

Council Leader Newsletter



The Improvement Service is the 'go to' organisation for Local Government improvement in Scotland.

The purpose of this newsletter is to update Council Leaders on key decisions made by the IS Board at its meetings in March and April 2023 and key business plan developments.

IS Board Update

Finance, Operations and HR Update

The Board noted that the total additional income received to date this financial year from outwith the Local Government sector is £1,587,928. The Board also approved the Audit Committee work plan for 2023/24.

Budget

The Board approved the 2023/24 budget, noting that the budget and overhead recovery will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the IS Audit Committee. The Board requested that further work be undertaken on the 2024/25 budget.

IS Sustainability

The Board agreed for further work to be carried out to explore options to support the ongoing sustainability of the IS and agreed the criteria that will be used to evaluate options. This evaluation will be discussed at the June Board Meeting.

Strategic Framework

The Board asked the Senior Leadership Team to make some changes to the draft Strategic Framework, to reflect feedback provided by Board members during a 'walk the floor' session with IS staff. The Board agreed to have a more in-depth discussion on the draft Strategic Framework at the June Board Meeting. The Board agreed that the Strategic Framework should be a live document that will be kept under annual review, to allow any changes to be made to reflect the IS' operating environment and future resourcing.

Business Plan 2023/24

The Board agreed the new [Business Plan](#) and this has been published on the IS website.

Climate Intelligence Service

The Board discussed the proposed Climate Intelligence Service and agreed in principle that this can become an IS programme if approved by Leaders and full funding is available.

Organisational Change

The Head of Data and Intelligence retired in March 2022, and following an unsuccessful recruitment process, the IS Board agreed to put the recruitment on hold to give the Chief Executive time to review options in relation to how the Data and Intelligence team could be managed going forwards. After reviewing options, the Board agreed to delete the Head of Data and Intelligence post and Data and Intelligence team from our organisational structure, with the Spatial information Service moving into the Digital Public Services team and the research and evaluation services and Local Government Benchmarking Framework moving into the Transformation, Performance and Improvement team. This will result in a saving which can be used to offset pressures in the core grant.

The Board also agreed that an IS Associate should be appointed to work with the Chief Executive to undertake a review of the Transformation, Performance and Improvement team and bring a report back to the June Board meeting on any proposed changes to the structure and staffing of the team.

Relationship Management

The Board noted that the annual council engagement documents will be shared within the next couple of months with all Council Chief Executives and the letter will include an offer of a virtual or in person 'walk the floor' session. A demo of the internal Council dashboards set up for all IS staff was provided and Board Members were very impressed with the amount of information available.

Sponsorship

The Board agreed that given our challenging budget situation, we will not provide any sponsorship at events or for awards this financial year.

Upcoming Events

[IS and Accounts Commission: Local Government Overview event for elected members](#)

Thursday 1 June, 10.00am - 12.00pm, MS Teams

A free online event for elected members on the Account Commission's Local Government Overview report

[Local Government Benchmarking Framework Climate Change Event](#)

Wednesday 14 June, 10.00am - 12.00pm, MS Teams

This event will analyse Climate Change data to help councils understand where progress is being made and what is driving this progress.

[Infralink-Exchange: Providing a helping hand to improve engagement with the mobile industry](#)

Wednesday 21 June, 10.00am - 11.30am, MS Teams

Infralink-Exchange is a pathfinder project, led by infrastructure specialists the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT), that in 2022 was awarded funding from the UK government to explore how local authorities can greatly enhance their mobile digital connectivity.

Key Business Plan Updates

Transformation, Performance and Improvement

Elected Member Development

Accounts Commission Local Government Overview Report - 1 June 2023

Along with the Accounts Commission, we are hosting an online event for elected members on the Commission's [Local Government Overview report](#). The event is being held on 1st June, 10am-12pm, MS Teams.

This will be a unique opportunity for elected members to hear from the Accounts Commission, together with the audit team, speak in detail about key findings and recommendations from the report, and the impact and implications for all councils and elected members. There will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions, share insights and experiences.

IS supporting the Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee (SLARC)

SLARC was established in legislation to advise Scottish Ministers on the payment by Local Authorities of remuneration (including pensions), allowances and the reimbursement of expenses incurred by Councillors in accordance with criteria specified by Scottish Ministers from time to time.

