Item 5

Report to the Executive Advisory Group

Improvement East **12th November 2008**
Subject: Leadership Centre Proposals from Suffolk and Norfolk
Report by: Secretariat

Purpose

To update on progress with the Foundation Stage of the Leadership and Place Shaping programme in Suffolk and Norfolk.

To ask EAG approval to recommend to members that Improvement East commission the second phase of the programme to deliver the outcomes identified in the Foundation stage and provide match-funding.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive Advisory Group

- **i) Note progress made during the Foundation stage of both programmes.**
- **ii) Agree to commission the next phase of the programme to deliver outcomes identified for Suffolk and Norfolk.**
- **iii) Agree to match fund the Leadership Centre programmes in Norfolk and Suffolk to a maximum of £150,000 for each county area.**
- **iv) Agree that the Chief Executive Champion for LGR reports back to the EAG at regular intervals on the programme.**

1. Introduction

1.1 This report sets out the background to the commissioning of the Leadership Centre to work with Norfolk and Suffolk. This report and associated presentation by the Leadership Centre provides a progress report on the Foundation Stage and outline proposals for future work.

2. Background

2.1 Following the joint meeting of the EAG and Member Panel on the 26 June 2008, the Leadership Centre was commissioned to develop a regional initiative to build capacity in Norfolk and Suffolk. The approach being developed by the Leadership Centre is relevant to all areas but it was decided to prioritise Norfolk and Suffolk as they were presented with particular challenges as a result of LGR.

2.2 The work was specifically commissioned to support two of the high level outcomes contained in the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy which are:-

- To ensure sufficient capacity and skills development to improve services, to empower communities and successfully embrace major changes
- Develop a culture of mutual support as well as a culture of challenge and the sharing of resources and skills across the region

The outcomes measures above relate to the skills and capacity agenda but it is clear that the initiative also contributes to place shaping, the building of stronger sustainable community strategies and the capacity of partnerships to deliver LAA outcomes which are all success measures in the RIES.

2.2 Funding of £50k was allocated from the transitional funding budget to carry out a Foundation Stage in both county areas. The purpose of this Foundation Stage was to establish whether there was potential to develop a full scale programme of support. It was anticipated that this more substantial programme would cost in the region of £200k for each county area and that Improvement East would be approached to part-fund the two programmes.

2.3 The Foundation Stage has now concluded and each area has taken a slightly different approach given their different starting points and local context. A summary of the work to date and the proposed programme for the next stage is set out in Annex A and B attached. It is anticipated that these further phases would be concluded by April 2009.

2.4 The costs attached to each of the programmes are set out in more detail in the annexes but in summary are:-

- Suffolk £300,000
- Norfolk £298,000

The proposal is for Improvement East to match fund the Leadership Centre programmes in Norfolk and Suffolk to a maximum of £150,000 for each county area.

The uncommitted sum remaining in the Year One budget for Skills and Capacity is £525,000.

2.5 Members of the Executive Advisory Group will have received a letter from the Director seeking agreement to fund a comprehensive programme for the Suffolk Authorities and their partners, called 'Making Suffolk Exceptional'. This report, and the supporting information, seeks to answer some of the questions raised as a result of this letter and provide the basis of discussion with the Leadership Centre on their work in Suffolk and Norfolk. In summary the main issues raised include:-

- The timing of the programme in advance of a decision on LGR
- The 'fit' with the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy
- A concern that the proposals move away from the regional commissioning model.

3. Conclusions

The approach that is being developed by the Leadership Centre in Suffolk and Norfolk is replicable to other areas and would provide a model for

developing capacity and leadership skills across other communities in the region. The work is innovative and will single out the region as an area committed to new ways of working. The Foundation Stage has enabled the Leadership Centre to work with partners on important issues and has provided them with the opportunity to develop ambitious programmes designed to build capacity and skills to successfully embrace major challenges in the future.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive Advisory Group

i) Note progress made during the Foundation stage of both programmes

ii) Agree to commission the next phase of the programme to deliver the outcomes identified for Suffolk and Norfolk

iii) Agree to match fund the Leadership Centre programmes in Norfolk and Suffolk to a maximum of £150,000 for each county area

iv) Agree that the Chief Executive champion for LGR reports back to the EAG at regular intervals on the progress of the programme

