

Report

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Report to:	Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum
Date of Meeting:	8 December 2009
Report by by:	Chief Executive

Subject:	Self Assessment
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum of the next steps in the roll out of the Council's self assessment programme

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Forum is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the re-branding of the Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) self assessment model for South Lanarkshire Council as Empower (Employee Ownership With Excellent Results), be noted; and
- (2) that the next steps for the roll out of Empower, be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Executive Committee at its meeting on 10 June 2009 agreed to the implementation of PSIF system of self assessment throughout the Council.
- 3.2. The importance of adopting a corporate system of self assessment has recently been reinforced in Audit Scotland's response and analysis of the BV2 consultation paper and in the early IRAS (Initial Risk Assessment and Scope) reports from BV2 Pathfinder Councils.

4. Self Assessment Corporate Identity

- 4.1. In order to maximise buy in and to engender a sense of ownership the Council has renamed the model from PSIF to Empower. This corporate identity complements and builds upon the existing Connect and Improve branding. Additionally, Empower is an acronym for 'Employee Ownership with Excellent Results' which explains concisely what successful implementation of self assessment will achieve. This branding will be used for any future publicity or reporting purposes.

5. Progress to date

- 5.1. During August and September seven employees received training in the use of the PSIF e-tool and the associated EFQM assessor accreditation. This comprised employees from the Corporate Improvement Unit, Corporate Resource, Finance and IT Resources and Social Work Resources. All individuals who participated were successful in achieving EFQM accreditation at the end of the training period.

6. Improvement Service

- 6.1. A practitioners' forum for organisations embarking on PSIF has been set up by the Improvement Service to enable the sharing of best practice. South Lanarkshire Council attended the most recent meeting held on 10 September 2009 in Glasgow City Council. Key points arising, some of which will influence the Council's approach to implementation are summarised below:
- 28 organisations are now signed up to PSIF including 21 Councils
 - SWIA mapping being piloted in three Councils (North Ayrshire, Edinburgh and West Dunbartonshire)
 - HMIE learning event related to mapping PSIF held on 7 October 2009
 - SLC are part of group of Councils who have volunteered to review PSIF and related guidance materials in relation to the Equalities Framework
 - BV2 corporate characteristics and advanced practice are being mapped to PSIF in consultation with Audit Scotland. Guidance will be published November 2009 and any gaps from this exercise will inform changes to PSIF question set.

7. PSIF Process

- 7.1. PSIF is derived from EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) and built around nine key criteria and 129 questions. The basic model is set down in Appendix 1.
- 7.2. The purpose of self assessment is to identify what Services are good at and what they need to improve. In order to do this robustly, a scoring model is used. This model is also derived from EFQM and is called RADAR (Results, Approach, Deployment, Assessment and Review). The scores are for internal use only, unless pursuing an EFQM award. It is critical to the process that a realistic score is applied, both to demonstrate self awareness but also to recognise room for improvement. As an example, in EFQM, the scoring totals 1000 and it is not uncommon for initial assessments to be relatively positive and only score around 300 points. National Excellence award winners commonly score between 500-600 and 600-700 is typically a winning score for the European Excellence award.
- 7.3. The key activities and timescales involved that will be typically undertaken during a self evaluation exercise within the Council are set down in Appendix 2. The average duration of any self evaluation is estimated at around eight weeks with an estimated maximum time requirement of 4/5 days per team member. Implementation of Empower will be managed via an e-tool which will be available to all officers undertaking an assessment and the Corporate Empower project team which, at the moment, comprises all seven accredited assessors within the Council.

8. Next steps

- 8.1. Within South Lanarkshire Council, a short term working group has been established comprising all seven assessors to manage the implementation of Empower within the Council. This group will develop and review the Council's approach and monitor the implementation arrangements learning from experience both here and elsewhere.

- 8.2. Advice from the external assessor reinforces the adoption of a phased introduction with each phase undertaking a lessons learned exercise following completion. It is also recommended that the Council adopts a fully facilitated model early in the roll out programme with each session involving 2/3 assessors.

