

RIEP - Update

Summary

This paper provides members with

- Feedback following the Chairman's meeting with John Healey MP on 25 November 2008
- feedback following the Improvement Board lead members visit to the East Midlands on 1 December 2008
- an update on the RIEP Member Forum on 6 January 2009
- A summary of performance oversight arrangements
- An update on procurement

Recommendations

This report is for information.

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1. **Chairman's meeting with John Healey MP**

Cllr Parsons met with the Minister John Healey on 25 November 08. Key outcomes from this meeting included:

- A joint letter from Cllr Parsons and John Healey MP to all RIEP lead members which outlined the need to share RIEPs achievements to date with the sector and government in order to build confidence in RIEPs' ability to deliver (Appendix A).
- Discussions around the timely release of year 2 funding Agreement that RIEPs should provide information on progress and good practice to the sector. RIEP Programme Office has subsequently agreed with RIEPs to provide quarterly progress updates from each RIEP and this will be important in keeping Improvement Board members and other stakeholders updated regularly.

2. **East Midlands RIEP**

£1.3m of 08/09 allocation for the East Midlands RIEP was withheld pending the strengthening of governance arrangements within the region. Lead Improvement Board members visited the East Midlands RIEP on 1 December 2008 to discuss progress made. Further to this Cllr Parsons has written to John Healey MP recommending the release of the withheld £1.3m year 1 funding (Appendix B).

This has now been agreed and was confirmed by John Healey MP at the RIEP Member Forum on 6th January.

3. **RIEP Member Forum**

The second meeting of the RIEP member forum was held 6 January 09 and was attended by representatives from RIEPs, lead Improvement Board members and John Healey MP. Key actions included:

- Confirmation of terms of reference for the RIEP Member Forum. This included decisions to; meet quarterly and to strengthen links with key groups including the LGA Improvement Board, political improvement boards, the performance support panel and the Chief Executives Task Group.
- Launch of the Councillors Guide to the RIEPs (hard copies will be available at the meeting. The brochure is available online at <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pageld=1383237>)
- Announcement of the release of withheld year 1 funds to the East Midlands RIEP
- Discussion around the role of RIEPs supporting councils during the economic downturn.
- Members endorsed a robust and consistent approach to performance management which will include quarterly updates, this will be important in

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keeping Improvement Board members and other stakeholders updated regularly. This will be supported by the development of ongoing communication mechanisms with RIEPs to provide a steady stream of information on progress and good practice to the sector.

4. Performance oversight arrangements for RIEPs

Performance oversight arrangements for the release of year 2 funding are proposed to include:

- Production of RIEP annual reports, as outlined in the National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy which show progress against objectives in Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategies.
- Draft annual reports for 2008/9 will be produced by mid March 09 for endorsement by LGA lead members and ministers and this will provide the basis for the release of year 2 RIEP funding.
- The first set of quarterly progress updates on each RIEP will be co-ordinated by the RIEP Programme Office at end January and will provide members with details of efficiency savings and an narrative on what the RIEP's have delivered in each region.

5. Procurement update

Following the presentations from Ken May from the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) and David Shields from the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) we agreed that there was a substantial amount of work to be progressed in the area of procurement. An officer group is being assembled to progress the work programme agreed by the Board in November. This will comprise of representatives from the LGA, IDeA, 4ps, RIEPs, treasurer, procurement bodies and OGC. A detailed report with recommendations will be presented to the next board on 24 March 2009.

6. Financial Implications

There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

7. Implications for Wales

This report applies to England only

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