

Agenda item No: 14

**EAST MIDLANDS IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY PARTNERSHIP
BOARD MEETING: 3rd February 2009**

Report of the Director

Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership - A Councillors Guide

1. Purpose of the report
 - 1.1 To present the recently published Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership – A Councillors Guide

2. Background
 - 2.1 The Attached brochure, published by the LGA, is designed to provide councillors with an update on the RIEPs, their achievements to date and an insight into the support they can offer. The brochure is available on the EM IEP website.

3. Recommendation
 - 3.1 The Board note the publication and agree a distribution process for the brochure to councillors in the region

**Chris Allison
Director
East Midlands Improvement & Efficiency Partnership**



Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships

A Councillor's Guide



Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships

foreword

Councillor David Parsons

Chairman of the Local Government Association (LGA) Improvement Board



Councillor David Parsons
Chairman
LGA Improvement Board

Local Government is a high performing part of the public sector. We consistently deliver excellent, efficient services that respond to the needs of our communities - increasingly working in partnership with other agencies across the public, private and voluntary sectors to drive through change and service improvement.

The media is dominated by news of tough choices ahead - the economic downturn, talk of contracting public spending and increasing expectations from residents mean that working together to harness the existing expertise and support within local government is more important than ever.

The member-led Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs) are partnerships of councils and other key providers which will be critical in supporting us through the challenging times ahead. With a funding package targeted at local improvement needs, RIEPs are focused on supporting you to deliver on the priorities which are important to your communities.

This brochure is designed to provide you with an update on the RIEPs, their achievements to date and an insight into the support they can offer.

RIEPs are only as effective as the councils that comprise them. As chairman of the cross party LGA Improvement Board and the RIEP Member Forum, I strongly encourage you to get in touch with your local RIEP. Contact details are provided at the back of this brochure.

David Parsons

background

Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships

RIEPs are member-led partnerships of councils, fire authorities and other local services which coordinate and support improvement, innovation and efficiency work at a regional and often sub-regional level with a devolved funding package of £185m over the three year period, 2008-11.

Each RIEP has evolved differently to meet local and regional improvement needs. However, as this brochure illustrates, all of the RIEPs are driving forward improvement, focussing on supporting authorities to accelerate efficiency gains, to deliver ambitious Local Area Agreements, to build capacity in key areas such as empowerment and economic development and to foster innovative and collaborative working.

RIEPs work in partnership with the national sector led improvement bodies within the LGA Group (IDeA, 4Ps, LACORs, the Leadership Centre, LGE and the LGA) and act as a regional 'hub,' providing a central point of contact to enable local authorities to access the right support at the right time.

The devolution of funding to the RIEPs, reflects a recognition by central government that improvement is best led by the sector working together, and that councillors and authorities know best how to improve outcomes for their communities.

RIEP Governance

member led, member driven

Member engagement and leadership is placed at the very heart of the governance arrangements for the RIEPs.

Elected members 'have a particular role in building a strong, shared vision for the area' (National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy). As such, their involvement in RIEP governance has been recognised within both regional and national arrangements as being essential.

Governance arrangements vary from region to region. These differences recognise the unique needs and make up of each region, ensuring innovation and true responsiveness to need as well as acknowledging sub-regional structures and the inherited support arrangements which are specific to place.

LGA Improvement Board

The cross party LGA Improvement Board is chaired by Councillor David Parsons (Conservative) and attended by LGA group lead members, Councillor Dame Sally Powell (Labour), Councillor Sir David Williams (Lib Dem) and Councillor Ray Frost (Independent). The LGA Improvement Board works to lobby government to drive forward a local government led approach to improvement and acts as a champion for RIEPs at a national level. The Improvement Board meets regularly with the RIEP lead members through the RIEP Member Forum.

RIEP Member Forum

The lead member from each of the nine RIEPs now come together on a regular basis and with members of the LGA Improvement Board at the RIEP Member Forum. The group provides an arena for members to share good practice and common issues and concerns, as well as forming a platform for discussion and advocacy with ministers about removing barriers to delivery and lobbying for further devolution of responsibilities to local government.

Chief Executives' Task Group

Consists of a chief executive lead for each region and is chaired by Joyce Redfearn, the Chief Executive of Wigan Council. It provides strategic advice to the LGA and IDeA on the improvement and efficiency agenda across local government.

RIEPs are made up of and led by councillors. In the following section the lead member from each RIEP provides an insight into the work of their RIEP and showcases a key achievement.

For more detailed information on the governance and reporting arrangements within each RIEP, and national governance arrangements for the RIEP agenda, please go to www.idea.gov.uk/rieps



Councillor Richard Stay
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member
for Finance, Bedfordshire County
Council, and Chairman of the Member
Board at Improvement East

Improvement East is the RIEP for the East of England. Councillor Stay highlights a success story from one of the RIEP's priority areas of focus, supporting authorities and services in difficulty.



