

Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships - Update

1. Summary

This paper provides members with a summary of recent progress and activity across the nine RIEPs and includes an outline of arrangements for the sign off of year two RIEP funding.

This paper also includes an update on the process for devolving the Efficiency and Transformation fund.

2. Recommendations

This report is for information.

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Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships

Background

1. The National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy (NIES) recognises the effectiveness of a sector led approach to improvement; Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs) are a core part of this model. Both RIEP and Improvement Board members have previously agreed the importance of the RIEPs providing regular updates to reassure key stakeholders of their progress and to share good practice across the regions. A summary of the key messages from the first set of these quarterly updates is provided below. The quarterly updates are available in full on request.
2. **Improving value for money to meet the 3% target:** Evidence of supporting authorities to achieve the 3% target is a key priority for RIEPs and the minister. Key examples to date include:
 - The SW's Peninsula Children's Placements Tendering Project has improved outcomes for children in placements and saved £1.6m
 - Significant savings from procurement; £6m to date from SE and £2.6m gains from the WM procurement hubs.
 - The EM RIEP has supported 200 individuals to date to complete the NVQ Level 2 in Business Improvement Techniques.
3. **Performance support:** RIEP support and engagement with councils experiencing difficulties appears to be positive and complementary to national architecture such as IDeA. For example:
 - The WM Regional Children's Forum plays a key role coordinating children's services improvement across the region's partners.
 - The NW RIEP has a 'rapid response' fund to react as issues emerge.
 - Capital Ambition offers peer support to all London boroughs which will shortly include the London Efficiency Challenge. Support has recently included officer and member support by the RIEP and IDeA to London Borough Haringey.
4. **Support for Local Area Agreements:** Supporting the delivery of ambitious LAAs is a priority for all RIEPs. Support programmes include:
 - a diagnostic tool developed by Improvement East and taken up by all Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) in the region.
 - Support for targeted work on particular indicators in the WM.
5. **Economic Development and the recession:** Supporting economic and neighbourhood renewal leadership capacity locally is a key enabler within the NIES and an area of interest for the minister. RIEPs are reviewing their

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programmes in light of the downturn, responding to changing priorities at a local level.

- In Y&H the RIEP is encouraging authorities to sign up to a 'pledge of action' against the downturn following a RIEP event in December 08.
- Capital Ambition is working with London Councils and authorities to offer apprenticeships in public services
- £1.2m DWP funding has been identified to support regional networks tackling worklessness and is currently being assessed on a region by region basis

6. **RIEP ownership and engagement:** RIEPs are continuing to embed themselves in the sector including raising their profile with councils and partnerships. A number of updates detail the establishment of both Member and Chief Executive 'champions' and networks to lead work streams and programmes.

7. **Release of year two funding:**

As outlined at the Improvement Board in January, RIEPs will produce annual reports which show progress against objectives in Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategies as per requirements within the NIES. The Improvement Board lead members will jointly review and endorse the reports with John Healey MP on 18th March. We will circulate the annual reports to Improvement Board members as soon as they are completed. A summary and update will also be provided to members at the next board meeting.

8. **Efficiency and transformation (E and T) fund:**

Following a consultation period, CLG has advised that this £115m capital fund will be used to support the following three workstreams: customer led transformation, efficiency and system innovation (including preventative services).

RIEP directors have been asked to submit short proposals to CLG by March 4th outlining broad programmes to be considered under the efficiency workstream and outlining individual projects to be considered under the system innovation workstream.

Officers will continue to work with CLG to agree a streamlined governance and programme management arrangement for the fund building on existing sector infrastructure. We will provide members with an update on progress at the next meeting.

Financial Implications

9. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Implications for Wales

10. There are no implications for Wales.

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