

LIFT SW

**A regional strategy and programme for improving the quality
of local government and wider, linked public services in the
South West by March 2008**

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LIFTING ASPIRATIONS

1. Whilst there are some truly impressive examples of excellence in public services in the South West, the regional evidence paints an aggregated picture of under-performance in comparison to other regions. It is time to lift performance across the region, hence LIFT SW – a concept and a programme devised to ensure ambition is raised, performance improves and collaboration increases to provide public services of higher quality.
2. We need to be realistic. It is not feasible to raise the South West's game to become the best performing region in the country by March 2008. It is possible however to lift our sights to ensure a noticeable, measurable improvement in the quality of services provided and to ensure that the regional agencies supporting local authorities and fire and rescue services to improve, are better co-ordinated, more focused and providing better value for money in their combined activity.
3. Progress demands a renewed, sustained effort from the region's politicians and the public sector workforce. It requires strong leadership from leading members and senior managers. LIFT SW is designed to support local public services in the region to raise their game. Prime responsibility clearly lies with individual authorities but LIFT SW is based on the premise that with stronger support and a shared sense of purpose, determination and pride individual authorities will achieve more.
4. LIFT SW grew out of a regional improvement event in December 2005 when the limitations of our pre-existing approach were recognised. Whilst the Regional Centre for Excellence was showing great promise on the procurement and efficiency agenda with some real successes under its belt, the South West Improvement Partnership had experienced some difficulty with its' own role and governance arrangements given its' then limited ability to influence the allocation of resources. Chief Executives were confused about the roles and benefits of regional agencies engaged on improvement and the overall picture looked inefficient and confusing. Elected members had some influence on the strategic direction of the SW Centre of Excellence and the SW Improvement Partnership, but had limited opportunity to demonstrate strong political leadership at regional level.
5. A small executive group with representatives from GOSW, the Regional Centre of Excellence, I&DeA and South West Regional Secretariat developed the LIFT SW concept, testing it at the Regional Centre of Excellence Management Board; the Regional Chief Executives Forum G51

and at the SWLGA Executive Committee between March and June 2006. It has received strong support across the region.

6. Partners within LIFT SW include all 51 local authorities, the Region's Fire and Rescue authorities, Regional Improvement agencies (GOSW, I&DeA, SW Provincial Employers, SWLGA, SWRA) and the Regional Inspection agencies (Audit Commission, CSCI, CHC, OfSTED). All are committed to the LIFT SW partnership, its objectives, the challenging targets it sets for the Region and the LIFT SW ambition which, relatively modestly for the next two years is **“to provide better public services; to offer stronger leadership to local communities, and to build the South West's reputation as a relatively good regional performer.”**
7. Progress towards this shared ambition will be measured through key performance indicators, more positive inspection reports and through various national programmes which recognise quality.

Success Measures

8. We will be able to say LIFT SW is succeeding if by March 2008

- **Public Services are better, measured by**
 - 8.1. having no poor or weak, nil or one star CPA scores for authorities in the region;
 - 8.2. having a higher number of three/ four star or excellent/ good performers than the average for England as a whole;
 - 8.3. having all councils and fire and rescue authorities improving adequately at least.
 - 8.4. all authorities having robust workforce development plans in place and being implemented, helping to build capacity to secure continual improvement in services;
 - 8.5. all authorities achieving at least level 2 on the Equality Standard by March 2008;
 - 8.6. at least 90 per cent of councils signing up to and implementing the LGA 'Reputations' model, in so far as it applies to them.
- **Elected members have raised their collective game, measured by**
 - 8.7. having the member development charter in place regionally by December 2006 and awarding Member Development charter status to at least five councils by March 2008;

8.8. doubling the number of elected members engaged in peer review, mentoring or other support, comparing March 2008 to June 2006.

- **All local authorities are providing more efficient services and better value for money, *measured by***

8.9. all local authorities achieving their annual Gershon efficiency targets and all fire and rescue authorities contributing their fair share to the national efficiency target;

8.10.no council scoring less than 2 on the annual use of Resources Judgement by March 2008 and all councils moving up at least one category from their 2005/6 position;

8.11.shared services becoming more common with all councils having entered into at least one such arrangement with another council by March 2008.