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Suffolk

1.1 Summary of Foundation Stage

"Making Suffolk Exceptional" was commissioned by all Councillors in Suffolk LGA (which is cross party and involves all 8 councils). The Foundation stage set out to understand key players and their interests and issues in relation to the programme, to encourage engagement and establish the groundwork for the next phase. During the Foundation stage, the Suffolk programme has been endorsed enthusiastically by the 40 members of the Suffolk Strategic Partnership Board including the Leaders and Chief Executives of all 8 councils; the Chief Executive and Chairman of Suffolk PCT; the LSC; chief executives of the third sector organisations; the Vice Chancellor of the University; Chairs of LSPs and business representatives.

In summary, in the Foundation stage, partners identified the following outcomes they wanted the next phases of the programme to deliver:

- Different and stronger relationships across local government and partners to sustain delivery through challenging times and accelerate improvement
- Improved social capital across partner organisations and into communities
- Improvement in community engagement and empowerment
- Innovations in public sector practice identified and shared across the county, region and beyond
- Improved capacity to lead in new ways and respond most effectively to future and current challenges.
- Aspiration and optimism for the future of Suffolk

Partners were clear that this should be a place shaping and community leadership capacity building project. It is not about setting up new unitary councils or the process of LGR. The Foundation stage identified a requirement to extend participation well beyond the "usual suspects". Through engaging a wide and diverse group of partners and stakeholders, Suffolk's programme intends to improve the lives of residents by tackling the "wicked issues" and building leadership capacity across the county area to innovate, adapt and respond to challenging times.

In laying the groundwork for the next phase of the programme, a project team has been formed with participants from the public, third and business sectors. Suffolk County Council has provided dedicated officer support to assist with programme management. This team has provided input to the design of potential launch activities and will add the meat to the bones of the high level programme plan. A proposed governance structure has been developed and a project management framework of status reports, plans and risk/opportunity management has been put in place.

1.2 Overview of programme

The Suffolk programme has been designed to deliver strengthened social capital through improved networks and relationships, improved leadership capacity across the County area through a tailored development programme and innovations in public service identified through expertly facilitated inquiries. The programme offers a neutral invitation to participate and is supported by skilled advisers, experienced in "whole system" change and skilled in creating the conditions necessary for these outcomes to be delivered. The Suffolk programme sets out to raise aspiration, taking responsibility for identifying, developing and sharing practices that will make Suffolk exceptional. The table below describes each of the programme strands, and indication of reach and the indicative cost. A full table showing benefits and more detailed costs is appended.

Strand	Reach	Cost
1. Launch activities - Community engagement	c.150 participants from organisations all across Suffolk including local authorities, partners, community groups and business	£40.5k
2. Social network analysis	Tbc – widespread, across organisations and communities	£20k
3. Inquiries	c.90 participants from a range of organsiations	£65k
4. Learning to Lead and leading Together – specific leadership development activity, learning labs and master classes	c. 20 participants in the Leading Together leadership development activity c. 20 participants in the Learning to Lead leadership development programme in cohort 1 c. 20 participants in the Learning to Lead leadership development programme in cohort 2 c. 150 participants in "masterclasses" and learning labs	£30k £25k £25k £5k
5. Conversations that matter	c. 500 participants in dialogue	£10k
6. Programme management	c. 10 programme managers from partner organisations	£30k
7. Sharing the Learning	Learning shared across the county, region and UK as applicable	£20k
8. Communications	c. 20 communications participants extensive reach through website and other media	£35k

1.3 What are the outcomes?

The outcomes of the programme will be:

- Improved social capital as measured by the social network analysis
- Improved leadership capacity across the system of delivery as evidenced by participant feedback and implementation of identified improvements

