

Bulletin for Councillors

Edition 8 – February 2010



East Midlands

Improvement and
Efficiency Partnership

A bulletin for Local Authority Leaders and Councillors

Welcome to the eighth edition of our bulletin for Councillors across the East Midlands. This bulletin provides an update on the work of the East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (EM IEP), as well as providing information about important events and policy developments.

About the East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (EM IEP)

Established in April 2008, the EM IEP is a partnership of the 46 East Midlands councils and 5 fire and rescue authorities. It aims to bring lasting improvements to the region and has a budget of c£30 million over the next three years to achieve this through building capacity, supporting the delivery of service improvements and efficiency savings.

To download a leaflet that provides more information about the EM IEP please go to: www.eastmidlandsiep.gov.uk/about_us.htm

Support following the Comprehensive Area Assessment results:

The Comprehensive Area Assessment results were released on 9th December 2009 and showed that local authorities are continuing to improve services and offer greater value for money. The EM IEP is now working closely with authorities in the region to support areas that received a red flag or identified performance issues through the assessments. This support is being provided through the existing programmes that the EM IEP offers and also bespoke support to individual authorities. The EM IEP will also publish a new set of case studies to share the best practice identified through the green flags and excellent councils.

Putting the Frontline First – Task Force review:

Also announced in December was the Smarter Government white paper on putting the frontline first. Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs) have been working hard with local authorities to secure the improvements and efficiencies that protect frontline services, and are already working on projects related to the three key themes outlined in the paper:

- Sharing resources to invest in frontline services
- An innovative frontline: making it a reality
- Organising internal structures for innovative delivery

The RIEPs will be feeding their good practice into a local government task force that has been created to capture the best practice on these themes. This practice will then be promoted across the sector to help to emphasise and increase take up of the opportunities open to local authorities and their partners.

Securing Year Three Funding for the RIEP Programme – an update:

The RIEPs submitted their interim reports on 8th January and these have now been put forward for discussion with the Department for Communities and Local Government with a covering report emphasising the collective messages from year two of the programme. The year two interim reports and the funding for year three of the programme will be signed off by Councillor David Parsons CBE, Chair of the LGA Improvement Board and the Minister in February 2010.

EM IEP Interim Report – January 2010

The EM IEP's report is full of information about the money being saved in the region as a result of improvement and efficiency projects taking place and will help secure our funding for Year Three of our journey as a RIEP.

For example, did you know that local authorities in the region have made almost £16 million cashable savings and £1.3 million non-cashable savings in 2009/10 arising from EM IEP funding? Additionally, we're predicting a further £160.1 million cashable and £26.67 million non-cashable savings by 2013.

The stories behind three of our biggest saving projects have been captured in three two minute films which can be viewed on our website at:

http://www.eastmidlandsiep.gov.uk/case_studies

Support for Making Efficiencies and Transforming Services

We have also recently published a new brochure called '*Support for making efficiencies and transforming services*'. This brochure provides a summary of training and support available to authorities in the region and lists the projects that are currently taking place in each of our sub-regions.

Download the document at: <http://www.eastmidlandsiep.gov.uk>

Care Funding Calculator saves £4.5 million in the East Midlands

In this issue, Chair of the East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership's Member Board, Councillor Martin Hill, OBE, Leader of Lincolnshire County Council, discusses the **Care Funding Calculator: 'Fair price, quality care'**

With competing pressures on public spending and the intense scrutiny that local authorities are under, as elected members, it is our duty to ensure that public money is spent responsibly and that value for money is achieved in every purchase we make in our regions.

This is all too true in Adult Social Care – a big spend area in which the East Midlands alone invested over £1 billion with external suppliers in 2008/9.

The Care Funding Calculator (CFC) – a sophisticated spreadsheet – allows both local authority and PCT commissioning staff to assess a fair price for residential care and supported living arrangements for adults with learning disabilities, mental health and physical disabilities.

It makes a complex process more transparent, gives service users and their carers more control over their care and enables better use of resources.

A single care placement for an adult can cost more than £50,000 a year and at present there are hundreds of providers, with costs ranging from £400 to £4,000 a week. The calculator breaks down individuals' needs and works out how much it costs to meet those needs. It also fosters an environment of partnership between providers and commissioners and supports clearer contractual arrangements.

