

Efficiency News

Contents

[Sign of the Times](#)

[News from Communities and Local Government](#)

[Update from the Regional Centres of Excellence](#)

[News Round Up](#)

[4ps – Joint Services Toolkit](#)

[Best Practice – Breckland – The Entrepreneurial Council](#)

[Case Study – RFID in Essex’s Libraries](#)

[Case Study – eProcurement at Rotherham](#)

[Moving Joined Up Government into the Mainstream](#)

[Useful Links](#)

Welcome to the twelfth edition of *Efficiency News*, published by the Communities and Local Government Modernisation and Efficiency Division and National Procurement Forum in partnership with PricewaterhouseCoopers.

To receive a copy of Efficiency News, please e-mail:

med@communities.gsi.gov.uk

If you have any comments or wish to submit content to this newsletter, please e-mail: med@communities.gsi.gov.uk

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Issue 12 – April 2007

Sign of the Times

*Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Angela Smith MP examines the key challenges facing the efficiency agenda within
both local and central government.*

These days we talk about efficiency in the same breath as service transformation. This is not surprising as these are two sides of the same coin. The huge benefit from increasing efficiency is that it provides the impetus for changing and improving services.

It provides an opportunity to see if a service is really delivering what is needed and doing so in the best way possible. It is also a chance to revisit the basics and challenge what has been taken as read.

We all know that local government has established an excellent record in finding efficiencies by transforming how they deliver services and do business. This then leads to the next question – how are we doing in central government? The answer is that it is a key focus for us too.

Communities and Local Government is also on track to exceed its target – of achieving at least £620m efficiency gains by March 2008. We have already delivered over £725m worth of gains, with £446m cashable – effectively releasing funds for use in other priority areas. As in local government, much of this has been achieved through working closely with our delivery partners and by improving 'back office' functions, including procurement tendering.

But the further any organisation goes, the tougher it gets to deliver more gains. The challenge for councils is to think bigger still and stretch their horizons, looking to work imaginatively with others. Have they got the tools and support to do that?

We are working with local government to make sure they have. Regional Centres of Excellence and the Improvement Partnerships (IPs) are already playing a key role in helping councils. They are bringing together partnerships, identifying capacity gaps and finding innovative ways forward.

But the support apparatus could be better organised at regional level. With this aim, the Centres and the IPs will merge arrangements in all regions, streamlining the support available. This makes sense given the strong link between efficiency and improvement.

We are also, with local government, drawing up a National Improvement Strategy. This will bring together all the strands of support available, for both local government and for local partners. Support can then be better targeted and unnecessary duplication and confusion cut down.

Finding more efficiencies is also about good leadership. It touches every department and means taking some difficult decisions – and then seeing them through. For all of us, looking for better ways of doing things must become an everyday part of life, now and in the future. That is the challenge ahead.

This article was first published in the LGC's Efficiency supplement, March 2007

News from the Communities and Local Government

The Modernisation and Efficiency Team review some of the recent events relating to the efficiency agenda for local government.

Although there were no news items from us in the last edition of "Efficiency News", that did not mean that nothing was happening! Far from it, in fact, as we have been busy working on implementing some of the proposals announced in the Local Government White Paper. You will be able to find out more about the results of this work in future editions!

One important document that has been published in recent weeks is the 2007 edition of **Measuring and Reporting Efficiency Gains**¹: the principal source of guidance for councils on how to complete their annual efficiency statements. People who used the 2006 edition should find it reasonably familiar, but we have taken the opportunity to add some new advice on issues raised with us over the course of the last year, including:

- How to report efficiencies net of costs;
- Treatment of gains from activities in fraud detection and court action;
- The sale of former school property; and
- Measuring gains from private sector sponsorship and Arms' Length Management Organisations.

The new edition also contains updated information on inflation indices, quality crosschecks (for use later in the year when submitting 2006-07 Backward Look statements), contact details for further advice, and a refreshed guide to the Annual Efficiency Statement process.

It is hoped that its publication will help councils complete the **2007-08 Forward Look efficiency statements**, the online templates for which have now been launched on the esd-toolkit website². These statements, in which councils will set out the efficiency gains they expect to make in the final year of the 2004 Spending Review (SR04) period, are due for submission by 5pm on Thursday 12 April.

We would strongly encourage all councils to submit a statement for 2007-08, even if they expect to record total efficiency gains in excess of their SR04 target in the 2006-07 Backward Look statement later in the year. The statements are a very powerful demonstration of the capability of local authorities in identifying and exploiting opportunities for efficiencies and it would be disappointing to lose this. It would be tremendous to be able to show significant strides continuing to be made by councils in improving the value for money of their service delivery this year.

Also published recently is the **UK Government Sustainable Procurement Action Plan**³, which aims to ensure that supply chains and public services will be: increasingly low carbon, low waste and water efficient; respect biodiversity; and deliver wider sustainable development goals.

