



**Improvement  
East**

Partnership  
for Improvement  
and Efficiency

## **Year Two Delivery Plan**

**April 2009**

Version 1

19 May 2009

# Improvement East Year Two Delivery Plan

## 1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Improvement East is the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership for the East of England and came into existence on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008. The Partnership is one of 9 regional partnerships set up to deliver improvement and efficiency regionally by the sector itself. The Partnership has been allocated significant resources to deliver this challenging agenda and in Year One put in place a robust governance structure to ensure it is led by Members and supported by chief executives and key partners across the region.

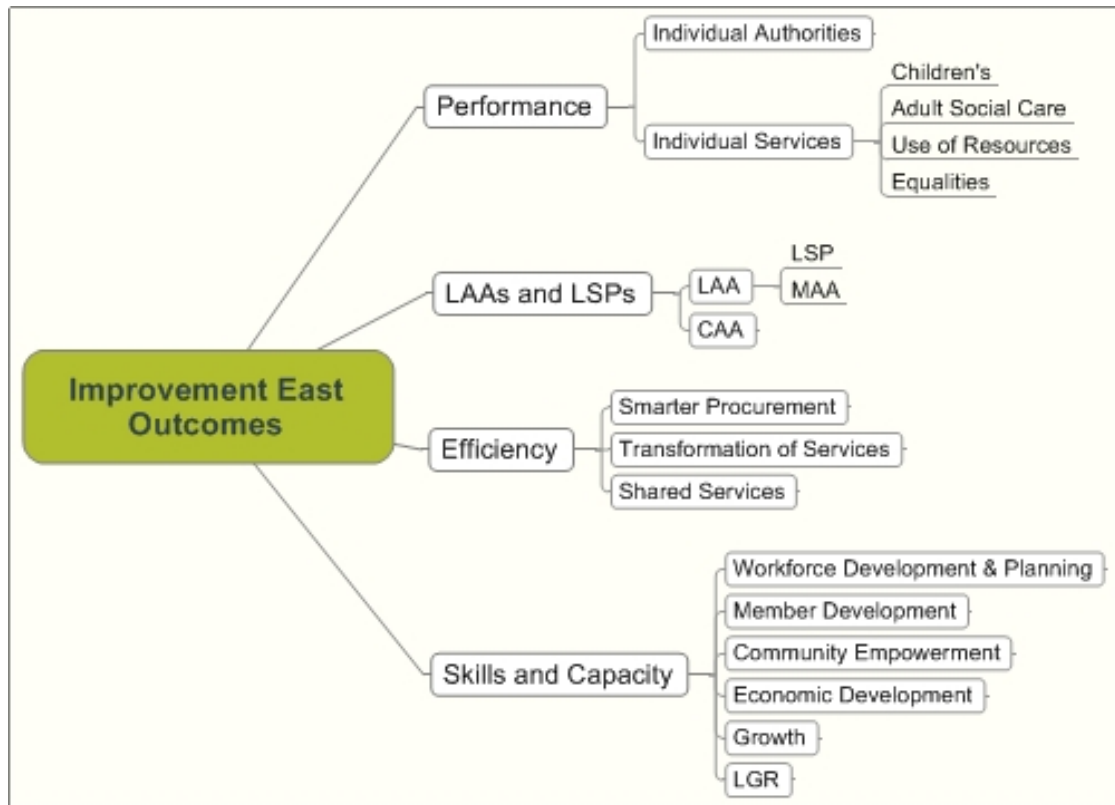
1.2 The Partnership is now able to move into its second year with some real momentum, support has been successfully delivered across the region throughout 2008/09 and work programmes have been established to deliver even more in 2009/10. The Partnership will continue to add real value to the improvement and efficiency agenda by regionally commissioning work to drive forward key priorities for the East of England.

## 2.0 Our Strategy

2.1 The East of England Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy was developed with partners and agreed in March 2008 and clearly sets out four key outcomes:-

- **Local Authority Performance**
- **LSPs and LAAs**
- **Efficiency**
- **Skills and Capacity**

2.2 These key outcomes and the work areas identified in the strategy are illustrated in the diagram below:



### 3.0 Year Two Priorities

The four key success areas for the partnership remain the same but we need to respond to the changing economic circumstances in the region. Greater emphasis and resources need to be focused on efficiency. A number of regionally commissioned programmes are in place for key service areas and by the start of Year Two this process will be completed ensuring that the Partnership moves from the development stage of Year One to an effective and focused delivery stage in Year Two.

