The 'go to' organisation for Local Government improvement in Scotland

is.
improvement **service**

Business Plan
2021—2022

Contents

1. Introduction

The Improvement Service (IS) is the *'go-to' organisation for Local Government improvement in Scotland.*

Our vision is

'To be an agile organisation that supports and mobilises resources for our partners to manage the challenges they face in improving outcomes and reducing inequalities'.

Our purpose

Provide leadership to Local Government and the wider system on improvement and transformation;

Develop capability and capacity for improvement within Local Government;

Deliver national improvement programmes for Local Government and partners and support councils to improve at a local level;

Provide research, data and intelligence to inform Local Government's policy-making and decision-making and to drive improvement;

Deliver national shared service applications and technology platforms; and

Broker additional resources from outwith the sector to support the delivery of Local Government's priorities.

Our Business Plan for 2021/22 takes forward the commitments set out in our 2-year Strategic Framework 2020/22 and sets out our deliverables and activities for the coming year.

2. Our Operating Context

The operating context of Local Government continues to evolve at pace and Covid-19 has intensified the range of challenges already faced. In response, COSLA has published a Blueprint for Scottish Local Government which will inform our work during 2021/22.

Local Government is facing significant financial challenges, with COSLA estimating a gap of around £360M still remaining for 2021/22. This creates immediate and long-term implications for Local Authorities, including their ability to manage the financial impacts of the pandemic and deliver essential services.

The Covid-19 pandemic is a social and economic crisis just as much as it is a health crisis, with socio-economic disadvantage and inequality of outcomes widening. Covid-19 is impacting on all aspects of society and has changed our lives in ways that we could not have imagined. At the same time, there has been an increased sense of community and volunteering.

Covid-19 has also changed the way in which we interact with each other, with more contactless interfaces and interactions and greater reliance on digital infrastructure and services. There has been an increased use of, and demand for, robust and timely data and intelligence to inform decision-making and service delivery. Interest in, and demand for, Artificial Intelligence and robotics also continues to grow. At the same time, we need to guard against an increased risk of digital exclusion within our most vulnerable communities. The refresh of Scotland's Digital Strategy will very much influence and inform how we further develop our digital public services across the next year.

Ambitious climate change targets have been set for Scotland, with many Local Authorities declaring a climate change emergency. Councils are also looking at recovery and renewal through an environmental and sustainability lens.

The Scottish Parliament election is due to take place in 2021 and the Scottish Local Government elections will follow the year after. Over the next year we will ensure support is available for candidates planning to stand for the Local Government elections and for newly appointed elected members in 2022.

Finally, the emerging challenges from the UK's withdrawal from the European Union also look set to drive further changes and challenges for Local Government over the forthcoming period.

As councils continue to reset their strategic priorities and direction over the next year, as part of their approach to recovery and renewal, it will be more important than ever to use the learning
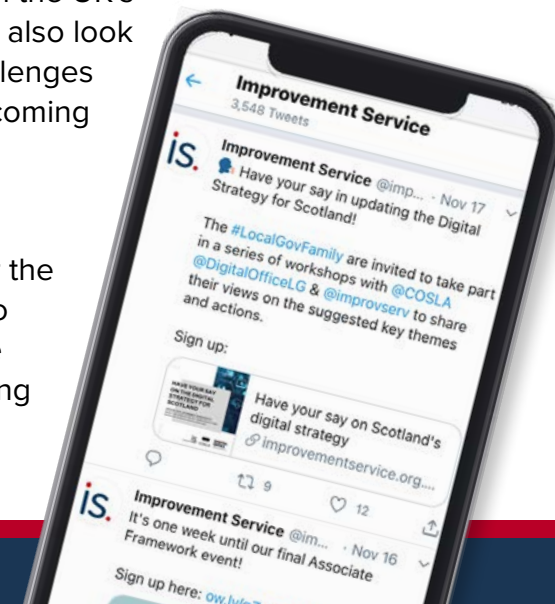
garnered through the Covid-19 response as a catalyst for sustainable transformation. Our Business Plan sets out the contribution we will make, aligned to our Strategic Framework 2020/22.

We will continue to work with partners within and beyond the Local Government family, to support councils through challenging times and to contribute to the delivery of Scotland's National Performance Framework priorities.

3. Our Strategic Priorities

Across 2020/21, we will focus our resources on providing improvement support and services that will help us deliver our four strategic priorities.

1. We will support Local Government to live with Covid-19

We will continue to adapt our programmes, products and services as necessary to support Local Government and councils with their Covid-19 response and recovery. This will include running online peer learning networks, publishing research, briefings, thought pieces and data dashboards and facilitating online collaboration through the Knowledge Hub. We will also deliver facilitated self-assessment to councils, using the Public Service Improvement Framework, to capture learning from their response to the pandemic and to enable them to consolidate the new ways of working and innovative practice that has emerged. Finally, we will deliver a greater range of secure and sustainable digital services, ensuring services are accessible when local offices are closed due to Covid-19 restrictions.

2. We will support Local Government to re-build post Covid-19

We will work with Local Government and councils as they transition from response and recovery to renewal. This will include undertaking work to redesign and reconfigure services in ways that are truly transformative, sustainable, innovative, accessible and digital. In collaboration with councils, we will develop proposals and options for the future delivery of key services, based on professional input, learning from the Covid-19 response, performance information and research. This work will be valuable not only in accelerating the changes we have begun to see, but also in reimagining the delivery of key services in a truly transformative way. We will introduce inclusive omni-channel approaches to public services for those who cannot access digital public services, choose not to or who lack access to the right technology, connectivity or traditional forms of identity evidence. We will collaborate with Local Government to better understand the impact of Covid-19 on their communities, particularly in regard to inequality of outcome as a result of increased socio-economic disadvantage from

the economic and social impacts of the pandemic. We will advocate for the role of place based approaches to develop new normals, including 20 minute neighbourhoods.

We will also build on the rapid progress achieved both locally and nationally in data sharing, data collaboration and data innovation facilitated by the increased focus on the role of data and intelligence during the pandemic. This will build on the important work delivered by the Improvement Service in the weekly Local Government Covid-19 Dashboard. Across the coming period, the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) will be at the heart of progressing system wide improvements in addressing current lags in data availability, streamlining data reporting/scrutiny landscapes, enabling greater automation and technical integration of data systems, and strengthening available insights from data and intelligence. A key element of this will include work with COSLA and the Local Government Digital Office to support the development of the Local Government Data Portal approach, using the LGBF as a primary vehicle for implementation.

3. We will support Local Government's contribution to Scotland's National Performance Framework

Economy [Sustainable inclusive growth]
We will provide support to the Scottish Local Authority Economic Development Group (SLAED) to bring local authority economic development colleagues together to share good practice and tackle common challenges through the various Strategic and Thematic Groups. We will work with SLAED to review and refresh the SLAED Strategic Plan to respond to the impact of the pandemic and identify the collective priorities for the next 6 to 12 months. We are also working to ensure that Local Government economic development can effectively influence Scottish Government policy and practice through the gathering and sharing of local economic intelligence. We will extend the reach of our business verification service - bisaccount.scot - to more organisations, helping local businesses transact securely online. We will further develop it to allow businesses to delegate authority to employees to transact on a business' behalf.

Fair Work and Business
We will work with SOLACE, COSLA, SLAED and Scottish Government to develop and deliver the shared ambitions of the Employability

Partnership Agreement, which will help transform a radical change towards person-centred, integrated support across the full range of services that can contribute to sustainable employment and related outcomes. We will effectively contribute to the delivery of the Young Person's Guarantee and through an inclusion first approach, promote Fair Work. We will provide practical improvement support to councils to help strengthen Local Employability Partnerships, develop improved service user engagement and help develop a consistent offer to employers to support recovery.

Environment [Climate Change]

We will work with SOLACE, COSLA and others to provide practical improvement support to councils on climate change. This will include helping connect councils better with good practice, signposting to existing resources, tapping into existing networks, supporting elected members' knowledge and scrutiny on this issue and helping embed the climate change agenda across the full range of programmes and supporting professional groups that have a role to play. We will seek to align with skills development and green jobs to ensure connectivity with other Scottish and Local Government policies and programmes.

Health [and Social Care]

We will enter into a Partnership Agreement with Public Health Scotland, to support the delivery of Scotland's public health priorities. We will work with COSLA and Solace to deliver the agreed recommendations in the review of adult social care. We will work with national improvement bodies to deliver collaborative improvement support to integration authorities, including introducing a joint account management approach. We will work with Audit Scotland to ensure that our self-assessment and improvement planning offer complements, informs and supports the development of the Accounts Commission's approach to Best Value for Integration Joint Boards. We will work with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and others to support and develop the workforce of the future improving career pathways aligned to skills development and employability.

Poverty

We will continue to work with the Scottish Government to assist its review of debt levy funding. With support from Scottish Government and COSLA, we are exploring the feasibility of developing a partnership framework that will be used to assist the adoption of a joint approach to funding advice services. The partnership framework will help to align the significant Local Government investment in advice with the broader range of Scottish Government advice-related funding. We will undertake detailed analytical work which will enable us to publish an annual report evidencing the investment in advice by local authorities and the key outputs achieved. This work will be used to facilitate benchmarking and improvement within

the sector. We will continue to work in partnership with Public Health Scotland and the Scottish Public Health Network to provide improved access to advice services in primary care settings.