SLARC has now being reconvened to undertake a one-off independent review of Councillor remuneration to ensure that terms and conditions truly reflect the responsibilities of a modern-day Councillor, and that remuneration does not act as a barrier to encouraging a diverse range of people to stand for elected office. We are supporting SLARC with their evidence gathering exercises in the coming months.

Bespoke support for Elected Member Development Programmes

We have been supporting and advising councils on their ongoing elected member development programmes. This includes the roll out of our free [Political Skills Assessment](#), and contributing to programmes with sessions in our [training catalogue](#).

We've also been supporting elected members with Coaching and Mentoring through our Associate's Framework.

Economic Outcomes

We are continuing to develop partnership working with key organisations around common priority areas. This has involved supporting SLAED to input into the Scottish Government consultation on a Community Wealth Building Bill via an [interactive webinar session](#) with facilitated group workshops. We have also hosted a [Wellbeing Economy webinar](#) targeted at Elected Members, and a follow-up session for officers and colleagues in Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland. The [SLAED Indicators Report 2021/22](#) was published in January, and the request for 2022/23 data has been issued. As the 2021/22 report marked a decade of the Framework being in place, we are supporting the compilation of a report looking at interesting trends in some of the data over the ten-year period, potential drivers for these, and opportunities for learning. The Service Level Agreement for provision of the secretariat service to SLAED was renewed in April 2023 for a further three-year period.

Climate Change

We continue to work closely with the Sustainable Scotland Network, SOLACE and COSLA and develop relationships with Scottish Government to deliver national and targeted local support. This includes the design and delivery of the Local Authority Forum (next meeting 20th June focusing on adaptation and the development of the statutory guidance), feeding into the [SSN Conference](#) on 24th May and supporting the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) officer group. We are exploring opportunities to align the [Local Government Benchmarking Framework](#) with the [Public Bodies Climate Change Reporting analysis](#) and continuing to support the development of resources on the [SSN website](#) including the [Leaders' Climate Emergency Checklist](#). Through HOPS we are rolling out Carbon Literacy and a Train the Trainer offering for planning teams across Scotland. Discussions are ongoing around the Climate Intelligence Service with a paper agreed at the Improvement Service Board in April.

Embedding Advice in Schools and Nurseries to Reduce Child Poverty

Ensuring parents and carers can access timely benefits and employability advice is an important aspect of maximising income and reducing child poverty. As a result, there has been a shift in many areas of Scotland towards embedding advisors – or referral pathways to money and employability advice – in education settings. This includes primary schools, secondary schools and nurseries. In partnership with Public Health Scotland, we hosted an online event on 16th May to highlight the impact of this work, with initiatives from Angus, Edinburgh, South Ayrshire and Glasgow presenting their approach. The event was chaired by the Scottish Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland and included a presentation from the Scottish Government's Head of the Attainment Challenge in Scotland.

The event provided an opportunity to highlight the importance of increasing parental income as a means of reducing the attainment gap for Scotland's children. It also raised important questions about how officers across community planning, education and schools can work together to achieve shared outcomes.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) Implementation Support

We continue to support local authorities to understand the implications of the UNCRC Incorporation Bill for the work that they do. We are currently working with Dumfries and Galloway, Falkirk and Perth and Kinross Councils to develop their approaches using the [self-assessment framework](#) which has also recently been expanded for use by all public bodies, not just local authorities. East Lothian Council are finalising their children's rights action plan and have provided positive feedback on how the framework supported the development of their approach.

In May, we launched a new [Understanding the UNCRC for Public Bodies in Scotland](#) resource which can support all public bodies in Scotland to learn more about children's rights and the impact of future legislation.

Recent events held to further support local authorities to embed Children's Rights into their ways of working included a focus on children's rights and climate change, children's rights reporting and child poverty. To support the Child Poverty and Children's Rights event we published an introductory paper on [Understanding Child Poverty as a Children's Rights Issue](#). The Peer Network continues to meet and recently focused on the developing Skills and Knowledge Framework and updates from the Scottish Government Children's Rights Unit.

To access our resources please visit <https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/products-and-services/consultancy-and-support/uncrc-implementation-project>

LGBT+ Inclusive Education in Early Years Learning Event

The LGBT+ Inclusive Education in Early Years learning event, hosted by IS and delivered by David Dick; Peripatetic Nursery Teacher and Project Lead in March, explored how settings can improve approaches to LGBT+ inclusion, and why this is so important to start breaking through the silences for LGBT+ parents and carers in early years.