¹ Available to download from the Department for Communities and Local Government website at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1508167>

² Template accessible from: <http://www.esd.org.uk/esdtoolkit/>

³ Available to download at: <http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/pdf/SustainableProcurementActionPlan.pdf>; also see press notice at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/latest/2007/defra-0305.htm>

It responds to the business-led Task Force report, *Procuring the Future* (available to download at <http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/procurement-action-plan/index.htm>) which was published last summer. At that time, the Government set a series of sustainable operations targets for the Government office estate, including a pledge to go carbon neutral by 2012 and to reduce carbon emissions by 30% by 2020. The Action Plan now strengthens the commitments made last year, by describing in detail what the Government and individual departments will do to achieve them.

The Action Plan puts in place clear lines of accountability and reporting, and develops plans to raise the standards and status of procurement practice in Government. Alongside the Action Plan, Government is also publishing an updated set of mandatory environmental product standards that will ensure departments procure the most sustainable commodities.

In the case of local government, a Group has been established under the chairmanship of the Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council, Roger Latham, to consider a response on behalf of local government. The Group will hold a series of meetings concluding in May, following which the local government response will be published.

Update from the Regional Centres of Excellence

Run by local government for local government, the Regional Centres of Excellence (RCEs) play an essential role in transforming council services. With a growing reputation for achievement and success, the RCEs are helping councils up and down the country to secure millions of pounds in efficiencies that can be re-invested in front line services.

National news

Role of Regional Centres of Excellence endorsed by Treasury

Financial Secretary to the Treasury, John Healey, has given his backing to the role of the Regional Centres of Excellence (RCEs) as the agents for transforming local government procurement. He made his comments in a major announcement on the future role of the Office of Government Commerce. The OGC will be a smaller, more focused, higher calibre organisation that will drive transformation through central government and the steps to achieve these goals are set out in the report, *Transforming Government Procurement*.

The Financial Secretary also recognised the important role of the RCE's Procurement Programme and the major professional buying organisations (known as the Pro5) which are working to unlock millions of pounds from local government procurement by making excellent deals available to all local authorities. The announcement signals clear recognition of and confidence in the regional change agents such as the RCEs, a move welcomed by the Chief Executives' Task Force.

David Jenkins, member of the Task Force and Chief Executive of Dorset County Council said, "This is an important announcement because it clarifies and strengthens the role of the RCEs in the transformation of local government procurement. It recognises the significant achievements already made by local authorities: many of the best examples of public procurement come from this sector. It

is very encouraging to know that the Regional Centres of Excellence have the confidence of government at the highest level.”

Procurement Solutions 07

The Regional Centres of Excellence will again be sponsoring this year’s event at Earls Court on 12 and 13 June. Visitors will have access to an exciting and free educational programme and a host of suppliers. The event aims to help visitors implement sustainable procurement practices, make further measurable efficiency savings, deliver fully-enabled e-procurement best practice and source new products and services.

The RCEs will have a high profile presence and visitors will be encouraged to come along to their stand to receive free consultations on procurement and efficiency matters. Further details to follow.

Adult services

The **North West** Centre of Excellence is encouraging local authorities to act on several recommendations it has made in an analysis of high cost placements for adults. The analysis has revealed that, in the top 10 providers, prices charged to authorities for apparently similar services vary by up to £1,000 a week. A review of existing pricing tools, similar to one developed by the South West and South East Centres Excellence, if adopted in the North West, would amount to approximately £3.25 million savings annually.

The analysis also revealed that in 90% of the 410 out of authority placements, which cost £28 million annually, it was either not known why the placements were continuing or placements were continuing simply because of a lack of appropriate provision. The Centre is recommending that authorities examine local provision, client needs and commissioning arrangements so that they can better manage placements. Such an exercise has already been carried out in Wigan and has resulted in 70 out of authority placements being repatriated and improved arrangements for a further 130 in authority placements. This saved £650,000.

The **South West** Centre of Excellence has formed a partnership with the Department of Health Care Services Efficiency Delivery (CSED) programme to implement a sustained resource to deliver business transformation in adult services in the South West. Devon and Somerset County Councils have been working with CSED for some time and now Somerset along with Bath and North East Somerset Unitary and Bristol City Council are working as ‘micro sites’. The programme is well into a procurement process that will identify the additional resources dedicated to the region.

Children’s Services

The **West Midlands** Centre of Excellence, which leads nationally on this work stream, reports that the recently established cross-RCE Children’s Working Group is establishing an effective framework for sharing best practice and for taking forward work in key areas of shared interest. Many regions are actively developing and supporting initiatives which focus on commissioning children’s services with a particularly strong emphasis on commissioning children’s placements.

The Working Group is examining how this area of work can be accelerated and consolidated. An opportunity exists to work closely with the DfES to drive forward a number of ambitious regional commissioning pilots during 2007. They will encourage the development of the supporting infrastructure such as better joint databases, the development and communication of national contracts and better sharing of work around outcomes-based contracting.