Poverty / Children

We will continue to work with local and national partners to support the ongoing development, implementation and improvement of effective child poverty interventions. In doing so, we will continue to develop existing peer support and learning networks to identify and share good practice and provide support and constructive challenge in relation to tackling child poverty and the Local Child Poverty Action Reports. In partnership with Public Health Scotland, we will act as a conduit between Local Government child poverty leads and the Scottish Government, facilitating engagement and influence in regard to national policy. We will continue to contribute to the delivery of the Parental Employment Support Fund supporting parents to increase income through employment.

Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Delivery Progress

Children

With the new statutory date for the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion being set for August 2021, we will continue to support local authorities with the delivery of their programmes through the provision of targeted business analysis, workforce planning and knowledge management support. We will pro-actively identify support needs and risks and will put in place creative solutions to unlock delivery for August 2021, ensuring that the expansion prioritises a high quality experience for the child. Through data collection and data analysis, we will gain a clear understanding of the status and trajectory of the programme on a national and local level, while identifying opportunities and highlighting any areas of risk. This will be fed back to Scottish Government and COSLA through regular delivery progress reports, providing assurance on the delivery of the programme.

We will continue to work with SEEMiS to deliver the parentsportal. scot and will roll out new services and features. We will aim to increase the portal's footprint to 15 councils, 1000 schools and used by over 150,000 parents responsible for over 200,000 pupils, and we will achieve 1 million annual authentication requests. We will also work with Young Scot to continue to support their membership platform, powered by myaccount, to grow membership numbers in pursuit of Young Scot's target of 175,000. We will bring a digital identity to young people lacking identity evidence, leveraging their Young Scot National Entitlement Card (NEC) as an anchor document for verification purposes. We will also explore the feasibility of a digital Young Scot NEC.

Communities

Building upon the successful delivery of the Digital Planning Pathfinder on Data we will undertake further work developing standards and promoting improved data governance for planning

data. We shall also contribute to the delivery of the Scotland's Digital Planning Strategy by utilising the rich array of data in the Spatial Hub. We will continue to promote the identified need for national data on health within the planning system, to deliver on National Planning Framework Outcomes on improving health and reducing inequality.

We will continue to co-ordinate Scotland's Violence Against Women Network and support local authorities to improve outcomes for women and children experiencing domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence within their local communities. We will also work in partnership with the Scottish Government and NHS Education for Scotland (NES) to help local authorities to develop trauma-informed systems, services and workforces to help improve outcomes for people affected by adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and other forms of trauma.

Human Rights
We will continue to roll-out support for the implementation of the Fairer Scotland Duty across Scotland, working with the listed agencies to identify and share best practice, develop practical guidance for officers and elected members and further develop online resources. This work will include supporting integrated Impact Assessments, helping to streamline and connect broad areas of strategic importance to Local Government, such as wellbeing economies, environment, equalities, fairness and poverty outcomes. We will also work with Scottish Government to refresh the Fairer Scotland Duty Guidance, informed by the experience of the Fairer Scotland Duty leads in the implementation of the duty.

4. We will support Local Government, working with communities and partners, to deliver place-based approaches

We will partner with Public Health Scotland to support councils, communities and partners to work and plan together to improve the lives of people, support inclusive economies and improve health and wellbeing through the creation of more successful places. This will include co-funding a joint Place and Wellbeing Partnership Lead to encourage new ways of working across national and local, and sectoral and disciplinary boundaries on policy and decision making processes that prioritise shared Place and Wellbeing Outcomes.

We will collaborate with Local Government and councils to take forward Scottish Government's ambition for 20-minute neighbourhoods, where people live, work and play more locally and can have most of their daily requirements met without the need for a private car.

We will prioritise our focus on the social determinants of health under the remit of Local Government including pulling on our own expertise in areas such as economic development, employability, planning and child poverty. We will work with national partners and agencies to develop a more placed based approach to service design and delivery. We will work in partnership with Public Health

Scotland, sponsored by COSLA and the Health Foundation, on a three-year programme of intensive local work with a small number of local authorities to implement the Place Principle and the 20 minute neighbourhood ambition. We will work with a range of national and local partners to coordinate and deliver targeted action and lasting systems change.

Supporting the delivery of our Strategic Priorities

All of the work delivered by our three teams will contribute directly, or indirectly, to the delivery of our 4 Strategic Priorities.

1. Transformation, Performance and Improvement

Our core improvement offer will underpin the delivery of our Strategic Priorities. We will:

• Work with councils as they seek to develop their transformation programmes as we emerge into recovery and renewal.

• Continue to deliver support and advice on change management and organisational development.

• Work closely with the Data and Intelligence team to target IS improvement activity in areas where data indicates that local authority performance improvement is slowing or declining.

• Embed our approach to self-evaluation and improvement planning across local authorities, other public services, partnerships and within priority outcome areas, including an assessment of the impact and reaction to the pandemic.

• Work with councils and elected members to co-design, develop and

deliver our elected member development programme, including ensuring standard induction materials are in place for new members following the 2022 local elections.

• Continue to grow the number of active Knowledge Hub users and groups across Scotland's public services and, in parallel, explore options for a refreshed collaboration tool.

• Harness the support we provide to councils from across the IS as they prepare for Best Value Assurance Reports (BVAR) and work with councils requesting our input as they implement their BVAR recommendations.

2. Digital Public Services

We will continue to develop our digital public services, which provide the underpinning infrastructure to support the delivery of digital services across a range of outcome areas. We will also ensure that our work contributes to the delivery of Scotland's Digital Strategy. For example:

• We will continue to grow the use of myaccount, expanding the number of authentication requests, unique and returning

visitors. We will aim to expand myaccount subscriber numbers to 1.6 million and grow authentication requests to around 10 million annually. We will work in partnership with Scottish Government's Digital Identity Scotland (DIS) Programme to deliver a joint project which will consider how the myaccount service becomes one (or more) of the components of the DIS Programme's attribute management model. We will protect and maintain ISO27001 accreditation, an internationally recognised standard for managing information security. We will also continue to grow the uptake of the Data Hub.

- We will work with our delivery partner, Dundee City Council, to deliver the National Entitlement Card (NEC) Scheme, and procure new contracts for the Scheme, including for card management/customer relationship system, card bureau services and smartcard supply.

3. Data and Intelligence

We will continue to invest in our collaborative approach to managing and improving data and intelligence across Local Government, resulting in the potential for long-term efficiency gains and cost savings.

For example:

- We will implement a series of technical upgrades to the Spatial Hub and continue to work with councils to extend the range of spatial data sets and improve the quality of spatial information available. We will also explore the development of a long-term and sustainable funding model for the Spatial Hub that will enable us to meet the aspirations of Scotland's open government policy by making the Spatial Hub data freely available to anyone who wishes to use it.

- We will investigate the feasibility of extending the scope of the Spatial Hub to cover all type of local authority data, with the aim of the Improvement Service becoming the broker for all local authority data in Scotland. This will include standardising the approaches to data management across authorities. We will also offer the facility to host other organisation's data in the Spatial Hub.

- We will continue to work with local authority property and street gazetteer custodians and Ordnance Survey/GeoPlace to improve and enhance the vital address and street datasets for Scotland.

- We will develop TellmeScotland to allow the automatic upload of planning notifications.

- We will work with SOLACE and COSLA to continue to develop and embed the Local Government Benchmarking Framework and target IS improvement activity in areas where local authority performance improvement is slowing or declining.

- We will maximise the use of our research and analytical services by Local Government to support analysis, thinking and decision-making in priority areas.

- We will offer support and guidance to any local authority looking to improve any aspect of their data and intelligence where necessary.

