

IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY WEST MIDLANDS (IEWM)

NOTES OF BOARD MEETING – 12th June 2014 Imagine Room, The Studio, Birmingham

Attendees: Mark Rogers (Chair); Steve Winterflood (Vice Chair); Cllr Paul Middlebrough (Wychavon); Howard Davies (LGA); Jan Britton (Sandwell); Martin Reeves (Coventry); John Polychronakis (Dudley); Colin Williams (WME); Ian James (Solihull); Dawn Hewins (Stoke).

IEWM: Sue Banks; Ged Bowles; Pete Jackson; Carola Bennion; Tony Ashfield; Sonia Thomson (Minutes).

Apologies: Kevin Dicks (Bromsgrove & Redditch); Clare Marchant (Worcestershire); Richard Partington (Telford & Wrekin); Laura Johnston (Telford & Wrekin); John van de Laarschot (Stoke); Nigel Kletz (Bham); Andrew Burns (Staffordshire).

1. Welcome & Apologies

Steve Winterflood (Vice Chair) opened the meeting on behalf of Mark Rogers (Chair) who was running behind time and apologies were noted as above.

2. Minutes of Board Meeting – February 2014 and Matters Arising

The minutes were approved as an accurate record and there were no matters arising.

3. IEWM: The next phase to March 2017 (Papers 2, 2a, 2b)

Sue referred to the presentation slides and Papers 2, 2a and 2b and outlined proposals to continue the IEWM Programme to March 2017, at no cost to the sector. The proposals were considered a 'worse case' scenario as no income assumptions had been factored in beyond March 2015 at this stage.

Sue talked about IEWM's role and purpose; the transition from being a funding organisation to a delivery and enabling organisation and the key themes for future focus to March 2017.

Sue confirmed that IEWM's proposal to March 2017 has been signed off by its' accountable body, Worcestershire County Council, however, Sue also emphasised that we recognise that IEWM needs to develop new opportunities/bring in more income as we cannot continue to rely on a combination of (reducing) legacy funding and external grant funding in the longer term.

To this end the IEWM team has been busy business planning and is exploring a number of opportunities as set out in section 6 of paper 2, including the development of new offers/themes; establishing strategic partnerships at the regional and national level and exploiting our own assets to develop new commercial opportunities.

IEWM has significantly reduced its' overheads in recent years and will continue to look for opportunities to do so and to get better value for every IEWM pound spent.

Sue also highlighted the potential to review IEWM's Governance arrangements and ensure that they continue to be fit for purpose as set out in Paper 2b.

Sue then paused the presentation and invited comments/discussion with the Board regarding the proposals put forward.

Discussion - New Proposals/Budget Position/Governance

Steve Winterflood (S Staffs) asked the Board if they agreed to the continuation of the programme as the residual risk seemed minimal and it was evident that the programme would not simply be 'limping through' to 2017.

Martin Reeves (Coventry) agreed it was sensible to continue the Programme and highlighted that any risks to WCC were minimal.

Jan Britton (Sandwell) said that the proposals reflected what CEX's want as councils but questioned whether they were radical enough in the longer term. Jan felt a more generously proportioned discussion with the sector is needed in terms of IEWM's purpose and role and whether it should operate in a different mode/via a different model; ownership by the region's LA's for example.

Martin Reeves (Coventry) said the focus should be on commercialisation and that we should look to bring in some external help to support that review and thinking about potential future operating models.

Sue highlighted that there could be an opportunity to build upon the region's SLI Compact which is currently a voluntary agreement; this could potentially be turned into an investment model for the region whereby participating authorities 'own' IEWM.

Jan Britton (Sandwell) felt that a subscription model would not work and that an ownership model would be more palatable and would allow freedom to develop and to trade with other regions.

John Polychronakis (Dudley) said that whatever the structure/operating model is, the real measure for success will be how successful IEWM is in

stimulating new ways of working. All local authorities are grappling with this at the moment.

Steve Winterflood (S Staffs) asked the Board for their views on governance and if the existing arrangements could take on the new proposals.

Martin Reeves (Coventry) said there needs to be clarity on the business model/market first and then a decision could be made about Governance. Martin felt that the Board membership should be smaller if IEWM were to move to a commercial model.

Cllr Middlebrough (Wychavon) felt the Board didn't necessarily need to be smaller. It is more about finding the right people with the right skills and having the right resources to determine what the future business model might be.

Colin Williams (WME) said we need to be clear about what councils want from IEWM e.g. consultancy, products or regional co-ordination and network support etc. Colin highlighted that WME needed to have a similar discussion with the sector before March 2016 and suggested a joint review with IEWM, bringing in someone external to provide support, could be helpful.

The Board agreed to this.

Steve Winterflood (S Staffs) then returned to the question of Governance arrangements.

Howard Davis (LGA) felt that nothing should be decided until the review with WME had been completed.

Steve Winterflood (S Staffs) added that everyone would want to be part of that discussion.

Ian James (Solihull) touched upon the themes and focus for IEWM and added that there was something about how it can position itself in terms of Health and Wellbeing; thinking through how it would engage with Public Health England for example would be important looking ahead.

Mark Rogers (Chair) arrived and Sue gave a brief summary of the discussion so far.

There followed a discussion about who might be the right people to support the review.

Mark Rogers (Chair) summed up by saying that there were a range of people that IEWM/WME can draw upon and added that Sue/Colin should be given the authority to crack on with the work that needed to be done.

