

**IMPROVEMENT SERVICE
BUSINESS PLAN 2020/21**



Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Our Operating Context	4
3. 2020/21 Priorities	5
4. Key Successes 2019/20	10
5. Our Approach	15
6. How we measure success	16
7. How We Are Organised	17
8. How We Are Funded	19
Appendix 1: The Business Plan 2020/21	20

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 is to:

- 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 2020/21 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 2020/21.

Local Government is facing significant financial challenges, with COSLA estimating financial pressures for 2020/21 in the region of £360m (once all additional funding announced to date is taken into account). 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, and councils are adopting a range of strategies to cope including use of reserves and re-profiling debt.

The pandemic is impacting on society, with socio-economic disadvantage and inequality of outcomes widening. At the same time, there has been an increase in sense of community and volunteering. A post-Covid world is likely to look and feel very different, which will have an impact on Local Government.

A post-Covid world is likely to result in more contactless interfaces and interactions, a strengthened digital infrastructure with greater use of digital services, increased risk of digital exclusion, increased use of data and intelligence to inform decision-making and service delivery, and increased reliance on Artificial Intelligence and robotics. The refresh of Scotland's Digital Strategy will influence and inform how we further develop our digital public services.

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 post-Covid through an environmental and sustainability lens.

The Scottish Parliament election is due to take place in 2021 and the Scottish Local Government elections to follow the year after. Work will begin this year to 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 outlined in 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.

We have mapped our business plan deliverables against the National Performance Framework, however, given the interlinkages between the national outcomes, some IS deliverables contribute to more than one national outcome. For the purposes of the business plan, we have mapped our products, services and programmes to the most obvious national outcome.

3. 2020/21 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 adapt our programmes, products and services as necessary to support Local Government and councils with their Covid-19 response and recovery. This will include moving all of our peer learning networks online, publishing research, briefings, thought pieces and data dashboards, facilitating online collaboration through the Knowledge Hub and supporting councils with facilitated self-assessment to capture learning from their response to the pandemic. We will support councils and partners to 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

It is likely that councils' focus during the lifetime of this business plan will be responding to the pandemic and, at best, moving to recovery. When the time is right, we will support Local Government and councils as they transition from response and recovery to renewal. This will include supporting the redesign and reconfiguration of services in ways that are truly transformative, sustainable and digital. We will start planning for this now as we reshape and develop new improvement offers and services.

3. We will support Local Government's contribution to the delivery of 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 around Covid-19 through the various Strategic and Thematic Groups.

Fair Work and Business

We will work with SOLACE, COSLA, SLAED and Scottish Government to develop and deliver the Employability Partnership, 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.

Environment [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 and helping embed the climate change agenda across the full range of service areas and professional groups that have a role to play.

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 also work with national improvement bodies to deliver collaborative improvement support to **integration authorities**, including developing

our self-assessment and improvement planning offer and testing a joint account management approach.

Poverty

We will continue to work with the Scottish Government in supporting its review of **debt levy funding**, including overseeing a number of ‘tests of change’. In doing so, we will seek to join up 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 support benchmarking and improvement within the sector.

We will work with the four local authorities involved and the relevant national partners to complete and publish the feasibility study aimed at assessing the potential for a **Citizen’s Basic Income pilot** in Scotland. Through the detailed and robust assessment of a radically different approach towards tackling long-standing challenges, the feasibility and challenges associated with piloting a Basic Income Scheme in Scotland will be better understood.

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 further develop networks to identify and share good practice and provide constructive challenge in relation to tackling child poverty.

Children

We will support local authorities with the delivery of **Early Learning and Childcare Expansion**, through the provision of targeted business analysis, workforce planning and knowledge management support. We will continue to produce regular delivery progress reports for Scottish Government and COSLA. We will continue to work with SEEMiS to develop **parentsportal.scot** by making more online services available, and grow the number of councils adopting the portal, with a target of at least 50% of councils being live or in our pipeline by 31st March 2021. We will also work with **Young Scot** to continue to support their membership platform, powered by myaccount, to grow membership numbers to achieve Young Scot’s target of 175k and expand the range of rewards, opportunities and discounts available.

Communities

We will deliver the **Digital Planning Pathfinder on Data** and undertake a comprehensive review of data within the planning system, draft data standards for planning data, draft a data governance proposal and develop data insights based upon environmental data work to date.

We will seek to expand our portfolio of work in co-ordinating Scotland’s **Violence Against Women Network** by applying for funding that will enable the delivery of support for local partnerships in relation to the ‘Safe and Together’ model.