9. Communication

- 9.1. There will be a team brief prepared and a Works article to increase awareness levels of Empower. Additionally, a full staff briefing and overview will be delivered to everyone involved in a service area as and when they embark upon their assessment. These will be led by the Executive Director, Head of Service or Senior Manager as appropriate.
- 9.2. It is also recommended that the CIU and Resource representatives deliver a presentation to Resource Extended Management Teams as part of the roll out programme to raise awareness.

10. Implementation

- 10.1. PSIF can be undertaken at any level in an organisation ie from organisation wide to individual work team. In relation to South Lanarkshire, it is proposed that the Council undertakes a Council wide assessment and undertakes three pilot Resource assessments as follows:
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|--------------------------|---|
| Corporate Resources | EMT level |
| Finance and IT Resources | Audit and Risk section |
| Social Work Resources | Children's Services (linked to HMIE guidance) |

These areas have been chosen to try to maximise experience in the process and will help inform the way forward. Specifically, the results should help Resources determine the optimum level within the organisation that self assessment should be undertaken over the rolling three year programme. This should be gauged by balancing input to the process against results achieved.

11. Council wide assessment

- 11.1. Prior to commencing the Council wide assessment, it is important to recognise the early work which has already been undertaken in this regard and which provides a solid platform for future assessment. This includes:
- the self assessment exercises undertaken to rate the Council against positive and negative characteristics and to identify outcomes which the Council wished to achieve in three to five years
 - the 2009 Mid Term Review of Connect which included a Corporate Improvement Plan directly informed by the exercises above.

Both of these areas of work reinforced the Councils recognition and commitment to the importance of being a self aware Council and have served as a forerunner to Empower. The next steps will focus on:

- what being a top performing Council means in the future
 - where we are in that journey
 - what we need to improve
- 11.2. The assessment process will be undertaken by the Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service and will use a bespoke question set (typically 30 – 40) derived from PSIF. This approach has been used by other Councils and is supported by the Improvement Service. This session will be fully facilitated internally and will take no longer than 1 day.

12. Pilot Resources

- 12.1. In terms of the other pilot projects detailed in 10.1, implementation of these should be undertaken in Finance and IT Resources and Social Work Resources by March 2010.
- 12.2. Thereafter, these Resources should identify the preferred service groupings for the remaining assessments and programme these for completion at a rate of four per annum. As the reassessment period is recommended as three yearly, it is sensible initially to limit the number of assessments undertaken to ensure the exercise remains manageable.
- 12.3. These assessments will use the full question set and will follow the process as set out in Appendix 2. Each assessment should be completed over a three month period with a view to being completed during 2011/12.

13. Remaining Resources

- 13.1. Training for the remaining Resources of Enterprise, Community, Housing and Technical and Education should be undertaken between March to June 2010 with a view to commencing roll out from October 2010 and completion during 2012/13.

14. Timetable

- 14.1. In view of the above and reflecting feedback from the training and Practitioners Forum, the timetable for roll out of Empower has been rescheduled as follows:

	Resource							
Completion date	Council level	Corporate	Finance and IT	Education	Social Work	Housing and Technical	Enterprise	Community
Phase 1 (pilots) March 2010	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Phase 2 2011/12		✓	✓		✓			
Phase 2 2012/13				✓		✓	✓	✓

- 14.2. Within the Council, various resource level self assessment systems are also currently in place ie SWIA HMIE IIP. As part of the development of PSIF by the Improvement Service, work is also underway with the relevant bodies to integrate a number of these systems which will streamline existing arrangements.

15. Performance Management Framework

- 15.1. All completed assessments will be reported to the Corporate Management Team and the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum. Scrutiny should be focused on Improvement Plans and expected benefits and outcomes rather than scores to ensure the exercise is viewed positively. The assessment process should be undertaken within each Resource as a rolling programme with each Service being reviewed no less than three yearly. Where Services have particularly challenging Improvement Plans, these should be re-assessed more regularly.