At a sub-regional level, there is growing understanding of what individual authorities are doing to improve commissioning and procurement. DfES's Centre for Procurement Performance will be publishing a number of case studies on this which will be disseminated through the RCE network (as well as through other channels). They are being seen as an important source of knowledge for commissioners in local authorities to draw on.

Another important role of the RCE Children's Working Group is the exchange of good practice and the development of tools and techniques for use in all regions. Key areas identified for sharing best practice include employment, training and transport. Work is also underway on examining cost calculator tools – how these can support decision making in children's services and how they relate to similar techniques being developed in adult care services.

Commodities, goods and services

Hertfordshire County Council has sourced over £0.5 million of food from sustainable supply chains this year and has agreed a work plan for the next year to consider a further £1.5 million, while Suffolk County Council has achieved local and sustainable sourcing worth about £225,000 and has also agreed a substantial work plan for the coming year.

These results mark the first successes from an **East of England** Centre of Excellence co-funded project to enable Local Education Authority caterers in the region to source more sustainable produce for school meals locally by creating new supply chains for regional meat and vegetables and defining new contract clauses. Earlier studies have shown that this is a complex and challenging area. Other LEAs in the region are expected to follow suit in the near future.

The **London** Centre of Excellence and the London Procurement Project (an NHS body) are sponsoring an e-auction for IT hardware which is scheduled to take place at the beginning of May. A project manager has been appointed to lead on the auction on behalf of London local authorities. So far, seven authorities have expressed their intention to participate while a further nine and two NHS Trusts have expressed a keen interest.

The **London** Centre of Excellence's Contracts Register Service has now been successfully adopted across the London boroughs. All authorities have registered users on the system which allows them to read and search some 1,360 contracts which have been loaded by 25 London boroughs as well as over 370 by OGCBuying.solutions.

The service has been significantly enhanced over the last 12 months with a new user-friendly look and feel as well as many other enhancements. These include the activation of the contracts alert feature which sends the contract manager and the associated department an email reminder six months before the contract is due to end. The email also contains dynamic links to other authorities' contracts in the same category and due to expire six months either side of the contract in question. This highlights the potential opportunities for contract alignment and delivery of shared services.

Those authorities (22) which have taken part in the 2005-06 expenditure analysis exercise will also be able to view their top 50 suppliers by spend.

The Vault, the **North West** Centre of Excellence's new contracts register, has captured the imagination of procurement officers across the region. Since its launch in December, a third of the region's 46 authorities have signed up and entered their contract details onto the register. The Vault provides local councils with an instant view of the contracts held by other councils in the region and

offers the ability to instantly spot potential savings opportunities. By sharing contract information, councils can use their combined buying power to gain a better deal from suppliers.

The **North West** Centre of Excellence has now announced the date for its Bargain Hunt II event. On May 21, the Centre will reveal potential savings of £100 million plus to delegates. The first event held in October attracted more than 160 delegates and this year's event is expected to attract many more as experts highlight the keys that will unlock potential, significant procurement savings to local authorities.

The Centre is also currently developing a pricing catalogue – 'Pricecheck' – that will contain a raft of 'good' or 'ideal' prices for common goods and services such as stationery, travel, hourly rates for trades and energy. The catalogue will allow councils to benchmark the prices they are paying against the list and find links to better deals. Pricecheck should be up and running in the next few months.

The **North East** Centre of Excellence, in partnership with law firm Eversheds, is working with all 25 local authorities in the region on a pioneering project to harmonise a number of local authority procurement related documents. The Harmonisation of Documents project intends to reduce bureaucracy, administration and costs for local authorities and suppliers. SMEs, third sector and other stakeholders are being widely consulted. The project has the potential for a national roll out and already the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber Centres of Excellence are involved. For more information, please contact emmaharvey@eversheds.com

Public sector organisations in the South West are set to realise almost £14 million in cashable savings by 2010 as a result of recent e-auctions supported by the **South West** Centre of Excellence. The auctions for agency staff, wheeled bins, stationery and protective gloves involved 28 local authorities as well as six NHS organisations and one police authority. This degree of procurement collaboration sets a trend that is almost unprecedented in the South West.

The Centre, working with Dorset County Council, has selected e-Three to provide a pre-agreed number of e-auctions in the region. The Gloucestershire Procurement Partnership has also been working with GS Auctions Ltd with the Centre's support and funding. By using an e-tendering approach far more authorities and suppliers were able to participate than normally would have been the case.

All the e-auctions have established framework agreements which are available for other public sector organisations to take advantage of. Other e-auctions planned for 2007 include personal protective equipment, printed materials, sheds/fencing, vehicle fuel, furniture and road salt.

An analysis of supplier spend in the **East Midlands** shows:

- External spend by local authorities is £3 billion
- There are in excess of 182,000 suppliers
- 2.9 million invoices were paid
- 60% of spend is with SMEs

The analysis was compiled from data held for all 46 local authorities in the region in an Observatory designed by Spikes Cavell. The Observatory is an online database of expenditure data and provides access for registered users to 1.4 million creditors, financial transactions worth more than £36 billion and 23.2 million invoices. The analysis tools can be used to support the preparation of a procurement

strategy, track progress towards objectives and identify opportunities for substantial efficiency improvements and cash savings.

