

WEST MIDLANDS IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY PARTNERSHIP

NOTES OF BOARD MEETING – 25th May 2011 Held at the Partnership Centre, Birmingham

Attendees:

Trish Haines (Chair); Nina Dawes (Vice Chair); Cllr Paul Middlebrough (Lead Member); Martin Reeves (Coventry); Steve Winterflood (South Staffs); Andrea Pope-Smith (Dudley); Andrew Burns (Staffordshire); Steve Sankey (Stoke); Paul Clarke (LGID); Rob Ewing (Herefordshire); Colin Williams (WMC).

IEWM: Ged Bowles; Matt Bowsher; Keith Gordon; Polly Reed; Tony Ashfield; Sonia Thomson (minutes)

Apologies: Mark Rogers (Solihull); Howard Davis (LGID); Kim Ryley (Shropshire); Gail Quinton (Worcestershire); Barbara Peacock (Sandwell); John Polychronakis (Dudley); Glyn Evans (Birmingham); Nigel Kletz (Birmingham); Kevin Dicks (Bromsgrove & Redditch); John van de Laarschot (Stoke); Victor Brownlees (Telford & Wrekin) Sue Banks (IEWM).

1. Welcome, Apologies

Trish Haines (Chair) welcomed everyone including the new members of the Board. Apologies were noted (as recorded above).

Glyn Evans (Birmingham) is taking up a secondment with Warwick Business School from 4.7.11 and it has been agreed that the new sub-regional representative for Birmingham will now be Nigel Kletz (Head of Procurement) from this point forwards.

2. Minutes of January 2011 Board and Matters Arising (Paper 1)

The minutes were approved and there were no matters arising.

3. IEWM Progress Update (Paper 2)

Matt Bowsher gave a presentation of all the key elements within Paper 2 and the key decisions required. This began with an overview of progress/achievements to date, highlighting that IEWM has supported the sector to realise £100m efficiencies to date and will target a further £100m across the course of the next two financial years.

Revised IEWM Board Membership now includes the establishment of a small Executive Group comprising Trish Haines (Chair), Nina Dawes (Vice Chair) and Cllr Paul Middlebrough (Lead Member), supported by the IEWM Director; thematic leads and sub-regional leads have also been confirmed, with a good balance of authority types and clear links are in place to West Midlands Councils (WMC) via Cllr Paul Middlebrough and the Regional Chief Executives Group (RCEG) via Kim Ryley (Chair).

IEWM core staff have now transferred under TUPE arrangements to Worcestershire County Council and the overall structure will decrease from 12 core employees to 8 by the end of July. IEWM is currently exploring a number of options to maintain collaborative capacity; by means of, for example, a communications specialist who has recently been appointed on an Internship at zero employment costs.

Income Strategy

The Board debated the proposed strategy for generating income over the next two years. The significant majority of the IEWM offer will be free at the point of delivery for Local Authorities in the West Midlands. Income generation will help sustain sector support and activities beyond April 2013; which is considered essential to facilitate ongoing support given no further central funding is anticipated. The target for the current financial year was proposed at £0.5M (which it is recognised could be optimistic) which will be reinvested back into the sector at the direction of the IEWM Board. Three methodologies were outlined for income generation:

- 1) Full cost recovery – e.g. the Climate Change Programme
- 2) Rebates from successful efficiency initiatives e.g. 10% payback from collaborative procurement deals.
- 3) Chargeable services – e.g. the potential to charge Primary Care Trust clusters for implementing Care Funding Calculator tools.

Agreed

The strategy was approved with the following qualifications:

- 1) There should be complete clarity about which IEWM products are chargeable prior to activity commencing
- 2) An “open book” approach to income received will be adopted with full financial reports to the IEWM Board
- 3) The target for 2011/12 was confirmed as £500k, the 2012-13 target will be debated by the Board later this financial year
- 4) **Matt Bowsher/Sue Banks** to draft a paper for RCEG and WMC to confirm the new approach to income generation
- 5) Charging for products should be significantly more competitive than commercial alternatives (where applicable)
- 6) IEWM should aim to deliver a unique service and products that enable sector led improvement

Transformation Programme

The Transformation review was completed in April 2011 and the proposals were well received by Board members; everyone was thanked for their contributions to date. Kim Ryley has accepted the role of Thematic Lead for Transformation on the IEWM Board.

Ged Bowles outlined two key offers for the sector:

The Strategic Transformation offer will focus on sharing knowledge and capacity building. It will also act as a focal point for chief executives to debate and shape cross cutting themes such as the 'Big Society' and 'Localism' initiatives for example. In practice this means delivering a series of 'Think Tank' events driven by sector demand.

