**Item 3**

**Report to Executive Advisory Group**

**Improvement East** **3rd September 2008**
**Subject: Delivery Plan – Feedback from Clusters**
**Report by: Secretariat**

**Purpose**

**To update the Executive Advisory Group in respect of the three Cluster meetings and the Skills and Capacity Cluster. A number of issues have arisen across the Clusters for consideration by the EAG and a number of recommendations are made.**

**Recommendations**

**It is recommended that the Group:**
**i) Consider the common issues arising concerning authority levels, cluster meetings and commissioning resources**
**ii) Approve the proposals detailed within the Performance Cluster: Dacorum BC bid; Equalities; Adults; Children's**
**iii) Agree that the Performance Cluster can develop and launch a Menu of Support at the 27th October event**
**iv) Agree the proposal from the LAA Cluster in respect of the regional architecture**
**v) Consider the framework for the efficiency agenda developed by the efficiency cluster and comment on the role descriptions of the Member and CEO Champions**
**vi) Support the network of the Heads of HR across the region in the development of a programme for 2009**
**vii) Support the setting up of a regional improvement network for Culture and Sport to the sum of £15,000 in 2008**
**viii) Retrospectively agrees £50,000 for Thurrock Council to develop a capacity building project for building control services.**

## 1. Introduction

1.1 Three Cluster meetings have been held in August.

1.2 A number of common issues have arisen which need consideration and agreement by the EAG:

- Authority levels of the Cluster and of individual members of the Cluster
- The ability to reallocate funding within the Cluster theme buy the Cluster
- The resourcing of commissioning strategies

## 2. Performance Cluster

2.1 The Performance Cluster met on 6th August. The Notes of the meeting are attached as Annex 1.

2.2 The main outcomes of the meeting were that the Cluster:

- Developed a role and remit
- Agreed that a Menu of Support should be developed for all authorities to utilise
- Agreed to develop a three year programme
- Agreed to devolve authority to robust governance groups where they exist
- Agreed to support individual authorities
- Agreed to aim towards commissioning the majority of support in the future rather than inviting bids – and this includes individual authority support
- Members expressed a wish not to be allocated to themes within the Cluster but to be utilised when a specific need (e.g. presentations) was identified

2.3 There was a discussion around the authority levels of the Cluster. There was recognition of the indicative funding level for Year 1 and the indicative allocations to key issues within the theme. However, there was a clear desire that the Cluster should be able adjust the funding to fit the needs of the issues within the overall theme budget.

2.4 In the absence of a clear decision-making line, the Cluster worked on the basis that:

a) They could reallocate funding within the theme
b) That recommendations should be made to the EAG

2.5 It has subsequently been recognised that some of our work will require a number of commissioning strategies for the different themes. There is a question as to whether this should come from our existing resources. It should be noted that there is limited resource and in some areas expertise within so the EAG may wish to consider how we generate the evidence to underpin our investments.

2.6 A number of proposals were considered under the key themes of the Cluster as follows.

2.7 <u>Use of Resources (UoR)</u>

2.7.1 It was agreed that:

- Individual visits will be carried out to those five authorities with a score of 1 to assess their needs and how to support them. Year 1 funding of £300,000 would be utilised to support these authorities.
- A working group will be formed to produce a UoR Menu of Support. This Menu would be aimed at those scoring 2 or 3. The group would be drawn from those scoring 4; those would have already improved from 2 to 3 and with Audit Commission support.

2.8 Dacorum BC

2.8.1 A bid from Dacorum BC was considered. This is for £190,000 for an Improvement Director over a two year period.

2.8.2 The Cluster discussed the bid in detail and agreed that the authority needed support both in terms of its UoR score (1) but also for wider issues.

2.8.3 *The Cluster recommends approval of this proposal subject to:*
*a) A Joint Agency Group is established (as proposed within the bid)*
*b) An Improvement East Chief Executive is allocated to support the authority.*

2.8.4 A Chief Executive has been approached and is currently considering this proposal.

2.9 Equalities

2.9.1 A proposal from EERA was considered which proposed a programme of work to support authorities with the new Equalities Framework and to help improve scores across the region. The proposal was for £36,400. It was noted that this proposal includes initial scoping work which may result in the need for further funding in 2009/10.

2.9.2 *The Cluster recommends approval of this proposal.*

2.9.3 It was also recognised that the profile of this area of work needs to be raised as it will be an important aspect of CAA and the social cohesion agenda. It was agreed that a lead Chief Executive should be allocated to this area of work. A Chief Executive has been approached and is currently considering this proposal.

2.10 Adult Social Care

2.10.1 The Cluster was made aware that David White, as Champion, has been working with the Joint Improvement Partnership (JIP) for Adult Social Care. The purpose of the JIP is to foster improvement, development and innovation in social care practice in the East of England. The JIP has developed a Work Plan 2008-09 which identifies seven work streams with outline plans for each one, such as Personalisation, Efficiency and Improving the lives of those with Dementia & Long Term Conditions. Each work stream has a lead Director of Adult Social Care; each project will also have a project manager drawn from a relevant local authority or other partner. A programme manager will coordinate the overall programme of work.

