Item 4

Report to Executive Advisory Group

Improvement East **12th November 2008**
Subject: Programme Delivery
Report by: Secretariat

Purpose

To update the Executive Advisory Group in respect of the two Cluster meetings held in October and the position in respect of the LAA cluster and the Skills and Capacity Cluster. A number of issues have arisen for consideration by the EAG and a number of recommendations are made.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Group:

i) Consider the recommendation from the Performance Cluster that the funding of £65,000 for Innovations Day (£15,000 subsidy to the event and £50,000 for innovative projects) should be supported and that the necessary funding should be top sliced from the whole budget.

ii) Note the update report in respect of Waveney DC

iii) Note the proposal in respect of the regional architecture for LSP, LAA and MAA support.

iv) Consider the request from the South Essex Thames Gateway Partnership for £50,000 to support the implementation of the IDeA Economic Prosperity Toolkit

v) Consider the request from the Regional Cities East for £191,000 over three years to support the CURE Programme

vi) Considers the request of the Performance and Efficiency Clusters that approval is given to the Chairman and Chief Executive Champions of the Clusters to make delegated decisions within their allocated budget in consultation with the Chairman and Liberal Democrat and Labour lead Members of Improvement East when the delay caused by waiting for decisions of the Member Panel would impede progress.

vii) Considers the request of the Performance Cluster that approval is given to Chief Executive Leads for individual authorities for up to £20,000 subject to agreed criteria.

1. Introduction

1.1 Two Cluster meetings have been held in October.

1.2 A number of common issues have arisen which need consideration and agreement by the EAG:
- Budget delegation levels to Clusters
- Funding of Innovations Day in 2009

2. Performance Cluster

2.1 The Performance Cluster met on 22nd October. The Notes of the meeting are attached as Annex 1.

2.2 The main outcomes of the meeting were that the Cluster agreed:
- To continue to work on a draft Use of Resources proposal received from CIPFA
- A Basic Offer available to all authorities
- A Winter 08 Menu of Support for all authorities to utilise to the value of £7000 per authority (Total commitment of £420,000)
- Not to support a proposal in respect of e-learning
- A number of issues in respect of our support to individual authorities and that a short document should be produced to encapsulate this
- Chief Executive leads for individual authorities would form a peer group
- A proposal from the Innovations Day Steering Group to assist with funding should be supported

2.3 The decisions of the EAG and the Member Panel in respect of previous recommendations were noted and in particular, the decision in relation to the need to include social care performance issues within the Children's agenda. This has been taken forward since the Cluster meeting at the Children's Programme Board meeting on the 28th October. It was agreed at the meeting that performance issues would be taken up within the evidence collation and analysis which will be undertaken in respect of drawing up a year 2 and 3 work programme. The aim is to undertake this work in time for the next Children's Programme Board meeting in January.

2.4 There was a discussion in respect of the need to be able to be proactive in response to the needs of individual authorities. It was considered that the current three levels of decision-making for funding (Cluster, EAG and Member Panel) could hamper this need. It was therefore agreed that a small funding allocation of up to £20,000 should be made available to each Chief Executive lead to use in accordance with agreed criteria. In addition it was agreed to request that the EAG and the Member Panel give delegated authority to the Performance Cluster to spend the remaining Year 1 budget. The uncommitted budget amounts to £653,600 of which £205,000 is earmarked for support to Use of Resources. This issue is addressed later in this report.

2.5 A proposal was considered from the Innovations Day Steering Board. In previous years, Building Capacity East had part–funded previous Innovation Days to:
- Subsidise the running of the event so that the delegate fee is kept to a minimum

- To fund small innovative projects run through a Dragon's Den type process.

The funding requested for the 2009 event is for £15,000 as the subsidy and £50,000 for an innovation project support fund.

While the Cluster agreed to this funding in principle, they were not convinced that the money should come from the Performance budget. It was agreed that this matter should be referred to the EAG and Member Panel with a recommendation from the Performance Cluster that the funding of £65,000 for Innovations Day (£15,000 subsidy to the event and £50,000 for innovative projects) should be supported and that the necessary funding should be top sliced from the whole budget.

It is recommended that the EAG:
Consider the recommendation from the Performance Cluster that the funding of £65,000 for Innovations Day (£15,000 subsidy to the event and £50,000 for innovative projects) should be supported and that the necessary funding should be top sliced from the whole budget.

2.6 It was noted that Gillian Beasley, as Lead officer for Waveney DC was due to give a written report to the EAG. This report will be forwarded as soon as possible.

It is recommended that the EAG:
Note the update report in respect of Waveney DC

3. LAA Cluster

3.1 The EAG will recall that the main outcome of the LAA Cluster meeting on 5th was that it was agreed that the existing regional architecture supporting LSPs and the delivery of LAAs and MAAs 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. Since then, consultation has been undertaken with the existing regional groups – the LAA theme leads, the LSP Steering Group and the LSP Network. As a result a consensus has been established to reorganise the existing groups and create the proposed Strategic Group-Practitioner Group -Network architecture.

3.2 A paper is attached in Annex 2 which gives further context to the proposals. The first meetings of the Strategic Group and the Practitioner Group are currently being arranged.

It is recommended that the EAG:
Note the proposal in respect of the regional architecture for LSP, LAA and MAA support.

