

WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY PARTNERSHIP

NOTES OF BOARD MEETING – 22 JULY 2010 Held at Baskerville House, Birmingham

Attendees:

Trish Haines (Chair); Nina Dawes (Vice Chair); Cllr Sue Anderson (Bham); Cllr Roger Lawrence (Wolverhampton); Cllr Paul Middlebrough (Wychavon); John van de Laarschot (Stoke); Celia Bahrami (Shropshire); Steve Winterflood (South Staffs); Gereint Stoneman (Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire); Allison Fraser (Sandwell); Tony Geeson (Herefordshire); Kevin Dicks (Bromsgrove & Redditch); Glyn Evans (Bham); Rory Borealis (Walsall); Paul Lankester (Stratford); Joanne Lancaster (Wolverhampton); Martin Gorjup (Wolverhampton); Linda Sanders (Dudley); Mark Rogers (Solihull); Sally-Anne Chidwick (WMFS); Phil Jones (Audit Commission); Howard Davies (IDeA); Mike Barnes (RAWM).

IEWM - Andy Hancox (Director); Sue Banks; Ged Bowles; Keith Gordon; Matt Bowsher; Colin Williams; Polly Garnett; Rebecca Davies; Tony Ashfield; Andrew Harrison; Sonia Thomson (minutes).

Apologies:

Cllr Ken Meeson (Solihull); Cllr Les Lawrence (Bham); Shane Bryans (GOWM); Chris Bull (Herefordshire); Victor Brownlees (Telford & Wrekin); Laura Rowley (Shropshire); Bev Messinger (Coventry); Dr Rashmi Shukla (NHS/SHAWM); Olwen Dutton (West Midlands Councils) Vij Randeniya (WMFS); Mark Pearce (AWM).

1. Welcome and Apologies

Trish Haines (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted (as recorded above).

2. Session 1 – Setting the Scene – The Scale of the Challenge

Cllr Middlebrough (Wychavon) gave a brief presentation from a members' perspective regarding the challenges facing local authorities and some of the actions that will be required to respond.

John van de Laarschot (Stoke) also gave a brief presentation from a Chief Executive perspective, highlighting that we are entering a new era in terms of a coalition government which has clear priorities for reducing the national deficit at an unprecedented scale and speed. The reduction in revenue funding for public services alongside a huge contraction in capital funding will require better detailed financial planning around risks and uncertainty, and for services to be more 'customer savvy'.

Trish Haines (Chair) added that local authorities will need to give up their 'passive approach' to government direction and be more proactive in terms of telling government what is required to deliver effective local services that are accountable to local people in the future.

3. Session 2 – Improvement and Efficiency Support and the Locality Investment Fund (1)

Andy Hancox gave a brief presentation to take stock of the challenges facing the West Midlands; provide a review of sector led support to date; and update the Board regarding the developing discussions around the future of sector led support nationally.

Roundtable discussions followed with each table considering 2 key questions in relation to the elements of the IEWM offer that are making a difference (or not) and what the future shape and scope of sector-led support should look like.

Some of the key feedback included:

- Procurement was widely acknowledged as being successful although there were mixed views re: effectiveness in Districts
- There were mixed views on the success of the RM role although generally this was felt to be positive
- Engagement at senior level and with Members needs to continue to be strengthened
- There is a clear need to continue to build capacity and skills in key areas through practical action and support (e.g. transformation)
- Workforce development will be a key issue moving forward
- We need to do more to accelerate learning, innovation and ideas effectively

Andy concluded by saying the feedback was very helpful; also we recognised the need for stronger engagement with localities, though this had been made more challenging to some degree given the lack of continuity with the Board Chair etc. and relatively high turnover of CEX in the region in recent years.

4. Session 3 – Making the Best use of the IEWM Locality Investment Fund (LIF) to tackle the challenges ahead (2)

Andy Hancox gave a brief overview of the new Locality Investment Fund, including the key themes emerging/opportunities available and the proposed model being recommended to the Board for managing the LIF.