- **Regional agencies have contributed to and supported success, *measured by***

8.12.local authorities and fire and rescue authorities confirming that the regional improvement and inspection agencies are more collaborative; more joined up and more effective by March 2008 compared to December 2006, to be measured by a stakeholder survey;

8.13.the development of an effective, robust system to share notable practice across the region;

8.14.securing LAAs across the region, with at least two being recognised as national exemplars for their innovative content and/or delivery;

8.15.delivering a regional partnership to support local authorities which is fit for purpose, with strong governance arrangements which are flexible enough to adapt to changing national or regional circumstances without having to “reinvent the wheel”.

8.16.the regional agencies reviewing their own purposes and contributions with the aim of reducing the number of regional bodies operating in the arena and a rationalisation of arrangements to reduce duplication and confusion.

9. To achieve these targets will demand a concerted effort from individual councils, fire and rescue authorities, the regional improvement and inspection agencies and elected member representatives on SWLGA. They will test local authorities grappling with lack of capacity or pressure on limited financial resources. It has to be recognised that one or two authorities might find the additional demands too burdensome to be acceptable. Nevertheless each council and fire and rescue authority is asked to embed these targets in their corporate planning processes.

The LIFT SW Board and the Executive Group supporting it will monitor and report progress to the SWLGA Executive Committee.

The SWLGA Executive Committee will approve, monitor and refresh the strategy and the implementation plan.

We are progressing from a relatively low baseline as set out in Appendix 1 and 2. *[Appendix 1 to be produced following receipt of questionnaires from all individual councils]*

10.The LIFT SW approach sits well within the national context.

- Local:Vision with its emphasis on developing strong and vibrant community leadership; improving citizen engagement; improving performance; developing a new relationship between central, regional and local government.
- The emerging revised performance framework, discussed in the Government's Local:Vision daughter paper "Securing better outcomes; developing a new framework", developed in the joint LGA/I&DeA work, "Driving Improvement: A New Performance Framework for Local Government" and reinforced in Michael Lyons' interim report.

11.Our aspirations extend beyond March 2008. This approach is essential to demonstrate stronger performance across the region but our horizon goes beyond this strategy. Given the likely themes of the DCLG White Paper and

the trends evident in Local:Vision; Lyons' interim report; the LAA guidance and the LSP consultation document, we see the need for a regional partnership which will strengthen the ability of individual councils to self assess performance; support weaker councils; offer peer support within the region; improve community leadership and equip all councillors to assume a leading role championing and calling to account public services in their local community as well as delivering better value for money.

12. LIFT SW will place the region in a strong position to respond positively to any new performance arrangements designed around annual self-assessments, peer challenge and review or sector-led interventions. The target to increase the number of members engaged in peer support is intended to develop capacity within the region for councils and fire and rescue authorities to offer mutual help and support, as well as offering a greater pool of experienced members to support those authorities that are struggling with the improvement agenda. The delivery plan will quantify and list accredited I&DeA and SOLACE member peers in the region with a proposal to offer better networking opportunities within the region.
13. This approach builds on experience to date of establishing improvement partnerships in other regions, leaning heavily on the East Midlands model. It has been prepared in the context of the national capacity building programme guidance with its emphasis on
 - working through existing partnerships
 - strengthening governance arrangements and
 - using a strong strategic framework to develop capacity within the region.
14. It scores strongly on integrating national priorities for improvement at the regional level. It goes further than most regional partnerships, merging the Regional Centre of Excellence arrangements with the broader improvement and capacity building agenda; securing the active involvement of the regional inspection agencies and promoting more integrated working between the key regional improvement agencies. See Appendix 3 for details of the key Regional Agencies involved in LIFT SW.
15. The new Transformational Government agenda will also be part of the LIFT SW remit, with its strong interrelationship with the Gershon agenda, exemplifying the Partnership's understanding that improved efficiency is not just more for less. "Transformational Government" promotes the vision that services, when enabled by technology, will be designed around the citizen or business; that government must move to a shared services culture; and that

the level of professionalism supporting major technology based change must be broader and deeper. Senior strategic direction through the LIFT SW programme will help capitalise on the potential and opportunities available, knitting together the capacity building, efficiency and e-government strands into a more cohesive approach.