Using the analysis, the **East Midlands** Centre of Excellence has provided several workshops on a regional and sub-regional basis to identify opportunities for collaboration. It plans to use the data to develop strategies for the SME and local supply markets and strategies for managing low value, high volume invoice transactions.

Also in the East Midlands, 14 local authorities have joined together to procure a temporary staffing solution designed to meet a range of staffing requirements. The Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) was engaged to help the partnership with procurement while support was provided by the **East Midlands** Centre of Excellence and the Office of Government Commerce. By aggregating demand and introducing common approaches to managing their requirements, the authorities have been able to leverage more benefits from the framework than would have been available individually.

It is estimated that the combined spend of the councils currently participating in the framework is around £4 million a year and cashable savings of up to 10% per annum could be realised. This innovative framework contract is open to all public service bodies in the UK and is set to generate millions of pounds of efficiency savings nationally. For more information, contact Lisa Tutt at ESPO at l.tutt@espo.org

Following the success of the 'On the Money' guide last October which focused on postal services, a steering group has been established in the West Midlands to help authorities put in place efficient postal services contracts. A pilot is being funded by the **West Midlands** Centre of Excellence in conjunction with Civica which won the tender for this contract.

Another steering group is looking to commission a study to review alternative approaches to insurance options, business process improvement and risk management. It is anticipated that various collaborative programmes will be commissioned in the near future which will use the findings from the feasibility study as a guide.

And following the success in other regions, a regional deal with e-auction provider, Achilles, is in place for both the East and West Midlands. The West Midlands Centre of Excellence has been looking at funding e-auction pilots for Home to School transport across the region.

Construction

Local authorities in the **East of England** are looking to establish regional arrangements for the procurement of construction companies for the forthcoming local authority construction projects. Now, two authorities in the region, Essex and Hertfordshire, have agreed to pump prime the forthcoming framework with a proportion of their capital programme. An OJEU contract notice has been published..

The move follows work carried out by COPROP Eastern Region (a division of the Association of Chief Corporate Property Officers in Local Government) which found that design and construction procurement arrangements vary considerably across the region. The preferred organisational model is the formation of a jointly owned and managed not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, called 'SmartEast'. Discussions are continuing with other authorities regarding their contracts and work programmes.

The **South West** Centre of Excellence has been developing an online cost and performance management database specifically aimed at large capital projects. The database can be used to benchmark cost and performance at any point in the capital programme and is targeted to drive savings of up to £7 million over the next three years in the South West alone.

Around 12 authorities have signed up to the tool so far which includes information on 20 large capital projects. Plans are also in hand to use the tool for the phase II Building Schools for the Future projects in the region. Discussions about expanding the tool as a national resource will take place in March at the East and West Midland construction meeting in Leicester.

The **North West** Centre of Excellence, working with the Centre for Construction Innovation, is inviting firms to tap into a £210 million, four-year framework. They have issued a notice asking interested parties to pre-qualify for the framework for the supply and lay of dense bitumen macadam. The framework aims to reduce costs by introducing a much smaller number of specifications for different types of applications. Responses to the notice were due back in March with an issue of tender documents taking place in April.

Corporate and transactional services

Authorities across the West Midlands are at various stages of implementing business process improvement measures and to support this activity the **West Midlands** Centre of Excellence is offering access to a range of training and skills development opportunities. These include managing successful programmes, systems thinking and business improvement techniques. A team is also in place to offer support for process improvement projects while authorities are being encouraged to share their experiences and work together.

The project is being aligned with the National Process Improvement Programme and a representative from DCLG is working closely with the regional steering group to make sure this happens. Collaboration with other RCEs is also being examined with a view to rolling out the project nationally.

As part of the Shared Services Programme for 2006/08, the **North East** Centre of Excellence has provided funding to support a partnership between two district councils to enable them to work together to provide joint printing services. The partnership was formally agreed after a 12 month pilot that included a thorough options appraisal and market testing. Benefits will include more efficient corporate working for print services, significant savings and improved use of resources. There is also scope for services to be extended to other authorities in the future.

Lessons learned from this and other projects within the Shared Services Programme can be found in the document 'Lessons Learned Report – if only I knew then what I know now!' which is available on the Centre's website.

Environmental services

'Efficient use of material resources and energy is the key to reducing waste and creating business opportunities in the local economy'. This was the message heard by delegates attending the regional Waste is Money conference and workshop in Birmingham in February which was co-sponsored by the **West Midlands** Centre of Excellence. Innovative new technologies were presented along with systems and practices to help to minimise waste at source. Also on the agenda was an informative workshop on how to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill sites by turning it into a resource.