“Improvement East has been a key player in supporting local authorities in the region on their improvement journeys and Uttlesford District Council is one such success story. The council had faced significant overspends in its budget leading to concerns being raised by the Audit Commission and necessitating a timely and supportive response from the RIEP. A voluntary improvement board including representatives from Improvement East, Government Office, IDeA and the Audit Commission has been established to ensure a co-ordinated offering by key sector partners. This includes a chief executive from a local authority in the region who oversees progress on the support package provided by the RIEP which includes corporate capacity building, cross party peer support for councillors and tailored support on the use of resources.

The council has achieved a significant amount to date under difficult circumstances assisted by the involvement of the right sector-led partners from an early stage. The council has now set a balanced budget and drawn up an improvement plan. Improvement East has provided essential support through brokering links with other authorities and programmes to share good practice and by funding direct support.”



Councillor Martin Hill OBE
Leader of Lincolnshire County Council
and Chair of the East Midlands
Improvement and Efficiency Partnership
(EM IEP) Board

The East Midlands devolves 70% of its funding to five sub-regions in order to ensure a focus on local improvement needs. Councillor Hill outlines a programme of support which is one the RIEP's key focuses at regional level, supporting ambitious Local Area Agreement (LAA) delivery.

“The EM IEP is working with the IDeA to run a series of regional events on delivery planning, strategic commissioning and outcome-focused performance management, which are all topics identified by local LAA co-ordinators as being essential to successful delivery. Local workshops include a focus on making an impact on some of the most difficult issues facing local partnerships such as; shifting resources, improving partnership delivery, delivering differently for child poverty and for people not in education, employment, training, and improving services from a customer perspective. EM IEP is also working with partners to deliver a major seminar for elected members and senior managers on the challenges and opportunities raised by the empowerment agenda.

The EM IEP has embarked on an ambitious initiative in the area of business process improvement training over 200 people on real life business transformation projects and acquired skills and qualifications to NVQ level 2 standard. We see this as being a foundation in building capacity within local authorities not only to achieve efficiency savings, but to transform local services.”





Councillor Michael White
Leader of the London Borough of
Havering and Member Chair of Capital
Ambition

Capital Ambition is the RIEP for London and offers a broad range of improvement and efficiency programmes under four key themes: 'Raising the Bar' is about challenging and supporting performance improvement; 'Delivering Together' focuses on collaborative working and procurement, 'Connecting London' stresses empowering communities and better use of technology to improve services for citizens and 'Developing Capability' seeks to improve London's leadership and workforce. Cllr White explains how Capital Ambition ensures positive engagement with local authorities in the region.



“Capital Ambition is fulfilling its commitment to local authority leaders and creating an environment of mutual support to promote good practice and improve services. At the heart of Capital Ambition is an innovative programme which ‘matches’ RIEP board members to individual authorities, providing and facilitating support where necessary, building on strengths and sharing good practice. This echoes the sentiment in our ‘mutuality statement’, which is signed by local authority leaders, and has helped London become the best performing region in the country.

The programme has proved successful, with three boroughs jumping from one to three stars in the last couple of years, and another rising from one to four stars since the inception of CPA. All authorities in London are involved in this successful programme which will soon incorporate the London Efficiency Challenge – providing a comprehensive and rigorous way of identifying and sharing best practice in resources management across the capital.”



Councillor Mick Henry
Leader of Gateshead Council,
Chair of the Association of North East
Councils (ANEC) and lead Member
for the North East Improvement and
Efficiency Partnership (NE IEP)

The NE RIEP is delivering a range of ten improvement and efficiency programmes, one of which is collaborative procurement. Councillor Henry, introduces us to a programme which will deliver quality and efficiency and contribute to the prosperity of the region.



“In these difficult times it is becoming ever more important to concentrate on improving the economic prosperity of our region and the NE IEP’s transformational procurement programme can make a significant contribution to achieving this. In the North East, the RIEP is investing £2m (12% of its funding) to its collaborative procurement programme and we expect to achieve £100m of efficiency savings in addition to contributing to significant economic, social and environmental benefits.

Although we know that authorities in the North East have a good track record of working together on procurement, I am confident that the NE IEP’s involvement represents a significant opportunity to deliver greater savings by offering authorities new ways of sharing information and working together. Our approach importantly includes a focus on sustainable procurement, working in partnership with SME’s and the third sector to support local providers. Our work on collaborative food procurement, increasing the use of regionally-produced fruit and vegetables in school meals, is a prime example which has delivered significant cashable efficiencies to the three participating councils of Stockton on Tees Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council and Hartlepool Borough Council, and demonstrated how sustainability and efficiency objectives can be reconciled through the improved flexibility and creativity of a collaborative procurement approach.”