4. Efficiency Cluster

4.1 The Efficiency Cluster met on 8th October. The Notes of the meeting are attached as Annex 3.

4.2 The main outcomes of the efficiency cluster meeting were:-

- To engage the services of Price Waterhouse Cooper to develop a programme for efficiency gains.
- To support the Corporate and Transactional Services national initiative being developed by the 4ps
- To propose that delegated authority be given to the efficiency cluster to approve proposals within the allocated budget when the EAG and Member Panel meetings are not due to take place within a reasonable amount of time

4.3 On the 13th August the Efficiency Cluster agreed its approach to improving efficiency gains in the region. It was acknowledged, however, that Improvement East does not currently have the capacity to develop a programme of efficiency gains until new appointments start in post. As an interim measure it was agreed to employ the services of PWC to carry out an analysis of past projects and support the development of an efficiency gain programme. At the Efficiency Cluster meeting of the 8th October it was agreed that PWC should be asked to work with the Improvement East Secretariat and partners to draw up project initiation documents for the following 6 programmes:

(i) Transformation of service delivery
(ii) Building capacity around joint commissioning
(iii) Resource mapping
(iv) Rationalising procurement activity
(v) Revenues and benefits
(vi) Personalisation in Adult Social Care

4.4 In relation to the first of the six programmes the Efficiency Cluster considered a proposal to increase efficiency from Corporate and Transactional Services. This programme is being developed by the 4ps (with the Region's Efficiency Champion as co-sponsor), has DCLG funding approval and is awaiting release of the funding from DCLG. The focus of the initiative is on key services including enquiry handling, billing, appointment taking, application requests, asset management, procurement, HR, financial management, ICT and property services. The initial pilot has drawn on the experience of Scotland and elsewhere and illustrated through work with nine English councils that significant on-going efficiency gains are possible.

4.5 The proposal for Improvement East is for three full diagnostics to be carried out (a District, Unitary and County Council) to provide a profile of potential efficiency gains. While the reports will be individual to each Council they will provide relevant examples for other Councils and networks and partners will be encouraged to participate in the process. The cost each of the diagnostics is £85,000 and the Efficiency Cluster agreed a contribution of £145,000 to the project contingent of £110,000 being allocated from the DCLG funding to the region.

4.6 Members of the Efficiency Cluster asked for urgent approval of this recommendation in order for it to progress quickly. Following the cluster meeting consultation was carried out with the two other Chief Executives on the Efficient Cluster, the Chairman of Improvement East and the Liberal Democrat lead Member. The following recommendation has therefore been agreed:

To allocate a sum of £145,000 for the Corporate and Transactional Services (CATS) project for full diagnostics to be carried out for one County Council, one Unitary Council and one District Council within the region contingent on £110,000 being allocated from the CLG funding to the region.

4.7 The members of the Efficiency Cluster were concerned that waiting for decisions to be approved by the EAG and the Member Panel could cause delay and proposed some delegation to cluster meetings to speed up decision making in the partnership. Following discussions the following suggestion has been made for delegated decision making in between Member Panel meetings. This issue is addressed later in this paper.

5. Skills and Capacity Cluster

5.1 The Skills and capacity cluster has not met as a group due to the broad range of issues included in this work area. These areas are listed below:-

- Workforce planning
- Member Development
- Community Empowerment
- Economic Development
- Growth
- Unitary Authorities

5.2 Issues relating to economic development and support to unitary authorities are covered in items 3 and 5 on this agenda

5.3 Growth

5.3.1 Unlike some of the other themes in the work programme it has been difficult to commission a single regional approach to the growth agenda due to varying needs of the different growth areas. Over the past few months Improvement East have been working with a small number of partnerships in the region to make them aware of the Partnership and to invite them to develop proposals around the growth agenda. Two proposals have been received for consideration by the Executive Advisory Group. The proposals

have been circulated to the Chief Executive Champions and partners but at the time of writing this report no comments had been received. The two proposals are:-

South East Essex Thames Gateway Partnership £50,000

. **Regional Cities East Capacity Building. £191,000**

5.3.2 **South East Essex Thames Gateway Partnership**. This proposal is a request for funding to support the piloting of the IDeA Economic Prosperity Tool Kit in the South Essex Thames Gateway. This work follows on from the earlier work Improvement East funded on the MAA and will enable them to ensure that their revised business plan fully addresses the economic requirements of the area. A copy of the covering letter from the Chairman of the Partnership and a Project Initiation Document is attached at Annex 4 but a short summary of the project is outlined below

"The attached proposal sets out our intention to use £50,000 of Improvement East funding to help contribute to the costs of engaging a consultant to facilitate the TGSE contribution to the preparation of the IDeA Economic Prosperity tool-kit, to help IDeA define the peer review process for the pilot, to undertake the pilot within the six Local Authorities in South Essex and to use the results of the pilot to inform the TGSEP Business Plan. The progress of this process will be monitored by the sub-regional economy group which comprises of officers from within each of the six Local Authorities supported by other key agencies, such as Business Link East and EEDA. The economy group will contribute to and review the outcomes at each stage. The timeline for the pilot will commence with preparatory work in November, the pilot will go live in December and the implementation issues arising from the pilot will feed in to the TGSEP Business Plan preparation in January 2009. The process will be complete by February 2009.

We believe this proposal provides natural progression from our previous work supported by Improvement East which provides us with an Economic Development & Skills Delivery Business Plan as a basis for a MAA. The attached proposal will enable TGSEP to undertake the IDeA Economic Prosperity Tool-kit pilot testing and TGSEP Business Plan preparation having completed preparation of the TGSEP strategic context and operational delivery plans to ensure improved performance in delivery of economic development in the sub-region. The delivery capacity of the sub-region will have been 'independently' benchmarked by the IDeA tool-kit which will enable sound decisions around future resource allocations to be made within the sub-region. "

It is recommended that the EAG:

Consider the request from the South Essex Thames Gateway Partnership for £50,000 to support the implementation of the IDeA Economic Prosperity Toolkit

5.3.3 **Regional Cities East Capacity Building.** This proposal pre dates Improvement East and arises from an audit of capacity in the East of England. The initial proposal was to build capacity in the growth areas within

the RCE partnership. Following discussions this proposal has been widened to the whole region. The CURE programme is designed to address capacity issues in the "engines of growth" across the region. The annual funding sought for the CURE programme from Improvement East is **£7,775 (2008/9); £90,166 (2009/10) and £93,490 (2010/11)**. RCE is seeking support for an initial two years, representing a total project cost of **£191,431**. A summary of the project is outlined below and a more detailed outline report is attached at Annex 5.