The Cheshire Waste Partnership, supported by the **North West** Centre of Excellence, has been awarded additional funding for a project to investigate collaborative working for joint procurement of waste collection and recycling. The current project is developing an options appraisal and an outline business case for delivering waste management services across the county. The Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority has selected a preferred bidder for a waste management contract. The GMWDA, supported by the Centre, has chosen a joint venture for the PFI scheme. The contract is expected to be finalised in May.

Training and development

Following a region-wide local authority training needs analysis focusing on procurement and efficiency, a pilot training programme has been developed, funded by the **North East** Centre of Excellence. The programme includes training in e-auctions, basic purchasing, project management, change management, contract management, negotiation skills and more. The pilot ran from January to March and is being fully evaluated with a view to repeating those courses found to be most valuable to authorities.

The **London** Centre of Excellence is launching a new procurement training programme, developed in association with LondonMet University, for use by all London authorities and organisations within the Greater London Authority Group. With funding from the Centre, the London Borough of Camden is leading the project and is working in partnership with 19 of the London authorities to produce a sound solution to the training needs of staff involved within procurement.

The core programme consists of seven one-day modules and is intended for both procurement and non-procurement professionals. Delegates will have the opportunity to attend either individual modules or the whole programme, enabling them to study towards the CIPS Introductory Certificate in Purchasing and Supply. This is a groundbreaking initiative – the first of its kind in the country – and gives London procurement staff the opportunity to gain a professional accreditation without going through the whole CIPS professional stage. While the non-core programme consists of various stand-alone specialist modules available to all stakeholders involved in the procurement process and who contribute to the delivery of sustainable, high quality procurement development.

All courses will be delivered by LondonMet Enterprises, a CIPS registered organisation with a proven track record of such training events.

Focus on the South East Centre of Excellence

The South East Centre of Excellence (SECE) supports 74 authorities across the South East region. SECE works with these authorities to support them in securing millions of pounds in efficiency savings that can then be re-invested in better front line services.

SECE currently works across five workstreams:

- Commodities, Goods & Services;
- Corporate & Transactional Services;
- Construction (Buildings);
- Social Care;
- Waste.

In this feature we will focus on three key areas which have progressed very well over the last couple of months – an update on our work with the Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnerships, the construction Regional Framework for Major Projects and our Best Deals and Opportunity Assessment programme.

Working with the Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnerships

Like all Regional Centres of Excellence, SECE has, in recent months, been getting to grips with the challenge of integrating efficiency and service improvement initiatives aimed at helping local authorities in the region. The current proliferation of agencies and organisations offering support is confusing to local government officers who are often unsure where to turn to for help. This not only hinders the rollout of the SECE programme but is also a source of inefficiency of the kind RCEs were established to eliminate.

The priority objective for SECE has been to establish coordination between the SECE efficiency programme and the capacity building programme administered by the Government Offices of the South East (GOSE). On the surface this is something where the south east can learn from other regions who have led the way in joining these two initiatives together. However, while there are certainly lessons to be learned, in no other region has there been 7 independent sub-regional partnerships created, not all of whom have a complimentary sub-regional Local Government Association grouping.

Despite these challenges, solid progress has been made over recent months. With excellent support from GOSE, SECE has obtained agreement in principle from each partnership for the establishment of a single governance board to oversee both programmes. In addition, SECE has taken over administrative responsibility for the Capacity Building Fund in the South East, as a first step to developing a consistent approach to programme management and reporting. This will enable consistent communication to customers in local authorities about efficiency and improvement programmes. Further coordination has been ensured through the involvement in the process of other relevant change agents, such as the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and South East Employers.

SECE's vision for delivering the efficiency and improvement agenda in the south east is not one where all support services are delivered through SECE, but one where multiple agencies work together in a coordinated fashion, specialising in their own form of support and with a clear customer proposition. This will mean that local authorities will get the maximum value for money from these support services and will be well placed to translate the support into tangible efficiencies and service improvements.

For further information contact Mike Crisp, Assistant Director on mike.crisp@sece.gov.uk

Construction - Regional Framework

The South East Centre of Excellence (SECE) has created a construction framework for building projects between £1m and £30m for use by any public authority in the South East. Projects could include any public work, from a community swimming pool to a new secondary school. The aim is to achieve efficiencies through shared learning and repetitive design, procurement and construction solutions.

The framework was anticipated to deliver around £200m of projects a year, but since its start in July 2006, fifteen projects worth around £110m, and a further programme of work worth at least £30m have elected to use the arrangement. The framework saves the time and cost of tendering projects through the European Journal which is estimated to cost between £50,000 and £100,000 for each project. On this basis, the framework has already delivered between £800,000 and £1,600,000 in efficiency savings to the nine participating authorities. In total, 24 authorities in the South East have now expressed an interest in using the framework for 47 projects worth over £600m.

The potential workload has identified that programmes of similar projects are emerging, which, if developed along common lines, and sharing best practice could deliver substantial efficiency savings for the participating authorities. The emerging programmes are:

- Major Education Schemes (Secondary);
- Major Education (Primary);
- Further Education;
- General Education (Extensions / Refurbishments);
- Police and Fire Authorities;
- Civic Offices and Headquarters;
- Sports and Leisure;
- General Projects.