Councillor Tim Stoddard
Leader of Cumbria County Council
and Chair of the Member Board of the
North West Improvement and Efficiency
Partnership

The North West devolves 60% of its total funding to five sub-regions as well as delivering key support programmes at a regional level. Councillor Stoddard outlines a key focus in the North West, both regionally and sub-regionally, on empowering communities.

“One of our core priorities in the North West is community empowerment and neighbourhood delivery. In our first year, we’re investing £350,000 in empowerment at a regional level, and in addition, each of our sub-regions has committed to addressing this important area of improvement. One of our regional providers, Neighbourhoods NW, has a dedicated gateway which brings together all community empowerment and neighbourhood activities under one roof to ensure complementary activity and share best practice. Neighbourhoods NW has launched a Neighbourhood Management Excellence Award which has been developed to inspire neighbourhood management organisations to achieve the national standard of Investors in Excellence - a framework for neighbourhood management organisations which drives improvement activities and recognises their achievements to date.

We took a bold decision to devolve considerable funds to the sub-regions and regional providers – more than £6million - but this reflects our focus on meeting local needs and has been backed up by the early signs of significant work which will deliver on the improvement and efficiency agenda.”





Councillor Paul Bettison
Leader of Bracknell Forest Council and
Member Chair of Improvement and
Efficiency South East (IESE)

IESE's programme of support focuses on ensuring improved performance, achieving successful LAAs and delivering efficiency. Councillor Bettison outlines one example of how the RIEP is fostering collaboration to improve services and heighten efficiency.



“IESE has been supporting Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council to create a single management structure and develop business cases for the transformation of staff structures and business processes. By joining more services together, Adur and Worthing will have greater buying power in other areas as they would effectively be transformed into the seventh largest district council in the country. The project is taking a service by service approach to harmonisation which gives managers the authority to assess the best way to transform their services. To help with this process, IESE is offering programme support and business process improvement training for officers at the authorities. The council expects to save £1m a year from the changes made to date.

The Members of Adur and Worthing are to be congratulated in leading this bold transformation. Their leadership is not only bearing fruit for them but for other authorities in the South East as sharing the lessons learned will benefit other authorities who are considering adopting a similar model. IESE is already engaged with South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse councils to ensure they benefit from Adur and Worthing's experience. We look forward to continuing to support this innovative partnership and will share the lessons learned and successes regionally and nationally.”



Councillor Ray Frost
Deputy Leader of Teignbridge District
Council and Chair of the South West
RIEP

The South West is delivering a broad programme of improvement and efficiency support for local authorities in the region. Councillor Frost highlights the RIEP's well developed approach to building leadership capacity for economic development



“In the South West, our Local Economy Programme has been developed following extensive consultation with local authorities and partners and contains a broad range of activities supporting authorities with their responsibilities for economic development and regeneration. Our initial focus has been on developing support packages for local authorities to deliver their physical growth targets but more latterly, in response to local authority need, our focus has broadened to include economic assessments, skills and worklessness.

Our support offer takes a variety of forms, including the organisation of workshops and peer reviews, the development of training courses to address key skills and capacity issues and grant funding for sub-regional projects. Current projects include a national transport benchmarking project, developing a consistent approach to economic assessments, a ‘skills and capacity’ survey of local authorities and supporting the creation of a central resource to help establish Employment and Skills Boards in the region. We are working with partners to take stock of the support we offer and ensure it remains flexible and relevant to local authorities needs given the economic downturn. Our intention is to pilot innovative approaches and encourage wider collaboration and joint working.”



Councillor Norman Davies
Solihull MBC and lead Member for
Improvement and Efficiency West
Midlands

The West Midlands offers a series of support programmes against five core work streams. Here, Councillor Davies showcases the RIEP's programme to support delivery through ambitious LAAs



“Our approach is to work very closely with individual authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) to tailor our support closely to their specific needs. Our ‘Learning to Deliver’ Programme provides core delivery support to every LAA in the region by providing hands on delivery support and a grant to support their key LAA outcomes. Underpinning this is an active programme of knowledge sharing to ensure the transfer of best practice.

Many of the regional targets being supported through our LAA support package relate to economic development and there is therefore, a developing regional focus on supporting economic outcomes through this network, with worklessness being a key regional focus. Advantage West Midlands (the West Midlands Regional Development Agency) is working with us on this and providing additional resources for ‘Learning to Deliver’ to achieve economic outcomes. We are thinking ahead to the implications of the sub-national review and considering how best to support authorities to prepare for the new local authority economic assessment duty. The credit crunch is highlighting how important economic issues will be over the next three years and we intend to address this actively. Overall, we believe that we have made a good start in the West Midlands, but we recognise clearly just how big the challenges facing both the sector and our communities will be over the next three years.”