The project was designed to improve the life experiences of LGBT+ adults, children, and families in Scotland, and aims to ensure that Scotland really is the best place for all children to grow up. Following the event, we created a new LGBT+ Inclusive Education in Early Years resource pack. This provides simple and practical materials to support the implementation of LGBT+ inclusive practice in early years settings across Scotland.

Whole Systems Approaches to Tackling Child Poverty

Along with partners, we brought together people working across child poverty, employability and early learning and childcare at two events in November 2022 and February 2023 to look at how local and national services can continue to work together to tackle child poverty.

The first of these two events focused on how local and national services can continue to work together to deliver a whole-system approach to tackling poverty. Policy leads from Scottish Government provided an update on national policies and funding relevant to tackling child poverty and delivering a whole-systems, holistic approach.

As well as hearing from those with lived experience of poverty, participants were also given an opportunity to share their experiences, discuss examples of good practice and highlight the barriers to whole systems they are experiencing locally.

The second event explored School Aged Childcare Early Adopter Communities, learning from the Glasgow Pathfinder programme, and resources to facilitate collaborative, holistic support. Summaries from both events are available here:

Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)

The final ELC data collection exercise for academic year 2022-2023 is underway, and will run until mid-May. Albeit in a simplified format, the information gathered through this exercise remains vital in understanding and evidencing the hard work that goes into maintaining delivery of the 1140 offer.

Our work in supporting the development of the Scottish Government's Strategic Framework for Scotland's Early Learning and School Aged Childcare Profession continues. The framework is being developed with partners and professionals across the sector and will set out key priorities for the profession, now and in the coming years. We are also supporting the development of a national measurement framework for ELC.

A member of the ELC team has recently completed a series of recruitment improvement sessions with a rural and island council. These sessions focused on the amount of interest, quality and number of candidates, with two questions forming the basis of the sessions: why would someone want to work with us? And, why would someone not apply to work with us? A variety of

improvement tools were utilised, including 'How Might We', 'Personas' and a staff survey. Sessions were held over a couple of months and culminated in an Action Plan which the management team will be taking forwards.

Finally, the team are continuing to work with a Council to develop their 3-5 year vision and strategy for ELC, with a focus on partnership principles, improving the experience of applying for funded places to reduce barriers, and workforce planning. A key element of the work is facilitating conversations with partner providers to ensure equity, and better communications across ELC professionals and with families.

Covid Recovery Strategy

The team are working with a group of local authorities to support and challenge service change and transformation by identifying discrete actions to deliver outcome focussed, person centred services and supporting teams to implement these changes. This support includes stakeholder mapping, organising, facilitating and reporting on workshops with stakeholders from the public, private and third sectors, and the articulation and documentation of plans to address specific changes.

Protecting People

National Trauma Quality Improvement Framework

As part of the National Trauma Training Programme, a Quality Improvement Framework for Trauma-Informed Organisations, Systems and Workforces in Scotland is currently under development, a draft of which is available [here](#). This Framework is being developed by the IS in collaboration with NHS Education for Scotland, the Resilience Learning Partnership, COSLA and the Scottish Government and a final version will be available in spring/summer 2023, which will take into account wider stakeholder comments following a consultation exercise in February 2023. The Framework is designed to be a resource that supports services/ organisations/ partnerships with reflective self-assessment, to identify and reflect on their progress, successes and areas for improvement with this work. The Framework intends to:

- highlight the key components of trauma-informed organisations, systems and workforces;
- raise awareness of the activities that are most effective in supporting organisations in their trauma-informed journey; and
- support organisations consider the potential impact/ contribution of a trauma-informed approach on staff, outcomes for people coming into contact with the organisation, and wider organisational objectives/ outcomes, as well as local and national priorities.

Authentic Voice: Embedding Lived Experience

The Authentic Voice (AV) Project held an event in April 2023 focused on exploring the benefits of power sharing among leaders, experts by profession and experts by experience. The focus of this event was based on key challenges raised by stakeholders across the AV project activities around the need for leadership buy-in, culture change, and confidence. The event was targeted to senior leaders and decision-makers. Attendees represented a wide range of service and policy areas including violence against women and girls (VAWG), Trauma, Police, child protection, mental health, community justice, social work and housing. The range of stakeholders highlighted the need for whole system working and collaboration to understand and embed lived experience of trauma and VAWG.