"The CURE programme has been designed by Regional Cities East (RCE) to deliver improvements to capacity and skills which support the delivery of the growth agenda. The programme seeks to test areas where the six local authorities of Regional Cities East (RCE), their sub regional partners and other key growth areas in the East of England may be able to work more closely to improve individual and collective capacity. RCE believes that improving capacity and enhancing skills sets will enable a stronger public sector response to growth opportunities irrespective of market conditions. The programme is designed to encourage a more intelligent way of delivering urban renaissance projects in a more effective and timely manner. RCE believes that this would involve a combination of different approaches which may include (this list is not exhaustive) the following activities:

- Joint approaches to common issues
- Centres of technical expertise for specialist areas
- More intelligent procurement of key scarce skills
- Influencing of education providers and professional bodies to ensure improved flow of qualified staff
- Working more effectively as a collective with developers

The programme has been scoped as a regional programme, involving partners beyond the core RCE network of six cities. RCE has stated that it is keen to disseminate results as widely as possible, and positioning the CURE programme as an exemplar for the rest of the region.

If funding support is approved, RCE will establish a Delivery Team which contains a range of partners. The Delivery Team will meet on a regular monthly basis during the initial phase of operation. The Team will oversee the operation of the programme and ensure delivery against the overall programme Implementation Plan. The Delivery Team will work with the RCE Core Team (Secretariat) to produce a regular project Status Report. Improvement East will be offered a place on the Delivery Team"

It is recommended that the EAG:

Consider the request from the Regional Cities East for £191,000 over three years to support the CURE Programme

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The two cluster meetings have provided a forum for members of the Partnership to work together to review the delivery programme and to commission future work. It is now necessary to seek clarity on the levels of delegation for decision making in the cluster meetings.

6.2 Both the Performance and Efficiency Clusters have raised the need for delegated authority for their budgets.

It is recommended that the EAG:

Considers the request of the Performance and Efficiency Clusters that approval is given to the Chairman and Chief Executive Champions of the Clusters to make delegated decisions within their allocated budget in consultation with the Chairman and Liberal Democrat and Labour lead Members of Improvement East when the delay caused by waiting for decisions of the Member Panel would impede progress.

Considers the request of the Performance Cluster that approval is given to Chief Executive Leads for individual authorities for up to £20,000 subject to agreed criteria.

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PERFORMANCE CLUSTER

Notes of Cluster Meeting
22 October 2008, 9:30am Trinity Centre

Present:
Caroline Tapster, Chief Executive, Hertfordshire CC - Chair
Cllr Lynne Faulkner, Bedfordshire CC and Bedford BC
Cllr Penny Otton, Mid-Suffolk District Council
Rob Hammond, Cambridge City Council
Andrew Limb, GO East
Dennis Skinner, IDeA,
Kevin Crompton, Luton Borough Council

Apologies:
Cllr Mac McQuire, Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Chris Millington, Harlow Council
Cllr Derek Ashley, Hertfordshire County Council
Gillian Beasley, Peterborough City Council
Andrew Good, Mid-Suffolk District Council
John Campbell, North Hertfordshire District Council
Rob Tinlin, Southend on Sea Borough Council
David White, Norfolk CC
Andy Perrin, Audit Commission

Item | Action

1. Welcome and Introductions

Caroline welcomed attendees to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

2. Notes of the Performance Cluster Meeting of 6 August 2008

The notes of the meeting of 6 August were approved.

Matters arising not covered in the Agenda were:

(i) <u>5. Equalities</u>

Alastair Robertson, CEX of Watford had agreed to take the lead on Equalities.

(ii) <u>7. Governance</u>

A question was raised on delegated powers and whether this group had the authority to commission work or whether prior approval was needed from the EAG/Member Panel. The Cluster agreed that it could commission work but, under the current arrangements, approval would need to be sought from EAG/Member Panel.

3. Update

Jane presented the update report to the meeting. It was noted that:

- All recommendations from the Cluster's last meeting had been agreed by EAG and the Member Panel.

- £300k, plus a further £100k at a later stage, had been agreed for Adult Social Care.

- The Children's Service Board was due to meet next week to discuss progress on the 14-19 agenda and the programme for years 2 and 3. EAG and the Member Panel had approved funding on condition that there is also a focus to be on performance in children's services.

- A Performance Management Framework was being developed and it is hoped that, in future, more detailed reports on approved projects will be available for the Cluster groups.

- Use of Resources: Great Yarmouth will be setting up a Joint Agency Board and Jane/Mark will look for a Chief Executive lead for the authority. JS/MH

- A draft proposal on the wider programme around Use of Resources from CIPFA was considered. It was agreed that Jane and Caroline should work together on evaluating the report. They would also obtain input from the Audit Commission and Rob agreed to obtain an opinion from the Treasurer at Cambridge. JS/CT/ RH

- It was noted that due to the current change in the economic climate it might become necessary to reconsider the programmes for Years 2 and 3 to meet authorities' changing needs.

4. Our Offer and Menu of Support

Jane went through the report for the benefit of the meeting. She explained that this was an overarching menu covering all clusters. Additional items could be added to future Menus.

<u>The Basic Offer</u>

There was a discussion on the use of the word "struggling" in regard to support for individual authorities and LSPs.

It was agreed that a better form of words would be: "Support authorities who are performing poorly and authorities with specific performance issues".

The details of the basic offer were agreed.

Operational Issues

Jane intended sending a letter out to Chief Executives explaining the offer in the week following the launch event and would make it clear that the offer was time limited.

The operational issues for the Menu were agreed.

Budget Considerations

The budget for the first Menu was agreed at £ £7,000 per authority.

Menu Items

The first Menu items were agreed with the addition of a speed reading course.

Further Support Programmes

It was agreed to defer the decision on funding five authorities through the IDeA CAA self-assessment tool as the tool was not yet ready to deliver.

e-Learning Package for Essex

Following discussion, the cluster group agreed not to recommend funding the purchase of the Learning Pool package to the value of £38,000 for the Essex authorities to EAG.

5. Individual Authorities

The nine questions posed in the paper were considered as follows:

1. How do the Member and Chief Executive Champions wish to be involved with individual authorities?

The group felt there was a need to be clear on what the Champion role involves when assisting an authority. It is more than the traditionally understood mentor role. It was agreed that individual authorities who are being supported should have a Chief Executive lead assigned to them. This role should be entitled Lead as opposed to Mentor to reflect the greater responsibility.

It was agreed that Chief Executives could request a mentor for themselves as per the Basic Offer.

2. How do we support these Champions and disseminate good ideas between them?

Leads getting together and sharing learning and experience was considered to be a good idea.