2.10.2 The JIP's priorities have been set in a complex context of national, regional and local pressures. The pressures, taken together require a radical transformation of adult social care and how it works with its key partners. Adult social care needs to develop new models of support which respond to challenging demographic changes and which are personalised to individuals. This entails delivering support which is provided with dignity and respect, seeing citizenship and equal treatment for the most vulnerable in society as key priorities and focussing on supporting most if not all people to remain in their own homes. This shift will require adult social care departments to spend current resources very differently and adopt a leadership role for the health and well being of the wider community that is council wide and focused on

place and people. The intention, therefore, is to work with existing regional networks to develop regional support for the implementation and use of evidence and knowledge in inspection, commissioning, service delivery and practice.

2.10.3 It should be noted that the overall submission of £400,000 exceeds the allocation of £300,000 for Adults. However, some of the work streams, albeit targeted at supporting Adult Social Care, closely relate to work covered by other Clusters such as Efficiency and Skills and Capacity. Consideration is required as to how these proposals can be funded.

2.10.4 The Work Plan and associated details have been developed since the Cluster meeting and any comments by Cluster members will be reported to the EAG meeting.

2.10.5 *It is recommended that, subject to the views of the Cluster, these proposals are approved.*

2.11 Children's Services

2.11.1 The Cluster was made aware that Kevin Crompton, as Champion, has been overseeing the development of a proposal from the Children's Services Board (CSB). These proposals have been submitted since the Cluster meeting and considered by Cluster members.

2.11.2 The proposals comprise:

a) The CSB advises that the 14-19 agenda should be the first priority. All Children's services authorities (CSA) will need to consider and prepare for the proposed return of funding for the 16-19 phase. The majority of CSA's will not have any expertise in this area nor any clear strategy as expertise in this area largely transferred to the LSC and FE sectors some years ago. Given this is the single common issue which challenges all CSAs it is recommended that Improvement East fund a region wide project to develop working models for commissioning 14-19 provision with a clear evaluation of the merits of commissioning on a local authority or sub regional basis. A detailed submission has been written in conjunction with the EoE Association of Directors of Children's Services. The proposals include the appointment of a Programme Manager to develop and implement the programme; work to establish readiness and then capacity building in sub-regional areas. The requested funding is:

- 2008/09: £280,000
- 2009/10: £220,000

b) Secondly, the CSB considers the key barrier to an effective improvement and efficiency strategy is the lack of a high-level overview and summary of current practice and possibilities. They therefore recommend that Improvement East fund a commissioning strategy which will:

- Summarise current improvement challenges
- Identify all resources currently available to support improvement

- Identify opportunities where Improvement east investment will make a significant difference to improving or sustaining performance in CSAs
- Develop a vfm comparison database
- Identify best performers in efficiency of services
- Identify practices that could be transferred /shared
- Identify opportunities where Improvement east investment would make a significant difference.

Such a commissioning document would require c£30k to complete and the preferred approach would be to identify through ADCS 2 secondees (one from a unitary and one from a two tier CSA area) to work together to produce this commissioning strategy and overview.

2.11.3 *The Cluster recommends approval of this proposal subject to the wider discussion in respect of the support of commissioning resource.*

2.12 Menu of Support

2.12.1 Since the Cluster meeting, a joint Improvement East and Government Office event has been arranged for the 27th October. The key aims of the day are to understand the developing role for authority leaders in partnership-based delivery; to explore how we can make the most of the partnership based capacity that we have; to spread learning with some good practice examples and to understand the support that is available. The keynote speaker is Barbara Follett MP. To date over 100 delegates have enrolled.

2.12.2 It is considered to be important that we should launch a Menu of Support that all authorities could begin to utilise. This could include offers such as full payment/subsidies for:

- ◊ Leadership Academy
- ◊ Peer Review
- ◊ Councillor Mentoring
- ◊ National Graduate Scheme

2.12.3 The Performance Cluster (meeting on the 22nd October) needs to have the authority to be able to develop and launch a Menu at the event.

2.12.4 Any suggestions for Menu items are gratefully received.

## 3. LAA Cluster

3.1 The LAA Cluster met on 5th August. The Notes of the meeting are attached as Annex 2.

3.2 The main outcome of the meeting was that it was agreed that the existing regional architecture supporting LSPs and the delivery of LAAs is not fit for purpose. It was agreed that a paper should be developed proposing a new support structure. This structure would need to incorporate a strategic group, taking advice from a practitioner group. Once established, the strategic group should consider priority needs, consider the necessary support and commission work as appropriate.

3.3 It was agreed that the proposals would be considered by the Cluster prior to the EAG meeting. Any comments by Cluster members will be reported to the meeting. Should the new governance arrangements be agreed, it was considered that the LAA Cluster would not be required, provided that the strategic group had Improvement East representation on it with a Member and Chief Executive Champion.