15.2. Improvement Plans resulting from implementation of Empower should be incorporated into Connect, Resource or Service Plans as appropriate and subsequently reported on as part of the regular quarterly performance updates.

16. Employee Implications

16.1. The implementation of Empower will be undertaken within existing resources but will require a maximum time commitment from Resources per assessment as estimated below, based on the assessments being fully facilitated:

	Corporate Lead Officer	Resource Lead Officer	Assessment Team Member
Training	10 days (one off)	10 days (one off)	Part of assessment
Assessment	4 days	5 days	4 days

16.2. It should be noted that implementation of Empower should reduce the amount of resource involved in gathering evidence to meet other quality standard requirements, eg Investors in People and Customer Service Excellence, however this remains to be quantified.

17. Financial Implications

17.1. The Executive Committee at its meeting of 10 June 2009 approved a budget allocation of £40,000 towards the implementation of self assessment. To date approximately £14,000 has been spent on training and the e-tool. The balance of the resource will be taken up through the remaining training and re-assessment requirements as part of the planned roll out.

18. Other Implications

18.1. Resources should consider any roll out arrangements for Empower as part of their 2010/11 Resource Plan preparations.

19. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

19.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

19.2. Consultation has been undertaken with the Empower working group and the Corporate Improvement Advisory Board.

Archibald Strang
Chief Executive

23 November 2009

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Improvement Themes

- Improvement Theme - Performance Management and Improvement

Previous References

- Report to Executive Committee 10 June 2009 on Self Assessment
- Report to Executive Committee 18 November 2009 on Self Assessment

List of Background Papers

- as above

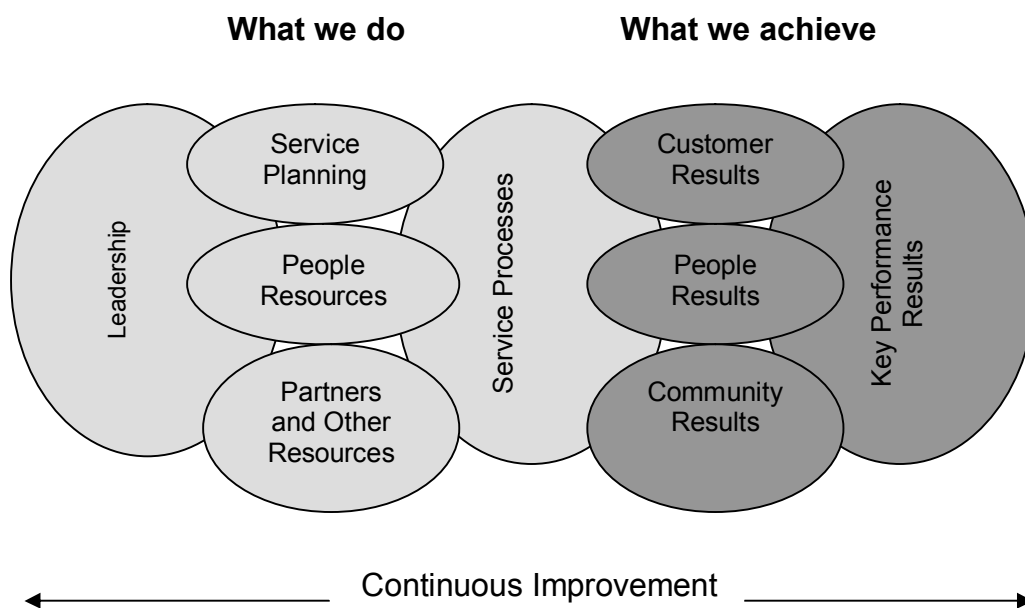
Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:- Heather McNeil, Head of Improvement

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Public Sector Improvement Framework