Our detailed deliverables for the year ahead, aligned to our strategic priorities, are outlined in Appendix 1.
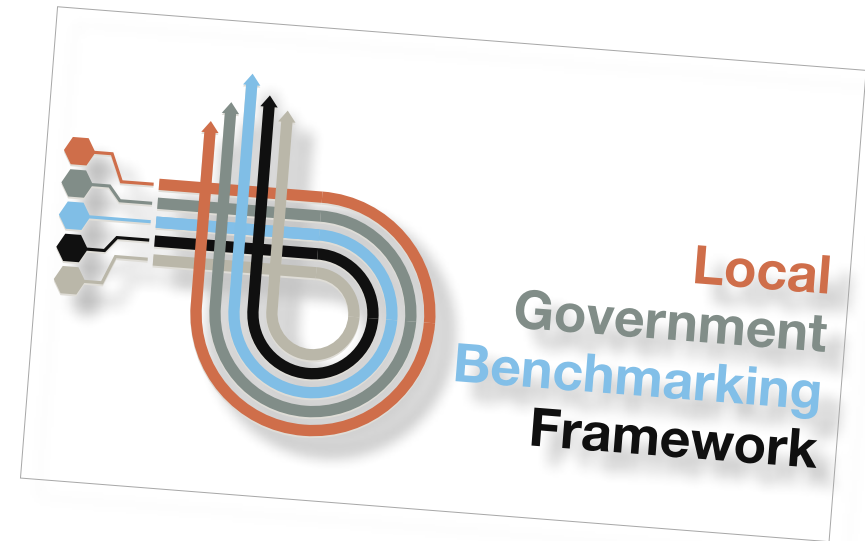
4. Our Corporate Priorities

We will:

- Continue to deliver our Partnership Agreement with COSLA.
- Develop formal agreements with other key partners, including the Accounts Commission and Public Health Scotland.
- Support the Board and continue to focus on the business management of the company to help ensure ongoing growth and sustainability.
- Support the Board to implement the improvement plan agreed as part of the IS governance review.
- Deliver our Business Development and Growth Strategy and, in a challenging financial climate, seek to deliver a target of bringing in an additional £2.5M from outwith the Local Government sector in support of the delivery of our strategic priorities.
- Procure a new Associates Framework contract and grow the volume of business generated by IS Associates.
- Implement a refreshed approach to account management, underpinned by a new Knowledge Management strategy.
- Embed our communications strategy to help ensure all stakeholders have a firm understanding of our improvement support, how to access it and the impact it has.
- Embed our values in all of our policies and the way 'we do business', including launching a new values based performance appraisal approach.

- Further embed and develop our performance management framework.
- Continue to embed our approach to information / cyber security and protect and maintain our ISO27001 certification.
- Continue to exploit Office 365 to enhance flexible and mobile working and improve collaboration and sharing of information.
- Continue to support Improvement Service self-assessment and improvement action plans.
- Continue to invest in developing leadership skills across the organisation.
- Develop and change our business practices, where appropriate, in support of climate change outcomes.
- Contribute to the shared ambition for a more inclusive, well-being economy.

5. Key Success 2020/21

The developments noted above build on our existing successes. Our main achievements from 2020/21 are highlighted below.

☑ We have continued to **grow our funding base** in support of Local Government priorities and exceeded our 2020/21 target of £2M for bringing in additional resources to the sector, achieving £2.28M.

☑ We continued to provide a range of support to councils, SOLACE and COSLA in their work to **improve outcomes for children, young people and their families**:

✓ We played a key role in the Delivery Assurance Team (whose membership comprises of Scottish Government, Scottish Futures Trust and IS) to support the continued delivery of the **expansion of Early Learning and Childcare**. We provided business analysis capacity to support councils as they implement their ELC Expansion Plans, and collated, analysed and reported on key performance indicators to show progress of the expansion, using the analysis to target support where necessary. We provided dedicated support to councils on the expansion and development of their Early Learning and Childcare workforce. We provided in-depth

knowledge management services to ensure lessons learned and good practice are shared. We also secured further funding through to the end of the 2021/22 academic year to continue to support councils in completing the expansion, as well as reporting on progress to Scottish Government and COSLA to assure delivery. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we also acted as direct point of contact for councils to clarify Scottish Government guidance and policy on public health measures in the early learning and childcare sector.

✓ We continued to host the **Child Poverty National Co-ordinator**, allowing us to provide a range of practical improvement support to local leads and partnerships across Scotland. This work included aligning with national partners to deliver practical support such as virtual peer support networks, presentations and workshops for local areas, one-to-one engagement with local Child Poverty Leads, feedback on and support with draft Local Child Poverty Action Reports,

Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Delivery Progress Report
September 2020

ELECTED MEMBER BRIEFING NOTE
Child Poverty and COVID-19

briefing notes (particularly on the impact of Covid-19 on child poverty and ways additional funding might be targeted), webinars and tailored input to local areas.

☑ We continued to work in partnership with SOLACE, COSLA and SLAED to **improve fair work and sustainable inclusive growth outcomes**:

✓ Working with SLAED and COSLA in taking forward the Scottish Government – Local Government **Partnership Agreement for Employability**, we helped secure an additional £47.35 million for local governance. We contributed to the development of a Local Employability Partnership Framework, the publication of a Joint Scottish and Local Government Delivery Plan for Employability support in Scotland and contributed to the establishment of the Young Person's Guarantee.

✓ We facilitated improved engagement with the Department of Work and Pensions and enabled discussions on the UK Government's Plan for Jobs, specifically focusing on the **Kickstart** programme, supporting Councils' direct engagement with Policy and operational leads.

✓ We undertook several surveys to help inform and shape a collective Local Government response to the ongoing programme of change, enabling the sharing of best practice and innovation.

✓ We contributed to the development of a **National Framework for Employer Recruitment Incentives**, supporting Councils to deliver a single local offer to employers.

✓ We worked with Councils to explore developments such as **Community Wealth Building**, using the previously published Economic Footprint Reports for each area to tie into three of the Community Wealth Building pillars.

✓ We supported SLAED in discussions with COSLA, SOLACE and Scottish Government on responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a particular focus on **Business Support** and the dispersal of grants. The Secretariat drew together responses from across all 32 local authorities to feed into consultations and calls for views from, for example, the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery.

☑ We delivered a range of improvement work to address **poverty and inequality**:

✓ We completed the work with Fife, North Ayrshire, City of Edinburgh and Glasgow City Councils, along with Public Health Scotland and Scottish Government, on the feasibility of a **Scottish Citizen Basic Income pilot (CBI)**, publishing the final report into our findings in June 2020.

✓ We secured funding from Scottish Government to evaluate potential
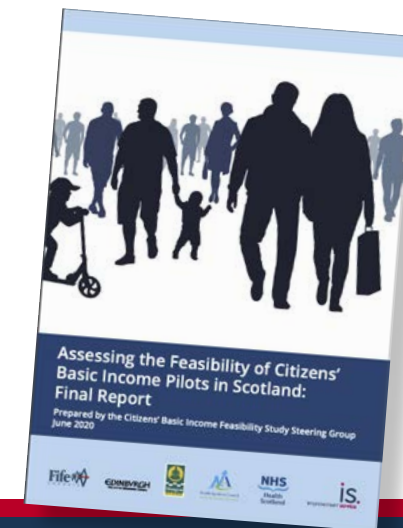
funding models and delivery approaches which could be used to allocate the levy funding devolved to the Scottish Government for **debt advice**. In partnership with the four local authorities who participated in the 'test of change', we will publish a report outlining the challenges and drawbacks of allocating debt levy funding through direct grants to local authorities.

✓ Following research involving 22 local authorities we have published a report outlining how local authority funded advice services responded to COVID-19.

✓ We continued to host the National Co-ordinator to support the implementation of the **Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD)** across Scotland. The FSD Knowledge Hub Group is being used as a central repository for information and toolkits. Early in the pandemic we published a briefing on Poverty, Inequality and Covid-19 which has helped inform discussions and impact assessment. We established a virtual FSD Leads Network to facilitate peer support and the sharing of good practice and useful information. The group were also involved in the refresh of the FSD Guidance which will be published after a consultation period. We supported the development of the impact assessment processes and engaged in the impact assessment of the draft Climate Ready Clyde Action Plan, the Flu and Covid-19 Vaccination Plan and Vaccination Scheduling Tool.

✓ We supported Councils to secure funding for the **Young Parents Project** aligned to the Child Poverty action plan to provide continuous and seamless worker support.

✓ We enabled Councils to access funding of £3.5m to support the **Partnership Action for Continuous Employment (PACE)**, to provide a local Single Point of Contact (SPOC) in each of the 32 councils, as well as key worker resources to connect with national helplines and provide support locally to individuals at risk of being made redundant.

☑ We continued to provide a range of support to local authorities and partners to help deliver outcomes in relation to **communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe**.

✓ In partnership with the Scottish Government, COSLA and Public Health Scotland, we published guidance for local authorities to support them to respond to heightened risks that women and children experiencing domestic abuse and other forms of **gender-based violence** faced during the Covid-19 pandemic. We also secured funding from the Scottish Government to support local authorities and their partner organisation to engage with the **National Trauma Training Programme** and identify actions they can undertake to ensure local systems, services and workforces respond to the needs of people and communities affected by trauma.
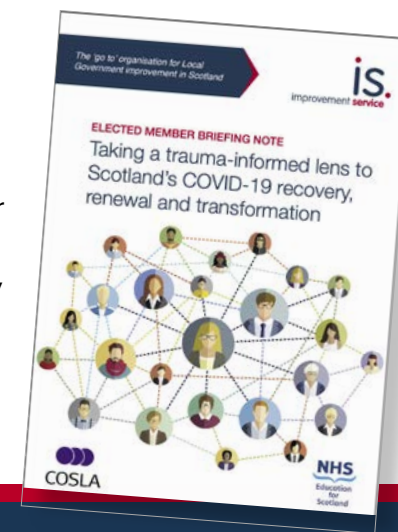
✓ We continued to develop and roll-out support for **place-based working** by applying the Place Principle via webinars, briefing notes and hands on support for a range of councils and partnerships. This typically included providing facilitation, constructive challenge and helping to drive improvement.