A first meeting of these Chief Executives would be arranged. JS

3. Should the bidding system be retained?

There was no support for retention of a bidding system as such, as a pro-active approach from Improvement East was preferred. However, a "submission" document to Improvement East from authorities in need of support in these circumstances should be acceptable. The submission would need to include details of anticipated outcomes.

4. How do we process bids having regard for the need for urgency?

Option b) was agreed in that a small funding allocation of up to £20k should be made available to each Chief Executive lead to use in accordance with agreed criteria.

The Cluster Group agreed to recommend to EAG and the Member Panel that this group should have delegated authority to spend the remaining Year 1 budget.

5. In what circumstances do we support individual authorities and when do we stop supporting them individually?

The group agreed to removing the two "Direction of Travel" options.

6. Will we support operational (day to day) activity?

Need to look at the issue of sustainability in each submission.

The general consensus was that operational activity should not generally be supported but that it should not be categorically ruled out.

7. What is the scope of support to Individual authorities

Again, the group did not feel they wanted to rule anything out.

8. What do we expect or require in return.

The group felt that the forming of an Improvement/Agency Board and/or the acceptance of a Chief Executive lead should be a requisition.

9. How do we discuss authorities' performance?

It was thought that if the GO or Audit Commission were worried about an authority's performance they should suggest to them that they have a conversation with the RIEP.

Caroline suggested that this matter should be raised with other Chief Executives at their next group meeting.

It was agreed that the secretariat should provide a draft protocol in respect of roles and responsibilities, expectations and requirements JS

6 Next Steps

It was agreed that Jane should draft a situation report for EAG. JS

Cindy to circulate alternatives for meeting dates for next year. CB

7. Any Other Business

(i) Andrew Limb raised the question of what would happen to any unspent funding allocations and felt that this should be given some thought.

(ii) Jane reported that Improvement East had been asked to fund an Innovations Day and Dragon's Lair as in former years.

While the group agreed to this funding in principle, they were not convinced that the money should come from the Performance budget.

It was agreed that this matter should be referred to the EAG and Member Panel with a recommendation from the Performance Cluster that it should be supported and that the necessary funding should be top sliced from the whole budget. JS

FINANCES	**Allocation Year 1 2008/09**	**Committed Expenditure**	**Balance**
Authorities in Difficulty	£1,000,000	Dacorum: £95,000	£448,600
All Authorities		Equalities project: £36,400 Winter Menu of Support: £420,000	
Adult Services	£300,000	£300,000	£0
Children's Services	£300,000	£300,000	£0
Use of Resources	£300,000	Dacorum: £95,000	£205,000
Equalities	£0	See above	N/A
Total	**£1,900,000**	**£1,246,400**	**£653,600**

LAA/LSP/MAA Programme

1. Introduction

1.1 The EAG on 3rd September and the Member Panel on 18th September endorsed the establishment of a new regional architecture to support the delivery of LAAs, LSPs and MAAs.

1.2 There are 52 LSPs in the region, 10 top-tier partnerships and although there are no MAAs yet, Improvement East has given financial support for scoping work in three areas; Thames Gateway South Essex, Haven Gateway and Beds and Luton. Funding for an MAA Co-ordinator has also been set aside from the transitional funding.

2. New Governance Structure

2.1 We need a robust sector-led mechanism to ensure investment goes to the right place. To that end we are looking to set up a small strategic group to provide high level steerage and to drive change. There will then be a Practitioners Group to shape and develop a regional programme then manage what is approved.

2.2 A proposed governance structure has been shared with the LAA informal network and the LSP network and has been amended in light of their comments. The LSP Steering Group considered this report at their meeting on 3rd November. They were very concerned to ensure that district representation on the Practitioner Group was fairly reflected in order that districts are neither disadvantaged nor disenfranchised by the new structure. They are therefore strongly in favour of transitional arrangements for the practitioner group, which would be reviewed during 2009 as appropriate.

See Annex 2A for the structure and Annex 2B for the draft terms of reference for each group.

2.2 The new groups will both have their first meetings in November.

3. Support for Partnerships

3.1 It has been recognised that we need to develop the capacity of LSPs and the current A2P project was set up to do this. The overall project includes a variety of things including a diagnostic toolkit, the development of peer support across the region, support for the LSP Network and support for Leadership in Partnership but is best known for the toolkit itself.

3.2 It is envisaged that in the context of Improvement East support it might be helpful to amalgamate this project with the wider work programme to minimise confusion about the support available. We would suggest that this needs to be reviewed by the practitioner group in one of their early meetings.

4. Support for LAA Outcomes

4.1 LAA Co-ordinators were asked to identify which themes/targets were potentially most at risk of not being met and therefore where regional support would be best placed. A short survey was carried out to identify the existing support available and what else would be helpful in relation to the priority themes identified.

4.2 The top three themes are:

- Climate change
- Community cohesion, empowerment and engagement
- Skills and worklessness