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 environmental, equalities, fairness and poverty outcomes.

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

We will partner with Public Health Scotland to support councils and their partners to find new ways of working across national and local, and sectoral and disciplinary boundaries. This will include supporting them to work and plan together, and with communities, to improve the lives of people, support inclusive economies and improve health and wellbeing through the creation of more successful places. It will also involve collaborating on the links between planning, place and public health as part of the whole system approach to delivering Scotland's public health priorities.

We will support Local Government and councils to take forward Scottish Government's ambition for 20-minute neighbourhoods, where people 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.

Developing our products and services to support the delivery of our Strategic Priorities

We will further develop our core improvement offer, which underpins the delivery of our Strategic Priorities. For example, we will:

- Continue to develop our **transformation support programme** through our themed approach that will build on existing activity, explore opportunities for new and innovative practice, promote collaboration (where appropriate) and, crucially, provide councils with the opportunity to participate when and how they wish.
- Enhance our offers of support on **change management and organisational development**, including local capacity building, and provide bespoke support to councils and partnerships as they implement their transformation programmes.
- Explore opportunities to further embed our approach to **self-evaluation and improvement planning** across local authorities, other public services, partnerships and within priority outcome areas.
- Work with COSLA and elected members to co-design, develop and deliver our **elected member development programme**, including introducing a new political mentoring programme.

- 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 support councils that requesting our input as they implement their BVAR recommendations.
- As lead for the **Community Planning Improvement Board** workstream on 'Supporting innovation, improvement and sharing best practice', we will work with partners to provide tailored support to CPPs. This will include continuing to develop and deliver the Community Planning in Scotland website.
- Work with SOLACE, professional associations and other partners to explore how we can contribute to any **peer support / review** approaches being developed by Local Government for Local Government.

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 different outcome areas, 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 1.5 million and grow authentication requests to around 9 million annually. We will continue to work closely with Scottish Government to secure the future of myaccount in Scotland's digital identity landscape and broader digital ecosystem, and capitalise on it. We will achieve 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.

We will also 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 freely available to anyone who wishes to use it.
- 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.
- 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.

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

4. Key Successes 2019/20

The developments noted above build on our existing successes. Our main achievements from 2019/20 are:

- We have continued to **grow our funding base** in support of Local Government priorities and exceeded our 2019/20 target of £1.2M for bringing in additional resources to the sector. More than £3.403M of additional funding was brought in to support collaborative and partnership working, of which £1.578M was brought in from out with the Local Government sector.
- Across our range of products and services our **annual customer satisfaction indicator** remained constant in 2019/20 at 80%. In response to the feedback, annual improvement actions plans were implemented for each product and service as part of our continuous improvement journey.
- We received external recognition for our products and services by winning a number of prestigious **awards**. Our Digital Public Services team won the Innovate Award at the Holyrood Connect ICT Awards. Our Spatial Hub won an award at the 20th Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning and from iESE where it received the Silver Award for Innovative Public Services in the UK public sector. Working with Scotland Excel and East Renfrewshire Council, our change team won the Employee Development and Skills Award at the Holyrood Public Service Awards for our Professional Development Award in Project Management.
- 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 ensure the delivery of **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 implementation, using the analysis to target support where necessary. We provided in-depth knowledge management services to ensure lessons learned and good practice are shared. We also secured further funding over the next 18 months to provide dedicated support to councils on the expansion and development of their Early Learning and Childcare workforce.
 - We secured funding to enable the Improvement Service to host the **Child Poverty National Co-ordinator**, allowing us to provide a range of practical support to local leads and partnerships across Scotland. This work included aligning with national partners to deliver practical support such as national, regional and local events, briefing notes, webinars and tailored input to local areas.
 - Working with SEEMiS, we successfully rolled out **parentsportal.scot** to all schools in West Lothian Council, with high levels of parental uptake and have now expanded its use in North Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire Councils. We launched the digitised Annual Data Check as a new service in time for the new school term in August. We

worked with Young Scot to launch their new membership platform, which is powered by myaccount, to provide young people with personalised rewards, discounts and opportunities.