## 4. Efficiency Cluster

4.1 The Efficiency Cluster met on 13th August. The Notes of the meeting are attached as Annex 3.

4.2 The cluster meeting discussed the approach to efficiency set out in the briefing paper. This framework emphasises the need to work with authorities to help them become streamlined, build organisational capacity and support collaboration. The main outcome of the meeting was that this approach was endorsed and should be taken forward for discussion at the next EAG meeting. The meeting also took a discussion on the role of Member and Chief Executive Champions and it was agreed that these "role" descriptions should also be reported to the EAG. The briefing paper and the amended role descriptions are attached as Annex 4.

## 5. Skills and Capacity Cluster

5.1 Due to the diverse nature of this clustering of issues it was decided not to call a meeting of the champions but to circulate a briefing paper addressing the areas and invite comments.

5.2 There are six work areas in this cluster and a proposal for the future approach for each area is set out below:-

### 5.3 Workforce Planning

5.3.1 This is an area where Building Capacity East made an impact in the past and it is recommended that the Partnership continue to support fully funded programmes such as Interchange. There is currently a great deal of activity on workforce development which can be continued via the Menu of Support, under the Performance Cluster (see para 2.12 above). However, there is a need to review this work and it is proposed that a network made up of the Heads of HR undertake this work and identify future requirements.

5.3.2 Sports and Culture is another area where there is a need to develop skills and capacity and Improvement East has been approached to support the formation of a improvement network , Culture and Support Improvement East (CSIE) to address capacity. This proposal resonates with the top LAA indicators in the region where the national indicator to increase adult participation in sport was selected by 9 of the 10 LAAs. This new network will also be supported by funding of £10,000 from the IDeA.

5.3.3 *It is recommended that Improvement East support:*
*a) The network of the Heads of HR across the region in the development of a programme for 2009*
*b) To support the setting up of a regional improvement network for Culture and Sport to the sum of £15,000 in 2008.*

## 5.4 Member Development

5.4.1 This area of work is being funded by transitional funding in year one and a programme of work is underway. It is proposed that Improvement East continue to work with the Member Development network and that a programme for Year Two is developed and bought back for discussion in January 2009.

## 5.5 Community Empowerment

5.5.1 It is proposed that a work programme is developed with the Regional Empowerment Partnership and discussed with Member and CEO Champions before being considered by the Improvement East Member Panel in the autumn.

## 5.6 Economic Development

5.6.1 It is proposed that a Member and CEO Champion is identified for this area and that a work programme is developed once the outcome of the report on economic capacity in local authorities is known. It is anticipated that this work would start in September/October.

## 5.7 Growth

5.7.1 Each of the growth areas has different priorities and it is proposed that Improvement East works with the sub regional partners to identify where it can add value. There are some common issues that impact on all the growth areas and it is proposed that Improvement East works with partners to address these as well particularly:-

- Capacity
- Quality of the built environment
- Community cohesion

5.7.2 Growth is one of the big cross-cutting areas that may be a focus for support for the partnership in Year One (see item 4 on this agenda)

5.7.3 Work to support the development of MAAs in Bedfordshire and Luton, Haven Gateway and the Thames Gateway is currently being funded through the transitional funding programme. This work is set to continue and further support will need to be considered again later in the year.

5.7.4 Following discussions with Thurrock Council a small initiative has been agreed to build capacity in the building control service in Thurrock, Castle Point and Basildon. A contribution of £50,000 was agreed in July to get the project underway urgently.

5.7.5 *It is recommended that Improvement East retrospectively agrees £50,000 for Thurrock Council to develop a capacity building project for building control services.*

## 5.8 Unitaries

5.8.1 LGR is a key issue for the East of England and it is proposed that Improvement East continues to work with each area to identify how it can support authorities in this period of change.

5.8.2 A separate report is included on the agenda on support to the Bedfordshire authorities (item 5)

## 6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The cluster meetings have provided an opportunity for members of the partnership to consider issues in more detail and make recommendations and suggestions to the EAG. In addition to the specific issues raised in this paper, it would be useful to receive feedback from the EAG on the cluster meetings and how this approach to involve partners could be developed for all clusters in the future.

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**PERFORMANCE CLUSTER**

**Notes of Cluster Meeting**
**6th August 2008, 9:30am Trinity Centre**

Chair: Caroline Tapster, Chief Executive, Hertfordshire CC

**Present:**
Cllr Lynne Faulkner, Bedfordshire CC and Bedford BC
Cllr Mac McGuire, Cambridgeshire CC
Mark Harrison, IDeA
Mike Mosley, EERA
Andy Perrin, Audit Commission
Richard Potter, GO East
Jane Sullivan, Improvement East