The framework will now be developed along these lines, and new programmes may emerge as interest and workload builds.

SECE has already carried out a major feasibility study for the replacement of Reading Borough Council's civic offices which provides a template for similar projects throughout the region. This work will be used by others to reduce feasibility costs and avoid costly reinvention of the same issues. There are at least seven similar projects to our knowledge.

The Secondary Education scheme is another major programme to emerge. A workshop was held with all authorities in SECE and bordering regions to explore the benefits of a common approach to the design, procurement and construction of their Building Schools for the Future pathfinder schemes. This has generated significant interest, and could lead to savings in design time as well as volume discounts. As an example, Hampshire County Council generated 10% construction cost savings, and halved the pre-construction periods on a programme of ten Nursing Care Homes. Similar efficiencies are possible with the Regional Framework programmes.

SECE have commenced the establishment of similar arrangements for smaller projects based on sub regional clusters of authorities, looking to build on the expertise and value of local, small to medium enterprises. Current clusters are based on authorities within East and West Sussex, and for those within Hampshire. Further clusters are emerging.

Participation in any of the SECE construction activities is simple, and SECE can work with you to aid the process. For further information please contact Keith Heard, Framework Development and Management at keith.heard@hants.gov.uk or David Corcoran, Planning, Development & Opportunities at david.corcoran@hants.gov.uk

Commodities, Goods & Services – Deal Evaluations & Opportunity Assessments

One of the primary aims of the Commodities, Goods and Services (CGS) workstream is to be the first point of call for local authorities seeking information on shared contracts and procurement questions. The deal evaluations and opportunity assessments play a critical role in achieving this goal.

Deal Evaluations: The objective of each evaluation varies – it may be to provide a snapshot of current market arrangements, to compare two contracts or to conduct research into a particular area such as temporary staff. The stimulus of each evaluation comes directly from local authorities. Examples of deal evaluations include: PC Consumables, Photocopiers and Temporary Agency staff.

Opportunity Assessments: Each assessment is a short research and analytical piece of work which gives a very broad overview of themes, potential focus points and recommended next steps.

Temporary Staff Example: This is clearly a very large spend area for local authorities. Our aim was to map the models being used within the South East so we had a clear picture of what was happening within the region. The temporary staff issue is very complex and is subject to a supplier led market with a number of 'hidden' costs, lack of knowledge and data. As such, there is no 'one size fits all' model.

Therefore, what we wanted to do was give local authorities access to our research, point them in the direction of those who can help, and if necessary provide guidance ourselves. We also expected each individual authority to gather supporting data and analyse their own costs before deciding on which route or model to adopt. In order to achieve these goals we organised a workshop with selected speakers from local authorities and suppliers to give the delegates an opportunity to hear case studies and to network with individuals.

As a direct result of the SECE workshop numerous local authorities began to investigate the area of temporary agency staff. A good example of this is seen at the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council where negotiations with key suppliers led to a substantial decrease in mark-up prices (up to 10%). The result has been quite dramatic with councils now having the data required to negotiate with important agencies.

Engaging Authorities: The CGS workstream communicates the findings of the deal evaluations and opportunity assessments through our [monthly e-newsletter](#), on our [website](#) or through workshops for local authorities.

Wherever possible we will ensure that every deal evaluation is treated firstly as a research exercise and then the findings and suggestions communicated to the wider procurement community. It is important to highlight that the deal evaluations and opportunities will not be providing comprehensive information or recommending that there is a 'best deal'. The intention is to draw attention to a particular offering or contract that, after some research, has shown to provide value for money. Our ultimate aim is to share information and best practice which will lead to better and efficient procurement.

For further details please contact Momtaz Islam, Project Co-coordinator, Momtaz.islam@sece.gov.uk

Focus on the Yorkshire and the Humber Centre of Excellence

The Yorkshire and the Humber Centre of Excellence (YHCoE) is hosted by Leeds City Council and supports 22 local authorities, 4 police authorities, 4 Fire and Rescue services. We have also been in contact recently with the Probation Service, National Offenders Management Services (NOMS) and the NHS for them to have access to our regional Supplier and Contractor Management System.

Government funding for the RCE's is due to expire on the 31st March 2008. However, the functions of the YHCoE will be subsumed by the Local Government Yorkshire and Humber (LGYH) in the form of a Regional Efficiency Improvement Partnership. Up until that date the YHCoE will report directly to the Strategic Improvement Group of the LGYH under its new governance arrangements.

The main areas of activity that the YHCoE have dedicated their resources are detailed below;

Project Funding

The YHCoE has a total of 70 projects from minor initiatives of under £10K to larger scale projects for the whole region where funding is in excess of £500k. The centre allocates funding on a two pronged basis either by bids submitted by authorities or allocation of funding to specific areas that the Annual Efficiency Statements (AES) returns have highlighted within our region i.e. regional commissioning.