There is also an appetite to maintain a generic overarching role across the region covering/providing support and networking around transformation across the whole spectrum.

A cohort of authorities are adopting the Vanguard Systems Thinking route e.g. Stoke, Staffordshire Fire, Bromsgrove/Redditch and Wolverhampton which provides dedicated support in the use of the Vanguard change methodology. This will be led by Dave Neill who transfers from IEWM to Stoke under TUPE arrangements imminently.

Both strands will operate on an integrated basis through a programme of joint events, lessons learnt to date and implementation outcomes etc. IEWM will bring these back to the table periodically for further debate and steer from the Board.

Themes for 'Think Tank' sessions will be identified via Relationship Management discussions and other engagement.

Agreed

It was agreed that the theme for the Board meeting in October will focus largely on the strategic Transformation of public services and other related topics could include Public Health and Localism. The IEWM Board Executive will help to shape the agenda in the lead up to the October meeting.

The Board endorsed the progress made from the previous meeting.

District Council Network

Steve Winterflood (South Staffs DC) has agreed to Chair the new network. He explained that it is a forum whereby Chief Executives can share common issues, showcase best practice and jointly collaborate on or commission improvement and efficiency activities. The network will be supported by IEWM until at least March 2013 and has resources of £50K

for this financial year.

Progress reported in Paper 2 was noted and there were no further questions.

3. Financial Overview (Papers 3, 3a and 3b)

Matt Bowsher provided an overview of Paper 3, including a budget update and summary of the delegated project approvals made since the last meeting. Updates were also provided about the Locality Investment Fund, the LACI programme and transfer of the People & Leadership programme and associated funding to West Midlands Councils.

It was reported that the Local Improvement Advisor framework had now wound up as of March 2011 leaving c£350K of residual funding. From October 2011 it is proposed that some of funding will be reallocated as follows:

- £30K for the LGID National Associate Model
- £35K to each region for local arrangements i.e. talent pools

Keith Gordon presented Paper 3a and confirmed that a small Climate Change Board had now been set up, chaired by John Polychronakis (Dudley). The proposals for the Climate Change payback Fund had been considered by both the Climate Change Steering group and the Asset & Property Management Group and were now being recommended to the IEWM Board for approval.

Martin Reeves outlined the Asset Management element of the proposal and expressed confidence about the full cost recovery approach.

Agreed

1. The overall position was noted, included the transfer of funding to West Midlands Councils to support the ongoing People & Leadership programme
2. The proposal for the Climate Change Payback Fund (£450K) in paper 3a was agreed
3. The progress made with the LIF, LACI and Transformation programmes were noted
4. The list of approvals made under delegated authority since the last Board meeting were noted
5. The latest version of the Programme Delivery Plan in Paper 3b was noted

4. Sector Led Improvement

Slide 23 onwards in the IEWM Board 25.05.11.ppt and attached Annex B – ADASS approach to Sector Led Support and Annex C - “Towards excellence for children’s services” provide the context of the discussion and details of progress in adult social care and children’s services thus far.

Paul Clarke (LGID) gave a brief overview of the LGID improvement offer: peer support; offering free mentoring support to local authorities; ‘beefing up’ the approach on existing practices; using/sharing comparative data and being transparent. In looking forward there should also be a focus on corporate capacity/leadership and sharing information through Leadership Academies. From the 1st June 2011 Howard Davis is the Regional Principal Advisor for the West Midlands and Paul will be Deputy Advisor acting as the main lead.

Matt Bowsher confirmed IEWM had ring-fenced £500k for sector based improvement support and activity and that a group discussion would help determine:

- The role the IEWM Board wishes to play in shaping sector-led improvement
- Priority areas for investment
- Whether or not a sub-group is required to develop activity on behalf of the Board and West Midlands authorities more generally.

Notes of the discussion and actions arising are set out overleaf at Annex A.

5. Communications & Events (Verbal)

The Board agreed to continue to market the IEWM E-bulletin internally

Two forthcoming events were highlighted namely: -

- 14th/15th June – Customer Insight as a Strategic Asset (for elected members)
- 29th June – IEWM LGG Fringe Joint Event with West Midlands Councils.

Event information can be sent out electronically on request.

For all communications queries please contact
(e) tbanks@westmidlandsiep.gov.uk (m) 07827 894602

6. Dates of Future Meetings

The July 2011 meeting has been cancelled. The meeting on 27th October will be brought forwards due to half term. **Sue Banks** to consult on revised timings, with a potential extension to the meeting from 1pm to 4pm.