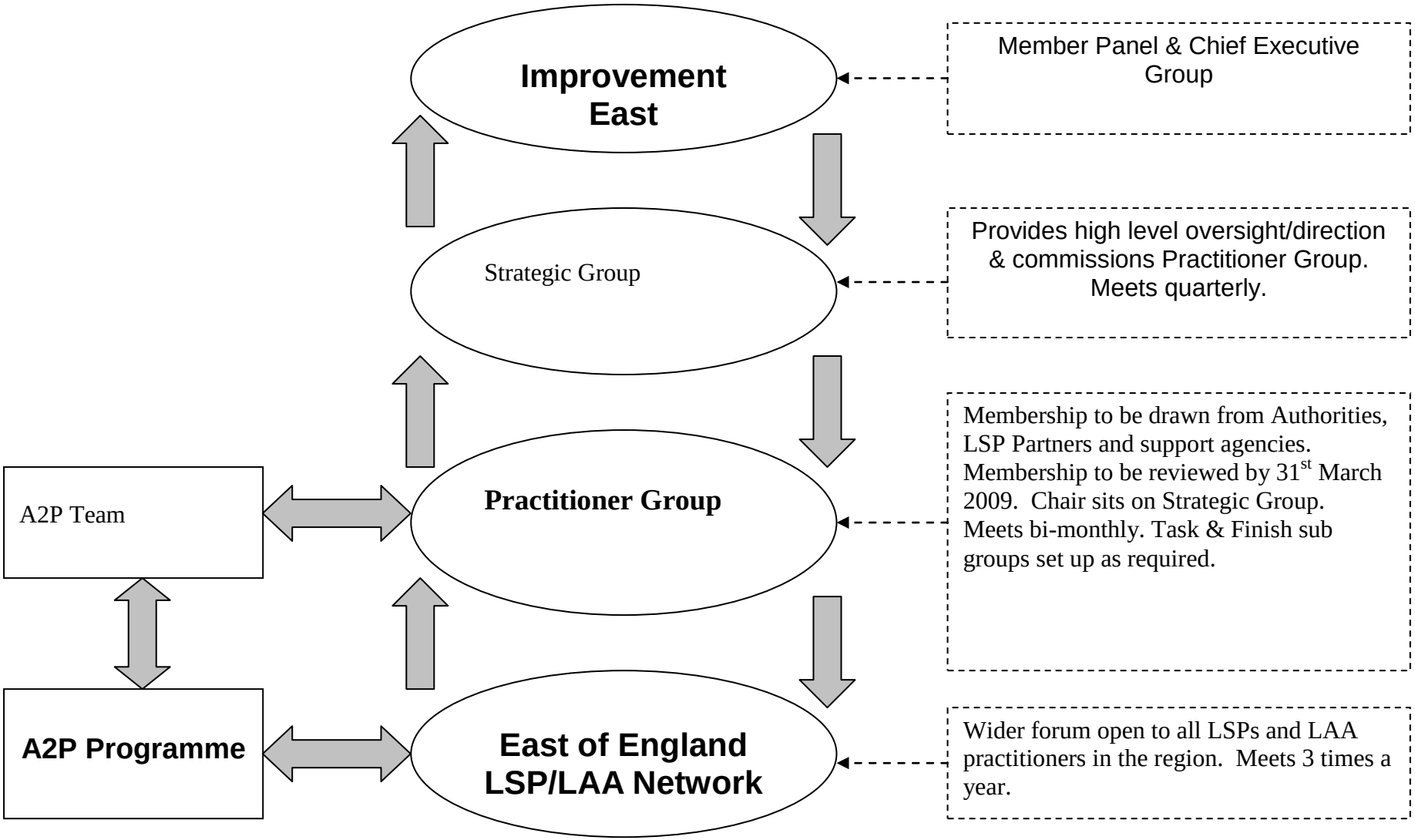
A brief summary of the survey results can be found at Annex 2C and will be considered by the strategic group at their first meeting to confirm the priorities and consider work being done in other regions and nationally. It will then be passed to the practitioner group to develop a support programme around the agreed priorities.

5.0 Local Improvement Advisers

5.1 The West Midlands have been leading on a project, funded directly by CLG to provide Local Improvement Advisers (formerly Neighbourhood Renewal Advisers) across the country. LSP leads can request the help of an Adviser through their own RIEP and the cost of assignments will be met from the budget held by the West Midlands.

5.2 At this stage, Advisers are in the process of being recruited so are not yet available for assignments. In order to make the most of this resource as soon as it is available, we suggest that the practitioner group should consider requests from LSPs as they arise to identify common requests for support that could impact on the overarching programme.

5.3 There will be Advisers to support the development of skills and capacity within partnerships as well as those offering assistance with service delivery. Administration of the scheme will be dealt with by the existing Aspire2Perform team.


Improvement East
Member Panel & Chief Executive Group
Strategic Group
Provides high level oversight/direction & commissions Practitioner Group. Meets quarterly.
Practitioner Group
Membership to be drawn from Authorities, LSP Partners and support agencies. Membership to be reviewed by 31st March 2009. Chair sits on Strategic Group. Meets bi-monthly. Task & Finish sub groups set up as required.
A2P Team
A2P Programme
East of England LSP/LAA Network
Wider forum open to all LSPs and LAA practitioners in the region. Meets 3 times a year.

Annex 2 B

Strategic and Practitioner Groups – purpose, outline terms of reference and proposed membership

Strategic Group

Purpose:

Oversees the totality of the new delivery agenda, provides high level steerage and direction (against policy developments and regional issues), agrees what needs to change and drives change through commissioning of Practitioner Group.

Outline terms of reference:

- Champions the partnership delivery agenda – opportunity for greater improvement and efficiency provided through effective partnership working
- Provides strategic leadership for the scale of culture change required – including new models for service provision and reprioritisation of funding to support improved delivery
- Provides reassurance to the Improvement East Member Panel and Executive Advisory Group and acts as custodian of investment in partnership development
- Keeps abreast of national, regional and local delivery challenges and provides check point on programme scope and development
- Knits together partnership policy, delivery and performance at strategic level via engagement with the Practitioner Group
- Takes advice from Practitioner Group on future funding proposals to Improvement East to support programme development and approves the work programme

Proposed Membership:

Gillian Beasley, Chief Executive of Peterborough and EAG representative (Chair)
Cllr Jane Storey, Suffolk County Council, and Improvement and Efficiency Member Panel representative
Chair of the Practitioner Group (to be elected at first meeting of practitioner group)
Go-East representative
Audit Commission representative
Improvement East staff representative

Practitioner Group

Purpose:

Commissioned by Strategic Group to shape and develop LSP capacity building programme through A2P and other specific projects (focused on NI delivery support) to support delivery of new Local Area Agreements, working with other networks as necessary.

Outline terms of reference:

- Develops the links to relevant networks and groups to support delivery and identifies the gaps and duplications
- Makes recommendations to the strategic group on relevant work programmes to support partnership working and the delivery of LAAs
- Manages the programme of work authorised by the strategic group to shape support for improving delivery, including the A2P Programme
- Responsible for commissioning and managing Task and Finish Groups as necessary to implement work programme
- Monitors the impact of investment in capacity building and specific projects and reports to Strategic Group regularly
- Responsible for building effective communications through A2P and associated networks to raise awareness and understanding of partnership agenda and its role in supporting effective delivery of LAAs
- Sets agendas for regular events for those working on LAAs and in LSPs to develop and share best practice between partnerships

Proposed Membership

6 County representatives
4 Unitary representatives
6 District representatives, one per county area
MAA representative
Police representative }
Health representative } unless another representative is from one of these.
Fire representative }
Third sector representative }
IDeA representative
Alex Stewart, A2P Programme Manager
Improvement East staff representative
Support: Amanda Ankin, EERA Networks Co-ordinator

It is recognised that some representatives may also be LSP and LAA co-ordinators and that will be helpful.