✓ We have continued to support collaborative work with Public Health Scotland, Directors of Public Health, COSLA, Heads of Planning Scotland, Health Improvement Managers Network and Edinburgh University, shaping a consistent and comprehensive set of Place and Wellbeing Outcomes to support the wellbeing of people and planet and the reduction of inequalities. We are collaborating to improve national and local policy and action, with an immediate focus on the ongoing review of the National Planning Framework. We are also supporting stronger links between place and public health as part of a whole system approach to delivering Scotland's Public Health Priorties.

☑ Our partnership working with Scotland Excel has continued to grow and develop to support councils to build their skills and capacity in project management and business analysis. The **Professional Development Award in Project Management**, which is a level SCQF 8, upskills candidates on the practical application of key project management skills in a Local Government context. Since its launch in August 2018, we have 153 candidates either completed, or progressing, the qualification from across 20 different councils. Furthermore, in late 2019 we launched our first cohort of the first part of our **Business Analysis programme, which is a Business Analysis Unit and Professional Development Award** in Decision Making and Innovation which are levels SCQF 8 and 9 respectively. There are now 19 candidates who have either completed or progressing through the qualification from across 9 different councils.

☑ Our offer of support on **change management** is continually adapted to reflect local authorities' needs. Our **Change Managers' Network** has grown to over 660 members, representing more than 100 organisations, including all 32 Scottish local authorities. During the pandemic our Network events have moved online and continue to focus on topics that councils have raised with us. We have held 7 events over the last year with colleagues from 28 local authorities in attendance, and a number of colleagues from our partner agencies. We continued to enhance **change management** capacity in councils, with workshops on change and project management held with North Lanarkshire and Midlothian Councils.

☑ We continued to successfully deliver the **Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF)** to help councils better understand their current performance levels, to build understanding of where and why council performance varies and to help identify and share good practice across councils. We are reviewing with stakeholders how we reset the [Local Government Benchmarking Framework](#) in light of Covid-19 to support councils in their response, recovery and renewal efforts. The new strategic plan for the next 3-year period will strengthen the relevance and credibility of LGBF across this coming period, including continuing to strengthen links with the National Performance Framework. The priority will be to protect the continuity provided by the LGBF across the 10 year period pre-Covid, which will be essential to understanding the impact of Covid on core Local Government services, whilst also working to evolve the existing suite of measures to reflect the challenges, risks and opportunities facing Local Government as it responds to the Covid pandemic and aims to build back better. This year, the LGBF includes new measures on Financial Sustainability (reserves, borrowing, budget performance) and Climate Change, both of which will be key for the period ahead.

☑ In order to support recovery and renewal planning in councils, as we move from response to recovery over the coming months and year, the **PSIF Self-Assessment** team have developed a number of checklists to **Capture Learning from the Covid-19** outbreak for council services, at a corporate level, for CPPs and for s. This learning has been captured using the PSIF self-assessment approach familiar to many in Local Government. We have worked with services and at a corporate level to facilitate this process and support Councils with the development of New Ways of Working Plans to consolidate and embed the innovations that have emerged in recent months.

☑ In partnership with the Care Inspectorate and Scottish Care, we piloted an **improvement planning development tool** in six care homes for older people. The Care Inspectorate produced an evaluation report of the pilot and concluded that the impact of the improvement work was positive in focussing staff and management in struggling care homes towards positive steps to improvement. We developed and successfully tested a new self-assessment checklist for frontline services in local authorities. We reviewed and refreshed the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) in consultation with the PSIF community, and we launched PSIF 2020.

☑ We ran online events and published briefings on topical issues for **elected members**. We developed guidance to support
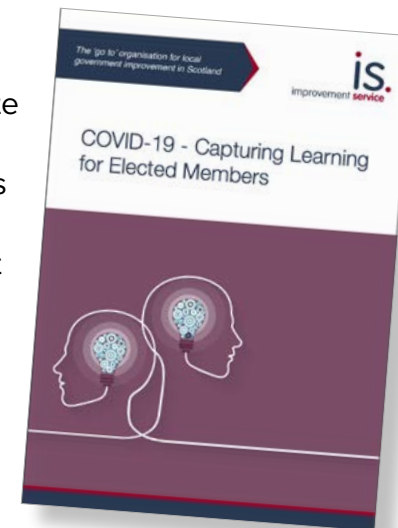
elected members with virtual surgeries and working remotely as a political group and undertook research on the governance arrangements in place across local authorities during lockdown. We developed a new **Political Mentoring Development Programme**, consisting of a mentoring handbook and three live online workshops. We ran six cohorts and we have already seen the positive impact of elected members taking up mentoring roles for potential candidates. We offered virtual coaching for senior elected members and the feedback from senior members was the offer had really helped them in their leadership role.

☑ Our **Organisational Development (OD) Network** membership grew significantly during 2020 and now has more than 90 members. We hosted 12 virtual sessions, giving colleagues the opportunity to network and to share information and resources around OD challenges and practices including leadership development, wellbeing and employee engagement.

☑ We developed and launched a **Scenario Planning Toolkit** to support recovery and renewal. The toolkit outlines a five-step approach and contains tools designed for councils to use themselves or with support from IS.

☑ We continued to manage, develop and train users on the

Knowledge Hub (Khub), a powerful digital platform for public servants to collaborate, communicate and connect. The Scottish Public Services Network (SPSN) enables its 22,000 members to drive significant efficiencies and tackle important social issues. 15,000 members are based in local authorities and 5,000 in the Scottish Government. There are around 850 communities covering a variety of subjects, including business transformation, organisational benchmarking, performance, sustainability and climate change, reducing re-offending and delivering excellent childcare and education. The Scottish network has seen more than 30,000 individual social interactions in 2020, which is around half of the total platform social activity. A number of professional associations, including the Society of Local Authority Lawyers and Administrators in Scotland, the Society of Personnel and Development in Scotland, Heads of Planning Scotland and Trading Standards Scotland, utilise the platform for online collaboration.

☑ We have continued to develop our **website** to better showcase our work. It provides improved personalisation, search and mobile experience and complies with the latest accessibility
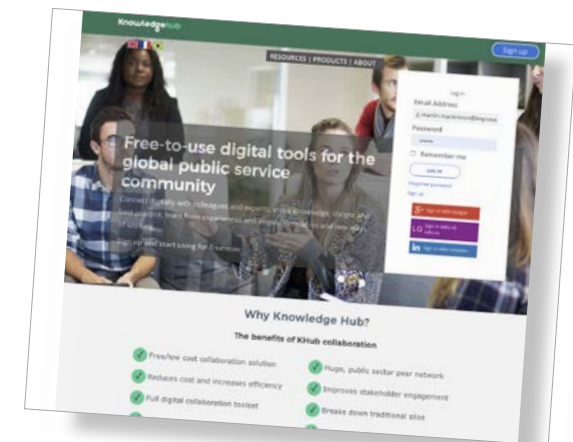
standards. With enhanced analytics, we can now understand our stakeholders' requirements and develop new content to match their needs. We also supported COSLA in the redevelopment of their website. Moving to a common platform will allow the shared development and support for both organistions' websites.

☑ We grew significantly the adoption, uptake and usage of the **myaccount service**. For example, the number of organisations using the service increased to 29, comprising 27 local authorities, NHS Scotland and Young Scot. Registered subscriber numbers rose to almost 1.2M, a 29% year-on-year increase. Annual authentication request volumes rose to 7.6M, a 19% year-on-year increase.

☑ We successfully launched **getyournec.scot** as a new channel, allowing those eligible to apply for a National Entitlement Card online for the first time. Within less than 6 months of getyournec. scot's launch, we had successfully onboarded almost half (15) of Scotland's Councils by 31 December 2020.

☑ We successfully achieved the internationally recognised **ISO27001** certification, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to keeping data, staff and premises secure, and helping promote myaccount as a credible solution for Identity Management and satisfy requirements necessary to be part of Scottish Government's Identity Assurance digital ecosystem.

☑ We successfully expanded **parentsportal.scot's** footprint to 7 Councils and 520 schools (almost 25% of the total Scottish local authority-run primary and secondary schools). Parental subscriber numbers increased by 453% year-on-year and linked children numbers increased by 468% year-on-year.

☑ We expanded the adoption of the **Data Hub** to 24 organisations, including 20 Councils, and uploaded 6.5 million records, helping improve the quality and accuracy of local data.

☑ We supported Scottish and Local Government to distribute **Covid-19 grants**. For example, we digitised the application process for Covid-19 Business Support Grants, enabling a consistent approach to be adopted across all Local Authorities for over 111,000 applications for over £1 billion of grants. This made it simpler and easier for businesses impacted by the pandemic to apply for vital government financial assistance. We also developed a uniform, secure digital service enabling over 2,000 childcare providers across Scotland in the private, voluntary and not-for profit sectors to apply for vital government financial grants, helping them meet the extra costs incurred in complying with public health guidance in response to Covid-19.

☑ We delivered **cyber awareness training** for all staff fully consistent with our commitment to maintain a culture of good cyber hygiene.