The Executive Group will decide on the theme for the next meeting.

In terms of format, it was agreed that papers relating to key decisions will be circulated in advance of the meeting and debated for the first 15 minutes. Thereafter the remainder of the meeting will be devoted to strategic collaboration. Forward plan agenda items were confirmed as follows:

- Progress with sector-lead support
- Outcomes of the first Transformation “Think-Tank” event

Dates for 2012 meetings to be confirmed for February/June/October

Improvement Support in the West Midlands

Notes of the IEWM Board Discussion - Annex A

Context

"Peer support offers the opportunity to fix our own ills and promote a positive story; rather than 'peer intervention'. Peer support is enduring and not a one off activity. We need to move away from measuring net units of production to truly measuring outcomes - across organisational boundaries where necessary." Martin Reeves, Coventry CEX.

Peer Review Design Criteria

"We need Peer Review to be more agile, lighter touch and flexible. Self-regulation should celebrate what we do best. This cannot work unless the people who use public services design how we evaluate them." Andrea Pope Smith - Dudley DASS

"Comparative data will be essential at some level." Trish Haynes - Worcestershire CEX

"Poorer authorities will demand more support and resource." - Steve Winterflood South Staffs

"A change of Council and or Chief Executive could automatically trigger improvement activity." Trish Haynes

"The District Council network is the ideal forum to commence discussions about improvement." Steve Winterflood

Any proposals arising should be cognisant of the national architecture for improvement.

The technical means of providing performance information to the public should be considered e.g. Twitter and social networking sites.

We need to think through how data arising from Peer Review will be used.

We need to measure tangible outcomes that are important for customers - not "units of production."

Recent Initiatives within the Region:

CIPFA toolkits used to benchmark cost and value (Lichfield),
Internal peer review (Newcastle under Lyme - used by new CEX),
Wychavon DC is undertaking a peer review with a district in Surrey.

Conclusions:

There was a general consensus that IEWM should not "hold the ring" on Improvement, rather the role is to identify and share best practice and stimulate sector led debate. There is a key role for RCEG, WM Councils, the District Council Network and others to play.

The Board agreed to delegate authority re: investment of improvement resources but at this stage significant investment is not appropriate.

Agreed

- **IEWM** to map local, sub-national and national improvement activities.
- **Sub Group** to accelerate terms of engagement (principles) re: Peer Review
- **Nominations for Board participation in the Sub Group to Matt Bowsher:** Mark Rogers (Solihull), Cllr Paul Middlebrough, Nina Dawes received to date. Howard Davis, Sarah Norman (Adults); Sally Rees (Children's) and Sue Banks, Polly Reed and Matt Bowsher have also been proposed in the presentation to the Board.
- **Paul Clarke** to provide an update about the work of the LGG national board - thinking and product development
- **IEWM** to play back a diverse range of products to support improvement such as the initiatives above, either at the Think Tank event or at the October Board meeting

Sector-Led Improvement and Local Accounts

Briefing to ADASS West Midlands

1. Issue

- 1.1. An earlier paper provided by Sarah Norman ("Taking Sector Led Improvement Forward – A Proposal for the Region"- appended) proposed a regional approach. This briefing note proposes setting up prototype "Peer Challenge" exercise and seeks the support of colleague Directors in:
- endorsing the approach,
 - identifying appropriate staff to be involved in the Local Accounts debate on 22nd June, and
 - expressions of interested to participate in a Working Group to shape the approach for Peer Review which will be presented at the ADASS Away Day on 1st July

2. Background

- 2.1. The earlier paper outlined the current thinking around developing peer support and challenge in the region, in the context of the wider approach being taken by ADASS S&P network nationally.
- 2.2. As part of the Government proposals for health and social care a new performance management regime is emerging. This contains the following elements:
- **Government's vision for Adult Social Care;** based on seven P's and setting a target for 100% of service users being offered a meaningful Personal Budget by April 2013;
 - **Outcome Frameworks;** there are new Outcomes Frameworks for Adult Social Care, Public Health and the NHS. The first of these is applicable for 11/12;
 - **Single National Data Set;** a reduced and revised national mandated reporting set;
 - **Quality Standards for Adult Social Care;** due from NICE starting next Spring;
 - **Greater involvement with MONITOR;** as a consequence of closer relationships with the Foundation Trusts and GP Consortia;
 - **A Local Account for Adult Social Care;** an integrated assessment of how the service has met the priorities set for it by the people who use it and how the service has performed against the national outcomes framework. Required from spring 2012 for 11/12, this must involve the agreement of HealthWatch. It is likely each Local Authority will need to publish a Local Account by December 2011