Presentations at the event included a range of good practice examples from SafeLives, Resilience
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Learning Partnership, Each and Every Child, and Dundee City Council. There were also inputs focused on the strategic commitment across local and national government from Scottish Government, COSLA and the IS. Breakout discussions provided opportunities to explore the practical elements of lived experience work, and the role of leadership. Some of the key actions identified at the event included improving joined up working across local strategic partnerships, exploring more inclusive co-design and collaboration within services, engaging with elected members and other leadership, and seeking opportunities to promote trauma-informed practice. Resources from this event will be available soon on the [Authentic Voice Website](#).

Racially Minoritised Women and Violence Against Women and Girls

We have been commissioned by Public Health Scotland to undertake research on the extent to which the needs of racially minoritised victims/ survivors of VAWG are currently met by systems and services across Scotland and where there may be opportunities to strengthen policy and practice to ensure it is more inclusive of women's needs. As part of this research, we launched a [Call for Evidence](#) to enable local authorities and other key stakeholders to share existing learning or research on the needs and experiences of racially minoritised victims/ survivors of VAWG. Further research activities planned over the coming months will include a series of deep dive events and engagement activities with specialist services and the victims/ survivors they support ahead of the research findings being published in July 2023.

PSIF

Work continues with various Councils on corporate self-assessments and supporting Councils pre and post their Best Value Assurance Report.

Organisational Development Local Authority Network

Our OD Network events bring colleagues together virtually. Events included a Key Topic session in February focused on 'Recovery and Delivery' and an Open Space event in March where colleagues considered current OD priorities and challenges. 23 councils participated, sharing experiences and learning and exploring opportunities for further work together. Coming up, there will be a joint session for the OD and Change Managers Network led by colleagues in Angus Council who will talk about their Transformation Programme. Details of other future events can be found on the IS website.

Digital Public Services

mygovscot myaccount

The number of organisations using myaccount continues to grow. Forty organisations are live with myaccount and all 32 councils across Scotland use myaccount to enable their citizens to access online services. Out of the 32 local authorities, 27 have myaccount integrated to at least one back-office system, and many councils have multiple integrations.

myaccount is also used by Social Security Scotland, Young Scot, NHS My Diabetes My Way and NHS Lothian to access hospital bookings. There are also another two public sector organisations currently going through the testing/onboarding process.

The myaccount service continues to experience a prolonged surge in demand. From its humble beginnings in 2014 when it first launched with just 19,258 accounts, myaccount has made huge

progress and now can boast over 2,150,021 accounts (as of 9 May 2023), and is now used by an impressive 44% of the eligible Scottish population to access public services online. Authentication requests for 2023 also continue to grow. The increase in authentication requests demonstrates that the service is being used frequently by account holders to access multiple services.

In 2022, our digital identity provider, [Yoti](#), became the UK's first certified Identity Services Provider (ISDP) under the [Digital Identity and Attributes Trust Framework](#), authorised by Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) and United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). Yoti is also the Identity Services Provider for the Post Office.

The Digital Public Service team will continue to explore where we can expand our use of identity verification services in 2023 to help build on, and further improve the customer experience for all citizens of Scotland that use our products and services.

myaccount also offers two-factor authentication via the IS-developed authentication app, email and SMS. This can either be made mandatory by the service provider, or the user can enable it themselves if they wish, offering another added layer of security. This is another feature that we will continue to promote to local government and other public sector organisations during 2023.

[getyournec.scot](#)

All 32 Local Authorities consume the service to facilitate online applications for National Entitlement Cards for over 60s concessionary travel, disabled concessionary travel, Young Scot card and Young Persons' Free Bus Travel. Over 735,444 applications for all National Entitlement card types have been facilitated through [getyournec.scot](#). Over 590,000 applications have been facilitated in 2022 alone.

[parentsportal.scot](#)

15 Local Authorities are live with the platform and continue to promote the service to its parents. A further 3 Local Authorities are in the process of onboarding. The service is now available in 1,297 schools, to 134,397 registered parental subscribers securely linked to 166,699 pupils, with almost 30K NEC Cards (to children aged between 5-10) issued via the [parentsportal.scot](#) platform.

[parentsportal.scot](#) is currently undergoing extensive development work; the platform will now benefit from a fresh new look and feel due to the new user interface for parents at the front-end, and school agents at the back-end. A mobile app for this platform is also currently in development, which is due to be launched in the last school term of 2023 (before end of June) to existing and new users. The introduction of the app will help increase usage, enhance the customer journey for parents, and demonstrates that we have responded to the needs of our customers as there was an appetite for an app from parents as well as the various local authorities across Scotland that use [parentsportal.scot](#).