**Apologies:**
Cllr Derek Ashley, Hertfordshire CC
Cllr Chris Millington, Harlow DC
Gillian Beasley, Peterborough City Council
Kevin Crompton, Luton BC
Rob Hammond, Cambridge City Council
Andrew Limb, GO East (Sub Richard Potter)
Dennis Skinner, IDeA, (Sub Mark Harrison)
David White, Norfolk CC

| Item | | Action |
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| **1.** | **Welcome and Introductions**<br><br>Introductions were made around the table.<br><br>The cluster was reminded of the agreement at the Joint Member Panel and Executive Advisory Group on the 26th June to form the clusters and to have champions to take forward work under the 4 main themes. | |
| **2.** | **Theme Brief and Development of Work Programme**<br><br>The cluster agreed that the aim of this item was to establish some general principles, ways of working and a draft work programme for presentation to the EAG on 3rd Sept and the Member Panel on 18th Sept.<br><br>During the discussion, the role and remit of this cluster was developed and agreed to include the following:<br>◊ To have an overview of the work streams within the cluster<br>◊ To allocate resources accordingly (this includes reallocating Year 1 funding as appropriate)<br>◊ To monitor other groups who are commissioned to undertake work – such as the Children's' Programme Board and the Adult Social Care JIP – and to make | |

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| | recommendations to EAG on proposals arising from these groups<br>◊ To commission work from appropriate groups/authorities etc<br>◊ To quality assure work<br>◊ To ensure the transfer of learning from resultant programmes of work<br>◊ To aim towards commissioning the majority of support in the future rather than inviting bids (including Individual Authorities)<br>◊ To ensure that bureaucracy is kept to a minimum<br><br>The cluster discussed the issues in the briefing paper and agreed that:<br>◊ A menu of support should be developed that all authorities could utilise<br>◊ The menu should include support to:<br>o Authorities post LGR transition<br>o Where significant changes occur<br>◊ The cluster should aim to develop a three year programme and to devolving authority to robust governance groups where they exist<br><br>It was noted that both the Adult and Children's work streams are actively developing proposals for consideration by the EAG on 3rd Sept. It was agreed that this cluster should receive these proposals first to enable any comments to be made. JS will circulate these when received on the basis that should no comment by made by a cluster member this indicates agreement to the proposal, and they will be recommended for funding to EAG. | JS to draft a proposal for next meeting<br><br>JS<br>ALL |
| **3.** | **Use of Resources**<br><br>A report was presented that gave the factual performance statistics of all 60 authorities together with more details behind the scores for the five authorities with a score of 1. A proposal was put forward in respect of a number of means of addressing the performance of all authorities in this arena.<br><br>AP stressed that this was the last year of the current assessment and the current round of assessments would give the performance levels of authorities as at March 2008. The current assessment results will be published in Dec 2008. Further assessment of the existing scores behind the headline figures would therefore be of limited value.<br><br>It was noted that there is optimism that some of the authorities currently scoring 1 could improve their score in the current assessment round.<br><br>It was noted that both Great Yarmouth BC and Uttlesford have requested individual support to address their needs | |

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| | rather than generic support.<br><br>The cluster agreed that this area of performance is a key priority. The following courses of action were agreed:<br>◊ Individual visits should be carried out to those authorities scoring 1 to assess their needs and how to support them (NB Dacorum item below)<br>◊ The £300,000 allocated to this work stream for Year 1 should be used to address the needs of the authorities currently scoring 1 (NB: Dacorum item below).<br>◊ A working group should be formed to produce a UoR Menu of Support. This Menu would be aimed at those scoring 2 or 3. The group should be drawn from those scoring 4, those who have improved from 2 to 3 and with Audit Commission support. | JS/MH<br><br><br><br>JS/AP |
| **4.** | **Dacorum Borough Council Bid**<br><br>A bid from Dacorum BC was received for £190,000 for an Improvement Director for a two year period.<br><br>The cluster discussed this bid in detail and agreed that the authority needed support both in respect of its Use of Resources score (1) but also for wider issues.<br><br>The cluster agreed that this bid should be recommended for approval to the EAG on the basis that the authority establishes a Joint Agency Group as set out in the bid and an Improvement East Chief Executive is allocated to support the authority.<br><br>It was suggested that Rob Tinlin, CEx of Southend BC could undertake this role.<br><br>In terms of the finances, it was agreed that this needed to be split across the two years so that:<br>◊ 2008/09 funding is from the Use of Resources stream<br>◊ 2009/10 funding is from the Individual Authorities stream but taken from Year 1 allocation | JS/CT<br><br><br><br>JS/MH<br><br>JS |
| **5.** | **Equalities**<br><br>A proposal from EERA was tabled which proposed a programme of work to support authorities with the new Equality Framework and to help improve the scores across the region. The proposal was for £36,400.<br><br>It was noted that the proposal includes initial scoping work which may result in the need for further funding in 2009/10.<br><br>The cluster agreed that this bid should be recommended for approval to the EAG.<br><br>As no financial allocation has been made for this year, it was | JS/CT<br><br>JS |