16. The Pay and Workforce Strategy, introduced in 2003 and revised in 2005, recognises the importance of leadership, effective people management and workforce capacity in delivering improving services. It provides a framework to ensure that local government has the leadership, organisational flexibility and people capacity to deliver improved services, greater efficiency and better customer focus in front-line services. By referring to the Pay and Workforce Strategy in developing its vision and priorities, the Improvement Partnership will take into account those workforce issues which contribute to organisational and service improvement. It will look to develop collaboration through the I&DeA and Local Government Employers nationally and regionally to ensure the profile of Pay and Workforce issues are raised through LIFT SW.
17. The approach is inclusive. The consultation process to date has guaranteed a critical mass for LIFT SW but other regional players are invited to review how their organisational aims fit, or can be adjusted, to meet the LIFT SW ambition. Research carried out in late 2005 established that something like one hundred organisations or partnerships are engaged in local government activity at the regional level. We have focussed on the most strategically important agencies at this stage but others are welcome to engage if they can demonstrate that they will add value to and help deliver success. For example, the two national park authorities will be invited to participate once the strategy is agreed

LIFTING OUR GAME - SETTING AND DELIVERING PRIORITIES

18. The LIFT SW partnership wishes to develop momentum for improvement to meet the measures of success described at 8.1 to 8.14. A SMART delivery plan is being worked up to be agreed by the LIFT SW Board by October 2006. Whilst further regional analysis would be helpful to support the development of the plan there is sufficient evidence already available to confirm that remaining capacity building funds and wider effort needs to be focused on

- **Leadership**
 - senior/middle management development
 - member development
 - community leadership

- **Capacity Building**
 - Workforce development
 - Modernising HR practices

- **Use of Resources**
 - Financial planning
 - Risk management
 - VFM
 - Supporting invest to save measures

- **Performance management**
 - individual councils
 - local strategic partnerships
 - shared service partnerships

19. These priorities have been derived from analysis of CPA results in the region, evidence from the latest round of corporate assessments and value for money judgements made by the Audit Commission.

20. It is anticipated that a significant proportion of the remaining resources will be directed at sub regional partnerships to get the benefit of shared experience and learning and to promote shared services as the norm rather than the exception. The value of broader partnership working, within the region and indeed beyond it, is recognised. Funding will not be restricted to existing sub regional partnerships where a good case is made for other configurations to be supported.

21. Authorities will need support to encourage partnership working through Local Area Agreements, local strategic partnerships and other sub regional arrangements. With greater significance being given to local authorities as “place shapers” there will be a need to prioritise resources to give members the confidence to perform this role.
22. The Regional agencies supporting LIFT SW will need a limited amount of resource to provide greater integration and collaboration and ensure the success of the regional partnership. £60,000 has been set aside to support the programme but the figure will be revised in October when the delivery plan has been submitted. GOSW is appointing two performance improvement managers to support the regional Director of Local Government Policy and Practice, ensuring adequate capacity to move the strategy forward and support sub-regional partnerships as they develop.
23. There is a challenge for LIFT SW to be at the forefront of any new national performance management framework. In anticipation of a framework with an emphasis on self assessment, peer review and stepped intervention the Delivery Plan needs to reflect the skills and capacity needed to move quickly into this new world. The regional partnership should also have mechanisms in place to identify failing performance early and to put improvement measures and support in place quickly before matters deteriorate significantly.
24. To date the capacity building programme has formally approved spending of £4.654m based on an analysis of regional needs arising from CPA results and Improvement Plans. Appendix 4 sets out the authorities and sub- regional partnerships that have benefited to date.

In addition a further £1m has been committed to the Cornwall Improvement Partnership and the regional fire and rescue authorities who submitted bids earlier this year. These will be integrated within LIFT SW programme to ensure good governance and shared learning.

Once approvals and commitments have been taken into account, the remaining amount to be applied is £3.65m.

It is suggested that bids will be encouraged in two main tranches to commit the remaining funds in this programme, the first in November, to be determined by January 2007 and a final one in February to be determined by April 2007. They will be judged against the priorities set out at para 18. A process to handle bids in the pipeline under the delegation threshold will be

developed to ensure they can be approved under the new LIFT SW arrangements before January 2007.

The distribution of capacity building resources has been criticised for not being transparent, fair or equitable in the past. Whilst the distribution of future funds will be based on need and the priorities set out in para 18 the Board will aspire to achieve broad equivalence across the region. A paper will be produced for the October Board meeting detailing the factors that will be taken into account in deciding future bids and a process for determination. The process will be designed to reduce bureaucracy and shorten the time involved in achieving a successful approval.