### 3.1 Performance

Improvement East is committed to assisting all authorities. Overall performance has improved with fewer authorities in the lower CPA categories. However there is still a need to support a small number of authorities and to work together to ensure that this support is sector led. In addition, certain services and some generic areas are prioritised, as detailed below, due to current levels of performance and/or greater performance challenges in these areas. Performance in other key areas, such as housing, may need to be supported as circumstances change and the Partnership will be flexible in its approach to such needs.

Improvement East is committed to supporting individual authorities which are experiencing difficulties. In 2008/2009 the Partnership directly supported seven authorities by identifying Chief Executives and others from elsewhere in the

region to support the authorities through change; establishing Joint Agency/Improvement Boards to oversee improvement planning; and accessing support through nationally recognised improvement programmes. Importantly, to ensure that intervention is timely, Improvement East works closely with partners to identify which authorities are, or likely to be, struggling.

However, all authorities should be able to access support and Improvement East will continue to offer Menus of Support to all authorities in the region to enable them to select appropriate support for their individual circumstances.

Overall the regional position of Adult Social Care has slightly improved. Improvement East will continue to work closely with the Joint Improvement Board for Adult Social Care to deliver an integrated package of improvement and support to drive up services and make them more efficient.

There has recently been greater scrutiny of Children's Services. The Children's Service Board has been commissioned to address performance as well as new responsibilities such as the 14 to 19 agenda. There has been some deterioration in some key areas of Children's Services and support for authorities will need to target high risk services. The imminent completion of a region-wide analytical study will enable the Board to devise and deliver an appropriate programme of support this year.

Although the region has improved in terms of Use of Resources judgements there are still a large number of authorities in the lower categories. In Year One Improvement East supported the lowest performing authorities individually and a comprehensive programme to support all authorities in respect of the new framework will be launched in 2009/10.

A recent audit of equality across the region demonstrated that some authorities find this agenda challenging. The Equalities and Human Rights Commission has identified a number of regions, including the East, where districts particularly need support in meeting their equalities duties. A package of support is being rolled out across the region to support authorities not only to meet their duties but to adjust to the newly introduced equalities framework.

### 3.2 Local Area Agreements

Improvement East is committed to working with Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Local Area Agreement (LAA) Boards across the region to ensure they deliver the priority outcomes for their communities.

The key aims are to:-

- Build the capacity of the LSPs to ensure they are fit for purpose

- Identify the priority LAA outcomes and where Improvement East can add value to the delivery of these outcomes

In order to achieve these aims, the Partnership has facilitated the introduction of a regional architecture to support the development of our fifty two LSPs and the delivery of the eleven LAAs across the region. This is providing strategic leadership to this wide ranging agenda. In 2009/10 the Partnership will develop and deliver a programme of support to the now eleven LSP's supporting the Local Area Agreements across the region.

Four key areas have been identified where Improvement East can make a difference in the delivery of LAA priority outcomes:-

- Climate Change
- Community empowerment
- Community cohesion
- Skills and worklessness

Improvement East will assist in the co-ordination of programmes and development of projects with existing partnerships and stakeholders in order to address these key areas.

Furthermore, a regional piece of work has been commissioned to be undertaken by a team of Local Improvement Advisers to include an analysis of the LAA delivery planning approach; establish a robust regional baseline picture of partnerships' strengths and development needs; facilitate a strategic view of resources and capture and disseminate effective practice models.

It is vital that authorities and LSPs can address the challenges that the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) will bring. Improvement East will continue to offer support on this agenda.

Improvement East have supported the scoping of Multi Area Agreements (MAAs) in a number of areas in the region. The Partnership will continue to engage with this agenda where appropriate.

### 3.3 Efficiency

The economic downturn has increased the need to ensure that greater efficiency is delivered across the sector. The NI 179 'value for money savings' returns provided by authorities across the region shows that overall the East of England is meeting its efficiency target but this masks the problem that some individual authorities are having in reaching theirs, with some authorities only projecting 1.5% rather than the full 3%.