Authorities submit their bids on standard format that the YHCoE has adopted detailing the efficiency savings, collaborative scope and replication opportunities for other authorities. These bids are in turn submitted to the Strategic Improvement Group (SIG) consisting of LGYH officers and Chief Executives from authorities within the region for a decision on funding.

Projects Funded

The YHCoE has a varied list of projects covering most workstreams of the efficiency review. The main areas are Corporate and Transactional Services for which the YHCoE is the National Lead, Commodities Goods and Services, Productive Time, Social Care, Supporting People and Children's Services.

Corporate and Transactional Services (National)

The CLG is to publish its Business Improvement Package by the 31.03.07 to compliment this the RCE's are developing a web based product which will highlight all the tools and information available particularly around transformation of services. It will try to answer the question "where do I start?"

The YHCoE is the lead for Corporate and Transactional Services workstream and has commissioned a three year contract with VOCA who initially developed the BACS payment system. A national steering group has been formed and from this the main focus of the project has been determined. A pilot scheme has taken place concentrating on the electronic payment of council tax. Potential efficiency savings in the region of £125k pa have been identified for this project. The next phase will be the roll out of the learning from this project by developing a national template that can be adopted by other local authorities thus leading to substantial savings nationally.

Commodities Goods and Services

The main project that the YHCoE have funded is the Supplier and Contractor Management System. This will be an invaluable tool for the region leading to greater collaboration and eventually leading to shared services with a programme in motion to harmonise standard documents and vetting procedures across the region. Two user groups have been set up to progress further developments and push through the standardisation of contractual documents throughout the region. A user group aimed at looking at ways to encourage collaborative contractual arrangements and a technical group looking at user applications and future developments. The intention is to agree a vetting system that is acceptable throughout the region and have one central vetting point for all. This will in itself realise efficiency savings as well as free up additional capacity to LA's within the region.

Social Care

The YHCoE have focussed on regional commissioning and earmarked funding for the placement of children in care, adults with severe learning difficulties and supporting people, and importantly the linkages relating thereto. These were all highlighted in the Annual Efficiency Statements.

Productive Time

A cross regional consortium for sickness management in social services was formed and has been jointly funded by the YHCoE, North East Regional Centre of Excellence and the North West Regional Centre of Excellence. This feasibility study covers 11 partnership local authorities with the objectives to investigate the high causes of sickness absence, develop and enable appropriate interventions aimed at reducing sickness absence and sustaining it at low level, to develop mechanisms to eliminate or control factors that lead to inappropriate absence, to improve efficiency and improve health and morale by addressing the causes of sickness absence. A target of at least a 1day reduction will achieve £500,000 efficiencies.

Project Roll out

All initiatives funded by the YHCoE were done so on the understanding that the learning from project would be made available to the rest of the region. As many of the YHCoE funded projects have come to fruition we are in the process of organising 2 events to spread the best practice and the lessons learnt to all authorities within our region. Two project roll-out dates have been planned for March/April 2007 and the list of projects to be showcased at this event has been finalised.

Collaboration

In order to assess the appetite for collaboration the YHCoE has just completed its second collaborative survey which was completed by all 22 Local Authorities within the region. Local authorities were asked to indicate and provide brief details whether they wish to provide a service on behalf of another authority, transfer their service to another authority or if they wish to collaborate with another authority across a full spectrum of service areas.

The survey itself was carried out electronically and the information received has been analysed and we are currently looking at publishing this on a secure website due to the possible sensitivity surrounding the material. Key officers will be issued with a password allowing them to view the details of other authorities and also update information on their own authority.

To follow up on the survey visits are being carried out to each authority to discuss their return and determine the priority areas for their respective authorities. It is hoped that this information will lead to a 'dating agency' for shared services across the region by providing information that will enable authorities to contact others that have indicated interest in the same service areas.

Training

The YHCoE has organised and facilitated training throughout the region in many topic areas either through organised training packages or the roll out of learning from projects at the Regional Efficiency Forum meetings which are organised on a quarterly basis.

In conjunction with the Work-Based Learning Unit at Leeds University Business School, YHCoE has successfully run a seven session course on transformational government. Exploring the theme, "Options for Shared Services, PFI and Partnering", the course was attended by senior managers from 8 out of the region's 22 local authorities. Course participants are currently writing up reports to show how they have applied the lessons learned to a current project in their work environment. It is hoped that some of these reports will serve as case studies for others in the region. Successful students will receive a post-graduate level City and Guilds membership in transformational government, awarded by Leeds University.

The course, which was run by Damian Dewhirst from GHK Consulting, has been well received. It is hoped to keep the successful participants together as a group which can advise other local authorities in the region about shared services. A second running of the course, extended to eight sessions, is scheduled to begin in April this year.

Shared Services – Service Transformation Through Partnership

YHCoE has helped co-ordinate for CLG a series of roadshow events across England and Wales, highlighting updated guidance from the Strategic Partnering Taskforce (SPT). Beginning in November last year, all nine RCE regions have staged events on service transformation through partnership.