- We continued to work in partnership with SOLACE, COSLA and SLAED to **improve fair work and sustainable inclusive growth outcomes**:
 - Working with SLAED, we secured funding to host the **Employability Partnership Manager**. This two-year post is working closely with a COSLA counterpart to drive Local Government's input to this new national Scottish Government – Local Government partnership. This work aims to be transformational in the way that employability and related services are re-designed in order to achieve better and more sustainable outcomes for citizens.
 - We undertook research to ascertain the experiences of local authorities in relation to **regional economic working**. All 32 local authorities actively engaged in the work, which resulted in the publication of two reports. The first report concluded that councils have an opportunity to lead and influence the next stages of regional economy working. The second report fleshed out further detail and proposals for taking forward the various action areas set out within the initial report.
- We delivered a range of improvement work to address **poverty and inequality**:
 - We worked with Fife, North Ayrshire, City of Edinburgh and Glasgow City Councils, along with NHS Health Scotland and Scottish Government, to explore the feasibility of a **Scottish Citizen Basic Income pilot (CBI)**, the aim of which would be to test the contribution of CBI to reducing poverty and providing a possible route to a fairer and simpler welfare system. We published an interim report into our findings.
 - 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**. We published an interim report and secured £100k funding for four local authorities to participate in 'tests of change' which will consider the advantages, challenges and drawbacks of allocating debt levy funding through direct grants to local authorities.
 - We secured funding from Scottish Government to support the implementation of the **Fairer Scotland Duty** across Scotland. We established a Knowledge Hub Group that is being used as a central repository for information and toolkits and produced elected member briefings, a generic integrated Impact Assessment Toolkit, generic training slides and a webinar and event programme.
- 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**.

- We rolled out support for use of the **Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework** in partnership with the Scottish Government and COSLA. The framework supports multi-agency Violence Against Women (VAW) Partnerships to measure their progress and performance in implementing Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls at a local level, and to identify any areas for improvement. We have secured initial funding that will enable provisional support for the '**Safe and Together**' model and we will seek to secure further funding to enable this approach to be further embedded across local partnerships.
- 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.
- 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 99 candidates either completed or progressing the qualification from across 16 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. Our first cohort is progressing well, made up of 9 candidates from 3 different councils, with our next cohort due to begin in June 2020.
- Based on feedback from our customers, we have redesigned our offer of support on **change management** to better reflect local authorities' needs. Our **Change Managers' Network** has grown to over 650 members, representing more than 100 organisations, including all 32 Scottish local authorities. Our Network events are also going from strength to strength, with our last event in December attracting over 60 delegates from most local authorities and a number of community planning partner organisations. We continued to embed further **change management resources** in East Lothian Council and worked with Clackmannanshire Council to embed a Transformation Manager.
- 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 delivered a programme of benchmarking events bringing together colleagues from across all 32 councils to share learning in family groups to drive improvement. We generated invaluable good practice examples which were shared widely across all councils. This year there were a number of improvements to enhance the relevance and impact of the framework. We strengthened the timeousness and reliability of the data, introduced new adult social care measures to reflect the integration and wellbeing agenda, voluntarily adopted the UK Statistics

Authority Code of Practice, and strengthened links to the National Performance Framework and Public Health priorities. We also published further evidence showcasing how the LGBF continues to gain traction across Local Government and is being widely used locally to support strategic decision making, inform improvement and support scrutiny with Elected Members. Examples provided by councils show that as the framework has matured, so too has councils' use of the data.

- In partnership with the Care Inspectorate and Scottish Care, we piloted an **improvement planning development tool** in four care homes for older people. The Care Inspectorate produced an evaluation report of the pilot in December 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**.
- 2019/20 was another successful year for the **Elected Member Development** programme. We regularly communicated via a dedicated elected member twitter account and e-newsletter. We supported the development of elected members' knowledge on topical issues by running webinars and through our briefings and guidance publications. We supported councils' member development programmes through the CPD Framework and by running workshops. This included sessions on Best Value, Economic Development, Scrutiny, Effective Administrations and Roles and Working Relationships. We ran a national good practice event on elected member development to support officers with the development of their councils' member development programmes. We also introduced a new coaching offer for senior elected members and facilitated self-assessment and improvement planning sessions for council administrations.
- 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 800 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. A number of professional associations including SOLAR, SPDS, Heads of Planning and Trading Standards Scotland utilise the platform for online collaboration.
- We have redesigned 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.
- The **myaccount** service continues to grow: subscriber numbers now exceed 961,000 with myaccount on track to sign-up its millionth user by April 2020; authentication requests have risen up towards 720,000 per month, an average increase of 40% from

the previous 12 months; and 24 organisations are now using myaccount, with a further five in our current pipeline. Adoption and usage of the **Data Hub**, our online data matching and cleansing tool also continues to grow: 18 organisations are live (15 of these councils) and a further 5 are in the current pipeline; and during 2019, 17.5 million records were uploaded for data matching and cleansing.