25. The Regional Centre of Excellence represents another major resource. The Centre's approach continues to be to take every opportunity to reinforce the existing work of local authorities in the SW who are striving to deliver £100m p.a. in efficiency benefits and the national procurement strategy. Against this backdrop of existing activity, the Centre adds value in five areas:

- Collaboration: Well placed to bring together local authorities, the wider public sector and other partners to develop shared working
- Accountable governance: Owned by, hosted by and run for local authorities
- Programme management expertise: Complements existing capacity where it already exists and can add new capacity where it doesn't
- Focussed on results: Not reports
- Links to regional and national expertise and know-how, including through seminars and awareness raising events.

The Centre has launched a programme of 28 projects during the first year of operation, of which 8 are complete. These projects should deliver between £325k and £430k of savings in 2005/06 and are likely to deliver between £15m and £32m by the end of 2007/08. The projects also act as exemplars aimed at supporting good practice into local authorities,

Extra funding of £2m, recently announced, will allow the Centre to support local authorities in the other areas of the efficiency agenda. This is particularly important in the areas of Corporate and Shared Service and Environmental Services, where the Centre is already funding small sub-regional projects.

26. The South West Provincial Employers are aware that more needs to be done to implement the Pay and Workforce Strategy in the region. The Strategy, developed in partnership by the then Employers Organisation and the Office

of the Deputy Prime Minister is designed to assist Councils to adopt a strategic approach to pay and rewards. It aims to ensure Councils can recruit and retain appropriate staff and target expenditure in ways that drive service improvement. SWPE working with LIFT SW partners will assist Councils to overcome difficulties with the implementation of the strategy

27. There are other significant resources in the shape of funding, people and ICT which can contribute to delivery of improvement programmes. In total, investment is substantial. If the LIFT SW partnership can exert the right influence on how resources are used the potential for improvement across the region is significant.
28. Like other regional improvement partnerships the South West has not capitalised on national improvement programme resources. We need to exploit national programmes to avoid missing the opportunity to bring additional support to bear in the region. The LIFT SW Executive Group, in making recommendations to the LIFT SW Board, or approving delegated capacity bids, will adopt the discipline of assessing and challenging whether national programmes or resources are available to fund the bid and whether other regional work can be aligned to squeeze better value for money from the available resources.
29. Whilst it is anticipated that individual councils and sub-regional partnerships will continue to bid for available funds, LIFT SW Board may itself commission work to support improvement across the region. The Devon Improvement programme, funded through the regional capacity building fund has developed a learning portal which is capable of expanding in to a regional resource. This is just one example of the sort of development that the Board may want to support at regional level. No specific sums will be earmarked at this stage for regional initiatives but the regional agencies will be encouraged to give thought to how local authorities might be able to benefit from region wide approaches.
30. The LIFT SW Board will determine the proportion of resources to be focused on poorer performing authorities. The aim will be to offer support at the early stage of decline, rather than wait for problems to become chronically bad or acutely critical. Direction of travel statements will be a key indicator to alert LIFT SW Board to those authorities struggling with the improvement agenda. There is a particular expectation that support will be available to such authorities and the delivery plan will expand on the support that may be available.

31. The Board will want to balance support for poorer performers against the need to deliver an equitable improvement programme and encourage the excellent and good performers to get even better. There is a strong desire to support innovation from excellent performers as a means of driving up performance across the region and securing and disseminating best practice across and beyond the region.
32. Currently the vast majority of capacity building funds have been directed at corporate priorities such as leadership and performance management rather than towards specific services. The assumption in para18 is that this continues to be the case but if certain specific service initiatives demonstrate the potential to make a real difference in the region, then exceptionally these will be considered for support. *The Fire and Rescue Services bid*, which is in the pipeline now, provides a good example of the way that services might be improved through the LIFT SW programme.
33. Service networks will be encouraged to sit within the LIFT SW framework. The Regional Centre of Excellence has already developed a healthy group of service partnerships covering procurement; customer services and children services. This network is likely to be extended in response to demand from the service sectors where they may be a benefit. Adult social care and the culture sector are two examples where interest is being shown in regional collaboration to develop sector improvements and secure efficiencies.
34. In the spirit of greater integration of regional improvement support we will look to explore the interdependencies between efficiency and capacity building through the provision of joint support and funding through one single point of entry. Procedures previously operated through SWIP and the Regional Centre of Excellence will increasingly converge.