☑ We have continued to improve the technical capability of the **Spatial Hub** and increased and improved the Local Government data available. We entered into a partnership agreement with EDINA (University of Edinburgh) which has enabled data to be accessed for the first time by the UK academic and research community. For the first time, the Spatial Hub has begun to collect and share non-Local Government data. A reciprocal data sharing agreement was signed with SGN, enabling their gas network to be efficiently shared with Local Government. We have also begun to transform, improve and share key health and social care datasets.

☑ Our Spatial Information Service was granted responsibility by the Scottish Road Works' Commissioner for the **collation and management of local authority and Transport Scotland street intelligence** for the Road Works' Register. The service also worked in partnership with National Records of Scotland in preparation for the Census 2021, and with emergency services to ensure the One Scotland Gazetteer is accurate and up to date.

6. Our Approach

For planning and operational purposes, we are organised into 4 teams as the diagram below illustrates:
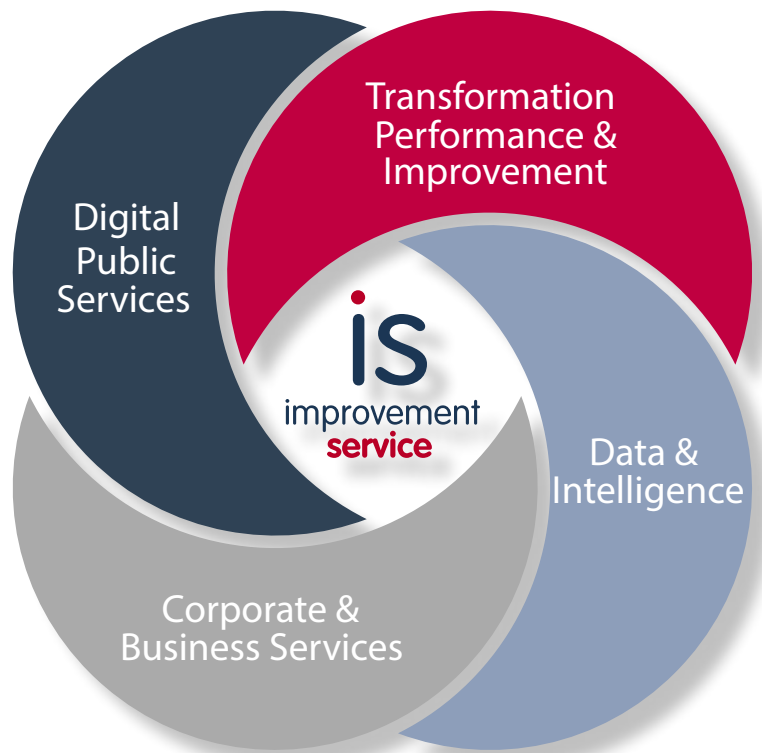
In reality and central to our ethos, our range of products, services and developments draw upon employees from across the four teams to ensure an integrated and holistic approach to service delivery. Using our collective skills and capacities in this joined up way will continue to be strengthened across the year.

Partnerships are important to us. We recognise that delivering whole system transformational change, effective public services and improved outcomes is contingent on partnership working. Across the next year, we will work closely with COSLA, Solace, other professional associations, other Local Government bodies, Scottish Government, Public Health Scotland, improvement agencies and audit and inspection bodies, to ensure our collective efforts are better aligned and integrated to maximise added value.

We will continue to work closely with COSLA to deliver our partnership agreement. We will work together, in the interests of our members and their priorities, where it is appropriate and sensible to do so, and where collaborative gain will be delivered for Local Government.

Across 2021/22, we will focus on opportunities to develop and enhance our organisational capabilities and core offers, including by forming strategic relationships with bodies having skills, tools, expertise, capacity and networks in areas that we currently do not, and which would be of benefit Local Government. For example:

- We will consider what more we can do to support Local Government to embed improvement and innovation and partner with organisations that complement the work that we do, such as NESTA and IESE.
- We will explore opportunities to partner with the Scottish Policy and Research Exchange, to encourage greater collaboration

between the IS, Local Government and researchers and academics in higher education institutions to expand access to evidence and increase the range of expert voices in priority outcome areas.

- We will explore opportunities to connect internationally with Local Government organisations focused on improvement to embed international learning and good practice in our work.

Our plan for 2021/22 (Appendix 1) outlines the investments we will make and the products, services and activities we will undertake. In line with our priorities, we will continue to allocate time for reactive work, for example, strategically important reviews and requests from partners of a strategic nature. Within the context of the plan, we will also continue to provide responsive and tailored support to individual councils and partnerships, underpinned by our account management approach.

7. How we measure success

As part of our continuous improvement journey, our approach to performance management is aimed at providing more meaningful evidence of delivery and performance against our plan and providing evidence of the wider impact of the Improvement Service in supporting councils and partners improve.

Our quarterly performance reporting includes results across the following key areas: progress on delivery, customer satisfaction indicators, evidence of wider impact in the form of best value programme reviews and a range of corporate performance indicators. Over the last year we have developed a bank of case studies to evidence the impact of the product, services and support that we provide. We will continue to build and strengthen our performance management approach and to better demonstrate impact in the coming year.

8. How we are funded

Our detailed spending plans are fully integrated and aligned to our Business Plan for the coming year. We will continue to receive £1.656M from Scottish Government, part of the Local Government block expenditure grant. This core grant funds our core capacities: The Elected Member Development programme and Organisational Development activities, Supporting Change, Transformation and Improvement, Knowledge Management, and Research and Intelligence activities including core benchmarking activities. The core grant also funds a small corporate team and covers the running costs of the organisation. Since 2011, the core grant has remained cash flat which means a continuous cut in real terms and places increasing importance on our ability to leverage additional funding into the organisation.

Other income streams have continued to grow steadily, for example:

- We have secured £3.66M to deliver myaccount and related-services this year.

- Specific grant agreements have been secured for a range of programmes, each of which is underpinned by a separate grant agreement containing discrete deliverables. The vast bulk of agreements are with Scottish Government. We will maintain a realistic target of bringing in an additional £2.5M from out with the sector in support of Local Government priorities.

- We broker partnerships and will continue to run collaborative programmes on behalf of all 32 councils, bringing in agreed funding from each individual council e.g., the Local Government Benchmarking Framework.

- We will continue to provide support services to the following Local Government professional associations: Heads of Planning Scotland, Scottish Local Authority Economic Development Group and Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland. Part of the support also includes hosting and banking arrangements.

- We will continue to explore business development and growth opportunities for the benefit of Local Government.

- We also host other large programmes having separate governance arrangements of their own e.g., Local Government Digital Office.

The funding source underpinning each key deliverable is contained in the detailed business plan (Appendix 1). Further enhancing and developing our core purpose and priorities, for the collective benefit of Local Government, is the common theme running through all existing and new income streams.

Appendix 1: The Business Plan 2021/22

The tables below highlight our detailed deliverables for the year ahead, aligned to our strategic priorities. Our strategic priority 3 is to support Local Government's contribution to the delivery of Scotland's National Performance Framework. To evidence our contribution to this strategic priority, we have identified deliverables that make a direct contribution to one or more national outcomes. It should be noted that many of our deliverables funded through the core grant cannot readily be allocated to one national outcome, because they are approaches used by the IS to support the sharing of practice and delivery of improvement across a wide range of service and outcome areas of relevance to Local Government. Likewise, our data and intelligence offer and digital public services provide the underpinning data and infrastructure that supports the delivery of a range of services that cut across different outcome areas.