- We participated in Scottish Government's **Digital Identity Scotland Programme**, including supporting its two alpha projects and participating in stakeholder and expert groups. We developed a **new model for myaccount** to overcome the limitations of legislation (The LEARS Act), enabling the reach of myaccount to be expanded beyond Local Government and Health. We successfully secured Scottish Government commitment to myaccount remaining very much in the overall design of the digital identity landscape in Scotland. We also secured COSLA Leaders' endorsement for **myaccount** in support of it being Local Government's preferred identity provider and playing a wider role as a public sector identity provider.
- We concluded a proof-of-concept involving **Blockchain** to test opportunities and applications for this type of technology in the delivery of public services, using it to test how a person with a disability can easily and simply access entitlements without having to repeatedly present proof to revalidate their disabled status. We developed **getyournec.scot** as a prototype to help people apply online for a **National Entitlement Card** safely and securely, which is currently being tested. We delivered **cyber awareness training** to all IS employees.
- 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.
- 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.

5. Our Approach

Ensuring we continue to support the priorities of councils and partners and respond to the scale and complexity of the challenges they face is critical to the effectiveness of the Improvement Service. In practical terms, this means focussed partnership working with councils, COSLA and 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. At the same time, we will continue to provide dedicated support to councils to help them improve, use tools and resources more effectively, collaborate and share good practice and adopt new, innovative and integrated models of working.

Over the next year, we will 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.

Our plan for 2020/21 (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.

Across 2020/21, we will focus on opportunities to develop and enhance our organisational capabilities and core offers, including by forming strategic relationships with bodies who have skills, tools, expertise, capacity and networks in areas that we currently do not, and which would benefit Local Government. For example:

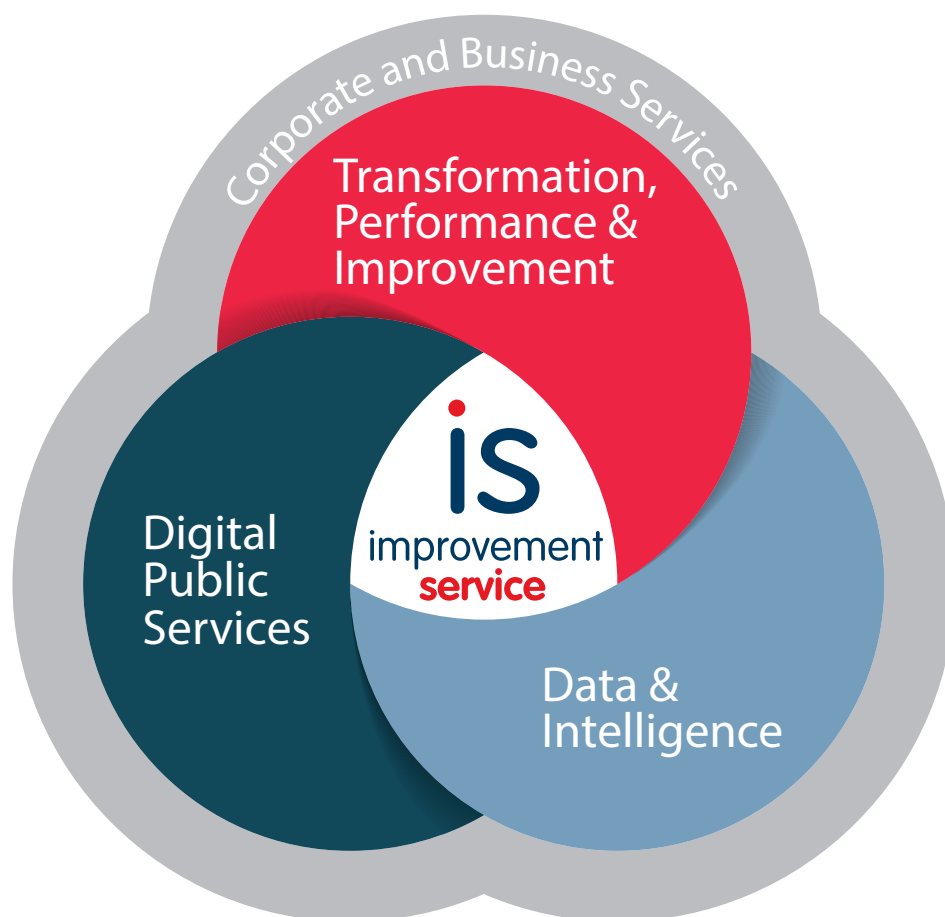
- We will consider what more we can do to support Local Government to embed **improvement and innovation** and partner with organisations that complement the work that we do, such as NESTA and IESE.
- We will explore opportunities to partner with the **Scottish Policy and Research Exchange**, to encourage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

6. 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.