- 2.3. In addition, Think Local, Act Personal is likely to generate a set of outcomes to generate progress. All of this is to be overseen by a local Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 2.4. As part of the overall Comprehensive Spending Review, Local Government Group made “an offer” to Central Government. that included taking greater responsibility for sector improvement. In Adult Social Care LGID and the Department of Health have been considering what this might mean. Early proposals suggest peer review and local assurance for most of the services with a trigger point prompting inspection by CQC should a service be seen to be failing.
- 2.5. Nationally, there has been some thinking done by ADASS. This has been led by Sarah Norman, DASS Wolverhampton and Paul Najsarek from Harrow. They have agreed some principles for ADASS’s approach, are looking at examples of Local Accounts being produced early for 10/11 and, later this year, producing guidance on “what good looks like”.
- 2.6. Regionally, ADASS has already considered and endorsed the regional proposal provided by Sarah Norman.

3. Proposals

- 3.1. We have identified three key pieces of work to be undertaken in this financial year:
 - Development of a good Local Account methodology (this would not specify local or regional content but the process by which a Local Account should be derived including citizen engagement and usage of a diverse range of media to engage the Public
 - A protocol for Peer Engagement (ground-rules for Local Authorities benchmarking one another)
 - Peer challenge exercises ("Peer prototype") expressions of interest to be sought for a working group at ADASS on Friday 20th May. In essence this will hone peer review through practice, key learning and emerging themes will be cascaded to ADASS on an iterative basis

Local Accounts

- 3.2. On the first point, a short term piece of research is to be delivered to the 22nd June Performance Network meeting: "What a good local account looks like." This will build on work undertaken at Hartlepool (annual report) and a number of Housing Associations. The research will also focus on the usage of web-based platforms to collate citizen feedback and re-shape service delivery accordingly.
- 3.3. To take this debate forward with the Performance Managers, we propose that other appropriate staff from the region’s councils be involved. These might include, amongst others, user involvement and communications specialists. *Directors are requested to consider and nominate appropriate staff to participate on the afternoon of the 22nd June. Notifications to simon@simon-adams.net.*

Peer Benchmarking

- 3.4. On the second point, we propose that the *afternoon slot on the 1st July ADASS Away Day is used to play back progress from the ADASS working group regarding peer benchmarking. Expressions of interest are required to participate in the working group. Nominations to simon@simon-adams.net*

Peer Challenge prototype

- 3.5. Once terms of reference are confirmed on the 1st July Away Day we move into the most challenging task. We are conscious we do not wish to recreate the recent inspection regime. We also know we need to be objective, testing and able to have difficult conversations about how we are performing, but to do that in a way that is constructive and brings some collective accountability for our performance across the region.
- 3.6. We therefore propose we would test this by March next year with interested local authorities.
- 3.7. We acknowledge that an entirely new methodology is required. We are suggesting that:
- We test the service offered by local authorities but draw the scope to include relationships with partners; particularly health, service users and the community and voluntary sector
 - We facilitate a small reference group in each Peer site
 - We provide direct feedback to the reference group at the end of the on-site and follow that up with a short report that highlights best practice and areas for improvement
 - We then, potentially, agree an action plan with the Service and any external support required to help deliver that.

4. Decisions required by ADASS West Midlands

- 4.1. Directors are asked to:
- Nominate appropriate staff to participate on the afternoon of the 22nd June workshop on Local Accounts with Performance Managers;
 - Provide expressions of interest to participate in the working group re: Peer Benchmarking terms of reference
 - Allocate of time in the afternoon slot on the 1st July ADASS Away Day for Peer Benchmarking discussion and agreement of next steps
 - Endorse the general direction of travel of this work.

To all West Midlands Children's Services Authority:
Chief Executives
Lead Members for Children's Services
Directors of Children's Services

Annex C

Colleagues

Towards Excellence For Children - a sector-led approach to evaluation and improvement

As the West Midlands Chief Executive and Association of Directors of Children's Services leads for children's services improvement, we are writing to you with two purposes in mind:

- i) to raise awareness of work that is being undertaken nationally, but for delivery locally, on a sector-led approach to the evaluation and improvement of children's services;
- ii) to secure your commitment, in principle, to implementing this new approach in your local area, but as part of a collaborative effort across the West Midlands.

Towards Excellence For Children

As you will know, the Coalition Government has been reducing and removing the external regulatory and inspection systems that over recent years have checked and reported on Councils' performance. In its place local government has been encouraged to lead on devising a new strategy to secure effective self-regulation - the so-called "sector-led" approach to evaluation and improvement.