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

LIFT SW Mandate

35. The mandate to establish LIFT SW as the Regional Improvement Partnership grew out of the dissatisfaction expressed with the present improvement partnership arrangements in 2005, culminating in the Cap Gemini/BuyIT event in December 2005.
36. In early 2006 the newly appointed Director for Local Government Practice at GOSW established support for a new regional improvement partnership and a small Executive Group comprising representation from GOSW, Regional Centre of Excellence, SW Regional Assembly and I&DeA developed the proposal. In March the Regional Centre of Excellence Board agreed principles subject to development of this strategy and in early May the SWLGA Executive Committee gave their support in principle.
37. The Regional Centre of Excellence Board (the embryonic LIFT SW Board) agreed the strategy on June 13th with some amendments and the SWLGA endorsed the approach on June 23rd. The strategy now stands ready to be approved by the National Improvement Board in July to secure their support and delegation of funds to the LIFT SW partnership.

Democratic Accountability

38. Elected members in the Region are keen to provide the leadership, challenge and drive to ensure success of this strategy. They will do so through the SWLGA Executive Committee which will receive progress reports at each of their meetings.
39. Terms of reference for the SWLGA Executive Committee, whilst acting in this capacity, are:
- to provide the vision, leadership and drive to achieve the strategy
 - to challenge the LIFT SW Management Board to ensure achievement
 - to provide six monthly reports to the full SWLGA Branch
 - to ensure that high levels of understanding, awareness and participation are secured across local authority and fire/rescue authority leading members
 - to represent the region on relevant issues at national level

- In addition the full SWLGA Branch will formally agree the strategy and scrutinise it's delivery through monitoring every six months prior to review of the strategy in Spring 2008.

The LIFT SW Management Board

40. Central to achieving success, the Board will have overall responsibility for developing the strategy and ensuring the programme delivers in line with the strategy.

41. The Board will be built upon the outstanding governance arrangements already in place at the Regional Centre of Excellence but the membership will be modified to meet the new challenge.

42. Terms of reference for the LIFT SW Management Board are to:

- work with the SWLGA Executive Committee to define and keep under review the strategic direction
- ensure that resources are applied in line with the strategy, approving bids that are not delegated to the LIFT SW Executive group.
- ensure that progress is made towards the strategy
- ensure that high levels of understanding, awareness and participation are secured across local authorities and fire/rescue authorities
- resolve implementation issues at Chief Executive peer level

Based on the pre-existing formula the Board will include representation from Chief Executives of six County Councils, three Unitary Councils and four District Councils (see Appendix 5 for current Management Board membership)

Elected members will be represented on the Board by four members, one selected by each of the SWLGA political groups.

In addition the Board will include the following regional support agencies:

- GOSW – RDLGP
- South West Regional Secretariat – Chief Executive
- I&DeA – Regional Associate Director
- Regional Centre of Excellence – Director

The Inspection agencies – Audit Commission, CSCI, OfSTED and others will be invited to select a representative to sit on the Board in an observer capacity.

43. The Chair of the Management Board will be elected annually from one of the Chief Executive representatives.
44. The Chair of the Management Board will also represent the Efficiency and Improvement Programmes at national level (for example, the Chief Executives Task Force meeting)
45. Each sub regional grouping will continue to decide on who should represent them on the Board. The presumption is that existing members of the Regional Centre of Excellence Board will continue unless authorities being represented decide to change their representative.
46. By bringing together council representation and the regional improvement agents a suitable platform is provided for the inclusive, integrated approach to be developed further.

The LIFT SW Executive Group

47. The executive group will support the LIFT SW Board
 - Taking decisions on bids and allocation of resources in line with agreed delegations.
 - ensuring that the strategy is implemented
 - managing the implementation of the delivery plan
 - co-ordinating effort across the authorities and ensuring synergy
 - between the various elements of the programme
 - co-ordinating effort across the regional support agencies and ensuring synergy
 - analysing specific bids and making recommendations to the Board
 - monitoring progress and reviewing specific projects, reporting on performance to the Board
 - capturing and disseminating notable practice
 - developing a more co-ordinated communications approach to keep key stakeholders informed
 - reviewing business plans of participating agencies to ensure that they support the strategy

48.It will comprise the following representatives or their deputies (first option removed)

Local Authority representatives at Senior Executive or Director level in-line with the membership of the LIFT SW Management Board. (The formation of the Executive Group provides an opportunity to widen involvement in LIFT SW across the region but the decision as to who represents specific sub regions will be a matter for that sub region to decide)

Regional representatives from

- GOSW – RDLGP
- South West Regional Secretariat – Chief Executive
- I&DeA – Regional Associate Director
- Regional Centre of Excellence – Director
- Regional inspection agencies – One representative

49. Working on the principle of inclusivity the Executive group will welcome membership from any other group that shares LIFT SW objectives. It will link up the extensive regional network which is vital to delivery of the LIFT SW agenda. It will also link the region into national networks.

