

## **NW Shared Services Programme News Update December 2006**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to the first **Sharing It** newsletter – a newsletter aimed specifically at local authority staff across the North West who are involved in large scale transformation change programmes and Shared Services programmes. Shared services and joint working is high on the local government agenda. The Local Government White Paper stressed, once again, the value to local authorities of investigating further joint working and shared service provision, and it is expected that CSR07 will go one step further in strongly encouraging councils to look at Shared Services. As such 2007 is expected to be an extremely busy time, and both the NWCE and NWeGG will continue to undertake work within this space.

This bi-monthly newsletter aims to frequently update our stakeholders with information on relevant activities underway across the North West and beyond. Below is a brief summary of some areas of work underway currently, along with an outline of future activity and events that are being organised.

As ever, we are always looking for examples of good practice of transforming local public service delivery and Shared Services and would like to hear from any council who wishes to provide information on their successes. If you would like to provide any further feedback, then please let us know. Should you wish to discuss any of the work underway please contact Olly Baker (NW Shared Services Programme Manager) via [olly.baker@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:olly.baker@tameside.gov.uk)

Regards,

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Director of Modernising Services, NWCE

Phil Swan  
NWeGG Programme Director

### **North West Shared Services Programme**

The NWCE and NWeGG are now co-located in the same office within Tameside MBC, and in recent months the two organisations have worked closely together where there is a close fit between their key business priorities. One of these shared key business priorities is Corporate and Transactional Services and in particular effective Shared Services delivery opportunities that will enable Local Authorities to deliver efficient, effective services through transformed services and delivery mechanisms.

As such the NWCE and NWeGG are developing a joint Shared Services Programme and action plan for the North West that will support councils within this highly topical area, and help align activities. Shared services and joint working is high on the local government agenda. The Local Government White Paper stressed, once again, the value to local authorities of investigating further joint working and shared service provision, and it is expected that CSR07 will go one step further in strongly encouraging councils to look at Shared Services.

The NW Shared Services Programme will:

- help develop the thinking and knowledge around innovative service delivery;
- enable councils to benefit from good practice;
- explore the Shared Services opportunities and help manage the risks;
- bring together all of the work occurring within the Shared Service arena across the region; and,
- identify and develop the tools, knowledge, guidance and assistance local authorities need and want to help them move towards Shared Service delivery of local public services.

A NW Shared Services Programme Board has been established and will meet for the first time in the afternoon of Wednesday 17 January. The Board will be chaired by Stephen Barnes (Chief Executive, Pendle DC) and will be composed of a representative from each of the sub-regions. We are also in the process of establishing a NW Shared Services Community to include local authority Change Agents and Senior Management Teams, and will inform this Community as to progress made and consult with them over future activity.

## Your Shared Services Priorities

Two well attended workshops were recently held in the North West – one to gather the views of senior local authority people around the Shared Service agenda and to help feed into CSR07, and the second event to discuss the Transformational Local Government agenda and the impact of this on local public service delivery.

A number of key messages have come out of these two useful events, including a need for:

- strong, tangible evidence on the benefits associated with various methods of shared service delivery;
- very strong leadership and governance
- lessons learnt – from projects / programmes that have gone wrong
- strong programme management
- capacity building

We have collated all the key messages to emanate from these sessions and will use these to help inform the NW Shared Services Programme and the work undertaken to deliver products that councils actually need. Further engagement sessions will be held next year.

## National Process Improvement Project

The National Process Improvement Project (NPIP) has been launched by DCLG to develop the “best BPI methods to improve local services”. A lot of activity is underway to develop methods for local authorities to understand the individual processes involved in the delivery of a service, and the costs associated with each process. The identification and removal of non-value adding activities within a service are seen as key to improving service delivery to the citizen and realising significant efficiency gains.

NPIP is currently focusing on 8 service areas, with AGMA leading 3 of them:

- Corporate Services (e.g. HR, Finance)
- Adult Social Care
- Children’s Services
- Revenues and Benefits - *AGMA leading*
- Democracy and Community Services (Public Protection) – *AGMA leading*
- Infrastructure (Highways and Transport) – *AGMA leading*
- Waste Management
- Housing Management

For the areas that AGMA are leading, the councils are looking at 2 streams of activity – long term process redesign, underpinned by short term process improvement. The authorities are keen to understand their business better and develop a view of common processes, as well as developing common methods for apportioning process costs. The Business Process Architecture model is being used in this project.

NWeGG is part funding this project to look more closely at the relative costs of processes and transactions.

## Planned Activity

Prior to the first meeting of the NW Shared Services Programme Board, the following key activities have been identified as key milestones, and work is underway to complete them:

- The mapping of all NWCE / NWeGG funded activities that are assisting councils transform the delivery of their local public services;
- The identification of all partnership working initiatives across the North West and the appetite for future Shared Services initiatives;
- The identification and dissemination of useful tools / products / outputs from existing Shared Services programmes that will be beneficial to North West councils; and,
- The promotion of facilitated workshops to help councils identify Shared Services opportunities, develop the business case and deliver the project successfully.

Following the first Programme Board meeting further details will be provided on the future activity across the North West.

## Events Update

### Service Transformation through Partnerships – 9am to 5pm Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January

The NWCE are supporting this DCLG event which aims to:

- Explore the options and the toolkits available to enable your authority to successfully deliver a shared service partnership, including DCLG's "Service Transformation through Partnership" A-Z toolkit published in June 2006.
- Help answer the all important "how do we do it" question including the process necessary to set up a shared service.
- Cover the tricky and at times complex shared services procurement process.
- Provide a valuable shared services networking opportunity to enable authorities to share lessons learned from their own experiences.

For further details and updates go to the NWCE website [www.nwce.org.uk](http://www.nwce.org.uk)

## Round-Up

The NWCE has just launched their new website. Each project and board now has its own homepage. The NW Shared Services Programme page can be found at <http://www.nwce.gov.uk/project.php?id=42>. This will be updated as appropriate.

***Have a great Christmas and a Happy New Year***