In addition to the initial RIEP investment to develop and pilot the CFC tools, the East Midlands Improvement & Efficiency Partnership has worked collaboratively with the West Midlands RIEP to commission a shared project manager (Mihir Trivedi) who now works across the two regions; supporting our local authorities and PCTs to use these powerful tools and embed them into their commissioning processes.

The tools are based on national data and assist commissioners and care managers in understanding the different elements of care costs, providing greater clarity on prices and simplifying the negotiation process. The Care Funding Calculator has influenced the costs of new placements/reviews in the East Midlands achieving weekly reductions on the initial offer price. These savings equate to £4.5 million for the region since April 2008.

For more information please contact:

Mihir Trivedi: email: mihir@hb21.co.uk Tel: 07977 160 163

Freedom to Lead: Trust to Deliver – LGA Consultation

The LGAs latest policy paper about freedoms and flexibilities for local councils to respond better to local needs has been published.

This paper sets out the LGAs proposals for what a new accountability framework for localities might look like. It covers the role of national targets, the case for stability and certainty about resources, the agreement of priorities for place, the nature and role of inspection and arrangements for supporting improvement. It is about the governance and management of place.

The LGA are currently seeking views on the proposals in the document. The deadline for responses is 10 March.

Download the document at:

<http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/publications/publication-display.do?id=7789424>

South Northamptonshire Councillor Receives Prize at National Award Ceremony

South Northamptonshire Councillor Martin Wilson has won an award at a national ceremony in London for his outstanding contribution to financial performance.

The prize was awarded to Cllr Wilson earlier this month for his consistent commitment to using a council's resources to deliver value for money and better outcomes for local people. The judging panel selected the South Northamptonshire Council Member for his continued work to ensure that value for money and better services constantly remained at the heart of the Council's spending decisions.

Judges praised his contribution to performance and acknowledged the financial challenges faced by district councils with relatively small budgets.

Amongst Cllr Wilson's achievements, he produced a review which gave a clearer understanding of how the Council's resources were being spent; introduced a new system to hold budget holders more accountable for their spending, and last year saved six percent of the net budget.

Cllr Martin Wilson, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Ward Councillor for Salcey, said: "South Northamptonshire Council works hard to deliver value for money and provide high quality services to local people. I am delighted to receive the award and to have been highlighted as making a significant contribution to the work carried out by the Council. I am grateful for the fantastic support of both the strong financial team at SNC and my fellow councillors, and I receive this award on behalf of all our team.

He added: "The financial challenges over the last couple of years have been formidable and I know that things are likely to be just as challenging in the years ahead. I know that we have the team in place to meet the future with confidence and to continue to provide quality services to the community."

Publications...

Members' Guides 5 & 6: Member guides on procurement – an update:

A series of six member guides on procurement are being produced, led by the RIEPs and the Local Government Association group. The guides cover the following key procurement topics: professional services, energy, information and communication technology, construction, adult social care and waste. The guides are being distributed to all members through the LGA and offer practical advice on the members' role in improving procurement within councils to secure efficiency savings.

The guides can be found at: <http://www.idea.gov.uk/procurement>

Forthcoming Events

This free one-day workshop is fully funded for Councillors by the EM IEP

Reading the Signs: Why People Turn Off from Politics

10.30 – 3.30pm, Wednesday 17th March 2010
Holocaust Centre, Laxton, Nottinghamshire. NG22 0PA

Councillors across the East Midlands face many challenges over the months and years ahead.

Now, more than ever, it is important that Councillors are supported in ways that allow them to build on their understanding of how to continue to lead their communities to be positive and active plays in which to live and work.

This course cuts to the heart of what it means to be a local councillor and UK citizen. It will challenge all to consider how our own understanding of, and approach to, exclusion, prejudice, active citizenship and the democratic deficit can dramatically influence the dynamics in communities. It will also help Councillors be alert to, and explore, the appeal of ideas that work against cohesive and well-integrated communities.

Nick Lowels has been confirmed as the contemporary speaker. Nick is the editor of 'Searchlight' magazine, and national coordinator of the 'HOPE not hate' campaign.

Who should attend?

- Councillors from across the East Midlands
- Officers supporting Councillors

To book your FREE place for this event contact Lois Dale at EM IEP:

Tel: 0115 977 4921 **Email:** lois.dale@nottscc.gov.uk **Web:** www.eastmidlandsiep.gov.uk

For more information on the EM IEP please visit our website:

<http://www.eastmidlandsiep.gov.uk> or contact:

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