

National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy : RIEPs update

Summary

This paper provides a summary of progress across year 1 of the RIEP programme and a forward look to year two. The paper also provides members with an update on the efficiency and transformation fund.

Recommendations

This report is for information.

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Background

1. As agreed in the National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy (NIES) Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs) submitted draft annual reports to lead members and the Minister, John Healey MP, in mid March. Following a recent meeting, Cllr Parsons and the minister have endorsed the release of year two funding.

Update on key achievements from the RIEP Programme, 2008-9

2. Key messages arising from the annual reports are as follows:
 - RIEPs are member led and owned by the sector
 - RIEPs reported over £100m of efficiency gains in their first year, on an initial funding investment of just under £50m
 - RIEPs communicate with all English authorities and have engaged with over 95% of local authorities in their first year
 - RIEPs are supporting councils to respond to the economic downturn
 - RIEPs have supported 36 councils in difficulty over the past year
 - RIEPs have facilitated innovative approaches so authorities can take forward collaborative projects they may not otherwise have done.

Collective messages, case studies and achievements have also been brought together in a 'key messages' document which is available at www.idea.gov.uk/rieips and has been previously circulated to members.

Building on year one progress

3. The annual reports for 2008/9 reveal a focus on the following areas for years two and three:
 - Accelerating efficiency gains
 - Support for councils in the downturn
 - Support for safeguarding
 - Embedding CAA including support for partnerships, collaborative working, LAA's and LSP's
 - Building on a strong start to ensure sector ownership
 - Delivery of regional priorities as per RIES
4. The recent RIEP member forum was a productive one where members shared knowledge on their RIEP's key procurement and safeguarding initiatives. It was agreed that case studies should be developed on the issues of category management, procurement portals and procurement cards and for the July Improvement Board to receive a presentation on the scope for developing shared services and other ways the IB can drive forward the procurement agenda. Members also shared concerns about possible capital funding for year two, in place of revenue funding.

Communicating the improvement journey of the sector

5. The Board commissioned a report at its meeting in September 2008 to celebrate the achievements of the local government sector. The report will demonstrate the role of RIEPs and the LGA group in supporting councils to deliver. A copy of the draft report is being circulated to members prior to the Board meeting for comment, ahead of publication at the annual conference.

Efficiency and Transformation fund

6. As reported to the board at its last meeting the efficiency and transformation fund (£115m capital fund) will be used to support three workstreams; customer led transformation, efficiency and systems innovation. CLG have now devolved £7.35m to the Local Government Delivery Council to develop better information on customers and more customer friendly websites and between £2m and £3.5m to each RIEP to implement projects on 'systems innovation' and efficiency. Projects RIEPs will be taking forward include a Value for Money tool by Capital Ambition which will also be on available to all RIEPs and development and roll out of regional procurement hubs (e.g. East).

'Total Place' - area based pilots

7. CLG has devolved £5m funding to the sector to develop an area based approach which maps total public sector resources in a locality in order to reduce duplication, improve partnership working and identify further efficiencies. The pilots will be modeled on the [Counting Cumbria project](#) which mapped the £7bn spent annually across the county by the public sector. This work is being led by the Local Government Leadership Centre with support from the RIEP in each region. Thirteen pilot sites were identified in the Budget announcement and we expect confirmation of an additional London site shortly. A list of the pilot sites is available from officers.

Financial Implications

8. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report

Implications for Wales

9. There are no implications for Wales