- Identified innovations in public service delivery, shared widely across the region and beyond, evidenced by approved business cases and national interest in sharing practice
- Improved relationships between leaders in Suffolk, as evidenced by participant feedback
- Improved community engagement and empowerment as evidenced by number of participants who when asked say they believe they have an influence on actions that affect their communities
- Improved partnership working as evidenced by partner feedback
- Improvements in the conditions necessary to accelerate and sustain "whole system" improvement – improved partnership working, higher levels of trust, a shared purpose, a shared sense of identity.
- Fundamentally, improved outcomes for people in places

1.4 How will progress be measured?

The programme proposes specific techniques to identify and monitor progress. A specific "learning process" is planned into the programme including the use and review of learning journals kept by participants to identify key lessons and facilitate the process of sharing these more widely.

The outcomes are delivered over time and through the cumulative effect of all the workstrands. To ensure progress and allow for any necessary adaptation, one of the early activities within each strand is to identify the "measures that matter". These will be the key metrics that the strands use to proxy their progress. For example, key metrics for launch activities may include - the number of organisations represented, number of participants, geographic spread of participation.

A specific analytical approach to analysing networks and assessing social capital is specified within the programme. This analysis will provide a baseline at the outset of the programme against which success in relation to strengthening and extending networks and enhancing social capital can be measured.

Each strand of activity will report progress to a steering group of leaders from across the county area. They will report according to the metrics they have identified and also report on any changes in the context of their activity that may require a change of approach. The steering group will assess progress and advise on any necessary adaptations.

It is intended that Improvement East will be represented on the project team and that regular updates be provided to all partners

Norfolk

1.1 Summary of Foundation Stage

The foundation stage set out to understand the key players and where they are now, both on the substance of their development agenda and their preparedness to lead in new ways; communicate the purpose of and approach to the overall work and in the course of doing so refine and sharpen it and win support for it; and lay the groundwork for the next phase event described below.

The activity of the foundation stage included one to one conversations with over 20 key public service leaders across Norfolk to shape objectives, deliverables and focus; attendance at key meetings to share and iterate development of thinking; and conversations with senior leadership development leads in Norwich and Norfolk Councils to understand leadership development work undertaken recently.

In addition, a project team has been set up, which has started its work and its own learning journey in relation to the work. Throughout the weeks of the foundation stage, there has been regular iteration and sharing of thinking, development of both design brief and future stages. Regular contact has been maintained with Anne Gibson as county link person, and with Improvement East as the client.

The outputs of the foundation stage are set out below in terms of the project proposals. There is broad commitment to the project from across the local government community, constabulary, and some of health sector, and a commitment to shared funding.

In addition, the county chief executive group has committed to being the leadership team for this project and, as part of that commitment, be active participant leaders and learners. A project team has been set up and commenced work including the early identification of skill resources in the system.

1.2 Overview of programme

The programme in Norfolk will focus on a cohort of 150 – 200 leaders from the participating organisations. They will learn and work together on real issues facing the county and its communities. The programme will focus on improving the lives of the people of Norfolk AND and WHILST building the capacity of public sector managers and leaders to deliver, whatever the challenges.

The cohort will work together, and with the wider community, to identify and tackle the issues that matter: improving performance in key services, seeking out opportunities to deliver real efficiencies, finding new solutions to complex and problem issues, shaping the places of Norfolk.

Bringing together leading edge concepts and thinking, with expert process design and facilitation, the cohort will undertake inquiries working with a wide community of players and beneficiaries. The overarching aim is to bring about a fundamental change in the way the public service system behaves for the greater good of local people and communities.

Through this work, and a specific learning programme, the project will support the development of leadership confidence, competence, skills and approaches. This will include opportunities to bring about a step change in individual capability and system capacity. The leaders involved will gain a track record that goes beyond current individual experience, strategic insight, hands-on change and problem-solving, improved self-awareness and enhanced development potential.

This will happen through a series of inputs, learning labs, master-classes, action-based application on 'live' issues, and self-directed learning. Through the HR network, we can also provide individual support to personal transition through any major change.

The total programme costs are anticipated to be in the region of £298,000, excluding expenses (at cost) and VAT.