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Transformation Support Programme	We will continue to develop our transformation support programme, working with councils as we emerge into recovery and renewal, that will build on existing activity, explore opportunities for new and innovative practice, promote collaborations (where appropriate) and crucially provide councils with the opportunity to participate when and how they wish. We will: • Work with a number of councils to develop their transformation plans. • Develop options for the future delivery of key council services based on professional input, learning from the Covid-19 response, performance information and research. We will facilitate a number of online virtual deep dive workshops, and will also look to engage Heads of Service and professional experts in some of these, to help scope future service delivery option.	Gerard McCormack		Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Change Management	We will continue to develop our offer of change management support to enhance skills and knowledge to support councils with transformational and operational level change. This will include: the continued development of the Change Managers' Network (both on the Khub and through events); the delivery of our business analysis and project management qualifications in partnership with Scotland Excel, exploring opportunities to further enhance this offer; the delivery of a range of workshops; and the delivery of webinars. We will also focus on developing support for strategic leaders in change and transformation. Examples of our deliverables include the following: • We will deliver the PDA in Project Management to at least 6 cohorts and the Business Analysis and Decision Making and Innovation qualifications to at least 2 cohorts by March 2022. • We will deliver tailored workshops and support for our Scenario Planning Toolkit, to inform strategic planning processes by providing a set of tools for thinking about the future and exploring possibilities of what that might look like.	Clare Sherry / Len Ward		Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Organisational Development / Workforce Planning	We will continue to work with councils, CPPs and Health and Social Care Partnerships to drive forward, and build capacity for effective approaches to organisational development, culture change, workforce planning, facilitation and management. We will: • Host a virtual learning and networking event every 6-8 weeks for the Organisational Development Local Authority Network and representatives from all 32 local authorities will be invited and encouraged to participate. • Respond to requests from councils and tailor support to make best use of resources available during the Covid-19 period. We will use the KHub to connect with groups and share resources that support learning and networking across the sector.	Amanda Spark		Core Grant
Organisational Development/ Workforce Planning	We will continue to actively work with public service partners to provide opportunities for cross public service organisational development learning and networking. We will: • Work with partners to deliver the Collaborative Leadership Programme in three pilot sites across Scotland. The programme will be delivered virtually, for senior managers in Local Government and Police Scotland. • Work with partners to deliver a virtual facilitation skills programme to build capacity for effective facilitation across the public sector.	Amanda Spark		Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Self-Assessment	We will continue to develop and deliver a wide range of self-assessment support to councils and partnerships and will further integrate partnership working around self-assessment to support Health and Social Care Partnerships and Integration Joint Boards. • The self-assessment approach used in the Capturing Learning from Covid-19 checklists will support council services and CMTs to 'build back better' by embedding new innovative approaches that have emerged during the pandemic. • The self-assessment approach will be used to support Best Value preparation work for councils and IJBs as part of a wider 'critical friend' support offer.	Barry McLeod		Core Grant
Best Value Support	We will continue to harness the support we can provide to councils from across the IS as they prepare for Best Value Assurance Reports. We will support individual councils who request our input as they implement the recommendations in their Best Value Assurance Reports. We will offer: • A self-assessment based upon the recommendations in recent BVAR reports. • An up to date summary of all reports. • Critical friend assistance throughout the proces. • To work with officers and elected members to outline what the BVAR process may involve.	Gerard McCormack		Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Elected Member Programme / CPD Framework for Elected Members	We will develop political leaders in Local Government by providing national direction, advice and tailored support. This includes supporting councils to put in place effective arrangements for elected members to receive the development they need to carry out their roles and responsibilities. We will complement and add value to councils' own member development activity by delivering webinars, briefings and guidance notes, as well as coaching for senior elected members. We will support the development of the next generation of political leaders by developing current members to become mentors, producing learning resources for candidates, and supporting councils with induction of newly elected members. We will: • Support all 32 councils to develop local induction programmes for May 2022, while providing national induction materials to complement local programmes. • Deliver at least 8 cohorts of our Political Mentoring Development Programme for elected members by March 2022.	David Barr		Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Knowledge Management	We will continue to develop the new IS website to meet users' needs, providing an added value gateway to a range of tools, data and information of relevance. We will: • Initiate an annual user survey for the website which will aim to gather information on how it is used and identify what works well and what needs to be improved. The survey will also invite users to shape the development of the site by inviting ideas for further development. • Build a user-focused development plan for the website shaped from the annual survey.	Martin MacKinnon		Core Grant
Knowledge Management	We will publish a Knowledge Management Strategy for the IS and continue to embed and develop dedicated knowledge sharing platforms including the Knowledge Hub, the new case study section of the website and Partners in Planning, a platform to support Scotland's planners in delivering successful places. In parallel, we will explore options for a refreshed collaboration tool. We will continue to develop our Thought Leadership Series, publishing output around a range of topics, with contributions from across the public sector and acedemia. We will explore opportunities to connect internationally with Local Government organisations focused on improvement to embed international learning and good practice in our work. We will: • Initiate an annual user survey of Scottish Network Knowledge Hub users which will aim to gather information on how it is used and identify what works well and what needs to be improved. The survey will also invite users to guide communication around alternative collaboration options. • Utilise the annual user survey to understand the audience reaction to the Thought Leadership Series and the case study section. The results will inform future commissioning.	Mike McLean		Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Knowledge Management	We will continue to embed our communications strategy, ensuring a consistent and corporate approach across all IS communications. This will include: developing consistent and targeted campaigns to promote and market our core products and services; working with partners to complement and align with national campaigns; delivering our own events and working with partners to deliver events; and measuring the impact of our communications activity. We will: • Develop and implement a communications plan for each team within the IS. • Produce an annual communications review, reporting on our communications activities and highlighting successes, lessons learned, and areas for improvement.	Mike McLean		Core Grant
Economic Development	We will work with Solace, SLAED, COSLA and the Scottish Government to support approaches to regional working, a wellbeing economy, a green, sustainable economic recovery and other Local Government priorities relating to economic development. Our deliverables will include: • Providing secretariat and improvement support for regular meetings between Solace, SLAED, COSLA and Scottish Government. • Delivery of presentations and briefing notes on key economic development issues e.g. Community Wealth Building. • Delivery of webinars for economic development staff e.g. on Green Economic Recovery, bringing climate change/sustainability officers and economic development officers together.	Miriam McKenna	Economy Fair Work & Business	Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
SLAED	We will continue to provide support to SLAED through the secretariat agreement. This includes support to the Executive and Sub Groups to maximise the profile of the organisation and take forward strategic priorities. We will work with SLAED to support the implementation of their Strategic Plan. Our deliverables will include: • Organisation and support at all SLAED Executive meetings and other subgroups as required. • Annual collation and publication of the SLAED Indicators Report, working with the Performance Lead to procure a data dashboard. • Supporting SLAED in the Business Gateway Review. • Writing and publication of the refresh of the SLAED Strategic Plan.	Hannah Young / Sam Tennant	Economy Fair Work & Business	SLAED SLA

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Employability	We will help implement the Scottish Government – Local Government Employability Partnership Agreement, which sets out the joint commitment of Scottish Government and Local Government to work together to transform the employability support system in Scotland to deliver improved outcomes for individuals. This work is focused on ensuring alignment and integration of a wide range of policies, resources and services that impact on employment outcomes. The delivery of the Young Person's Guarantee and employment aspects of the Child Poverty Action Plan are also included. High level deliverables include: • Local Employability Partnerships will be strengthened enabling collective leadership, collaboration and the delivery of improved outcomes at a local level proactively mitigating the economic impact of Covid 19 on those most disadvantaged in the labour market. • The next phase of the transformation of the employability support system in Scotland via No One Left Behind will be implemented with the transfer of additional investment directed through Local Authorities moving from national to local governance arrangements.	Pamela Smith	Economy Fair Work & Business	SG Specific Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Child Poverty	We will work with local and national partners to support the development and delivery of effective local child poverty action reports and associated activity. We will continue to support networks to identify and share good practice in relation to tackling child poverty. We will: • Review all Local Child Poverty Action Reports (LCPAR) and provide feedback to lead officers, focused on improvement. • Develop a self-evaluation process. • Co-ordinate and host the Child Poverty Peer Support Network. • Share practice from LCPARs across Scotland and provide improvement support in areas where there are gaps. • Supporting leads to ensure that tackling Child Poverty is at the heart of recovery from Covid-19. • Deliver briefing notes and webinars for elected members.	Hanna McCulloch / Rebecca Spillane	Poverty Children Human Rights	SG Specific Grant
Community Councils	We will further develop and support the Scottish Community Councils' website. We will continue to support the Community Council Liaison Officer Network at events and on the Knowledge Hub, as appropriate. We will: • Develop and implement a communications plan for the Community Council Project. • Initiate an annual user survey for the website which will aim to gather information on how it is used and identify what works well and what needs to be improved. The survey will also invite users to shape the development of the site by inviting ideas for further development.	Mike McLean	Communities	SG Specific Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Violence Against Women (VAW)	We will continue to co-ordinate the National VAW Network and work to ensure that every local authority area in Scotland has a high performing multi-agency VAW Partnership that engages effectively with community planning processes. We will support VAW Partnerships across Scotland to use the Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework to measure, demonstrate and further improve the progress being made to tackle violence against women and girls within local communities. We will support local authorities to engage with the National Trauma Training Programme and identify actions they can undertake to ensure local systems, services and workforces better respond to the needs of people and communities experiencing trauma. Deliverables will include: • Assisting local authorities in submitting data returns to the Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework to generate learning on progress being made to tackle violence against women at a local and national level and identifying examples of good practice and shared challenges. Individual reports will be produced for each local authority showing their own progress in implementing Equally Safe over the last 3 years and highlighting potential areas of focus for the year ahead. • Facilitating an Action Learning Programme for Trauma Champions within local authorities and other community planning organisations to support them to identify tangible actions they can undertake to embed trauma-informed practice within and across organisations. A learning report will be published at the end of the year to share examples of good practice and challenges/ enablers identified locally and nationally.	Joanna McLaughlin	Communities Human Rights	SG Specific Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	**Deliverable**	**Lead Officer**	**Relevant national outcomes**	**Funding source**
Place Based Approaches	We will continue to promote, facilitate and develop place-based working including its input into climate crisis action, delivering Scotland Public Health Priorities, the Scottish Government Planning (Scotland). Act 2019, National Planning Framework 4, and the Digital Planning Strategy. We will continue to work with partners (COSLA, Public Health Scotland, Scottish Government) to support and promote the effective use of Place and Wellbeing Outcomes, the Place Principle, 20 minute neighbourhood ambitions and the Place Standard. • We will deliver the Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme, which is a delivery partnership with Public Health Scotland to create conditions for better wellbeing by enabling system-wide action on the social determinants of health at a local level. • We will help connect councils better with good practice, support elected members' knowledge and scrutiny on this issue and work to embed the value of place-based approaches across the full range of service areas and professional groups that have a role to play. • The Place and Wellbeing Outcomes Rapid Scoping Assessment pilots will continue to enable a consistent and comprehensive approach to place-based working at local, council and regional level.	Irene Beautyman	Communities Environment Health	Core Grant + other partnership funding