Councillor Roger Stone
Leader of Rotherham MBC and Member
Chair for Local Government Yorkshire
and Humber (LGYH)

LGYH hosts the RIEP for the region and has a vision to provide leadership, challenge and support for public sector improvement and value for money across the region. Councillor Stone highlights one project which is supporting this vision and achieving efficiencies through collaboration.



“Yorkshire and Humber has a strong track record in delivering efficiency through procurement and our Yorbuild project is an excellent example of collaborative working in the region. The Yorbuild project sees the RIEP building on successful developmental work to establish regional frameworks covering construction works and consultancy which all authorities can access.

The project will be hosted by North Yorkshire Council with support from the Yorbuild Steering Group. We have generated a solid commitment from eight local authorities (with a combined annual capital spend of £245m) to take part in the project and a second wave of five local authorities is already expressing an interest. I am pleased to announce that anticipated efficiencies based on similar projects in other parts of the country are 10 per cent of spend, which will potentially generate £40m savings per annum across the region if all of our local authorities buy in. This is a significant return on the £250,000 invested by the RIEP particularly as once the procurement phase is completed the project will become self-funding providing a lasting legacy of collaborative working from the RIEP’s initial investment.

I look forward to working in partnership with local authority members and colleagues across the region to implement our programme of improvement and efficiency in Yorkshire and Humber, including taking forward this important project.”

Who's Who in the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships

Region	Member leads	Chief Executive	Contact
East of England	<p>Chairman of the Member Board, Improvement East: Councillor Richard Stay Bedfordshire CC (Conservative) richard.stay@bedscc.gov.uk</p> <p>Councillor Penny Otton Mid Suffolk DC (Lib Dem)</p> <p>Councillor Robin Harris Luton BC (Labour)</p>	Andrea Hill Suffolk CC	Cecilia Tredget cecilia.tredget@eera.gov.uk 01284 729 426
East Midlands	<p>Chair of the EM IEP Board: Councillor Martin Hill OBE Lincolnshire CC (Conservative) Councillorm.hill@lincolnshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Councillor John Stocks Nottinghamshire CC (Labour)</p> <p>Councillor Fiona Martin East Lindsey DC (Lib Dem)</p> <p>Councillor Jeremy Webb East Lindsey DC (Independent)</p>	Nick Hodgson Derbyshire CC	Chris Allison chris.allison@nottscc.gov.uk 0115 977 3875
London	<p>Member Chair of Capital Ambition: Councillor Michael White LB Havering (Conservative) michael.white@havering.gov.uk</p> <p>Councillor Nick Stanton LB Southwark (Lib Dem)</p> <p>Councillor Clyde Loakes LB Waltham Forest (Labour)</p>	Derek Myers LB Kensington & Chelsea	Steve Johnson steve.johnson@londoncouncils.gov.uk 020 7934 9972

Region	Member leads	Chief Executive	Contact
North East	Lead Member for NE IEP: Councillor Mick Henry Gateshead MBC (Labour) Councillor.mhenry@gateshead.gov.uk	George Garlick Durham CC	Martin Ryan Martin.ryan@northeastcouncils.gov.uk 0191 261 3094
North West	Chair of the Member Board for NW IEP: Councillor Tim Stoddard Cumbria CC (Conservative) timothy.stoddard@cumbriacc.gov.uk	Joyce Redfearn Wigan MBC	Gillian Bishop g.bishop@wigan.gov.uk 01942 705 484
South East	Member Chair for IESE: Councillor Paul Bettison Bracknell Forest (Conservative) paul.bettison@bracknell-forest.gov.uk	Peter Gilroy Kent CC	Andrew Larner andrew.larner@southeastiep.gov.uk 01883 732957
South West	Member Chair for SW IEP: Councillor Ray Frost Teignbridge DC (Independent) rfrost@teignbridge.gov.uk Councillor Christine Channon Devon CC (Conservative) Councillor Roger Hutchinson South Gloucestershire (Labour)	David Jenkins Dorset CC	Julian Morley j.morley@dorsetcc.gov.uk 01305 757 230
West Midlands	Lead member for Improvement and Efficiency WM: Councillor Norman Davies Solihull MBC (Liberal Democrat) ndavies@solihull.gov.uk	Nina Dawes Lichfield DC (interim)	Andy Hancox ahancox@wmcoe.gov.uk 0121 245 0220
Yorkshire & Humber	Member Chair for LGYH: Councillor Roger Stone Rotherham MBC (Labour) leader@rotherham.gov.uk	Kim Riley Hull CC	Chris Taylor chris.taylor@lgyh.gov.uk 01924 331 631
RIEP Programme Office			Keith Beaumont keith.beaumont@idea.gov.uk 020 7296 6828



Regional Improvement and
Efficiency Partnerships



Local Government Association