1.3 Specifics of the programme

The work and learning will be achieved through a journey of several connected components. These are set out below, along with outline costs and deliverables for each stage.

A large-scale event (150-200 leaders) Cost £44,000
A launch event for the initial identified learning and inquiry community. The objectives of the event to be to start the building of the learning and inquiry community, to set learning objectives and to identify the work themes that will form the basis of the inquiries

Inquiries Cost £28,500 per inquiry. Total for five inquiries £142,500
A series of five inquiry teams will be supported and facilitated in their learning and inquiry activities to pursue their inquiry themes and to come to proposed ways forward against high-level objectives.

Following a two-day learning and inquiry planning process, the teams will work together over a number of weeks, progressing the inquiry process. The team will then come together in a second team event to review and evaluate their work and capture the learning.

Each team would be sponsored by a member of the steering group to support them. They would work inclusively, working with connections with the wider system including political, third sector, community etc. Learning at individual, team and organisational level will be captured.

A virtual community network will help the community to learn and stay in contact across the work, and to feed into inquiries across the learning community.

Community Action and Learning Event Cost £36,000
A second whole community event 'plus' to share learning, progress the work and 'make "common" sense' of what has happened and the implications.

This would be a great opportunity for the organisations to start to think how the leadership community can be supported, sustained and utilised as any structural change, or enhanced status quo solutions are proposed.

Learning Support, learning history and evaluation Cost £28,000
A programme of learning and coaching support for the senior leaders across the public sector community aimed at creating the conditions for further success. This will include the end of programme learning history, helping the cohort and organisations to make sense of the learning and its applicability across the county and its partners. This will be presented in a format that can be easily shared regionally and nationally.

Programme Management – Cost £48,000
A major programme of activity such as this requires hands-on, ongoing and skilled support to make it a success. The programme management of this work will include significant weekly commitment from a skilled leadership adviser and of a project manager. This support will ensure support to the key governance networks and teams in the process, ensure skills transfer across the system, and undertake full project management support including those of risk and status reporting.

1.4 What are the outcomes?

The high level outcomes have been set through the foundation stage, and can be articulated as:

- Significant progress towards measurably improved efficiency and effectiveness of public services as measured by approved business cases and measured progress on specific deliverables.
- A strong, cohesive, sustainable 'system' of leaders in the local government and public service community with a clear and shared purpose evidenced through learning history work and participant feedback.
- Managers and leaders have more capability, capacity and skill to lead whatever the context or issues, including leading change evidenced through learning history work and participant feedback.
- Managers and leaders have an improved and common understanding of the key strategic and contextual issues facing the sector and the places of Norfolk (e.g. Local Government Review, Comprehensive Area Assessment, Locality and neighbourhood agendas) evidenced through recorded outcomes of community action learning event and participant feedback.
- Strengthened relationships and accelerated cultural change across the sector. This work delivers a different kind of relationship and hence opens up new opportunities and accelerates pace on existing ones
- Identification where changes in performance are needed, what the vehicles for change are and the evaluation of these options measured over the medium term by performance indicator improvement.
- Real progress on real issues such as community cohesion, climate change, and public sector efficiency evidenced through recorded outcomes of inquiries, community action learning event and participant feedback.

1.5 How will progress be measured?

In addition to the measures set out above, at each stage of the work, detailed objectives and deliverables will be set and progress against them evaluated and reported through the project team to the leadership team, through status reports and risk and issues logs. Further development of the embryonic governance framework for the programme will form part of the programme management activity. This will be the basis of progress evaluation and will include reporting back to the REIP in line with agreed procedures.

Each inquiry team will work with a member of the leadership team, will set inquiry objectives in line with the high level objectives and report against, supported by the project manager for the overall programme.

The learning history process will run throughout the project with key assimilation points where progress can be reported through the same mechanism.

The proposed shape and process of the intervention set out in this report may need to be revised and flexed to reflect the emergent needs of delivering the outcomes as work progresses. We will report any such changes through agreed mechanisms as and when they arise and have any required discussions at that time. The high level outcomes and objectives will remain.