N.B. In this case, representatives are there to give different perspectives and to help co-ordinate communication channels. It is recognised that there are many interested parties and it may not always be possible for attendees to collect the views of all parties before a meeting and to put them across. We are happy to send the agendas and minutes to a broad circulation list.

Summary of Priorities Improvement Responses

We have received responses from 8 of the 10 upper tier authorities. (The outstanding responses are from Southend and Peterborough). Full details can be seen on the table, but here are some of the key emerging points:

Climate Change:

8 responses received from Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Herts, Cambs, Beds, Thurrock and Luton.

Suggested support:

- New area of work; a need to better understand how to deliver a national measure at the local level
- Case study and best practice exchange
- Incentives for sustainable development especially industry/business also transport/domestic
- Specific local partnerships or post to support on climate change
- Consider rural dimension

Cohesion, Engagement and Empowerment:

8 responses received from Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Herts, Cambs, Beds, Thurrock and Luton

Suggested support:

- Consider Community Mapping as a foundation
- Work with Institute for Community Cohesion – research into attitudes/perceptions
- Case study and best practice exchange possibly via regional events, on-line forums or a regional partnership
- External facilitation for events
- Support for Neighbourhood Panels
- Capacity building and empowering the third sector

Skills and Worklessness:

7 responses received from Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Herts, Cambs, Beds and Thurrock.

Also from GO-East

Suggested support:

- Data toolkits for indicators; guidance on drilling down to various spatial levels
- Sharing good practice and identifying a common, region-wide approach to skills improvement
- Engaging employers - invest in work based learning, train to gain, apprenticeships
- Support to develop collaboration between commissioners and providers

Housing:
4 responses received from Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex & Herts
Suggested support:
- Research into barriers to achieving growth; tap into expertise around region and beyond
- Identify potential usage of Strategic Housing Market Assessments,
- Regional identification of opportunities for release of land
- Possible pilot: Deposit underwriting schemes for first time entrants
- Possible pilot: Support developers bringing forward developments for rent

Child Poverty:
3 responses received from Herts, Suffolk & Beds.
Suggested support:
- Initial research into child poverty – mapping, existing support, what works
- Make use of conference on 12 Feb for sharing of practice, experience
- Develop innovative actions

Adult Participation in Sport:
2 responses received from Norfolk & Suffolk
Suggested support:
- Research into what works, how to sustain sports offer and lifestyle changes
- Regional marketing campaign – is there an opportunity to piggy-back on Olympics?

N.B. Topics identified by GO rather than localities:
Children's Social Care, Early Years Health Promotion, Targeted Youth Support, Transport

Notes of the Efficiency Cluster Meeting
Held on 8 October 2008, 9.00 am
at the Trinity Centre, Cambridge

Present:

Cllr Tony Williams	Norfolk County Council	Chairman, Member Champion
Cllr Michael Lager	Braintree District Council	
Cllr Terry Hone	North Hertfordshire DC	
Satvinder Rana *	IDeA	
Laurie Rainger*	GO-East	
Mike Mosley	EERA	
Malcolm Morley	Harlow DC	CEX Champion
Cecilia Tredget	Improvement East	
David Ellis	Improvement East	

***** Substitute

Apologies

Dennis Skinner IDeA – Satvinda Rana substituting
Andrew Limb GO-East – Laurie Rainger substituting
Kevin Crompton – Luton Borough Council
Rob Tinlin – Southend on Sea Borough Council

Actions

1. Welcome and Introductions

Cllr Williams welcomed attendees to the meeting and introductions were made.

2. Notes of the Efficiency Cluster Meeting of 13 August 2008

The notes of the Efficiency Cluster meeting of 13 August 2008 were agreed as an accurate record.

Matters arising not covered in the agenda were:

- Terms of reference for the roles of Member Champions and Chief Executive Champions had been approved by EAG and adopted by the Member Panel.

- Members asked for an update on the work being carried out nationally around fuel procurement. Cecilia to obtain an update and circulate. Members also asked for it to be included on the agenda for the next meeting. CMT

3. Programme for Efficiency

Cecilia reported that David Ellis had been recruited to take up the position of Assistant Director and would be leading on the efficiency agenda for Improvement East. David would be starting on 17 November.

Cecilia presented a report on taking forward the efficiency agenda and building on the work already done by the RCE. The recommendations focused on 6 areas which could be developed into regional programmes.

(i) Transformation of service delivery
(ii) Building capacity around joint commissioning
(iii) Resource mapping
(iv) Rationalising procurement activity
(v) Revenues and benefits
(vi) Personalisation in Adult Social Care

The recommendation was to commission PWC to develop PIDs for each of the 6 areas.

The following comments arose from the ensuing discussion:

- 6 areas may be too much to take on all at once and there may, therefore, be a need to prioritise.

- CLG expected real benefits from programmes within the life of the RIEPs, including real efficiency savings. Therefore quick wins needed to be identified.

- There was a need to discover what was already happening around the region and nationally in order to avoid “reinventing the wheel”.

- Barriers to change both political and at officer level would need to be overcome. Members should use their ambassadorial role to promote the work of Improvement East in order to overcome these barriers as should Chief Executives.

- Sustainable procurement savings (as in on-going) wasn’t emphasised sufficiently in the report and should be included explicitly within the efficiency programme.

- There needed to be close liaison with other clusters, particularly regarding the work on Adult Social Care and the work being commissioned through the JIP and the Performance Cluster.

- The recommended funding was for up to £50k – Cecilia and Malcolm to work with PWC to control the budget.

- Timescale: PWC asking for 10 weeks to complete the work. It would be good if this could be reduced.