7. How We Are Organised

For planning and operational purposes, the Improvement Service is organised into four teams as the diagram below illustrates.



In reality and central to our ethos, our range of products, services and developments draw on 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.

We have also established and embedded a range of core approaches to providing effective support to councils and partners. We will continue to channel our efforts to ensure multiple employees across the organisation are equipped with the skills and capacities to effectively deliver these core approaches.

Our corporate priorities for the coming year are noted below:

- To deliver the Partnership Agreement with COSLA
- To support the Board and continue to focus on the business management of the company to help ensure ongoing growth and sustainability.

- To support the Board to review the governance of the company and undertake a skills review of Board members, to enabling any gaps and issues to be addressed.
- To support the Board to develop a Business Development and Growth Strategy and, in a challenging financial climate, to seek to deliver a target of bringing in an additional £2m from outwith the Local Government sector in support of the delivery of our strategic priorities.
- To implement and embed the refreshed approach to Board induction and onboarding.
- To review and continue to evolve our account management framework.
- To 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.
- To maintain and manage the Associates Framework contract and grow the network.
- To further embed and develop our performance management framework.
- To continue to embed our approach to information / cyber security and achieve and maintain ISO27001 accreditation.
- To continue to exploit Office 365 to enhance flexible and mobile working and improve collaboration and sharing of information.
- To continue to support Improvement Service self-assessment and improvement action plans.
- To invest in developing leadership skills across the organisation and develop a good practice guide for people managers.
- To develop and change our business practices where appropriate in support of climate change outcomes.

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.

Since 2005 we have continually developed our core capacity and offerings, and developed our reputation for quality improvement support, using both to leverage additional funding in support of Local Government priorities. As a result, other income streams have grown steadily since 2005:

- Recognising the efficiencies delivered across the Digital Public Services portfolio, we have secured £3.66M to deliver myaccount and related services this year. This is the third year of funding secured under a 3-year Memorandum of Understanding with Scottish Government.
- 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 however we also have agreements in place with the UK Government and other agencies. We will maintain a realistic target of bringing in an additional £2m from out with the sector in support of Local Government priorities.
- We also 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 also 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 commercial opportunities for the benefit of Local Government. Agreement has been reached between the IS, Ordnance Survey and the Geospatial Commission for the onward supply of Local Government address and street gazetteers and associated intelligence to Ordnance Survey for the next ten years.
- We also host larger programmes with separate governance arrangements, e.g. Local Government Digital Office.

The funding source underpinning each key deliverable is contained in the detailed business plan and proposed spending is set out in our detailed budget. 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 2020/21

The tables below highlight our detailed deliverables for the year ahead for current programmes, products and services, aligned to our strategic priorities and commitments.

Our Strategic Priorities are numbered as follows:

1. We will support Local Government to live with Covid-19
2. We will support Local Government to re-build post Covid-19
3. We will support Local Government's contribution to the delivery of Scotland's National Performance Framework
4. We will support Local Government, working with their communities and partners, to deliver place-based approaches

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement - Our core improvement offer

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	Funding Source
Account Management	We will continue to evolve and strengthen our account management service with council corporate management teams and invest in building relationships and developing a responsive service for each council.	Sarah Gadsden	1, 2, 3, 4	Core Grant
Transformation Support Programme	We will continue to develop our transformation support programme through our themed approach that will build on existing activity, explore opportunities for new and innovative practice, promote collaboration (where appropriate) and crucially provide councils with the opportunity to participate when and how they wish.	Gerard McCormack	2, 3, 4	Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement - Our core improvement offer

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	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; 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.	Clare Sherry	1, 2, 3, 4	Core Grant
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.	Amanda Spark	1, 2, 3, 4	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.	Amanda Spark	1, 2, 3, 4	Core Grant
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.	Barry McLeod	1, 2, 3, 4	Core Grant
Best Value Support	We will continue to harness the support we can provide to councils from across the Improvement Service as they prepare for Best Value Assurance Reports, including the sharing of good practice. We will support individual councils who request our input as they implement the recommendations in their Best Value Assurance Reports.	Gerard McCormack	1, 2, 3, 4	Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement - Our core improvement offer