The first sector-led product was launched earlier this year by the Local Government Group in the form of a generic evaluation and improvement framework designed for all Councils called **"Taking The Lead"** (<http://www.local.gov.uk/lgv2/aio/1233499>).

In parallel with the development of this tool, representatives from the Local Government Group (LGG), the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE), working in partnership with officials from the Department for Education (DfE), have been jointly developing a complementary framework specifically designed for children's services - the working title of which is **"Towards Excellence For Children"**.

Other than to say that the design principles are consistent with the "Taking The Lead" framework, we are not going to attempt to describe the key features of the prototype framework in this letter because supporting detailed briefing materials will soon be available and forwarded to you. What we are

endeavouring to do in writing to you is ensure that every Council in the West Midlands now becomes aware of both frameworks and, in respect of our particular roles, especially cognisant of "Towards Excellence For Children".

Call to action 1: so, if nothing else, please could we ask you to use this letter, the accompanying bulletin and, in due course, the further bespoke resources that will be available in the next few weeks (and that we will send you), to brief onwards in your Council, Children's Trust (or equivalent local partnership arrangement) and any other relevant networks.

Moving to Implementation

It is expected that the prototype framework will be available by July, along with some of the tools that will be needed to support local implementation (eg a model self-assessment approach, a single and simple data and performance information set, guidance on peer challenge and peer review, etc).

With this in mind, we are now seeking an "in principle" agreement from all 14 children's services Councils in the West Midlands to take forward this sector-led approach to evaluation and improvement. Undoubtedly, there will be questions - and maybe even concerns - about the approach, but at this stage we are clear that within the West Midlands (as nationally) there is full support from the 14 Directors of Children's Services (through the West Midlands ADCS group) and that, following inputs at the Regional Chief Executives Group and the Chief Executives Task Force (which advises and supports West Midlands Councils), there is also agreement to adopting this approach amongst those Chief Executives who have been engaged.

Whilst there has not yet been a specific input for Lead Members on this topic, we understand from discussions within a number of individual Councils that there is generally a positive view of the sector-led approach. We are also actively seeking, through the West Midlands Lead Members of Children's Services Group, to identify someone who will represent the region's portfolio holders for children's services.

Call to action 2: it would be very helpful, therefore, if each Council could indicate its willingness to participate so that, together, we can plan for implementation and create the new networks and mutual support arrangements that will be required to deliver. Responses should be emailed to preed@westmidlandsiep.gov.uk by 7 June if at all possible please.

West Midlands Children and Young People Forum

To provide oversight, coordination and encouragement to the move into a sector-led approach, it is proposed that an existing body - the West Midlands Children and Young People Forum - be re-configured to bring together Directors of Children's Services, Chief Executives and Lead Member representatives. In the past this Forum has successfully supported key partners in children's services to deliver a Council- and RIEP-funded programme of sector-led improvement initiatives, so there should be high confidence that it can rise to this new challenge of helping to raise awareness of, and support the introduction of the new system.

Call to action 3: again, it would be helpful if each Council could indicate its support for this proposal, or suggest an alternative - and indicate the willingness of your DCS, Lead Member and/or Chief Executive to attend and support the lead West Midlands Lead Member, Chief Executive and Association of Directors of Children's Services representatives. Responses should be emailed to preed@westmidlandsiep.gov.uk please.

Recommendations

To summarise the above, there are three recommendations:

1. That each Council create an opportunity in the next few weeks to raise awareness of the rapidly emerging sector-led approaches to evaluation and improvement ("Taking The Lead" and "Towards Excellence In Children's Services").
2. That each Council indicates its willingness (or otherwise) to becoming part of a West Midlands "engagement" network by writing back to us.
3. That the West Midlands Children and Young People Forum be reconfigured to guide, support and challenge the implementation process across the 14 Children's Services Authorities and their partners.

As soon as they are available, we will ensure that the additional briefing resources are forwarded to you.

Finally, we do hope that you feel able to support this exciting adventure into an improvement world driven, first and foremost, by the sector. Sally and I would be more than happy to fill in any gaps and answer any questions you may have knowing that, for some, this may be unfamiliar territory and, therefore, feel like a leap into the unknown at the moment. Our principal encouragement for you to take this leap is that we believe we all share the same goal of being committed to a self-improving system that values the learning, support and challenge that comes from collaboration and reduces the reliance on external scrutiny from regulators and inspectorates.

Yours sincerely



Mark Rogers
Chief Executive of Solihull MBC
On behalf of SOLACE



Sally Rees
Director of Children's Services of
Staffordshire County Council
On behalf of WMADCS