- Another cluster meeting to be held in December to consider progress.

The meeting agreed to support a programme for efficiency covering the six key areas and agreed a budget of up to £50,000 to engage the services of PWC to assist Improvement East in the development of the programme.

It was agreed that this item would be considered at the December Cluster Meeting.

4. Efficiency gains from corporate and transactional services

Malcolm Morley gave a presentation on the National Corporate and Transactional Services (CATS) Project. He reported that there was interest from the Minister in this programme and that Improvement East could be at the forefront of this national initiative. Presentation to be circulated with the Minutes.

Malcolm proposed that in the first instance 3 full diagnostics should be commissioned, one District, one Unitary and one County Council. CMT

The following comments were noted:

- All local authorities were not the same and there may be a feeling that what worked for one would not necessarily work for all. The results of the diagnostics needed to be replicated to result in wider efficiencies.

- The predicted efficiency savings would only be achieved with 100% buy in and that the programme covered a long time span.

- CLG had committed to this project but there was a risk that they would not progress it if RIEPs didn't confirm their engagement.

- Similar work was going on in other regions and good contacts should be maintained.

- This project would be the principle activity under item 1, Transformation of Service Delivery identified in the PWC report considered at agenda item 3. It was considered, therefore, that a PID would not be required for this project.

It was agreed that PWC should be commissioned to provide 5 rather than 6 PIDs.

It was agreed that the cluster group should recommend that EAG and the Member Panel allocate a sum of £145,000 for this project for full diagnostics to be carried out for one County Council, one Unitary Council and one District Council within the region contingent on £110,000 being allocated from the CLG funding to the region. CMT

A discussion arose on whether or not the Cluster Group had the delegated power to agree funding for projects without referring back to EAG and the Member Panel each time. Cecilia was asked to discuss this with the EAG and Member Panel Chairs in order to reach some conclusion.

The question of how to choose the 3 pilots was discussed. Malcolm suggested emailing all Councils to ask for volunteers. The Chair of the Group along with the Chief Executive Champion and the Director of Improvement East would then develop and use evaluation criteria to select the three Councils.

It was agreed that pending confirmation of funding from CLG, the Chair of the Cluster, the Chief Executive Champion and the Director of Improvement East would develop criteria for the evaluation of expressions of interest and select the Councils for the three full diagnostics.

5. Procurement and service commissioning across the public sector

Malcolm presented a report on this RCE legacy project commissioned from Cap Gemini which would be covered under Area 5 of the PWC report considered at item 3.

The setting up of Public Sector Management Boards was discussed and their relationships with LSPs. It was considered that LSPs dealt with strategies and priorities whereas Public Sector Management Boards looked at improving the co-ordination of public sector resource investment within places and how efficiency gains and improved delivery could be achieved in practice.

There was concern that this was not an obvious area of work for the Efficiency Cluster to consider and that it might sit better in the LAA/LSP cluster group. The Group was content to review this once the PID had been prepared.

There was a general acknowledgement that projects will overlap different group and that this underlined the need to ensure good linkages between all the cluster groups.

It was agreed that a PID should be developed for this project as part of the PWC work.

It was noted here that the £50k funding for the PWC work had been allocated from the Transitional Funding budget and it had been agreed earlier in the year that spending from this budget would not require prior approval from the Member Panel.

6. Future Meetings

It was proposed that the next meeting take place on 10 December in the Newmarket area, starting at 9.00.

Cecilia Tredget
Improvement East
Flempton House,
Flempton,
Bury St Edmunds,
Suffolk
IP28 6EG

23rd October 2008

Dear Cecelia,

Re: Improvement East Funding

Further to my letter dated 3rd October, I have pleasure in attaching a 'business case validation document' in support of our proposal for £50,000 of Improvement East funding.

As you know, within Thames Gateway South Essex we have an extensive capital programme underway led by both local delivery vehicles and individual local authorities. However, we are keen to ensure that a comprehensive strategic approach is taken to addressing the economic development challenges of the sub-region. In terms of promoting economic prosperity and responding to the objectives of the Sub National Review, research undertaken by Shared Intelligence (Si) for the IDeA indicates that most local authorities and sub-regional organisations require support to effectively deliver the new local economic duty. As suggested by the research, it will be important to recognise that any support for local authorities needs to reflect the issues experienced by the type of council and the variety locations in which they deal.

The research proposed a range of capacity building activities, which would support local authorities in delivering economic prosperity, including the developing of a benchmarking and diagnostic tool which would be used to assist local authorities in identifying areas for improvement.

Following on from the research, Si are currently developing, on behalf of the IDeA, diagnostic tool to assist with this process. A number of local authorities from across TGSE have been involved in workshops informing the shape of the diagnostic. As a next stage, the IDeA has indicated that it wishes to test the diagnostic with a range of Local Authorities, recognising the different economic challenges faced across the country and the difficulty of producing a single approach. From our discussions with the IDeA and Shared Intelligence, it is clear that the intention is to involve RIEPs in the testing stage and discussions are currently underway at a national level to agree an approach.

Partners in TGSE are keen to pursue the opportunity of testing the diagnostic tool, as part of the overall objective of enhancing the Partnership's own capacity. The diagnostic tool, as envisaged by the IDeA, would enable local authorities to assess their economic development function and highlight any areas of weakness. This is the critical first step in improving their performance and taking the economic development agenda forward.

In our view using the diagnostic to identify areas of improvement, and then building a programme of support around the identified issues would be an extremely useful exercise, both to inform the diagnostic and its' use but also to drive immediate performance improvement.

Yours sincerely

Rob Tinlin
Chair, Thames Gateway South Essex Executive Board

Annex 4 continues as a separate document

The CURE (Capacity for Urban Renaissance in the East) programme

1.0 Programme summary

The CURE programme has been designed by Regional Cities East (RCE) to deliver improvements to capacity and skills which support the delivery of the growth agenda. The programme seeks to test areas where the six local authorities of Regional Cities East (RCE), their sub regional partners and other key growth areas in the East of England may be able to work more closely to improve individual and collective capacity. RCE believes that improving capacity and enhancing skills sets will enable a stronger public sector response to growth opportunities irrespective of market conditions. The programme is designed to encourage a more intelligent way of delivering urban renaissance projects in a more effective and timely manner. RCE believes that this would involve a combination of different approaches which may include (this list is not exhaustive) the following activities:

- Joint approaches to common issues
- Centres of technical expertise for specialist areas
- More intelligent procurement of key scarce skills
- Influencing of education providers and professional bodies to ensure improved flow of qualified staff
- Working more effectively as a collective with developers

The programme has been scoped as a regional programme, involving partners beyond the core RCE network of six cities. RCE has stated that it is keen to disseminate results as widely as possible, and positioning the CURE programme as an exemplar for the rest of the region.