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Planning Skills	We will continue to deliver a Planning Skills Programme that leads the behavioural change required for those working within the planning system to deliver: the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, National Planning Framework 4, Scottish Planning Policy and the Digital Planning Strategy. Key areas of interest are the implemention of the Place Principle and the contribution of planning to the whole system delivery of Scotland's public health and climate change priorities. In doing so, we will work closely with the Partners in Planning Forum members, including Scottish Government, HOPS, RTPI and the Key Agencies Group. High level deliverables will include: • Regular training events on topics requested by planning authorities and key agencies. • Input into national working groups, such as Partners in Planning, to support the training and development of planning authority staff.	Irene Beautyman	Communities Environment Health	HOPS SLA
HOPS	We will continue to provide support to Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS), including supporting their input into the transforming planning prorgramme associated with the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, National Planning Framework 4, Scottish Planning Policy and the Digital Planning Strategy, public health reform and place-based working. This will include: • Co-ordination between planning authorities and other organisations within the built environment to deliver the HOPS business plan. • Support of the Planning Performance Framework in conjunction with the High-Level Group on Planning.	Trevor Moffat	Communities Environment Health	HOPS SLA

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme	We will provide a range of business analysis, knowledge management and workforce planning support to councils as they continue to evolve and deliver their Early Learning and Childcare Expansion plans tailored to individual local authorities' needs, whilst reporting on progress to Scottish Government and COSLA. High level deliverables include: • Undertaking periodic data collections to evidence the progress being made by local authorities in delivering the expansion of funded ELC to 1140 hours. • Supporting local authorities in developing recruitment strategies while strengthening capacity for effective long term workforce planning by sharing learning and good practice.	Adam Hall	Education Children	SG Specific Grant
Health and Social Care Integration	We will work with COSLA and Solace to progress relevant recommendations in the review of Adult Social Care. We will work with national improvement bodies to deliver collaborative improvement support to integration authorities. We will work with Audit Scotland to ensure that our self-assessment and improvement planning offer complements, informs and supports the development of the Accounts Commission's approach to Best Value for IJBs. • The IS will lead on testing a joint account management approach by national improvement bodies designed to provide practical improvement support for IJB chief officers. • The IS will look to provide self-assessment support for IJBs to both support continuous improvement in IJB/HSCPs and to facilitate preparation in advance of upcoming Best Value audits by Audit Scotland.	Sarah Gadsden Gerard McCormack Barry McLeod	Health	Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Public Health	We will enter into a Partnership Agreement with Public Health Scotland to support the delivery of Scotland's public health priorities. This will include working with partners across the public, private and third sectors to collectively develop a whole system approach to improving the public's health and reducing health inequalities, co-leading a Place and and Wellbeing collaborative shaping Place and Wellbeing Outcomes, maximising the collective use of our data and intelligence assets and delivering joined-up practical support to CPPs and local authorities.	Sarah Gadsden Irene Beautyman	Health Environment Communities	Core Grant + other partnership funding
Climate Change	We will work with Solace, COSLA and others to provide practical support to councils in relation to the improvement agenda around climate change. This will include helping connect councils better with good practice, supporting elected members' knowledge and scrutiny on this issue, supporting links to shared ambitions in promoting public health and helping embed the climate change agenda across the full range of service areas and professional groups that have a role to play. We will: • Delivery training on Carbon Literacy for IS staff. • Work with all IS programmes to embed climate change where relevant. • Work in partnership with Scottish Cities Alliance, Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) and COSLA. • Deliver webinars and briefing notes for elected members. • Deliver a webinar on Green Economic Recovery for climate change/ sustainability officers and economic development officers. • Deliver a Deep Dive on Climate Change with the IS Board. • Undertake research with SSN, COSLA and Solace to deliver a baseline of how Scottish local authorities are delivering on their Climate Change commitments.	Miriam McKenna	Environment	IS Change Fund

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Fairer Scotland Duty	We will provide support for the implementation of the Fairer Scotland Duty (FSD) across Scotland until September 2021, working with the listed agencies to identify and share best practice via a peer support network, develop practical guidance for officers and elected members, and further develop the online resource. We will: • Co-ordinate and host the FSD Leads Network. • Share policy and practice, particularly around impact assessment. • Publish briefings on FSD and Protected Characteristics. • Support the launch of the refreshed FSD guidance. • Engage with organisations such as Scottish Government, CELCIS, NESTA, COSLA, Public Health Scotland, LGIU etc. to collaborate in regard to the provision of support and evidence for organisations subject to the FSD.	Miriam McKenna	Human Rights	SG Specific Grant

Digital Public Services (DPS)				
Area	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Governance	We will work with Scottish Government to implement a new strategic framework by June 2021 for the Digital Public Services portfolio. We will ensure strategic and operational alignment across the DPS portfolio and corporate-wide digital platforms; refresh agreements with delivery and strategic partners by June 2021; and seek ongoing independent feedback from organisations and individuals with expertise in areas of privacy, ethics and consumer groups.	Martin Brown		DPS Grant
Information Assurance and Information Security	We will continue to maintain regulatory and legislative compliance to protect individuals' privacy and to manage risk. This will include: protecting and maintaining ISO27001 certification including an annual surveillance audit in September 2021; • Developing and evaluating a business case for the pursuit of ISO27701 (the privacy extension of ISO27001), a standard which demonstrates accountability for managing Personally Identifiable Information with recommendations in October 2021. • Implementing as an ongoing activity appropriate risk management policies and strategies. • Providing a focus for UK GDPR and associated activities. • Assessing the implications for DPS of the UK Government Digital Services' Digital Identity Trust Framework, involving an initial paper in April 2021 and follow-ups in line with subsequent UK Government publications.	Robert Clubb		DPS Grant

Digital Public Services (DPS)				
Area	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Information Assurance and Information Security	We will maintain a culture of good cyber hygiene. This will include: • Implementing cyber resilience plans, ensuring appropriate controls are in place to protect against threats and vulnerabilities, and including an IT Health Check in October/November 2021. • Maintaining business continuity and contingency plans and testing them periodically, including in January 2022 for a failover test. • Appraising and advising on the appropriate secure tools and resources (including how we deploy Office 365), necessary to support staff work remotely, safely and securely, including the provision of a roadmap to the Senior Leadership Team by June 2021. • Developing and maintaining a corporate cyber awareness training programme including the commissioning of a new platform in April 2021 with monthly rollout of a training programme thereafter.	Robert Clubb		DPS Grant/ Core Grant
Business Growth and Delivery	We will collaborate closely with Scottish Government's Digital Identity Scotland (DIS) Programme on a joint project to examine and take forward how the myaccount service becomes one (or more) of the components of the DIS Programme's attribute management model, informed by a joint options appraisal by April 2021	Martin Brown, Andrew Campbell		DPS Grant
Business Growth and Delivery	We will work with Scottish Government, COSLA, the Local Government Digital Office and other partners to play a key role in the delivery and governance of Scotland's refreshed Digital Strategy	Martin Brown		DPS Grant
Business Growth and Delivery	We will ensure that all products and services are available to customers and users at, or near, 100% availability levels	Andrew Campbell		DPS Grant
Business Growth and Delivery	We will review all contractual commitments in April 2021, renewing or replacing, as appropriate by August 2021	Andrew Campbell		DPS Grant

Digital Public Services (DPS)				
Area	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Business Growth and Delivery	We will facilitate access for Scottish citizens to secure digital public services and position our products and services in support of Councils' service transformation and improvement plans. We will maintain continuity of service for the myaccount service's customer and user base. We will also focus on expanding the uptake, adoption and usage of our Digital Public Services and developing them further to meet customers' needs. We will aim to: • Grow myaccount registered subscriber numbers to 1.6M and expand authentication request volumes to 10M annually by 31 March 2022. • Launch myaccount with Social Security Scotland in autumn 2021 and other public service organisations. • Increase parentsportal.scot footprint to 15 councils, 1000 schools, 150K parents, 200K pupils and 1M annual authentication requests by 31 March 2022. • Expand getyournec.scot's coverage to all councils by 31 December 2021, launch the next two development phases in May 2021 and facilitate applications for under 19's concessionary travel once Ministers approve the scheme's launch, expected for autumn 2021 or early 2022. • Integrate bisaccount.scot with 3 councils by 31 March 2022 to support local businesses in transacting online securely. • Support Young Scot's membership platform, working jointly to build membership numbers to 175,000 by 31 March 2022. • Increase the impact and adoption of the Data Hub to 30 organisations by 31 March 2022, supporting them to derive good quality, accurate local data using the Data Hub, given the potentially higher intrinsic value it will have as attributes in an attribute-led approach to identity establishment and entitlement to public services. Launch a new address matching programme for the Data Hub in April 2021. • Launch the new issecure service in June 2021, initially with National Records of Scotland.	Andrew Campbell	Economy Fair work & Business Poverty Children Education Environment	DPS Grant