[Data Hub](#)

24 Councils and 8 other public sector organisations (Public Health Scotland, Lothian Valuation Joint Board, Scottish Fire and Rescue, SEEMiS, University of Glasgow – Urban Big Data Centre, Scottish Government Heatmap Team, NHSNHS, Scottish Water, Scottish Government ADR Team, Scottish Government - Office of the Chief Economic Adviser Economic Analysis and Scottish Government GIS Team) have all signed up to use the Data Hub platform. There is also another public sector organisation currently going through the onboarding process.

dcn.scot

All 32 Councils continue to use dcn.scot, Scotland's National Dog Control Database. Launched in February 2022, the service is also used by Police Scotland.

Young Persons' Free Bus Travel Scheme (Under 22s)

Approximately 620,000 young people are in possession of a National Entitlement Card to use for free bus travel to access new opportunities while also helping to meet environmental targets.

Data and Intelligence

Spatial Hub to become an open data platform for local government information

The Spatial Hub will become an open data portal in May 2023 for many cross-Scotland local government datasets. The initiative is supported by Scottish Government and the information covers a range of different themes including planning, energy, the environment, community and society, roads and transport, and health and care services. This will mean that these datasets will, for the first time, be available to the private sector and members of the public.

For further information, please contact: simon.roberts@improvementservice.org.uk.

Community Map Scotland empowers Community Councils to utilise data

The Community Map Scotland service is now being provided free of charge to every Community Council in Scotland. The easy to use mapping tool contains many useful local government Spatial Hub datasets along with other information sources that will be of interest to Community Councils and their citizens. This will aid Community Councils in their engagement with their communities and enable the creation of Local Place Plans for consideration by the local authority as part of the Local Development Plan process.

Review of Planning & Building Standards Casework Management

We have been working with the Digital Office for Scottish Local Government on a strategic review of Planning and Building Standards casework management systems that are used by local authorities and national parks.

Supported by Scottish Government's Digital Transformation of Planning programme, the review aims to provide evidence of the current status of casework management systems, their interdependences with other service areas, and linkages with other relevant systems in use. The review shall provide the Scottish Government with options for delivering a state-of-the-art planning casework management solution for the future, as outlined in the Digital Planning Strategy.

TellMeScotland adopts myaccount sign-in

The TellMeScotland web portal, which provides statutory notice information and location-based alerts to the public, will be adopting the mygovscot myaccount sign-in and registration capability. This will extend the single-login functionality that myaccount offers across the public sector to TellMeScotland, improving the user experience.

National Street Gazetteer enhancements

Street Gazetteer data custodians from local authorities and Transport Scotland have been continuing to improve their road network and asset information. The improved data, which acts as a digital twin, has now been incorporated into the Scottish Road Works Register, as required by legislation to be produced by each roads authority.

We delivered introductory training courses to new members of staff within roads authorities across Scotland, along with refresher training provided to existing custodians.

PhD research data identifies opportunities for sustainable energy from mine water

The Spatial Hub has collaborated with a Strathclyde University PhD student to publish research data on locations in Scotland where there are opportunities for generating sustainable heating for houses and businesses from geothermal mine water. The information can be used as part of the local authority Local Development Plan evidence base and in sustainable energy strategies for the future.

For further information, please contact: simon.roberts@improvementservice.org.uk.

Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF)

The most recent LGBF Publication was issued in March 2023. In line with the LGBF Board's refreshed strategic priorities, this year's publication included a redesigned and slimmed down [LGBF Annual report](#) which provides a clearer focus on sector wide performance, and a new [online LGBF dashboard](#) which includes detailed indicator level analysis and narrative and facilitates release of data in a timelier manner. The key themes within this year's annual report included:

- Local Government Financial & Workforce pressures
- Poverty, Financial Hardship and the Cost-of-Living Crisis
- Health & Social Care pressures
- Education for Children & Young People
- Performance of Local Government Services

The new dashboard represents a positive step forward in relation to the LGBF Boards' ambitions to adopt a more assertive approach to sector-led performance and to improve the timeliness of data. We are engaging with Councils to explore how this approach can be further developed to support local performance reporting, including adaptations for local context, providing greater flexibility to support analysis by policy theme (e.g. The Promise; Financial Hardship), and improving data flow to/from council systems and data providers..