50.The Group will be chaired by a local authority officer

The Accountable Body

51.Dorset CC has acted to date as the accountable body for the Regional Centre of Excellence. It is proposed that Dorset CC expands this role to act as the accountable body for LIFT SW.

52.The role includes

- receiving managing and accounting for all monies, expenditure and income to the LIFT SW Partnership, ensuring satisfactory audit trails are in place
- advising the LIFT SW Board in line with good accounting and financial management practice
- complying with the law and any conditions attached to any grants or other funding.

53.The ongoing costs of this service and any other direct management and support costs will be met from the delegated Capacity Building Fund and Regional Centre of Excellence fund allocated to the region.

54.Logistics for the LIFT SW Management Board and the Executive Group will be managed, in the first instance, by the Regional Centre of Excellence.

Delegations

55.The Management Board will decide all applications over £100,000. Amounts below this figure will be delegated to the Executive Group for decision. The Management Board and the Executive Group will be quorate if six members are in attendance and able to vote. Members are not able to vote if an application for funding applies to the district, unitary or county council or a sub-regional partnership they represent.

Communication

56.It is essential that the LIFT SW concept and programme is well communicated and understood throughout the region. Key stakeholders will obviously include Council Leaders and other leading members, Chief Executives and senior management team officers but it will be vital that other elected members and officers engaged in delivering or influencing specific elements of the LIFT SW programme are also well informed.

57.The Delivery Plan will include stakeholder engagement and ensure that mechanisms are developed to ensure strong two-way communication. The strategy will include:

- supporting the SW Regional Secretariat in refreshing a Chief Executives network to absorb LIFT SW, G51 and other regional business in addition to continuing to deal with other South West Regional Assembly, LGA and Employers matters
- a network of officer groupings to assist delivery of specific aspects of the programme and share learning
- working with wider regional partners towards a regional communications protocol to reduce the number of newsletters presently published by individual regional support agencies building on research set in hand by the SW Regional Assembly,
- supporting the SW Regional Secretariat in developing a calendar of key regional events.

- Communicating progress, successes and learning through the SWLGA

Evaluation and Review

58.The overall programme and individual projects designed and commissioned to deliver the LIFT SW strategy will include provision for monitoring and evaluation of their success. These arrangements will be varied to suit the scope and scale of individual projects.

59.The LIFT SW Board will put in place its own processes to ensure robust, objective evaluation of the strategy and the Delivery Plan by SWLGA, including

- reporting to each SWLGA Executive Committee
- reporting annually to the SWLGA branch with a monitoring report on performance every six months

60.The partnership will need to ensure a strong performance management system is in place. This will largely draw upon information generated through specific projects.

NEXT STEPS

61. An initial draft was presented to the Regional Centre of Excellence Board on 13 June 2006 and was endorsed with amendments.
62. The revised draft was presented to SWLGA on 23rd June and approved subject to further amendment.
63. The final report will be presented to the National Improvement Board, following which, and subject to their approval, funds will be delegated to the LIFT SW Board.
64. The Executive Group will develop the Delivery Plan for consideration by the LIFT SW Board by October 2006.
65. The Regional Support Agencies will review their business plans to align them with the objectives of the LIFT SW strategy by October 2006.
66. Individual local authorities will have formally endorsed LIFT SW through their internal processes by October 2006.
67. The Fire and Rescue authorities will be invited to endorse the strategy and the delivery plan by October 2006.

Appendix 1 Baseline

[Each local authority and fire/rescue authority to contribute baseline scores and to indicate if the targets in para 8 are realistic

Name of Authority.....

	Baseline	Is target realistic?
CPA Score		Y/N
Direction of Travel – Counties		Y/N
Unitaries		Y/N
		Y/N
Workforce Development Plan in Place	Y/N	Y/N
Equality Standard	Level 0	Y/N
	1	Y/N
	2	Y/N
	3	Y/N
Sign up to LGA Reputations	Y/N	Y/N
Interest in exploring Member Development Charter		Y/N
No. of members engaged in peer review/mentoring/support		Y/N
2005/6 Efficiency target met	Y/N	Y/N
Use of Resources score		Y/N
Shared service arrangement in place	Y/N	Y/N

Appendix 2 The Regional Context –

See separate attachment

Appendix 3 The Regional Support Agencies

Government Office South West

The Government Office for the South West (GOSW) plays a key role in linking central and local government to ensure an effective balance of local, regional and national priorities. The vision for local government sets out the context for the next 10 years across four broad themes:

- leadership
- citizen engagement
- service delivery
- a new settlement between central, regional and local government

GOSW carries out work on behalf of ten Whitehall Departments, drawing together a variety of national policies, strategies and funding. In seeking to develop and improve public services we work with regional partners to:

- promote a good understanding of the Governments vision for local government and the key role local authorities and local strategic partnerships have to play
- improve the delivery and value for money of local services through the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process
- engage with local authorities in improvement planning
- promote, administer and monitor capacity building programmes and other improvement initiatives
- negotiate and manage Local Area Agreements and Performance Reward Grant
- help local authorities to develop their financial planning and support the electronic delivery of local authority services

The LIFT SW programme is integral to the work of the Local Government Team and the delivery of GOSW business planning objectives.

The South West Regional Secretariat

The Secretariat supports three member organisations undertaking a range of functions at regional level and providing services to local authorities. This combined secretariat has been created by Members to ensure effective joined up working and avoid duplication and bureaucracy. The three organisations are: South West Provincial Employers; South West Local Government Association and the South West Regional Assembly. One of the shared key

objectives of all three is to “encourage improved performance and capacity across the region through the provision of high quality advice and support...”

South West Provincial Employers (SWPE)

SWPE supports local government with all aspects of their employer role. In addition they constitute the employers side of the regional consultative and negotiating body, the South West Provincial Council. SWPE constantly seeks to promote the interests of local authority and related employers at a regional and national level by formulating and contributing to employer strategies on issues such as pay and workforce development. The Learning and Development Service which is part of SWPE aims to support all our members and partners in developing a highly skilled and motivated workforce. The Tormarton Centre provides very specialist workforce development skills vital to the provision of regional services.

The South West Local Government Association (SWLGA)

The South West Local Government Association exists to represent and promote the regional interests of the South West local authorities, lobbying government as appropriate and supporting networks for sharing of best practice. It also acts as a host for joint working by local authorities on a range of issues such as Refugees and Asylum Seekers, E-government and the overall improvement agenda.

South West Regional Assembly (SWRA)

The South West Regional Assembly is the Regional Planning and Housing Body and exists to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of all who live and work in the region. By agreeing shared aims for regional level strategies it endeavours to ensure that local authorities have a clear view of the regional context for their work where appropriate.

Through the combined regional secretariat the organisations will work to support the delivery of the elements of the LIFT strategy which relate to their work. In particular they will deliver the refreshed G51 so that it encompasses not just the agendas of the 3 organisations but the wider LIFT agenda as appropriate. LIFT will be identified as one of the key partners in the Secretariat Business Plan with which the three organisations will work to deliver regional improvements.

The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA)

The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) was created by and for local government in England and Wales. It is independent of central government and regulatory bodies and accountable to local government through a Board of Directors - half of whom are local government councillors. The rest reflect a range of other stakeholders and important interests for local government. It is a company wholly owned by the Local Government Association. The Board is independent of any single organisation or interest, except the interest of local government as a whole.

The IDeA believes that democracy and involvement are the lifeblood of strong, confident and thriving communities. Democratic legitimacy and successful inclusion form the cornerstone of local government and enable local councils to deliver the best on behalf of all the people they serve.

The IDeA approach

To stimulate and support continual and self-sustaining improvement and development within local government by:

- connecting ideas and expertise, both within the sector and beyond, to cross-fertilise solutions and accelerate progress
- focusing on best practice and forward thinking, enabling individual councils and local government to learn systematically and respond to the needs of changing environments
- delivering a flexible range of tools and services, recognising that every community and locality is unique and everyone's journey of improvement and development is different
- carrying risk on behalf of local government by innovating and incubating new joined-up but locally-delivered initiatives

IDeA focus

The Idea proactively supports the five key themes of the Local Government Association:

1. To build the corporate capacity of local government to deliver improvement
2. To improve the quality of political and managerial leadership in local government
3. To develop workforce capacity
4. To support the improvement service delivery in priority areas
5. To strengthen the ability of local government to build sustainable communities

and has added a further strategic objective
6. To use resources to maximise impact

Key Elements of the IDeA Improvement Toolkit

The IDeA concentrates its services where it has a distinctive role and can make the most impact. The support is tailored to the needs of individual councils and makes use of a range of established products and approaches.