What we do Evaluating the processes and policies in place
1 Leadership Setting the overall aim of the organisation, and managing and implementing this through planning and involvement with stakeholders and people
2 Service Planning Policy and Strategy, the context within which the organisation operates, and how it monitors its performance
3 People Resources What people resources are used, and how they are managed and motivated
4 Partners and Other Resources What relations there are with partners, what other resources are used, and how they are managed
5 Service Processes Activities and Initiatives – what the organisation does to meet the aims it has set out – with measurable targets

What we achieve Analysing the results gathered
6 Customer Results How well the organisation meets the needs and expectations of its customers
7 People Results What the organisation has achieved in terms of motivating, involving, developing and valuing its staff
8 Community Results Sustainability and the good neighbourliness aspect of the organisation
9 Key Performance Results What the organisation has achieved in relation to its Performance Indicators The performance of the organisation in relation to the targets set out in the plans for activities and initiatives

Self Evaluation - Process and Timescales:

1. Manager engagement session (duration – no more than 2 hours)

This should include the Director/Head of Service/Senior Manager in the service that will be undertaking the self-evaluation. The Empower Lead Officer, nominated from the Corporate project team should present an overview of PSIF and explain how the self-evaluation will be carried out. By the end of this meeting, the Lead Officer should have the names of the individuals who will be part of the Service Assessment Team. Teams normally consist between 6 and 12 officers with 9 being the optimum and MUST comprise a cross representation of employees from the Service.

2. Meet Assessment Team (duration – no more than 30 minutes)

The purpose of this meeting is for the Lead Officer to make initial contact with the Assessment Team and to discuss the training they will be undertaking.

3. Full staff briefing with everyone involved in targeted service area (duration – no more than 1 hour)

This session will be led by the Director/Head of Service/Senior Manager, and it will include an overview of Empower and what will be involved in the self-evaluation.

EITHER

4a.

Fully facilitated Assessment and Consensus sessions (duration 2- 3 days)

It is recommended that at the early stages of implementation, South Lanarkshire adopts a fully facilitated model where teams are briefed and facilitated in a group session over 2/3 days by 2/3 assessors. At the end of this, the team will have identified their evidence, justification, areas for improvement and have scored the criteria via the e-tool. Criteria may be split between the group relating to the officers job and experience but ultimately consensus must be reached by the entire group on the findings.

OR

4b.

(4b involves completion of the assessment individually and is not fully facilitated)

Awareness Training for Assessment Team (duration - half day)

This is typically delivered by the Lead Officer or other member of the Corporate Empower project team.

Individual completion of Assessment (duration - 2 to 3 weeks with input estimated at approximately 2 days per individual)

Officers on the Assessment Team can be allocated specific criteria to consider individually. As part of this they will be required to identify their evidence, justification, areas for improvement and to score their criteria via the e-tool. Criteria allocated will relate to the officers job and experience.

Mid-point progress check (duration – 2 hours)

This takes place to review progress either between team members and the Lead Officer or with a key team member and Lead Officer. The Empower project team will have monitored progress via the e-tool. The purpose of this session is to address or identify any issues arising.

Consensus Day (duration – 6 hours or 2 x ½ days – this can be variable)

All team members meet to agree their evidence, justification, Areas for Improvement and scores in a facilitated session with a member of the Empower project team. The Assessment Team can be sub divided into smaller groups to help manage the process but ultimately require to reach full consensus.

Improvement Plan Session (Duration – 2 to 4 hours)

This involves the Director/Head of Service/Senior Manager, and the whole team and the Lead Officer. All identified Areas for Improvement are prioritised and improvements identified. At the end of this session, there should be a completed Improvement Plan which assigns each improvement action to a Senior Responsible Officer with related timescales, resources and measures of success.

5. Scrutiny and Review

All completed assessments should be reported to the Corporate Management Team and the Performance and Review Forum. Scrutiny should be focused on Areas for Improvement and expected benefits and outcomes rather than scores to ensure the exercise is viewed positively. The assessment process should be undertaken within each Resource as a rolling programme with each Service being reviewed no less than every three years. Where Services have particularly challenging improvement plans, these should be re-assessed more regularly.