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| | agreed that this should be transferred from the Individuals Authorities stream.<br><br>It was recognised that the profile of this area of work needs to be raised as it will be important in respect of CAA and the social cohesion agenda. It was agreed that a lead Chief Executive should be allocated to this area of work. It was suggested that Alastair Robertson, CEx Watford BC would be an appropriate lead and that CT would pursue this. | CT |
| **6.** | **Champions' Role**<br>It was agreed that the role of Champions would vary across this theme with specific Champions being allocated to certain work streams, but not necessarily to all.<br><br>It was noted that both the Adults and Children's groups within this theme had requested a Member to be allocated to them. However, Members were keen that they are not allocated to work streams within this cluster – but were happy to undertake specific actions when required e.g. presentations at events. | JS to report back to Adults and Children's' groups accordingly |
| **7.** | **Governance of the Cluster**<br><br>It was agreed that this cluster needs to continue to meet to both develop a robust work programme and commission work accordingly and also to consider bids from individual authorities when necessary. | |
| **8.** | **Next Steps**<br><br>CT would report the outcomes and recommendations of this cluster meeting to the EAG on 3rd Sept.<br><br>Further cluster meetings will be arranged –to meet four times a year, in advance of the EAG meetings.<br><br>**Next meeting**<br>22nd October 2008 at 9:30am at the Trinity Centre, Cambridge | CT<br><br>JS<br><br>ALL |

| WORK PROG | Year 1 2008/09 | Year 2 2009/10 | Year 3 2010/11 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Overarching** | Develop a 3 year programme | | |
| **Authorities in Difficulty** | Consider bids as appropriate | Move towards commissioned work | |
| **All Authorities** | Develop Menu of Support including for those with significant changes | Develop Menu to include authorities post LGR transition | |
| **Adult Services** | Commission and consider programme of support from JIP | | |
| **Children's Services** | Commission and consider programme of support from the Children Services Board | | |
| **Use of Resources** | Visit all authorities with a score of 1 and develop support package. Form a group, develop and deliver a Menu of Support | | |
| **Equalities** | If approved by EAG, monitor delivery of EERA programme of support | Possible consideration of further support | |

| FINANCES | Allocation Year 1 2008/09 | Expenditure | Balance |
|---|---|---|---|
| Authorities in Difficulty | £1,000,000 | *Dacorum: £95,000* | £868,600 |
| All Authorities | | *Equalities project: £36,400* | |
| Adult Services | £300,000 | | £300,000 |
| Children's Services | £300,000 | | £300,000 |
| Use of Resources | £300,000 | *Dacorum: £95,000* | £205,000 |
| Equalities | £0 | *See above* | N/A |
| **Total** | **£1,900,000** | **£226,400** | **£1,673,600** |

Italics: to be considered by EAG

**LAA CLUSTER GROUP**

Notes of Group Meeting
5TH August 2008, 3pm Trinity Centre

Chair: Gillian Beasley, Chief Executive, Peterborough

Present:
Cllr David Jenkins, Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Peter Jones, Babergh DC
Cllr Jane Storey, Suffolk County Council
Lucy Ashwell, Improvement East
Ian Jacobs, GO East
Satvinder Rana, IDeA
Alex Stewart, A2P
Jane Sullivan, Improvement East

Apologies:
Geoff Rivers, South Norfolk DC
Joanna Killian, Essex County Council
Andy Perrin, Audit Commission
Dennis Skinner, IDeA, (Sub Satvinder Rana)
Andrew Limb, GO East (Sub Ian Jacobs)

| Item | | Action |
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| **1.** | **Welcome and Introductions:**<br><br>The group were reminded of the agreement at the Joint Member Panel and Executive Advisory Group on the 26th June to form the cluster groups and to have cluster champions to take forward work under the 4 main themes. The general principles for each cluster to follow are:<br><br>• Modus Operandii needs to be worked out by theme i.e. fit for purpose<br>• Need flexible matrix of support to manage range of issues across varying geography<br>• Emphasis on adding value<br>• Build on current architecture -enhance not replace/duplicate existing structures<br>• Need to work together with key people in each theme<br>• Need clarity on key things to achieve | |
| **2.** | **Theme Brief and Development of Work Programme**<br><br>The group discussed the issues in the briefing paper and agreed that:<br><br>1) The present regional LSP and LAA architecture is not currently robust enough to take on a commissioning role. IJ and AS to work with Janet Capstick from the GO and Eve Dewsnap, Norfolk County Council and Chair of the Informal LAA Network to develop a proposal for a strategic group | IJ, AS, JC and ED |