Year One has focused on developing the capacity of the secretariat and on developing an efficiency programme. A risk audit has been completed on the supply chain for the county and unitary authorities to assist with business continuity planning in the recession. We will move into increased emphasis on efficiency programme implementation in Year Two and increased resources will be targeted at this area to enable successful delivery.

The four work areas that the Partnership will be concentrating on in Year Two are:-

- Procurement
- Joint commissioning
- Resource mapping
- Transforming services

The Partnership has agreed that the emphasis will be on procurement as the most likely area to offer support to all authorities across the region in achieving direct efficiency savings.

In the year ahead our priorities are to:-

- Develop a new regional procurement hub and online portal which will enable authorities to pinpoint best value framework contracts to match their requirements and also to enable and support regional collaboration and aggregation of expenditure, thus maximising the purchasing power of those authorities. Further work on the risks within the local authority supply chain may be conducted where authorities feel that the year one project has added value. We also intend to investigate the potential use of the Care Costs Calculator which has been successfully piloted in other regions.
- Encourage authorities to work in partnership to make cases for new shared service ventures, with financial support for joint commissioning, initially testing the potential interest in shared Revenues services.
- Support local resource mapping activity for projects seeking to identify the totality of sub-regional public expenditure on a 'place' basis and developing relationships with other organisations where funding streams could be integrated to provide major performance improvement or efficiencies delivered through deeper coordination, including potentially single channel funding.
- Assist authorities in the transformation of services by developing a programme of capacity development for business process improvement; through the implementation of an Invest to Save fund to pump prime efficiency projects; and through making regional support available for a national project to improve delivery of efficient corporate and transactional services. We will also

study closely the possible regional use of the emerging Peer Efficiency project.

- Work with Fire and Rescue authority partners to bring about a mixed efficiency and performance improvement programme on a regional basis.

### 3.4 Skills and capacity

In the first year Improvement East has worked with sector led partnerships and networks to develop programmes to achieve its strategic outcomes in all of the six work areas.

The Partnership needs to respond to the changes in the external environment and the impact this is having on authorities in the region. Since the RIES was agreed the country has entered an economic recession, the timetable for Local Government Review (LGR) in Norfolk and Suffolk has been put back and growth in the region has slowed down. These changes present new challenges and in Year Two, Improvement East will want to ensure that it is supporting authorities in the development of skills to meet the changing environment. The key priorities for Year two will be:-

- A focus on Member development and a comprehensive programme of support being rolled out in year two in conjunction with the Member Development Network.
- The research into the needs of authorities following SNR provides a firm foundation for a capacity building programme which will be rolled out in partnership with the East of England Development Agency and other partners. There is also the need to support authorities in addressing new pressures as a result of the down turn and national programmes will be delivered regionally through the partnership on worklessness
- Community empowerment is a national priority and Improvement East will continue to add value to the work of the Regional Empowerment Partnership to increase its effectiveness particularly with local authorities across the region.
- Implementing a programme of support for work force planning developed by the Heads of HR across the region. This programme will include support for authorities to develop apprenticeships, address safeguarding as well as making workforce planning more efficient through smarter procurement of services.
- The priority for growth in the next period is to support authorities in managing the down turn and ensuring that key skills are retained for future growth.
- The changed timetable for LGR in Suffolk and Norfolk provides an opportunity to build on the work of the Leadership Centre to ensure the “soft processes lead to hard outcomes” resulting in clear efficiencies in the provision of public services in these areas.

#### 4.0 Delivering the plan

The Partnership has grown and developed in its first year and the governance structure has been enhanced by the creation of Member and Chief Executive Champions for all the main themes in the Delivery Plan. Members and Chief Executives come together regularly in Cluster Meetings to look in detail at proposals that have been commissioned by the Partnership. An urgency process has been agreed with delegation to clusters to make decisions to ensure the Partnership is responsive to the needs of the sector.

In Year Two the Cluster Meetings will take on more responsibility in managing the delivery of their section of the Plan with delegated powers from the Member Panel. The Executive Advisory Group will continue to advise and support the Member Panel on the strategic issues affecting the Partnership and the cross over between the different cluster groups.

