

Solace/IS Transformation Work

Workstream 2 Project: Digital Shared Services

Chief Executive Sponsor:

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Purpose

The following paper is intended as a briefing paper for those who have volunteered to get involved in Solace/IS Transformation work and the project of digital shared services which sits in workstream 2 which is the shorter term projects. The further reading section at the end of this document includes a slide deck which sets out the detail of each workstream.

The paper covers the following areas which will enable discussions at the project kick off meeting that is scheduled for 19 January 2024. Furthermore, there are attachments at the end of the document for further insights to the work done to date.

- Background
- Project approach
- Discovery work
- Project kick off meeting
- Further reading

Background

Following the [Delivering a future for Scottish Local Authorities](#) think piece paper which proposes a new approach for the future operating model of Scottish local authorities, each of the anchors in the report have been assigned a Chief Executive sponsor from within the Chief Executive Working Group.

It is recognised that each anchor is not exclusive, and work will intersect therefore a significant role for the sponsor and colleagues supporting the work will be to identify and highlight interdependencies with anchor leads and refer to the Chief Executive Working Group when appropriate.

As set out in the Think Piece paper, the anchor **Design for people's needs** places the development of people-centred approaches at the heart of the design and delivery of public services. This means starting to tackle complex problems by first deeply understanding the root causes of them, rather than leading with a solution-first approach which often leads to addressing issues at a symptomatic level. Deeply understanding the root causes of complex social challenges happens by meaningfully engaging people through a participatory design process. This type of approach to creative problem solving involves local authorities spending time with citizens who have diverse experiences with public sector challenges in the context of how they live, giving the community the opportunity to co-create insights into why this challenge is happening and what can be done to improve it.

It also means taking a systems-based approach to understand lived experiences across the wide range of stakeholders who are involved in creating, influencing, impacting, and delivering in each challenge space. By deeply understanding the needs across a system, councils can triangulate and assess which aspects of the problem they have the most control over, and identify the best opportunities to generate the most measurable change as quickly as possible. We can derive benefit by doing this type of work at scale across the sector, to share expertise and resources, whilst still being able to tailor services to local need.

Data, intelligence and digital technologies, including web, mobile, artificial intelligence, robotics, Internet of things, blockchain, analysis and visualisation tools, will be a key contributor to the design and delivery of people-centred and personalised digital experiences for individuals, businesses and communities. The aspiration of the anchor **Create digital, design and technology enabled transformation** is for an intelligent, connected and secure digital ecosystem that enables local authorities to effectively and efficiently serve their citizens, businesses and communities by leveraging data and technology to enhance citizen adoption, inclusion, trust and collaboration across public services.

Digital and data are key enablers and vehicles to make public services more accessible, connect people and communities, enhance engagement with individuals, communities and businesses

and improve outcomes through data driven decision-making, whilst meeting the needs of equality and inclusion.

Council services will be digital, seamless, and omni-channel, with users actively involved in the design of these services. Some of these digital services may be delivered locally, whilst others will be delivered regionally or nationally. We have a wealth of digital expertise and resources within local government (i.e. local authorities, Improvement Service, Digital Office for Scottish Local Government, SEEMiS) to help coordinate and deliver work that will enable local government to deliver digital, design and technology enabled transformation.

Project Approach

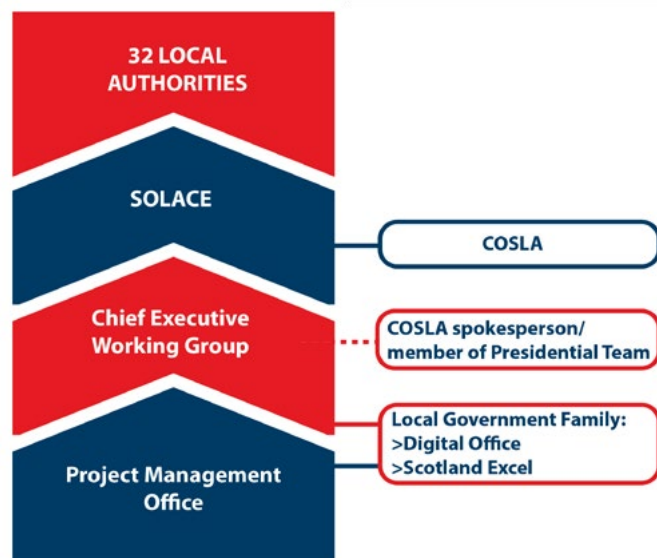
Project Scope

Delivering aspects of the digital 'to-be state' which have a strong focus on collaboration, innovation and which will require strategic leadership and buy-in. For example:

- Maximising the capability of digital and data across Local Government at place, regional and national level to improve access to customer-centric services, improve efficiency and effectiveness of delivery and provide sustainable front-line local services and better customer experiences.
- Identifying and delivering new use cases for existing national shared service applications and technology platforms.
- Adopting an iterative approach to prototyping and developing service delivery models that achieve effective and efficient service delivery.
- Exploring the use of Artificial Intelligence and machine learning to drive innovation, proficiency and collaboration in local government.