Martin Reeves (Coventry) asked if the Board should reconstitute itself and have more people from the Board attending the Executive meetings to oversee the review work.

Mark Rogers (Chair) agreed that a larger Executive Group was needed to oversee the review work but felt it was important not to lose sight of the overall Board at this stage. Mark asked for volunteers to join the Executive and suggested that Colin ought to be part of the group. Jan Britton (Sandwell) said he would be happy to join the group. **Howard Davis also volunteered to join this group after the meeting.

Colin Williams (WME) agreed that he should be part of the discussions however, highlighted that he and Sue would be advisers to the Executive and not decision makers.

Agreed

Continuation of the IEWM Programme - Paper 2

- The continuation of the IEWM Programme to March 2017 was agreed.

Budget - Paper 2a

- The overall financial position was noted and agreed.
- The proposed distribution of funding as set out in Paper 2a was noted and approved to support the continuation of the IEWM Programme to March 2017.
- The latest Return on Investment position was noted.
- The conclusions of the internal Audit were noted.

Governance – Paper 2b

- It was agreed that the IEWM Executive will be extended to create a working group to oversee the proposed options appraisal work.
- The full Board will remain in place until this work is complete.

4. Programme Updates

Developing the IEWM Innovation offer and linking to the Transcend Alumni (Paper 3).

Innovation Offer

Ged Bowles referred to paper 3 and gave an update of progress since the

last meeting in February. At the last meeting, IEWM decided not to pursue the Ernst & Young model for various reasons. Since then, IEWM have spoken to Capital Ambition who has confirmed that West Mids authorities can take advantage of their current arrangement with E&Y. We are now working with Capital Ambition to enable this access and will notify authorities accordingly.

IEWM is planning to bring in a group of Transcend graduates to help develop the wider Innovation offer going forward.

Transcend Programme

Ged summarised the success of the Transcend Programme to date, delivered in partnership with WME and Capita, with 50 delegates having 'graduated' from 22 authorities across the region. WME are planning a 4th cohort without IEWM subsidy to be delivered in the autumn.

In April IEWM ran the first Transcend Alumni network event which was attended by CEX's and sponsored by Virgin Media at their training academy centre near Solihull. Northgate are sponsoring a further event on 27th June and CAPITA have agreed to host another event in the autumn.

We are consulting with the Transcend Alumni about future focus and emphasis but this is clearly a key resource/opportunity for the region which must be maximised.

Transformation Challenge Award

Ged gave a brief update and explained the purpose of the TCA, following the recent event hosted by Staffordshire CC. Essentially, there will be a £320M fund available to authorities over the next two years of which £15M will be immediately available to authorities currently working on Transformation projects.

Initial expressions of interest need to be submitted by 1st July 2014 followed by a formal submission by 1st October 2014.

West Midlands Commissioning Academy

Ged gave a brief update on the national Commissioning Academy and highlighted that Staffordshire CC have recently been appointed by the Academy to deliver parallel support at the regional level.

Staffs CC are keen to partner with IEWM in this respect though conversations are at an early stage. Hopefully an offer can be developed

which complements our existing 'peer challenge' approach which has worked successfully so far.

Performance of the Region Report/Next Steps

Sue Banks gave a brief overview of the pending Performance of the Region report and proposals for circulation to LA's in early July, with wider follow up activity including circulation to key partners and the potential for a regional event in the Autumn.

A key issue is to highlight the need for more traction across the SLI system to ensure participation and active involvement from all and not just the willing.

Mark Rogers (Chair) suggested that we take stock of reactions to the report amongst LAs before considering any wider circulation/follow up activities. The SLI Steering Group meeting on 17th July will provide a good opportunity for this.

Adult Social Care & Health

Ian James (Solihull) gave an update about the region's Better Care Fund plans and associated concerns around NHS funding.

Howard Davies (LGA) highlighted that CLG have requested a briefing about our progress with the Plans.

Sue Banks added that this was in the context of the forthcoming CEX meeting which CLG reps will be attending.

Ian James (Solihull) highlighted that this could be an opportunity to encourage CLG/LGA to lobby more effectively with the DoH on our behalf.

Children's Services

Carola Bennion (IEWM) gave an update on the Children's Improvement Plan which for the first time brings together the wider WMADCS work programme with the region's Improvement Plan for Children.

Carola also gave an update upon the requirement to establish an Adoption Leadership Board and confirmed that Tony Oakman from Stoke will be chairing this Board.

Mark Rogers (Chair) asked if there should be Elected Member/CEX involvement in the regional Board. Carola said she would look into this.

Children's Agency Social Workers

Jan Britton (Sandwell) gave an update on the letter that had been sent out to the 13 CEX's and DCS's suggesting a 'cap' for agency worker rates. Responses have come back from most authorities which are mostly positive, with no outright 'no's'.

We will now commission a piece of work on behalf of the region to propose some suggested rates for key roles and an associated mechanism for managing them via WMADCS.

It has been suggested that WME are in a position to do this work and IEWM will look to prepare a brief within the next week in consultation with WMADCS.

Martin Reeves (Coventry) agreed that it was an honest piece of work which will enable us to begin managing markets across the region.

Mark Rogers (Chair) concluded that this would hopefully lead to wider initiatives/outcomes in terms of stabilising the children's workforce etc.

5. Any Other Business

None.

6. Dates of Future Meeting

- 7th October 2014, 2pm to 4pm at the Studio in Birmingham
- 2015 dates to be confirmed.