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| | which will be able to fulfil the role required with advice from a practitioner group. This is to be circulated to the cluster group for comment prior to 25 August so that a revised proposal can be included with the circulation of the papers for the EAG on the 3rd September. There will need to be member representation on the group and a high level link back into Improvement East. GB volunteered to be part of the new group.<br>It is anticipated that the new group will take up responsibilities in October, assuming approval from the Member Panel on 18th September. | GB |
| | 2) The Aspire 2 Perform project is an integral part of this workstream and the new group should take ownership of that project. | New Group |
| | 3) The new group will need to look at the top 5 priorities identified by the LAA informal network, consider if they are the right ones, consider what support is appropriate and commission relevant work. | New Group |
| | 4) Part of the A2P project is to review the EERA LSP Network steering group and to develop a more targeted network. This needs to be linked into the new strategic group. AS to talk to EERA about the developments and the link. | AS |
| **3.** | **Champions Role** | |
| | The group was asked to promote the A2P diagnostic toolkit as part of their champion role. It was agreed that they needed a better understanding in order to do that and that AS should arrange a demonstration after the Member Panel on the 18th and either before or after the EAG on 3rd September. | ALL<br>AS |
| | A presentation on LAAs/LSPs is needed for the "Developing in Partnership" event on the 27th October, particularly to focus on the support Improvement East is proposing. GB volunteered to do this. | GB |
| | A Member is needed to give a presentation on the Member Role in LSPs at the launch of the sub-regional briefings on LSPs and Community Empowerment on 8th October. Cllr Storey recommended Cllr Joanna Spicer from Suffolk County Council. | LA/AS |
| | The group were asked to take opportunities to champion anything that is on offer from Improvement East regardless of their cluster. | ALL |
| **4.** | **Governance of the Group** | |
| | If the new proposed new architecture is approved by EAG and the Member Panel there will be a high level link into | |

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| | those groups and this cluster group will no longer be needed. | |
| **5.** | **Next Steps**<br><br>The situation report for EAG will comprise the proposal for the new group and GB will take this to the EAG. | GB |

# Improvement East
# Notes of the Efficiency Cluster Meeting
# 13 August 2008 2.30 pm
# At the Trinity Centre, Cambridge

**Present:**

Cllr Richard Stay – Chairman RIE Panel, Bedfordshire County Council *
Cllr Michael Lager – Braintree District Council
Cllr Terry Hone – North Hertfordshire District Council
Malcolm Morley – Chief Executive Harlow District Council
Kevin Crompton – Chief Executive Luton Borough Council
Mark Harrison – IDeA *
Colin Anderson – GO-East *
Ceclia Tredget – Director, Improvement East
Mike Mosley – EERA

* Substitute

**Apologies:**

Cllr Tony Williams – Norfolk County Council (Substitute Cllr Richard Stay)
Cllr John Lamb – Southend on Sea Borough Council
Rob Tinlin – Southend on Se Borough Council
Andy Perrin – Audit Commission
Dennis Skinner - IDeA
Andrew Limb – GO-East

**Action**

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

It was proposed and agreed that Richard Stay should act as Chairman in the absence of Tony Williams.

The purpose of Cluster groups was defined as helping to develop an innovative work programme that will concentrate on those areas which will make a real difference.

To that end, the group needed to focus on:

- evidence based opportunities
- identifying big wins
- identifying best practice to promote across the region
- partnership working
- measuring performance

- procurement and building on the work of the RCE

The role and purpose of cluster groups would be discussed at both EAG and RIEP September meetings.

2. **Theme Brief and Development of Work Programme.**

Malcolm Morley presented his paper "Taking the Efficiency Agenda Forward".

Appendix 1 "The Role of the partnership Board Lead Member" and the Role of the Chief Executive Champion (Efficiency) was discussed at length.

General comments were that all members of the group had an ambassadorial role. In particular, Richard Stay would like to see Members and Chie Executives having one to one conversations to encourage buy in. It was noted that a different approach was being taken in London where Members were being asked to challenge authoritieis.

It was agreed that item 4 under Chief Executive Champions needed to be more explicit, emphasising the fact that projects needed to be agreed by Members. MM

This Appendix, with agreed amendment, to be taken forward for discussion at EAG and RIE Panel. CMT

Comments arising from the discussion on the main body of the paper were:

In order to advise where the money should be invested, some groundwork (preparatory work) needed to be done by the secretariat, although it was accepted that this would involve buying in additional capacity.

It was important to capture the learning from projects and roll out the knowledge. This was a job for the secretariat and Cecilia confirmed work on this was ongoing.

Need to include other public sector organisations such as Police, PCTs etc. Cecilia reported that the secretariat were looking at work carried out in Scotland around cross sector collaboration on procurement with a view to implementing this in the Eastern region.

Procurement of fuel was considered to be an area worth looking at. Richard reported that Kent County Council had proposed setting up a national scheme and Improvement East had registered an interest and were being kept informed of progress.

It was agreed that the paper (with agreed amendment to Appendix 1) should be put to EAG on 3 September.

3. **Projects for Possible Discussion**

It was decided that it was too early to be discussing individual projects.

Cecilia was asked to prepare a note on the RCE legacy, the efficiencies gained from projects and what now needed to be taken forward. Note to set a baseline and recommend approach to take. CMT

4. **Governance of the Group**

- Frequency of meetings – Meetings would take place as required.

- Longevity of the Cluster – as long as required to do the job.

- Linkages with other Clusters – recommended this to be discussed a Member Panel and EAG together with report back procedure.

5. **Next Steps**

- Malcolm's report to go to EAG on 3 September with approved amendments. Richard Stay unable to attend on this day Penny Otton will be attending in his place
.
- Suggested next meeting to be held on Friday 17 October at 2.00 but depending on availability of Tony Williams (Chairman). Meeting to be held in Cambridge.