#### 5.0 Financial allocation Year Two

Funding stream	
Building Capacity East carry forward	£0.5m
Year One uncommitted	£3.5m
Year Two funding	£7.0m
Capital Efficiency and Transformation Fund (2008/9)	£2.0m
Total Year Two	<b>£13m</b>

At the end of the first year all uncommitted expenditure has been added to the budget for 2009/10 allocation ensuring that Improvement East focuses on its new changed priorities for Year Two.

In Year One £4.5m was committed leaving approximately £3.5m to be carried forward to 2009/11. Building Capacity East carried forward £0.5m which is uncommitted expenditure increasing this to £4m. The Partnership has also been allocated £2m from the national capital Efficiency and Transformation fund which takes the **Year Two budget to a total of £13m**. A copy of the indicative Financial Allocation is attached and this totals **£12 922**.

Indicative Financial Allocation Year Two	Approved Programme 2009/2010 £k											
<b>Performance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Authorities</li> <li>• Adult Social Care</li> <li>• Children's Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 14-19 Transition Programme</li> <li>- Children's Services Programme</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use of Resources</li> <li>• Menu of Support</li> <li>• Equalities</li> <li>• Housing and Planning</li> <li>• Innovation Fund</li> <li>• Innovations Day</li> </ul>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">1000</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">1297</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">220</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">750</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">150</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">580</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">65</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">120</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">100</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">65</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">4347</td></tr> </table>	1000	1297	220	750	150	580	65	120	100	65	4347
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<b>LSPs/LAAs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to Strategic LSPs</li> <li>- Support to District LSPs</li> <li>- Support to two Places</li> </ul> </li> <li>• LAA Outcomes** <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Climate Change</li> <li>- Skills and Worklessness</li> <li>- Community Empowerment</li> <li>- Community Cohesion</li> </ul> </li> <li>• CAA</li> <li>• MAA</li> </ul>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">550</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">600</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">270</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">100</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">100</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: right;">1620</td></tr> </table>	550	600	270	100	100	1620					
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Indicative Financial Allocation Year Two	Approved Programme 2009/2010 £k
<p><b>Skills and Capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support for Regional Networks 70</li> <li>- Heads of HR Regional Programme 250</li> <li>- Culture and Sports Improvement Network 100</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Member Development 150</li> <li>• Community Empowerment 200</li> <li>• Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Eastern Region Skills Development Programme (SHAPE East) 110</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Economic Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local Authorities Economic Development Capacity Building project 300</li> </ul> </li> <li>• LGR</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme Management 900</li> <li>• National initiatives 200</li> <li>• Contingency 100</li> <li>• Communications</li> </ul>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>12 922</b>

Notes: \*\* Improvement East has received or will receive the following ring fenced funding for these LAA priority outcomes which it is channelling to regional partnerships

Climate Change	£288,624 already received from DEFRA
Community Empowerment	£200,000 funded from Skills and Capacity cluster
Community Cohesion	£150,000 expected from DCLG
Skills and worklessness	£100,000 expected from DWP

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Probability (H M L)</b>	<b>Impact (H M L)</b>	<b>Action Required</b>
Lack of leadership from Member Panel	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidate and maintain politically led governance model adopted by Improvement East</li> </ul>
Lack of leadership from Advisory Board	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulation through the Member Panel</li> </ul>
Lack of senior management ownership from authorities (not represented on Advisory Group)	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Executives on the Advisory Group to fully engage with their peers through the county/fire meetings and Society of Local Authority Chief Executives</li> <li>• Invite senior officers to seminars and conferences</li> </ul>
Lack of Member engagement	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members on the Panel to fully engage with their peers within their political groupings and their own authorities</li> <li>• Invite Members to seminars and conferences</li> </ul>
Strategy fails to meet regional needs and/or achieve anticipated impact	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel and Advisory Group to be alert to new challenges</li> <li>• Advisory Group to keep the programme under close review</li> </ul>
Lack of clarity about role and purpose of Improvement East	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panel, Advisory Group and support staff to place a strong focus on effective communication and marketing of Improvement East</li> <li>• Communications post to be appointed in May 2009.</li> </ul>
Expectations on Improvement East are too high and this leads to disappointment.	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for clear priorities in the strategy and for these to be translated into a challenging but realistic work programme that is well communicated</li> </ul>