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	Funding Source
Elected Member Programme / CPD Framework for Elected Members	We will continue to support the development of political leaders in Local Government by providing national direction, advice and tailored support to councils. This includes supporting councils to implement a structured process for member development, such as the CPD Framework. We will complement and add value to councils' own member development activity by delivering webinars, briefing and guidance notes, as well as coaching and mentoring support. We will also develop learning resources for candidates to understand the roles and responsibilities of elected members, while encouraging people from underrepresented demographic groups to stand. We will work with COSLA and other partner organisations to deliver on these commitments.	David Barr	1, 2, 3, 4	Core Grant
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.	Martin MacKinnon	1, 2, 3, 4	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 also continue to develop our Thought Leadership Series, publishing output around a range of topics, with contributions from across the public sector and academia.	Mike McLean	1, 2, 3, 4	Core Grant
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.	Mike McLean	1, 2, 3, 4	Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement - Our core improvement offer

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	Funding Source
Knowledge Management	We will explore opportunities to connect internationally with Local Government organisations focused on improvement to embed international learning and good practice in our work.	Mike McLean Gerard McCormack	1, 2, 3, 4	Core Grant
CPP Support	As the lead for the Community Planning Improvement Board workstream on 'Supporting innovation, improvement and sharing best practice', we will work with partners to provide tailored support to CPPs that will help them to deliver their statutory duties as defined in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and contribute to the delivery of national policy, such as Public Health Reform and the Place Principle. This will include continuing to develop and deliver the Community Planning in Scotland website.	Sarah Gadsden Gerard McCormack Mike McLean	2, 3, 4	Core Grant + NHS Health Scotland Contribution
Peer Support/ Review	We will work with SOLACE, professional associations and other partners to explore how we can contribute to any peer improvement approach being developed by Local Government	Sarah Gadsden	3	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	Miriam McKenna	1, 2, 3, 4 (National Outcome – Economy, Fair Work and Business)	Core Grant
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.	Hannah Young	1, 2, 3, 4 (National Outcome – Economy, Fair Work and Business)	SLAED SLA
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 in order to deliver enhanced employability outcomes. This work is focused on ensuring alignment and integration of a wide range of services that impact on employability outcomes.	Pamela Smith	1, 2, 3, 4 (National Outcome – Economy, Fair Work and Business)	SG Specific Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement - Our core improvement offer

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	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. We will develop networks to identify and share good practice in relation to tackling child poverty.	Hanna McCulloch	1, 2, 3, 4 (National Outcome – Poverty)	SG Specific 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	1, 2, 3, 4 (National Outcome – Poverty)	SG Specific Grant
Citizen's Basic Income research	We will continue to work with the four local authorities and relevant national partners to complete and publish a feasibility study, aimed at assessing the potential for a Citizen's Basic Income pilot in Scotland.	Wendy Hearty	3 (National Outcome – Poverty)	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.	Mike McLean	1, 2, 3, 4 (National Outcome – Communities)	SG Specific Grant
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 Cedar (Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery) groups to become more integrated and sustainable at local level, and help them to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people affected by domestic abuse.	Joanna McLaughlin	1, 2, 3 (National Outcome – Communities)	SG Specific Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement - Our core improvement offer

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	Funding Source
Place Based Approaches	We will continue to promote, facilitate and develop place-based working including its input into climate crisis action, the Scottish Government Planning Review, Public Health Reform and Digital Planning Review. We will continue to work with partners to support and promote the effective use of the Place Standard Tool as an enabler of the Place Principle application	Irene Beautyman	1, 2, 3, 4 (National Outcome – Communities)	Core Grant + other partnership funding.
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 Review, implement the Place Principle and contribute to the whole system delivery of Scotland's public health priorities. In doing so, we will work closely with the Partners in Planning Forum members, including Scottish Government, HOPS, RTPI and key agencies.	Irene Beautyman	3, 4 (National Outcome – Communities)	HOPS SLA
HOPS	We will continue to provide support to Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS), including supporting their input into the progression of Scottish Government's Planning Bill, the Digital Planning Review, public health reform and place-based working.	Trevor Moffat	1, 2, 3, 4 (National Outcome – Communities)	HOPS SLA
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.	Clare Sherry	1, 2, 3 (National Outcome – Education / Children)	SG Specific Grant
Health and Social Care Integration	We will work with national improvement bodies to deliver collaborative improvement support to integration authorities, including developing our self-assessment and improvement planning offer and testing a joint account management approach.	Sarah Gadsden Barry McLeod Gerard McCormack	1, 2, 3 (National Outcome – Health [and Social Care])	Core Grant