# TAKING THE EFFICIENCY AGENDA FORWARD

## 1.0 Introduction to the Efficiency Theme

Improving efficiency needs to be seen within the broader context of the public sector and local government agendas with service transformation and efficiency going hand in hand.

The aim is to improve the efficiency of resource investments in activities that will add real value for the communities served through improving service outputs, releasing resources from existing activities for re-investment/reducing cost to the Council Tax payer and enabling Councils to meet their statutory requirements in the most cost effective way possible.

The commitment to on-going improvements in the delivery of improved community/customer outcomes and efficiency is clear and at the core of the approach to the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy (RIES).

Within the CSR07 guidance it is clear that Government is expecting Procurement to make a substantial contribution to the efficiencies required. Of the £4.9bn worth of efficiencies expected nationally £2.8bn (57%) is anticipated to be from "Smarter Procurement"

In the East of England this target equates to circa £380m of which "Smarter Procurement" is expected to deliver around £230m. The foci of the approach to efficiency gains will therefore be streamlining and improving the capacity of service provision/commissioning systems to improve efficiency and improving value from "Smarter Procurement".

## 2.0 The Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy (RIES)

The RIES sets out the key priorities and the success criteria for Improvement East in addressing greater efficiency across the region:

- All Councils will have access to support to enable them to meet the national targets for efficiency savings.

- Opportunities will be explored to add value to Council's plans to increase efficiency savings above existing targets.

- Information will be collated, analysed and utilised to enable the targeting of support to Councils, the spread of good practice and value to be added to the efficiency gain process.

- Opportunities will be explored to add value to individual 'at risk' Councils to increase their capacity to achieve efficiency savings.

- Support will be given to the development of longer term solutions to transform the delivery of services in an efficient and sustainable way.

Councils within the region and beyond have made many efficiency gains with some having achieved transformational changes in efficiency and performance. We now need to ensure that the best practice of those achieving transformation becomes the norm and that innovation leads to real and on-going improvements in efficiency.

In short, we intend to learn from the best and continue to challenge ourselves to ensure that a community of improvement is developed that delivers tangible sustainable efficiency gains. We recognise that much remains to be done and that many opportunities exist to improve both the sector's efficiency and the efficiency of individual Councils. We firmly believe, however, that only through working together will these potential efficiency gains be realised.

In the first year it has been agreed that the partnership will focus on two key areas to increase efficiency:

- Promoting procurement best practice.

- The transformation of services.

The intention is to build on the work from the RCE and to ensure that a momentum is created to deliver improvements in efficiency into the future.

## 3.0 Previous/ongoing work in the region

The Regional Centre of Excellence engaged in many projects which enabled Councils in the region to report efficiency savings of approximately £400m for the CSR04 period. The range of projects supported was spread across procurement in Goods, Construction, Waste, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Corporate Services, Postal Services and Highways. Other performance improvement projects were also supported which encouraged Councils to work together to identify improved value from partnership working.

Examples Include:

- Public Service Village, improving access to services by creating a one stop shop for customer services.

- Waste Partnership, collections, joint contract between two District Councils.

- SMARTE East; A regional joint procurement consortium for the procurement of capital works including constructors and materials/suppliers at all levels.

- Postal Services Framework, improved value from a choice of collection of mail suppliers.

- Hertfordshire Market Place; Access for all Districts to Hertfordshire Purchasing and Supplies contracts through the Hertfordshire Marketplace and Luton.

- The Regional Centre of Excellence hosted the National Procurement Programme which has provided guides and framework and major efficiency opportunities for councils across the UK.

- Commissioning a study on revenues and benefits efficiency gains.

- Commissioning a study on collaboration for the investment of public sector resources within places.

## 4.0 Future Approach

It is important that the above is built upon in the evolving context of the challenges being faced by local government and the rest of the public sector. It is therefore proposed to develop the Efficiency approach as follows:

### 4.1 Streamline

Develop Council organisational competence and capability in:

- Benchmarking and identifying efficiency gain opportunities.
- Developing and agreeing the specification of service outputs/outcomes.
- Developing a systems thinking approach to improving the existing means of service provision.

### 4.2 Build Organisational Capacity:

Develop organisational competence and capability in:

- Option appraisal.
- Service commissioning.
- Procurement.
- Partnership working.

### 4.3 Collaborate

Develop organisational competence and capability in:

- Developing and delivering joint in-house partnerships.
- Negotiating to join existing partnerships.
- Creating new partnerships/joint ventures, and
- Supporting the delivery of improved efficiency, economy and effectiveness from collaboration.

Clearly different Councils are at different stages for different service areas. The aim will be to provide access to a suite of resources that would enable Councils to gain the most for them. Learning from these Councils (and from elsewhere) would then

be distributed creating the opportunity to maximize the value created from the investment and reducing the time for Councils to move down the learning curve. This approach would build individual and sector capacity to improve.

## 5.0 Key partners within the Efficiency Theme

The main specialist partners currently are:

### 5.1 Smarter Procurement

- National Procurement Forum.
- East of England – All Procurement Networks.
- Performance Improvement Network.
- Public Buying Organisations.

