

Capacitybuilders Press Release

Thursday 7 June 2007

Partnership Improvement Programme rolls out to regions.

The Improvement and Development Agency's (IDeA) Partnership Improvement Programme (PIP) is being rolled out to three regions this year, starting in the North East on 13 June, before moving on to London and the North West later in the year. The programme will bring together senior staff from local authorities and local third sector organisations to identify new ways of working more effectively together.

The roll out follows on from a successful pilot last year and is a partnership between the IDeA and the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR), funded by Capacitybuilders. Capacitybuilders is providing £165,000 in 2007/08 to fund the rollout of the programme, alongside a £50,000 contribution from the Office of the Third Sector.

The PIP pilot revealed the difficulties and complexities of cross-sector partnership working. The barriers and obstacles to cross-sector partnership working identified in the pilot were shaped by *local* circumstances and *local* relationships. Because each local authority area is itself complex, and because there is great diversity between areas, uniform solutions to improvement which are imposed from outside are not appropriate. The flexible and adaptable approach of the Partnership Improvement Programme ensures that *local* solutions can be identified and developed to improve *local* partnership working.

Each local authority area participating in the programme will produce a joint, cross-sector partnership improvement plan. These plans will provide the foundations for senior staff in local government and the third sector to respond

more constructively to the challenges of working across boundaries and in real partnerships.

Ben Cairns, Director of the Institute for Voluntary Action Research, said *“this is a fantastic opportunity to move beyond the detail of cross-sector partnerships and pay proper attention to the relationships which are critical to their success. By helping to build mutual understanding and trust across the sectors, the Partnership Improvement Programme offers a real opportunity for change at a local level.”*

Simon Hebditch, Chief Executive of Capacitybuilders commented: *“It is vital that leaders and representatives from the public sector meet as equals with third sector leaders locally to build strong and sustainable partnerships. Capacitybuilders believes that an investment in this targeted partnership programme is the right way for us to help build strong relationships locally for the ultimate benefit of neighbourhoods and communities.”*

Further information about the Partnership Improvement Programme is available on www.idea.gov.uk and www.cvar.org.uk.

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Notes:

Capacitybuilders was established in April 2006 to undertake the management and administration of the ChangeUp programme and to work with other funders to influence policy on building the capacity of the third sector. The ChangeUp Framework (2004) highlights the need to achieve a “step-change” in how infrastructure is funded and delivered by 2014.