Supporting Transformation, Performance and Improvement - Our core improvement offer

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	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 an early adopter on Place and Health, maximising the collective use of our data and intelligence assets and delivering joined-up practical support to CPPs and local authorities.	Sarah Gadsden	2, 3, 4 (National Outcome – Health [and Social Care])	Core Grant
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 and helping embed the climate change agenda across the full range of service areas and professional groups that have a role to play	Miriam McKenna	2, 3, 4 (National Outcome – Environment)	IS Change Fund
Fairer Scotland Duty	We will provide 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 the online resource.	Miriam McKenna	3 (National Outcome – Human Rights)	SG Specific Grant

Digital Public Services

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	Funding Source
Governance	We will ensure that robust governance arrangements are maintained to bring cohesion, transparency and accountability, and to ensure strategic, operational and policy alignment, including: within and across our portfolio; through services delivered by third parties on our behalf; and through key strategic partnerships and MOUs.	Martin Brown		DPS Grant
Operations	We will ensure that the operation of all products and services in our portfolio are secure, reliable and available at levels at, or near 100%, to meet the needs of Councils, partners, the public and our business development ambitions.	Andrew Campbell	1, 2, 3	DPS Grant
Operations	We will monitor and review contractual arrangements put in place at the award of new contracts in August 2018, to support the needs of 'business-as-usual' and business development.	Andrew Campbell		DPS Grant
Operations	We will ensure that our strategy and infrastructure for cloud hosting provides robust, sustainable and ethical hosting capabilities able to support business as usual, provide effective business continuity and disaster recovery, assist our business development ambitions and contribute to our commitment to tackle climate change.	Cameron Walker		DPS Grant
Information Security	<p>We will continue to maintain regulatory and legislative compliance to protect individuals' privacy and manage IS's corporate risks as a business. We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement our Cyber Resilience across our DPS portfolio and corporately • Protect and maintain ISO270001 accreditation, an internationally recognised standard for managing information security helping us to comply with industry best practice, enhance our brand and meet the requirements necessary to be part of Scottish Government's Identity Assurance digital ecosystem. 	Robert Clubb		DPS Grant

Digital Public Services

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	Funding Source
myaccount	We will continue to increase the adoption and usage of myaccount and capitalise on the business development opportunities likely to flow from myaccount's broader role as a public sector identity provider (IDP). We will expand myaccount subscriber numbers to 1.5 million and grow authentication requests to around 9 million annually.	Andrew Campbell	1, 2, 3	DPS Grant
myaccount	We will continue to work closely with Scottish Government to secure the future of myaccount in Scotland's digital identity landscape and maximise the opportunities for myaccount as part of the broader digital ecosystem	Martin Brown Andrew Campbell	3	DPS Grant
myaccount	We will deliver year 3 of the 2018-2021 roadmap for myaccount (and broader portfolio), while reviewing our forward strategy for it, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> allow individuals to prove their identity and entitlement to services online and in person, providing a better end-user experience for those using smartphone technology when verifying their identity online support thin-file, hard-to-reach individuals (without a passport, driving licence or bank account) prove their identity help individuals come in at a low entry level and build their identity profile expand getyournec.scot to other client groups as a secure means of applying for a National Entitlement Card or requesting a renewal or replacement. 	Andrew Campbell	1, 2, 3	DPS Grant
Data Hub	We will continue to grow the uptake of the Data Hub, and introduce some enhancements identified by users, to enable Councils and other partners to benefit even further from having rich data and intelligence available to make evidence-based decisions.	Andrew Campbell	1, 2, 3	DPS Grant
National Entitlement Card	We will continue to maintain regulatory and legislative compliance for the National Entitlement Card Scheme designed to ensure that we meet GDPR's needs, information-sharing protocols and comply with Scottish and UK standards for identity proofing.	Robert Clubb Brenda Robb		DPS Grant