Each of the LIF proposals was then considered in line with the proposed model by 4 working groups. Feedback for each group is briefly summarised as follows:

Group A

Birmingham City Council/City Region/Stoke on Trent City Council

Bham/City Region

- Optimal Care bid should go forward – need to learn from and link to Coventry pilot to support it
- Collaborative procurement – yes, should go forward and roll out learning to other sub-regions
- Fast Broadband – yes, more work required on ROI
- Customer Insight proposal – more work required

Stoke

- Proposal supported – full package
- Recognise it is central to Stoke's improvement strategy
- Need to ensure ROI and shared learning across the region

Group B

Dudley MBC/Sandwell MBC/Walsall MBC/Wolverhampton City Council/ Black Country

- Broadly supported all proposals and keen to get moving
- CEX meeting in September will firm up Black Country proposal
- Raised a question as to whether we should 'over programme' acknowledging that some proposals may not deliver

Group C

Coventry/Solihull/Warwickshire & Districts/ and Worcestershire & Districts

- Strong proposals which are all supported
- Good opportunities for regional learning
- Can live with proposed capital/revenue split

Group D
Staffordshire & Districts/Shropshire Council/Herefordshire Council/Telford & Wrekin Council

- Telford – No rep at meeting. Need to discuss further with Telford. Suggested £200k at this stage.
- Herefordshire - agreed £275k. Proposal and ROI to be firmed up.
- Shropshire – Fully supported.
- Staffordshire:
 - 3rd Sector - good proposal
 - Asset Management – not supported
 - Waste Management – not supported
 - Procurement - £100K support
 - One Place/lets get together – supported – original £100k plus additional £175k

Andy Hancox thanked the groups for a challenging and productive discussion and confirmed that IEWM would now adjust the proposed model to reflect the feedback and would circulate for final comments by close of business on Friday 23rd July.

Agreed

It was agreed that the final sign-off for the LIF package would be delegated to Trish Haines (Chair) in consultation with Andy Hancox. We would aim to sign the package off before the end of July and to follow up any proposals which required more work quickly – again these will be signed off by Trish in consultation with Andy.

5. Session 4 – IEWM Business

Andy Hancox presented paper 2 and paper 2a which provided a financial update and a programme progress report.

Andy also highlighted the projects which had been approved under delegated authority since the last Board meeting. No projects required approval at today's meeting outside of the LIF programme.

A key issue to note was the current situation regarding the WMLB and the potential impact upon IEWM – Andy highlighted that associated risks are being managed accordingly.

Andy highlighted proposed changes to the People and Leadership programme as a result of the WMLB position. Work is underway to develop and agree a sustainable delivery model to support future delivery and Andy requested delegated authority to continue this work and report back to the Board in October with the outcome.

Andy also gave an update on the Climate Change Skills Funding which has yet to be fully confirmed by CLG. IEWM is working in partnership with Sustainability West Midlands and endorsement was sought from the Board for the developing approach towards the use of the Climate Change resources.

Finally, Andy highlighted the current ongoing national review of the local government improvement architecture (as part of the Spending Review) and that a key feature of the October Board discussions would centre on the longer term sustainability of elements of the IEWM programme within this context.

Agreed

All recommendations were agreed as follows:

- The overall financial position was noted.
- The current situation regarding the WMLB and potential impact upon IEWM was noted.
- Delegated approval was given to the IEWM Director and Chair/Vice Chair to continue ongoing work to agree and implement a transitional, and ultimately self-sustaining, delivery model for People and Leadership activity.
- The Board noted the progress being made with regards to the implementation of the overall IEWM programme.
- The Board endorsed the developing approach to the use of Climate Change Resources.
- The latest version of the Delivery Plan Summary (Paper 2a) was noted.

6. Date of Next Meeting

- **28th October 2010 – 2pm to 4pm at the RPC**