

Supporting Change and Shared Services

The gravity of the financial situation councils will face is now much clearer and COSLA, SOLACE and the Directors of Finance share a common planning assumption of a 12% real reduction in current spending across the next spending review, combined with a 50% reduction in the public capital programme in Scotland.

At the same time, it is accepted that demand will increase substantially across the period due to demographic pressure and policy commitments (1.5% - 2% per annum).

The ability of councils to deliver the necessary efficiency savings, at the same time as improving priority outcomes, will require robust and informed assessment of the options for change and significant enhancement in the capacity of councils and their partners to effectively plan and deliver the change.

The Improvement Service is responding to these changing needs and some of the activity we will be undertaking in the coming year is summarised below.

Ensuring change activity delivers the expected benefits

In 2010/11, a key component of our team's activity will be focussed on supporting councils to enhance their capacity to deliver the efficiency savings and other benefits from their change programmes.

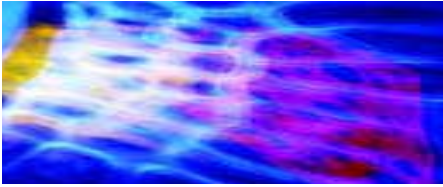
We will identify Critical Success Factors for delivering efficiency and other benefits from change through research and dialogue with best practice councils and other organisations. We will then work with councils to help build these into their own change programmes.

Supporting Collaborative developments

Many councils are working on similar areas of change and recognise the potential for collaboration. We will directly support councils to work collaboratively to develop joint assets (policies, procedures, training, infrastructure etc.) in areas of common change, to help reduce the timescale and cost of implementation.

An initial focus of this work will be to provide direct support to councils working on flexible / mobile working change programmes. We are providing a subject matter expert to work with these councils to identify and reach agreement and funding for the development of joint assets that will accelerate and reduce the cost of change in each council.





Supporting Shared Services

Shared services is one of a number of options available to councils to achieve efficiencies and improvements in some service areas, and the full exploitation of existing IS supported shared services arrangements such as the Customer First infrastructure, myJob Scotland and the Public Information Notices Portal, will become increasingly important as budgets reduce.

We will continue to support groups of councils who are proactively seeking to develop shared services initiatives as a component of their efficiency and service improvement programmes.

The most recent example of this is the financial support we brokered from Scottish Government for the South East Scotland councils (East Lothian, Edinburgh, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders, West Lothian) to assess the potential of a managed service for Payroll and associated transactional HR activities. This project will report in April of this year.

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