Digital Public Services

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	Funding Source
National Entitlement Card	<p>We will continue to ensure delivery of the services specified in the Service Level Agreement between Dundee City Council and IS for the National Entitlement Card (NEC) Scheme including to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> manage business-as-usual effectively continue to develop the scheme to ensure it meets user needs procure new contracts for the NEC's card management/customer relationship system, card production bureau and smartcard supply 	<p>Martin Brown</p> <p>Brenda Robb</p>	1, 2, 3	DPS Grant
National Entitlement Card	We will implement the business development plan for growth in use of, and exploitation of, the National Entitlement Card	<p>Andrew Campbell</p> <p>Brenda Robb</p>	1, 2, 3	DPS Grant
Development of strategic and sustainable options	We will work with a range of partners, including Scottish Government, COSLA, Scottish Local Government Digital Office, Transport Scotland and Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, to support the delivery of key initiatives focused on improving outcomes and providing accessible local public services.	Martin Brown	1, 2, 3, 4	DPS Grant
bisaccount	We will promote the uptake of bisaccount, to support local businesses to transact online securely, to verify a person is who they say they are and verify a person has the authority to act on a business' behalf	Andrew Campbell	<p>1, 2, 3</p> <p>(National Outcome – Economy, Fair work and Business)</p>	DPS Grant
Digital Public Services - Parentsportal.scot	<p>We will, through our partnership with SEEMiS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> grow the number of councils adopting parentsportal.scot, with a target of at least 50% of councils being live or in our pipeline by 31st March 2021. increase the number of schools and parents using parentsportal.scot continue to develop parentsportal.scot by making more online services available 	Andrew Campbell	<p>1, 2, 3</p> <p>(National Outcome – Education/ Children)</p>	DPS Grant

Digital Public Services

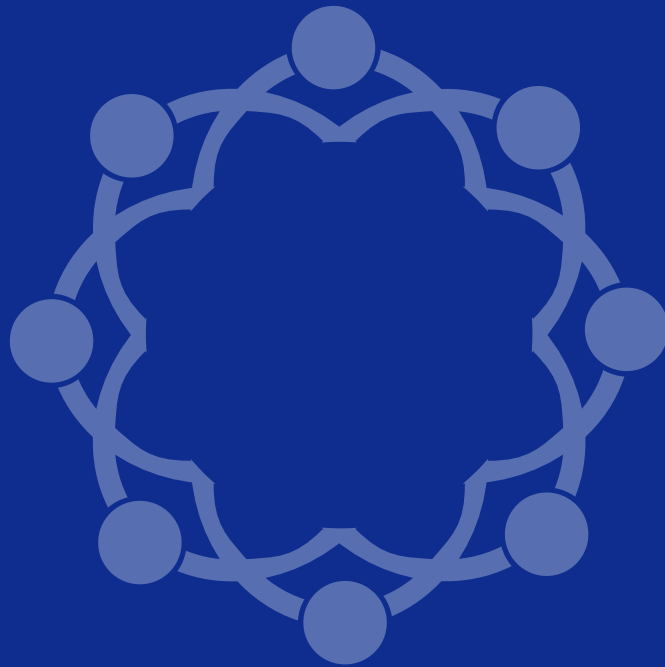
Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	Funding Source
Digital Public Services - Myaccount (Young Scot)	<p>We will work with Young Scot to continue to support their membership platform, powered by myaccount, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grow membership numbers to achieve Young Scot’s target of 175,000, and usage of the platform and myaccount • expand the range of rewards, opportunities and discounts available to Young Scots • expand the contribution of the membership platform to tackling child poverty, raising attainment and improving outcomes for young people • develop a ground-breaking digital version of a National Entitlement Card, initially for show-and-go purposes 	Andrew Campbell	1, 2, 3 (National Outcome – Education/ Children)	DPS Grant

Data and Intelligence

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	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.	Dominic Greenslade	1, 2, 3, 4	Gazetteer Revenue
Spatial Hub	We will 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 freely available to anyone who wishes to use it	Iain McKay	3, 4	Gazetteer Revenue
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	3, 4	DPS Grant / Gazetteer Revenue
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.	Iain Paton	3, 4	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	1, 2, 3, 4	Gazetteer Revenue
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 develop improved measures in adult social care, climate change, digital, public protection and financial resilience. 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	1, 2, 3, 4	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	3, 4	

Data and Intelligence

Project	Deliverable	Lead Officer	Direct contribution to Strategic Priorities	Funding Source
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	1, 2, 3, 4	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	1, 2, 3, 4	Core Grant
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	1, 2, 3, 4	Core Grant



Improvement Service
iHub
11 Quarrywood Court
Livingston
EH54 6AX

T. 01506 282012
E. info@improvementservice.org.uk
W. www.improvementservice.org.uk



is.
improvement **service**