2.0 Funding required and duration

The annual funding sought for the CURE programme from Improvement East is **£7,775 (2008/9); £90,166 (2009/10) and £93,490 (2010/11)**. RCE is seeking support for an initial two years, representing a total project cost of **£191,431**.

3.0 CURE programme partners

RCE are looking to build an inclusive programme that delivers benefits across the region. The RCE partnership is broad based it includes the six city members of RCE, EEDA, GO-East, a range of sub-regional partners who are currently working in partnerships across the functional urban areas around the six cities (such as Greater Norwich Development Partnership or Haven Gateway Partnership) and Inspire East. Using this sub-regional approach the CURE programme will initially involve around 30 local authorities. RCE is keen to involve other key growth centres, in particular, other growth areas in the region, such as Greater Cambridge and Thames Gateway.

4.0 Background to the CURE programme

RCE undertook research during 2007 which was concerned primarily with identifying opportunities for RCE cities to develop skills and capacity by working together on training and development issues and by pooling scarce professional staff resources.

The research began by reviewing current expertise and strengths in the six cities and their local delivery partners such as LDV's. It also sought an understanding of projects that are currently underway, or planned for delivery over the next 3-5 years, where cities believe they have issues around capacity and opportunities for collaboration.

Key findings from the research were presented back to the RCE Board in January 2008. The research highlighted a number of common key issues facing the cities. These were;

- concern about delivery capacity across the majority of core professional disciplines;
- skills shortages which are likely to get worse in the short to medium term, particularly in specialist skills areas;
- all authorities have been maintaining 'wish-lists' of projects that far exceed any realistic expectations of resources for delivery and tend to dilute delivery capacity.

RCE cities have been working closely with EEDA to develop Integrated Development Programmes (IDPs). The IDPs have begun to address the prioritisation of projects. There are now four well developed IDPs covering 5 Cities and their sub regional partners.

5.0 Addressing the economic downturn

The CURE programme was devising during late 2007 with the Business Plan endorsed by the RCE Board in January 2008. In this sense the proposal predates the current Credit Crunch. RCE have expressed that they would like to test a number of proposals which could address new issues that have arisen out of the current downturn. RCE have specifically identified three initial issues that they would like to address due to the changed economic circumstances. The issues include; Land banking and site assembly; Affordable Housing – in particular reviewing delivery models that are less reliant on private sector investment and; Infrastructure delivery (where there is increased need for the public sector to address issues now). RCE believes that joint working on each of these areas will help growth areas position themselves better for a future recovery and help deliver balanced sustainable communities whilst the downturn continues.

6.0 Outputs and Outcomes

RCE have drafted an initial set of outputs and outcomes for the programme. These need further refinement, however, the set enclosed in the application demonstrate the direction the programme is seeking to evolve. The Outputs and Outcomes are set out in the attached appendix.

7.0 Links to Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy high level outcomes

The CURE programme has clear resonance with a number of elements contained in the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy (RIES), including:-

- **Outcome 4 - Capacity and Skills**

The CURE programme shares the same focus on the growth agenda as the RIES. The ethos of the CURE programme concentrates firmly on:

- Improving local economic growth through enhance capacity and skills and;
- Delivering the overall, substantial growth agenda in the region

The CURE programme aims are directly in line with the Improvement East Year 1 Delivery Plan. In particular the programme addresses the Delivery Plan priority of addressing 'the key challenges facing the East of England require new skills and new ways of working (around the growth agenda)'.

Secondary benefits will also align with other key Outcomes identified in the RIEP Strategy. These include;

- **Outcome 1 - Authority Support**

The CURE proposal is based upon finding new innovative approaches to building capacity across a range of service areas. This focus potentially offers significant benefits in terms of improving service delivery in authorities, particularly in programme management and planning disciplines.

- **Outcome 3 - Efficiency**

CURE offers the potential for efficiency gains. Examples include embedding a standard mechanism for resource planning. Use of resource planning will afford authorities with the potential to reallocate resources and increase productivity. Through CURE there is an opportunity to improve efficiency through shared service arrangements and sharing of best practice.

8.0 How progress will be monitored

If funding support is approved, RCE will establish a Delivery Team which contains a range of partners. The Delivery Team will meet on a regular monthly basis during the initial phase of operation. The Team will oversee the operation of the programme and ensure delivery against the overall programme Implementation Plan. The Delivery Team will work with the RCE Core Team (Secretariat) to produce a regular project Status Report. Improvement East will be offered a place on the Delivery Team.

The Status Report will be presented by the Delivery Team on a bi-monthly basis to the RCE Working Group and Quarterly to the RCE Board. The report will focus upon critical aspects of the programme including.

- Monitoring delivery against established programme and individual project milestones. Each individual project (based on the Business Plan recommendations) will have an individual status report. These will be held by the RCE Core team and discussed with the Working Group and reported to Improvement East on a regular basis. RCE believes at any one time there will be a maximum of 4/5 projects being delivered of the overall 16.
- Cost and resource management – to ensure the programme's finances are effectively managed
- Quality management - to ensure that the programme delivers against the core recommendations contained in the CURE Business Plan and pursues other

opportunities that can add value to the programme. This will be undertaken in discussion with Improvement East.

- Risk management – the status report will monitor future risks that may effect the delivery of the programme.
- Benefits realisation – RCE will track benefits accruing from the CURE project to enable effective dissemination of best practice.

RCE will additionally report back to Improvement East on a quarterly basis through an overall Project Status report. RCE have also suggested that the programme be subject to an end of year evaluation at the end of the first year of operation.