



East Midlands

Improvement and
Efficiency Partnership

Communications Strategy

East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership

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1. Introduction and guiding principles:

The Communications Strategy has been formulated on the following guiding principles:

- East Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (EM IEP) must communicate effectively with the Region which it serves
- wherever possible, communication must be purposeful and timely, particularly in relation to consultation and decision making
- wherever possible, communication must be open, honest and frank
- in general, relevant information will be available on an open basis, and only in exceptional cases (eg to preserve confidentiality) is it not made available
- notwithstanding the need for open sharing of information, communication networks are to be established and used to ensure the right people receive adequate not excessive information to enable them to do their jobs but not overwhelm them with spurious data
- communication is a two way process. It is not just a question of information, data and messages being passed down from the EM IEP to Stakeholders or other interested parties: upward and horizontal communications are equally important
- effective communication increasingly depends on information systems which must be easy to use, accessible, robust and reliable
- decision making and organisational structures will support effective communication wherever possible by, for example, ensuring clear accountability for outcomes
- communication will not rely solely on 'E' strategies; relationships across the region will be crucial to develop integration and understanding

2. Key strategic aims

The role of the EM IEP reflects the service improvement priorities for local authorities in the region helping them to respond to key drivers for change including the national procurement strategy, the Efficiency Agenda, the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and the Community leadership role. Demonstrating "added value" through the development of a small range of key customer focussed performance indicators is a priority for the EM IEP. This Communications Strategy will support the aims and objectives of the EM IEP promoting regional activity and progress and enabling the effective dissemination of information.

The key strategic aims will be:

- to promote the EM IEP and its progress at local and regional level in order to maintain and develop stakeholder engagement and ensure the success of the programme.
- improve awareness and understanding among local authorities and opinion formers of the EM IEP's role, status and services and those with whom it has contact and provide easily accessible and up-to-date progress information about the EM IEP's Programme,

and also provide information about other RIEPs and relevant developments in local and central government

- to make it easy for people to find out about the EM IEP's progress and events
- to regularly consult with Stakeholders and reference group(s)
- to help establish links with other related organisations
- to make effective use of available communication channels, where appropriate

To ensure a high-quality and consistent communications approach by the EM IEP making sure that communication takes place:

- At local and regional level
- between the EM IEP and key stakeholders
- between key stakeholders and the EM IEP
- between the EM IEP and specialist, local and regional media

3. Stakeholders

The following table gives details of other organisations or bodies that are to be considered as Stakeholders. These are parties that are interested in the progress and deliverables from the EM IEP or that the EM IEP needs to engage with to ensure the success of the programme.

Stakeholders may be engaged with the EM IEP in a variety of ways including acting in a consultative capacity. If required a Reference Group could be created to enable all public sector Stakeholders to have the opportunity to be consulted and receive information relevant to the projects progress.

Suppliers' knowledge, views and experiences are also invaluable to many areas of the national project. Suppliers may be invited to attend appropriate meetings at the discretion of the Regional Director or management board for the purpose of information exchange.

Stakeholder	Stakeholder	Stakeholder
Regional authority chief executives and senior officers	Council Leaders & Members	Relevant national government departments including regional CLG and LGA
Officers involved in procurement and delivery of services	ALL local authorities within the East Midlands region	RIEP's Programme Team
Professional local government organisations	Other public bodies	Private sector companies/suppliers, SMEs, BMEs
Central bodies	Regional representatives	LGA Regional representatives

Regional and sub-regional partnerships, Regional Development Agencies, Regional Government Offices and Regional Improvement Partnerships	Relevant public sector organisations including Health, Police, Schools (FE) and Transport	Regional press and media, Regional Offices of the CLG, IDeA, Audit Commission and LGA
Specialist commercial/procurement/trade press and media	Other interested agencies and organisations including voluntary and academic institutions	Other Relevant Professional and Industry bodies involved, or with an interest in Local Authority Efficiency and Improvement.

The EM IEP will establish links with the stakeholders and audiences outlined above ensuring that *all* local and regional stakeholders are identified.

4. Evaluation methods and criteria

Evaluation needs to be factored into the communications undertaken. The EM IEP will continuously monitor and evaluate progress, changing tactics where needed, and finally evaluate the success of the communications objective.