One of the key tasks is to map the existing public sector procurement agencies and seek to ensure that they work synergistically. Councils will then have a more focused knowledge and choice of the best procurement options.

### 5.2 Transformation of Services

- Performance Improvement Network.
- IDeA, Audit Commission, Government Office - East.
- Cabinet Office Shared Services Programme.
- Waste Partnerships – Regional Waste Technical advisory Group.
- Waste Information Network.

The above is not exhaustive and a review of the partners and their contributions to the improvement of efficiency needs to be undertaken. The key to all of the above, however, is the willingness and ability of Councils (and other public sector organisations) to work together. It is also recognised that there needs to be real engagement with the private and voluntary sectors to ensure that opportunities to learn and to liberate value are taken.

## 6.0 Possible funding from alternate sources

It is clear that Improvement East only has limited funding. Alternative forms of funding will, therefore, be explored. Initial thoughts include specific government support:

- CLG – Empowerment Fund. (Still at the consultation stage.)
- Every child matters – transformation funding.
- DEFRA.
- National programmes and initiatives.

Learning will also be taken from partnership working with the private sector which provided access to investment such as the joint venture created by Harlow Council and the partnership created by Suffolk County Council.

## 7.0 Ideas and Proposals

Improvement East cannot deliver efficiency gains for Councils. It can only work with Councils to support the development of the transformational changes in systems, processes, capacity and performance necessary. Councils must take responsibility for their own progress. It is not proposed consequently to merely provide 'grants' for Council projects but to develop programmes of work and initiatives. The following ideas have already been suggested and will be built upon:

- Launch promotion (not an event).
- Quick wins e.g. match funding for diagnostic work to identify efficiency gaps/opportunities.
- Initiate an all Council survey on Efficiency Gain priorities and methodology.
- Create a Top Performers Programme to leverage learning from top performers.
- Develop best practice awards.
- Develop web pages and message board.
- Learning Forums for major activity areas.
- Create a Regional Public Sector Partnership Board with all parts of the public sector represented to identify how partnership working in the public sector can improve efficiency.
- Map the existing public sector procurement agencies and seek to ensure that they work synergistically.

## 8.0 Roles

Attached at Appendix 1 to this paper are suggested roles for the Lead Member and the Chief Executive Champion for the Efficiency Theme. They will be supported by the Efficiency Cluster. The cluster will be a key reference group for the development and review of the initiatives above.

## 9.0 Resources

If Improvement East is to pursue and deliver its ambitious agenda for efficiency gain it must invest in its own capacity to do so. Proposals will be forthcoming to build this capacity.

## 10.0 Conclusion

This paper seeks to provide a framework for the pursuit of Improvement East's ambitious Efficiency Theme. It recognises the importance of generating a momentum for change and achievement. It also recognises that it is for Councils themselves to engage and to deliver the efficiency gains required. The role of Improvement East is to support Councils in developing that willingness and ability to deliver tangible efficiency gains.

## 11.0 Outcomes from the Group

- To consider the future approach outlined in paragraph 4.0.
- To consider the ideas and proposals in paragraph 7.0 and agree areas to develop.
- Discuss the roles of the Member and Chief Executive champions in paragraph 8.0 and make suggestions of how this would be taken forward
- Develop the basis of a situation report for the EAG on 3 September 2008.

**Malcolm Morley**
Chief Executive Champion (Efficiency)

**Cecilia Tredget**
Director, Improvement East

**THE ROLE OF THE PARTNERSHIP BOARD LEAD MEMBER**

It is important that the Lead Member and Chief Executive Champion work closely together in developing and pursuing the agenda. To this end it is proposed that the following roles of the Lead Member are adopted:

1. To act as the Partnership Board Member focus and lead for efficiency issues.

2. To act as a reference point for the Chief Executive Champion.

3. To represent the Partnership Board as appropriate on efficiency issues.

4. To take an overview of efficiency projects and progress.

5. To promote the engagement of all Councils in the efficiency agenda within the region.

6. To support the development of linkages with, and learning from, organisations in the rest of the public sector and other sectors.

7. To support the Chief Executive Champion (Efficiency).

8. To liaise with the Chair of the Improvement East Board.

**THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE CHAMPION (EFFICIENCY)**

It is proposed that the Chief Executive Champion (Efficiency) has the following roles:

1. To act as the principal advisor to the Partnership Board/Executive Advisory Board on efficiency issues.

2. To act as the sponsor of Efficiency Projects agreed by the Partnership Board/Executive Advisory Group.

3. To be the principal contact and representative of the Board/Executive Advisory Group on efficiency issues in consultation with the Efficiency Lead Member.

4. To have responsibility for the authorization of expenditure on projects previously agreed with Members.

5. To promote the engagement of all Councils in the efficiency agenda within the region.

6. To promote the development of linkages with, and learning from, organisations in the rest of the public sector and other sectors.

7. To support the Partnership Board Lead Member for efficiency.

8. To liaise with the Chair of the Executive Advisory Board and the Director of Improvement East on Efficiency matters.