

Partnerships Programme Update

February 2010

Given the current and uncertain financial climate, being able to pool resources and knowledge, and deliver through partnerships has never been more important. We are familiar with partnership working but do we understand the dynamics well enough to overcome the natural hurdles and maximise the benefits?

The five projects being delivered through the RIEP's Partnerships Programme support three important ambitions:

- Challenging us to think bigger about the potential of partnerships to deliver
- Applying new ideas and innovations to how we work together
- Adopting attitudes and behaviours that underpin the most effective partnerships.

Here's an update on our some of our key projects:

Through our [Understanding and Delivering High Performing LAAs](#) project, we are focussed on two aspects: deepening our understanding of the best interventions available to deliver outcomes in communities, and using benchmarking to focus our attention on good practice and value for money, as well as to examine how we're doing as a region in the context of Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

[Research to Reality](#) is a series of workshops which bring together strategic policy makers and practitioners with researchers and academics to look at topics which are regional priority LAA targets. The aim is to examine the best and latest research into the most (and least) effective interventions. So far we've held workshops on Stopping Smoking and on Alcohol related admissions to hospital.

The following workshops are coming up.

- 1 March 2010 – Under 18 conception rate
- 17 May 2010 – Work and incapacity
- 28 June 2010 – Obesity amongst primary school children

To find out more, book a place or search for the reports produced after each workshop, go to <http://www.northeastiep.gov.uk/partnerships/researchtoreality.htm> .

The first phase of the work on **regional performance benchmarking of key LAA targets** is almost complete. An enhancement has been made to the **ESD toolkit** (which is already used in most local authorities to monitor NI 14 and benchmark customer services value for money). Councils (and now their partners) can use ESD Toolkit to input additional information on performance against key National Indicators, the services that contribute, customer profiles (using the integral MOSIAC or ACORN data) and cost. All of these could provide a rich picture of performance, cost and customer for the locality. The next phase is to train the right people in each organisation to use the system. [More here.](#)

We've merged two of our projects into one to create ***Inspiring Partnerships***. *Inspiring Partnerships* includes elements of the former projects but adds new areas of activity, partly in response to the emergence of **Total Place** since the Programme was formed.

The aim of *Inspiring Partnerships* is to encourage partnerships to pay more attention to their behaviours and cultures and build capacity for partnership working by sharing learning from those who are most experienced and effective. The project involves a range of practical activities which could be relevant to you if you currently work in partnerships, including:

- Report on the pilot with Sunderland LSP to assist them to examine the culture of their partnership
- A 360 degree feedback tool to assess individuals' effectiveness in a partnership context
- A 2 day learning module for middle managers new to partnership working
- Supported networking and action learning for LSP manager and coordinators
- Learning events and master-classes for those experienced in partnerships

Excellent progress has been made on our [***Driving and Supporting Community Safety Outcomes***](#) project which has provided training and development for community safety partners based on the nationally recognised **Hallmarks of Effective Practice** (HEP). The project's Information Sharing Protocol developed by Community Safety Managers has been extremely very well received by community safety partners and may be transferable to a wider partnership context.

We use **Local Improvement Advisors** as an excellent free resource to support partnerships. They can be quickly and easily commissioned via the RIEP. There is huge potential to deploy LIAs, limited only by your imagination and a few basic rules. (See also www.northeastiep.gov.uk/partnerships/localimprovementadvisors.htm).

Total Place arrived after we began the RIEP Partnerships Programme, but it has certainly influenced the Programme's development. Total Place has undoubtedly caught the interest of senior politicians from all parties and considerable energy and ingenuity has gone into the region's two pilots in South of Tyne and Durham. As we anticipate the findings from the all of the pilots nationally, the Partnerships Programme is considering how we can help all localities to take Total Place to the next level.

Our Programme Sponsor is Keith Harcus, Assistant Chief Executive at South Tyneside Council.

If you want to know more about the Partnerships Programme, please contact emily.sweetman@northeastcouncils.gov.uk or on 0191 261 3919.