Support for LIFT SW

The IDeA will:-

- provide 25 dedicated days of consultancy staff time to support the work of LIFT SW.
- make available the IDeA knowledge web site to capture and share the learning in the SW.
- ensure that the national examples of good practice are fed into the LIFT SW programmes
- provide advice and guidance to LIFT SW on improvement
- provide a link to national improvement programmes

The South West Regional Centre of Excellence

[JM to amplify]

Appendix 4 Summary Of SW Capacity Building Activity

Direct Support - Authority	Main Elements of Programme	Amount
Forest of Dean	Putting the customer first Embedding performance management Improving services Training and developing staff and councillors	179,000
Isles of Scilly	Performance Information and Management Develop strategic planning Support a middle management training programme	60,000
Mendip	A comprehensive member development programme A change programme for officers An examination of ways to improve customer accessibility and satisfaction	215,000
Mid Devon	Corporate Planning Human Resource Management and Organisation Culture, Constitution and Effectiveness of Scrutiny and "Fit for Purpose" Systems.	76,000
North Devon	Embedding project & performance management Developing and adopting a communications strategy.	170,000
North Dorset	Access to services – giving people access to excellent service when, how and where they want it Building corporate capacity – a high performing, policy led, people focussed Council Community leadership and planning – working in partnership to deliver community outcomes	137,250
Plymouth	Leadership and Management Development Human Resources Performance Management & Improvement Capacity Building to improve service delivery.	305,000
Torbay	Cross-directorate development programme for 'Professional Managers', A mandatory training course on equal opportunities and diversity for all staff across the council. Organisational development initiatives Specific service projects in housing and children's services.	549,000
Torridge	Support to enable recovery and the improvement plan to be implemented Revision of project management, monitoring and reporting processes.	189,620

Direct Support - Authority	Main Elements of Programme	Amount
West Somerset	Project management system and performance management framework to be embedded throughout the council. Support to address the lack of capacity and specific skills.	293,500
Weymouth & Portland	Building capacity for change, developing a change programme, supporting member development.	102,500
B&NES	Member Champions project -Electronic sharing of information/best practice, creation of a support network. Providing different forms of training delivery including accredited online learning opportunity.	105,000
Bristol	Develop councillors' leadership skills based upon the Bristol pilot modular Leadership Skills Development Programme for councillors.	35,000
Sub Total		2,416,870

Regional Support – Sub-Regional Partnerships	Main Elements of Programme	Amount
Devon Improvement Programme	The DIP is focussed around 6 main themes: Partnerships, Strategic Planning, Member Capacity, Officer Capacity, Performance & Project Management and Communication & Consultation.	1,130,000
Dorset	A key outcome is to achieve alignment and modernisation of performance management processes and systems across the Dorset councils with common performance data sets.	317,500
Fire and Rescue Authorities Service	Leadership & management training and project management for the procurement officers for all seven services.	14,000
Wiltshire	Member development., equalities & Diversity, Local Strategic Partnerships and Performance Management.	316,000
Somerset	Develop corporate capacity in the area of recruitment, retention and scarce skills.	200,000
Gloucestershire	Set a clear and shared agenda for building leadership capacity; identify common/shared approaches and delivery methods; develop and encourage innovative approaches to leadership in the county.	200,000
SWIP	To establish and support the partnership to lead improvement activity at a regional level.	60,000
Sub Total		2,237,500
Total (Direct and sub-regional support)		4,654,370

Appendix 5 Current membership of Regional Centre of Excellence Management Board

Representative	Organisation	Sub Region
Bob Austin	CEx Cotswold District Council	Gloucestershire
Peter Bungard	CEx Gloucestershire County Council	Gloucestershire
Tbc	CEx Cornwall County Council	Cornwall
Byron Davies	CEx Caradon District Council	Cornwall
Liz Goodall	CEx North Dorset District Council	Dorset
David Jenkins (Chair)	CEx Dorset County Council	Dorset
Phil Norrey	CEx Devon County Council	Devon
Barry Keel	CEx Plymouth City Council	Devon
John Jones	Assistant Chief Officer Dorset Police Services	Police
Alan Jones	CEx Somerset County Council	Somerset
David Thomson	CEx Mendip District Council	Somerset
Mike Pearson	Assistant Fire Officer Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority	Somerset
Amanda Deeks	CEx South Gloucestershire Council	West of England
Graham Turner	CEx North Somerset Council	West of England
Keith Robinson	CEx Wiltshire County Council	Wiltshire
Richard Sheard	GOSW	