Digital Public Services (DPS)				
Area	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Business Growth and Delivery	We will refresh the 2021/22 Development Roadmap for myaccount and wider Digital Public Services portfolio. We will: • Develop the Identity Provider element of myaccount by June 2021, focusing on credential lifecycle management and monitoring fraudulent activity in online account usage. • Develop an attribute management capability by September 2021, leveraging data sets held within the myaccount service to add value within an attribute-driven world. • Develop approaches to enable identity to be established in secure and sympathetic ways by September 2021, providing omni-channel tools to those who cannot/ choose not to access digital public services. • Bring a digital identity to young people lacking identity evidence by September 2021, leveraging their Young Scot National Entitlement Card (NEC) as an anchor document for verification purposes. • Explore the feasibility of a digital Young Scot NEC by September 2021. • Enhance getyournec.scot by July 2021 to support changes to, or an expansion of, concessionary travel. • Develop parentsportal.scot by August 2021 to roll out new services and features. • Further develop bisaccount.scot by September 2021 to allow businesses to delegate authority to employees to transact on their behalf. • Develop and launch in April 2021 chat box functionality to augment our support to customers. • Comply with accessibility requirements for public sector websites, as defined by law.	Andrew Campbell	Economy Fair work & Business Poverty Children Education Environment	DPS Grant

Digital Public Services (DPS)				
Area	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source

Technical Assurance	We will ensure a healthy IT environment and culture is maintained. Our systems must be supported by an environment that is performant, available, scalable, flexible and secure. This will include:
	
	• Developing and implementing a Hosting Strategy for the next 3 – 5 years where the emphasis is on public cloud as our preference:
	  ♦ Having drafted a hosting strategy, systems are being reviewed and a target public cloud architecture is being developed with a proof-of-concept targeted for August 2021 completion.
	• Ensuring people and third parties are provided with the information that they require to operate, maintain, support, deliver, and protect our IT infrastructure and our investment:
	  ♦ architecture principles have been updated in March 2021 and a technical build standards checklist drafted.
	• Ensuring systems are maintained and documented to the right level to agreed standards:
	  ♦ a framework has been agreed for the documentation of systems, and it will be populated between April to June 2021.
	• Providing advice so that the right technology decisions are made by the organisation.
	• Appraising and evaluating approaches, software tools and solutions
	  ♦ Data & Intelligence will undertake a review of the processes, tools and solutions used in the Spatial Hub. This will run in parallel through April – June 2021, forming a template for use across IS when evaluating systems and solutions.
	• Reviewing technical skills and identifying any training required
	  ♦ Currently Cloud Computing Basics is under evaluation and it will form the basis of a training programme to be developed through April – September 2021.
		Cameron Walker		DPS Grant

Digital Public Services (DPS)				
Area	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
National Entitlement Card Scheme	We will continue to ensure the smooth delivery of the National Entitlement Card (NEC) Scheme. We will: • Procure contracts in April 2021 for card application management, bureau services and smartcard supply to maintain business-as-usual. • Migrate services to new technologies by October 2021. • Ensure changes to, or expansion of, the concessionary travel scheme, including Programme for Government commitments, can be operationalised from April 2021 working closely with Transport Scotland. • Maintain an effective ongoing interface with all Local Authorities and Scheme user. • Implement by June 2021 the business development plan for increased card usage and exploitation. • Maintain the Scheme's regulatory and legislative compliance. • Align closely the Scheme's delivery to myaccount's development roadmap; the Programme for Government; plans of key partners, including Young Scot and Transport Scotland; and to the Digital Identity Scotland Programme. • Prepare by May 2021 plans for succession, to minimise or avoid potential adverse impact to the Scheme's effective delivery.	Brenda Robb Martin Brown	Economy Fair work & Business Poverty Children Environment	DPS Grant

Data and Intelligence				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Spatial Hub	We will implement a series of technical upgrades to the Spatial Hub, continue to work with councils to extend the range of spatial data sets and improve the quality of spatial information available. As part of this we will: • Conduct a Proof of Concept with our current server providers (Brightsolid) in the next 3-6 months where we will migrate several of our technical components to the cloud (Amazon Web Services). Upon successful migration we will conduct a review on the long-term viability of such a migration. • Conduct an external reiew with contractors (Parity) to review the current Spatial Hub data flows with a view to improving the pipeline infrastructure, performance and scalability. This review should be conducted in the next two months with outputs and a Data and Intelligence plan to move forwards by October 2021.	Dominic Greenslade	Environment	Gazetteer Revenue
Spatial Hub	We will develop a long-term and sustainable funding model for the Spatial Hub that will enable us to meet the aspirations of Scotland's open government policy by making the Spatial Hub freely available to anyone who wishes to use it	Iain McKay	Environment	Gazetteer Revenue
Spatial Hub/Use of Data	We will investigate the feasibility of extending the scope of the Spatial Hub to cover all type of local authority data, with the aim of the Improvement Service becoming the broker for all local authority data in Scotland. This will include improving the approaches to data management across authorities	Iain McKay	Environment	Gazetteer Revenue/ Spatial Hub
One Scotland Gazetteer	We will continue to work with local authority gazetteer custodians and Ordnance Survey/ GeoPlace to improve and enhance the vital address and street datasets for Scotland	Ron Wilkinson	Environment	DPS Grant / Gazetteer Revenue

Data and Intelligence					
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source	
TellMeScotland	We will develop TellmeScotland to allow the automatic upload of planning notifications and continue to support the use of existing notices (Planning, Traffic, Licensing, General and Councillor Surgeries) by councils. Within the next 12 months, initial work will be complete on the related Cloud Connector Framework, with the ability to demonstrate the automatic transfer of planning data	Iain Paton	Environment	Gazetteer Revenue	
Digital Planning Data	We will undertake further Digital Planning Data Pathfinder work, as commissioned by the Scottish Government, to develop the use, management, standards and governance, of planning data in the Local Authority domain and in collaboration with stakeholders	Iain Paton	Environment Communities	Scottish Government funding	
Cloud Connector Framework	Development of the Idox Cloud Connector Framework to extract planning, building standards and gazetteer data from local authority Uniform casework management systems, and transfer to a central portal hosted by the Improvement Service	Will Hensman	Environment Communities	Gazetteer Revenue	
Use of Data	We will work with IS colleagues and the Scottish Local Government Digital Office to promote the virtues of good data practice across Local Government and promote the increased usage of data to support operational and strategic decision-making	Simon Roberts		Core Grant +32 Council MOU Agreement	

Data and Intelligence				
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Relevant national outcomes	Funding source
Benchmarking	We will continue to deliver the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) and highlight the maturing credibility and reliability of this Local Government-led improvement approach. We will work with partners to evolve the existing suite of measures to reflect the challenges, risks and opportunities facing Local Government as it responds to the Covid pandemic and aims to build back better, including improved measures in adult social care, poverty and inequality, economic development, climate change and digital. We will support council officers and elected members to continue to strengthen their use of the framework to drive improvement and scrutiny. We will target IS improvement activity in areas where local authority performance improvement is slowing or declining	Emily Lynch		Core Grant +32 Council MOU Agreement
Community Planning Outcomes Profile	We will update the Community Planning Outcomes Profile and support CPPs to utilise the profile to enhance local planning, performance and reporting arrangements, including that required for the Local Outcomes Improvement Plans	Emily Lynch		Core Grant
Research	We will work with all IS colleagues to help coordinate and facilitate cross-team collaboration; to share knowledge and expertise to encourage best practice in our analytical activities; to provide advice and support to colleagues on research matters; and to gather information on ongoing research and internal research needs within the organisation to help us prioritise our activities.	Nick Cassidy		Core Grant
Research	We will continuously review existing research and analytical activities within the Improvement Service and develop an ongoing set of planned research projects based on strategic priorities. These projects will be developed together with colleagues within the IS, as well as in COSLA, local authorities, and SOLACE.	Nick Cassidy		Core Grant

Data and Intelligence				
Project	**Deliverable**	**Lead Officer**	**Relevant national outcomes**	**Funding source**
Research	We will explore opportunities to partner with the Scottish Policy and Research Exchange, to encourage greater collaboration between the IS, Local Government and researchers and academics in higher education institutions to expand access to evidence and increase the range of expert voices in priority outcome areas.	Nick Cassidy		Core Grant
Advice Services	We will deliver the outputs of the Advice Services project as agreed with the project funders. This will include workstreams relating to performance management, service transformation, regional approaches, strategic funding of advice services and tests of change. A key focus will be on developing research and evaluation evidence relating to these priorities.	Sandra Sankey Karen Carrick	Poverty Human Rights	SG Specific Grant
Evaluation	Evaluation support will be provided within the Improvement Service and to external organisations on a commercial basis. A wide range of evaluations and reviews focussing on outcomes, process or both are planned. Covering a range of subject areas these are funded by Scottish Government, Money and Pension Service, Paths for All and Trading Standards Scotland.	Karen Carrick		External funding sources

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