Local Government Data Platform

We are continuing to work with the Digital Office for Scottish Local Government, COSLA and Solace to progress plans for the development of a Local Government Data Platform. This aims to rationalise the current data reporting landscape, simplify data collection, improve quality assurance, and provide richer insight from data currently collected from councils, including LGBF data. A strategic case setting out the long-term vision and a phased approach for this project was endorsed by Solace members and COSLA Leaders in April 2022.

Phase 1 of the project represented a discovery phase and aimed to better understand the current reporting landscape. This phase has now been completed and key findings point to the significant and increasing volume of current reporting, the lack of focus on outcome improvement, and the lack of oversight or awareness of what data is being collected and how it is being used. A calendar of data returns provides a further illustration of the current reporting burden for Councils. The recommendations emerging from this phase have been endorsed by Solace, and will be considered by Leaders at an upcoming Leaders meeting.

Community Planning & Community Planning Improvement Board (CIPB)

We are continuing to support the [CPIB](#) in their work to illustrate how excellent outcomes are being achieved locally when partners come together and respond innovatively, and to surface with Scottish Government Ministers those barriers which are getting in the way of delivering person led services. CPIB deep dive sessions and short-life working groups provide a vehicle to support this approach, with topics aligned to the Covid Recovery Strategy to demonstrate the valuable role Community Planning is playing in supporting recovery and renewal efforts. The next meeting in May will provide an opportunity to take stock and refresh our focus, and agree an implementation plan for the year ahead.

Currently CPIB Short Life Working Groups are focussing on the national and local action needed to address the following barriers to inform our next engagement with the DFM and COSLA President, and with wider CPP partners:

Climate Change:

- Decluttering the funding landscape to improve access to resources, and to develop a coherent investment strategy in relation to Climate.
- Prioritisation of big-ticket areas through evidence-based analysis on which areas where there is most to gain and where more collective progress is needed.
- Addressing how we use and co-ordinate procurement strategies to apply the full weight of the public sector collectively to support the drive through the economy to net zero.
- Ensuring sustainable funding is available to support community organisations and local communities play a central role in driving the Climate agenda.

Financial Security for Low Income Households:

- Addressing barriers in relation to organisational sharing of population and personal data, building on progress made in overcoming such barriers during the pandemic.
- Addressing the challenges partners face in relation to funding cycles, ringfencing and reporting to different funders with different timescales.
- Reducing the complexity of recording, reporting, and inspection frameworks which create both a burden and lack of clarity in relation to shared outcomes and priorities

Wellbeing of Children & Young People:

- Securing sustainable, flexible and bridging funding to enable the required shift to prevention
- Strengthening joint prioritisation across services, removing silos and delineation between partners
- Ensuring Families receive the right support at the right time
- Building a holistic approach with love and relationships at the heart of how we work
- Addressing trauma and the impacts for how people engage with public services

[CPIB outputs](#) from these Working Groups will be shared widely with CPP partners, and will also be available on the [CPIB website](#), where colleagues can access further evidence on the role Community Planning has played in responding to Covid-19 so far and CPIB briefings on the role of Community Planning in Recovery.

Research

We have recently published our new sub-council area population projections dashboard, which allows you to easily view how the population of small areas within your council area are projected

to change. You can use the tool to find out about the total population, age and sex breakdowns, and some of the drivers behind these changes, such as migration and mortality.

We have also been working with councils to develop a Child Poverty Index, which takes council held data on Free School Meals, Clothing Grant, and Education Maintenance Allowance, and combines this with Children in Low Income Families data from the DWP to give a more holistic picture of where children are at risk of living in poverty.

The team have also worked with Building Standard Division to make improvements to our National Customer Survey Dashboard, which allows building standard colleagues within local authorities live access to the feedback provided by their customers.

Evaluation

Welfare Advice and Health Partnerships supported by 16 councils in over 180 GP Practices across Scotland have generated almost £12 million in financial gains for service users.

Following an extensive engagement process, the 'Final report on potential funding models and delivery approaches which could be used to allocate the levy funding devolved to the Scottish Government for debt advice' was published. The report which can be found [here](#) suggests that to get more consistent access to advice services and to have a more settled and stable approach to funding, work continues on developing an 'Advice Services Partnership Framework' between the Scottish and Local Government.

For further information, on any of the above or to discuss how evaluation support can be provided at a local level.

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Further information

If you have any questions on this information update or would like further information, please contact Sarah Gadsden, Chief Executive at sarah.gadsden@improvementservice.org.uk or 07901 513186. We hope you find the update helpful and would welcome your feedback.