff on a wide range of matters, from planning issues, contracts, to freedom of information and data protection. Her specialty is civil and criminal litigation. Verina also holds the post of Monitoring Officer at Harborough.



Verina comes to the Welland from Rugby Borough Council, where she was Legal Services Manager for three years. Prior to that she worked as Litigation Solicitor in the private sector for six years. Before that she was Assistant Solicitor at

Northamptonshire County Council for nine years.

Verina enjoys playing the flute, hill walking and going to the theatre; but most of her spare time recently has been taken up by renovating a small cottage in central France with her husband.

The most important thing about her job is being able to work as part of a team and help to resolve problems.

Verina is also looking forward to meeting as many members of staff as possible over the coming months.

Contact details for Verina Wenham:

Melton	01664 502490	vwenham@melton.gov.uk
Harborough	01858 821248	v.wenham@harborough.gov.uk

Councils will share financial services

East Northamptonshire Council and Corby Borough Council have joined forces to deliver combined financial support services to both councils

The partnership was agreed by members of both councils in October last year, and the new joint team will be hosted by Corby, but there will continue to be staff based at both offices.

The arrangement will cover accountancy, creditor payments, insurance and treasury management functions

As well as delivering an improved, more robust service, the team also plans to make efficiency savings through streamlining processes and spreading best practice.

Legal Services Update

Harborough District Council and Melton Borough Council have considered the Joint Leicestershire Legal Shared Services Business Case in detail; and having considered the proposal in terms of timing, of collaboration, service offered and staff involvement, have decided not to pursue the arrangement offered.

The two Councils will continue to develop their relationship around the existing shared post of the Head of Legal Services to improve working relationships and potential efficiencies.



Sustainability agenda takes off in East Midlands

Sustainable Procurement is about integrating the principles of social, environmental and economic sustainability into all procurement projects and ensuring supplies, services and works are sustainable.

The Government set up the Sustainable Procurement Task Force in 2005, which developed a National Action Plan, proposing to calculate value for money on the basis of whole life calculations, not just the cheapest at the point of purchase.

The Task Force also developed a tool (*The Flexible Framework* - see below) to support and guide local government in actions required to make sustainable procurement happen.

The Flexible Framework identifies 5 key themes:

- People;
- Policy;
- Strategy & Communications;
- Procurement Process;
- Engaging Suppliers and Measurement and Results;

and has established 5 levels of performance in each theme. The framework allows Local Authorities to assess where they are in relation to sustainable procurement and provides a route map to improved performance.

From 2009 the Audit Commission and other inspectorates will collaborate to provide a risk based Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) which replaces Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) for Councils. Following consultation the Audit Commission has announced its intention to assess sustainable procurement and asset management within CAA and the use of resources judgement.

The East Midlands Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership is therefore leading the development of a major regional project to raise awareness, ambition and outcomes across the sustainability agenda over the next three years.

The proposal, still being worked up, is to have a Strategic Project Board leading the planning, communication, and identification of champions in each council to move the project forward.

The Board will be supported by a small Project Advisory Group, the core members of which are already in place, and which include Tony Hall from Welland Procurement. A Project Initiation Document is in development in order to bid for funding to give substantial impetus and direction to this important project.

	Foundation Level 1	Embed Level 2	Practice Level 3	Enhance Level 4	Lead Level 5
People	Sustainable procurement champion identified. Key staff training in sustainable procurement	All staff training in sustainable procurement. Key staff given advanced training	Targeted refresher training on latest sustainable procurement principles.	Sustainable procurement included as part of employee induction	Achievements are publicised. Focus is on benefits achieved. Good practice shared.
Policy, Strategy & Communications	Agree overarching sustainability objectives. Communicate to staff	Review / enhance sustainable procurement policy – supplier engagement	Augment policy into strategy, to be endorsed by CEO.	Review / enhance sustainable procurement strategy, include in corporate strategy.	Review strategy regularly. Future priorities determined.
Procurement Process	Expenditure analysis undertaken and key impacts identified.	Detailed analysis, risks assessed. Whole life costs analysis adopted.	All contractors assessed for sustainability risks. Target agreed with key suppliers	Detailed risks assessed for high impact contracts	Life cycle analysis for key commodity areas. Barriers for sustainable procurement removed.
Engaging Suppliers	Key supplier spend analysis undertaken to identify high sustainability suppliers.	Detailed supplier analysis. Supplier engagement programme initiated.	Targeted supplier engagement programme in place. 2 way communication. Supply chains mapped.	Key suppliers targeted for intensive development. Sustainability audits in place.	Suppliers recognised as essential to delivery of sustainable procurement strategy. Best practice shared
Measurements & Results	Key sustainability impacts of procurement activity identified	Detailed appraisal of impacts undertaken.	Measures refined to include individual buyers	Measure integrated into a balanced scorecard approach	Measures used to drive organisational strategy for sustainable procurement.

Welland Internal Audit Update

It has been a busy time for the Welland Internal Audit team over the last few months and all have been working hard towards bringing the 2007/08 audits to a close. Galileo (audit software) is now fully embedded into our everyday work and is continuing to be a useful tool.

It has also been a busy time outside of work for a number of the audit team as they continue to progress towards their qualifications. The Head of the Consortium, Richard Gaughran, is part way towards the IIA Advanced Diploma and will be undertaking an exam in November. Two of the Internal Auditors, Richard Cooper and Tom Perry, are continuing to do well with their studies towards CIPFA and Richard is due to take an exam in June. One of the Assistant Auditors, Natasha Bailey, is also continuing to do well with her studies and will also be undertaking an exam in June. The other Assistant Auditor, Nicola Sharman, has successfully completed the IIA Certificate. Congratulations!

Annual Customer Satisfaction Questionnaires have been distributed to a number of Officers across the four Welland sites, with a large amount of positive feedback received so far. The Head of the Consortium will be including this valuable feedback into the Annual Report for each of the client sites.

Website addresses for organisations mentioned in this newsletter

East Midlands Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership

www.emce.gov.uk

Sustainable Procurement Task Force

www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/government/task-forces/procurement

CIPFA

www.cipfa.org.uk



www.welland-partnership.com

Contact Information:

Welland Procurement Unit

Tony Hall

Head of Welland Procurement

01664 502425

thall@melton.gov.uk

Diane Clayton-Smith

Welland Procurement Officer

01664 502342

dclayton-smith@melton.gov.uk

Peter Bignell

Welland Procurement Officer

01664 502306

pbignell@melton.gov.uk

Welland Internal Audit Consortium

Rosanne Fleming CPFA
Audit Manager

01572 758302 / 07796 940015

rfleming@rutland.gov.uk