

Solace/IS Transformation Work

Workstream 2 Project: Active Communities

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 active communities 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 **8 February 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 unlock community action is focused on strengthening and rebalancing the relationship between Local Government and citizens. Developed over many years there are a number of successful examples across Scotland. During the pandemic, this was further expanded and new models were tested, working with not just for communities, and amplifying the impact of work through existing community networks and initiatives. This will enable us to further develop our approaches to co-designed services that empowers communities and maximises positive impact of the work we do in local government.

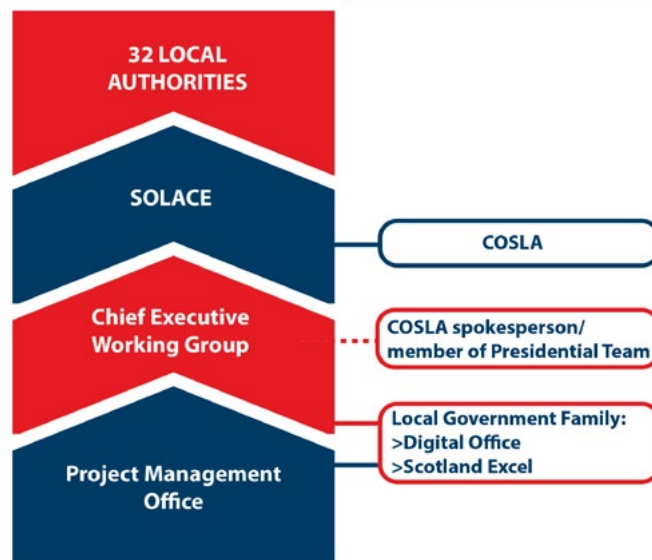
Project Approach

Project Scope

- Development of a repository of examples of Active Communities which are leading the design of alternative community service delivery in conjunction with the responses provided by local government.
- Development of a repository of examples of how local authorities are developing the skills/capacities of staff to work alongside communities & how they and others are supporting communities to develop their skills/capacities. This will include a focus on the different ways communities are structuring themselves to respond to the design/delivery of community solutions.

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

There has been initial discovery work undertaken to bring together examples of active communities from across Scotland and beyond.

There are a range of examples collected which include developing community empowerment; asset transfer; revitalising town centres. Some of the examples have developed since the pandemic others have been in place for longer.

These examples can be found in the following document: [Active Communities Case Studies](#)

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 following document provides some examples from across Scotland and beyond on how community action can be unlocked.

[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.