Quantitative and qualitative data will be required and there are a number of methods we can use:

Interviews:

- Email/postal questionnaires
- Hit rates on website
- Measure of attendees at events / attendee feedback

5. Channels of communication

The EM IEP proposes to use the following channels of communication:

- a) Printed information
- b) Regional website
- c) Email distribution lists
- d) Events - conferences, workshops
- e) Questionnaires and feedback
- f) Information repository
- g) Consultation
- h) Press
- i) Telephone & video conferencing

Stakeholder Details

To ensure that information is reaching the right people including the wider Stakeholder Group and that all email addresses and other contact details will be kept up to date.

a) Printed information

A monthly newsletter and other promotional material at workshops and conferences will be sent out via email using the EM IEP's email distribution lists. All printed information and promotional leaflets will be made available on the website.

Regional website: <http://www.eastmidlandsiep.gov.uk>

The website will be a key source of information for partners and regional stakeholders holding information and advice which meets unique regional needs. This will be the main place where people will be able to find current information about EM IEP and its activities. It will play an important part in advertising the EM IEP and its activities, storing minutes of meetings, presentations from workshops, links to other related material, and holding details of EM IEP's deliverables. It must be easy to find information, so the website has good navigational tools - index, contents, and search facility. Both the Regional Director and an appointed member of staff will collectively be responsible for maintaining an up-to-date web site. Feedback will be obtained from Stakeholders using online web forms and templates.

EM IEP's distribution list

The stakeholders of the Centre's distribution list will be EM IEP Board, the region's Leaders, Members and Chief Executives, Regional Directors, sub-regional partnerships, RIEP Programme Management Team, CLG and other bodies/agencies as identified in the table of stakeholders defined earlier in this strategy. This list will be maintained by the EM IEP.

b) Events - conferences, workshops, meetings

Planned dates of conferences, workshops and meetings will be advertised on the EM IEP's website well in advance to help avoid clashes with other organisation's events.

Confirmed dates, together with a description of the event, the programme and an online booking form, will be made available on the website.

After the event, relevant reports or presentations will be published on the website.

c) Information repository

A repository of documentation can be accessed via the EM IEP's website.

Consultations & requests for information

The EM IEP may be asked to respond to consultations or ad hoc requests for information. The EM IEP will deal with these themselves or, if necessary will forward them to an appropriate member of the Programme Team or other specialists for input.

d) Press

Regional media mapping should be undertaken where this information is not already available within local authorities' media/communications teams. EM IEP will identify 'newsworthy' items and target appropriate media for publicity in conjunction with press officers.

6. Actions

To achieve this objective the following communication strategy will be adopted

Communication Channel	Dates / Frequency / Activity	Approach and outputs	Who will deliver?
EM IEP Web site	www.eastmidlandsiep.gov.uk The site will publish information as soon as it becomes available	This site will serve as the main source of information about regional activity. It will contain:	EM IEP Communications and Information Officer
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notes of meetings, workshop and conference outputs 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project and work stream progress and case studies from across the region 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A document 'resource library' with documents and links to key information and documentation 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events page 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to other relevant sites 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular newsletters 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> News & information page 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Data and Knowledge Centre 			
Generic Newsletter	Every month	An electronic newsletter will be sent to all Regional stakeholders with updates on outputs and progress on the EM IEP.	EM IEP Communications and Information Officer
Councillors Bulletin	Bi-monthly	The electronic newsletter will also be sent to as many representatives of the stakeholder groups shown above	

Communication Channel	Dates / Frequency / Activity	Approach and outputs	Who will deliver?
Reports	Quarterly	Regions to provide updates to national programme team for national newsletters	EM IEP Communications and Information Officer
Ad hoc feeds to Regional Programme Team	As and when	Dependant exemplar efficiency savings projects being adopted/replicated	EM IEP Communications and Information Officer
Press and publicity including advertising	Ad hoc	In conjunction with Sub Regional Programme Managers	EM IEP Communications and Information Officer
Events	As appropriate	Information availability at events	EM IEP Communications and Information Officer
Production of Case Studies	Monthly	Case studies will be produced to showcase regional examples of improvement, efficiency and innovation.	EM IEP Communications and Information Officer