Governance

As agreed at Solace on 28th April 2023, the governance from the work will be as follows. The anchor sponsor will be part of the Chief Executive Working Group and therefore will be able to feed in risks, issues, interdependencies, and update on progress made by the group.



Roles

Chief Executive Sponsor Role

- Provides leadership to the project, ensuring alignment with overall Solace/IS work.
- Will breakdown barriers and issues through either the Chief Executive Working Group or collective action of Solace.
- Responsible for the project delivery and benefits realisation.
- Encourages and motivates project team.
- Attends project meetings.

Project Director Role

- Leadership support to the Sponsor.
- Brings expert knowledge to the project area.
- Drives progress through the project team.
- Sets direction of project meetings.
- Attends project meetings.

Improvement Service PMO

- Manage and coordinate the collaborative projects in line with the strategic direction of the think piece.
- Ensure a consistent approach taken with those involved from project inception through to delivery.
- Initially provide evidence to support the decision making process around prioritising the service areas for inclusion in the work programmes.
- Wider ongoing support for the governance structures through monitoring progress and considering risk, issues and changes to the work.
- PMO will also seek to engage with council colleagues with expertise of working within a PMO environment to support the wider programmes of work, as well as with local government colleagues who are subject matter experts in the areas of work being developed.

Volunteer Colleagues

- Work to foster collaboration across local government.
- Ensure open communication within the project team and across local government and wider.
- Will remove obstacles to the successful delivery of the projects under the anchor.
- Maintain the focus of the group on the agreed scope, outcomes, and benefits of the anchor in line with the Think Piece paper.

- Champion the work under the anchor and the wider Think Piece across local government and wider.
- Escalate risks, issues, and interdependencies as appropriate.
- Share knowledge and learning within the project team and across local government and wider.
- Identify local opportunities that could feed into the work.

Discovery Work

The Improvement Service (IS) has a track record of utilising its skills and assets to develop, provide, and deliver digital public services on behalf of Councils, enabling Councils to achieve savings, efficiencies, and improved standardised citizen services that avoid a “postcode lottery” depending on where they reside in Scotland. The IS provides a variety of services which can support Councils with part of a service process or can deliver services end to end.

Examples of shared digital public services include, but are not limited to mygovscot myaccount, getyournec.scot, parentsportal.scot, bisaccount.scot, dcn.scot (National Dog Control Database) and One Scotland Gazetteer. Under the further reading section there are two documents which provide some more detail on these. The first provides examples of shared digital public services and the second sets out how IS services are used across the country. This will help to identify some priorities for taking forward.

Areas to consider for discussion at project kick off:

- What are your views on the examples?
- What other examples do we have across Scotland?
- How can we gather research from international communities?
- What learning and information do we need to replicate good examples?
- How can ensure the case studies and examples are valid and applicable within Scottish local government?
- What links and connections will there be with the other projects?

Project Kick Off Meeting

Please come prepared for a participative meeting.

The **purpose** of the meeting is to:

- Bring together all volunteers who are willing to get involved in the project
- Provide an overview of the project ambition and work done to date
- Provide a space for building relationships amongst the project team
- Understand what work locally is underway which may be relevant
- Agree the direction of travel for the project team

Expected Outcomes

- A greater understanding of the project from those who have volunteered
- Project team build relationships
- An understanding of what participants can bring from their local system
- Actions agreed to move work forward including timescales and input from volunteers
- Barriers, risks, interdependencies identified that require to be escalated to ensure read across of all projects in the work

Further Reading

[Delivering a future for local government think piece report](#)

This is the original think piece report which sets out the ambition and vision of the work.

[Translating think piece report into action](#)

This slide deck describes how the think piece report will move into action, detailing the 3 workstreams and projects within.

[Terms of reference](#)

The Chief Executive Working Group developed up Terms of reference for each anchor pairing, setting out how they envisaged the work unfolding.

Discovery work done to date

The Improvement Service currently offers a range of digital public services and there are opportunities to maximise some of the work done to date.

The following documents provide a snapshot of services in place and uptake from across the country:

- [Digital Public Services Portfolio Overview](#)
- [Digital Public Services - Shared Services Examples](#)

[Leadership Practitioner Forum](#)

As part of the Solace/IS Transformation work there is a Leadership Practitioner Forum in place to build capacity across the sector. At the session on the 29 November 2023, the breakout room discussions focused on the active communities project, as well as procurement, Crerar implementation and statutory and non statutory services, some of the points might be helpful to stimulate discussion as the project kicks off.