The workshops were generally well attended and received, benefiting from excellent professional facilitation. Each workshop participant received a pack of materials based on the work of the SPT, including a CD with all the SPT documentation. Included in the pack was a series of 19 case studies of good practice in delivering shared services, which have been welcomed by participants.

For more information on the work of the Centres access their websites or contact them through our national website gateway www.rcoe.gov.uk

The Centres are supported by a Programme Management Team who can be contacted on 020 7944 4145.

News Round Up

Commissioning Toolkit for the Procurement of Consultancy and Professional Services

The City of London Corporation and the London Borough of Hounslow have produced a *Commissioning Toolkit for the Procurement*

of Consultancy and Professional Services.

This aims to assist local authorities in keeping costs down when engaging consultants by delivering good value for money, well commissioned and well managed assignments.

The toolkit is available on the [London Centre of Excellence website](#).

London Centre of Procurement Excellence, January 2007

New Powers for Establishing Joint Waste Authorities

Ben Bradshaw, Local Government Minister, has announced the intention to amend the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill to introduce new powers for the establishment of Joint Waste Authorities with the key aim of making services more integrated and cost effective.

.Under the new powers groups of two or more local authorities will be able to apply to the Government for the transfer of waste disposal, collection and street cleaning functions to a statutory Joint Waste Authority.

Defra, 22/01/07

Public Procurement Reforms Announced

Financial Secretary to the Treasury, John Healey, has published a document outlining the Government's plans for public procurement reform.

Measures contained in the document, entitled *Transforming Government Procurement*, include:

- Introduction of procurement capability reviews to assess whether departments

meet the standards required to deliver value for money;

- Encouraging collaborative approaches to procurement;
- Broadening the Major Projects Review Group to ensure complex procurement projects are subject to effective scrutiny at key stages.

The document also lays out plans for the reform of the Office of Government Commerce (OGC). The proposals include the OGC being reformed to deal solely with procurement which will include powers to set out the procurement standards that departments are required to meet.

The document can be viewed in full on the [HM Treasury website](#).

HM Treasury, 23/01/07

PASC to Launch Third Sector Inquiry

The House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) has launched an inquiry into the Government buying or commissioning services from the third sector.

The inquiry will explore the costs and benefits of the Government's policy and to judge the effectiveness of the Government's approach. The full terms of reference

for the inquiry can be viewed on the [PASC website](#).

PASC , 25/01/07

Study of Shared Corporate Services in Central Government

The National Audit Office (NAO) has announced its intention to undertake a study of shared corporate services in central government. This will focus on:

- Providing an up to date commentary of progress in implementing shared services across central government;
- Reviewing the process used to evaluate shared services strategies;
- Evaluating a selection of existing shared service centres to gather lessons learnt;
- Analysing the Cabinet Office's role in the shared services initiative.

The NAO plans to publish a report in Autumn 2007.

NAO, 26/01/07

Out of Authority Placements for Special Educational Needs

The Audit Commission has published *Out of Authority Placements for Special Educational Needs*.

Some of the key findings of the report are as follows:

- Councils spend more than £500 million a year on out of authority placements for children with special educational needs (SEN) but integrated planning and monitoring of support for these children is insufficient;
- The full costs of supporting individual

children with complex needs are often unknown and, until recently, many councils have not challenged the fees charged by out of authority providers;

- Opportunities to offer local provision are not being maximised and there is more potential for reducing costs through joint commissioning of

provision locally and regionally.

The report is available on the [Audit Commission website](#).

Audit Commission, 06/02/07

4ps – Joint Services Toolkit

Richard Kelly, Senior Executive at 4ps, looks at how a new innovative system developed by 4ps on behalf of the North East Regional Centre of Excellence will support local authorities deliver effective shared services and achieve efficiency gains.

There is growing interest amongst local authorities in sharing services as a means to achieving efficiency savings, improving service delivery and developing skills capability and capacity. Sharing services also meets one of the challenges set out in the Local Government White Paper which called on authorities to pursue innovative approaches to service delivery.

Many local authorities are aware of the benefits of joint working in helping to deliver effective services and achieve efficiency gains. However, from our experience, authorities need help finding the right partner and delivery model for their services. To meet this need 4ps, local government's project delivery specialist, has developed an innovative system designed to help local authorities find a potential partner and choose the right shared service delivery model.

'*Guidance for collaborative options evaluation and appraisal of service delivery models*' is aimed at senior officers, project directors and project managers and focuses on the collaborative options of local authorities working with each other or with other public sector bodies.

Produced on behalf of the North East Regional Centre of Excellence the guidance supports local authorities during the development of a business case for sharing services. Before proposals for shared services can be moved forward authorities must put together a business case which explains why collaborating services is being considered and sets out the proposed collaborative option and the service delivery option.

The guidance asks local authorities to assess and score key decision making criteria, such as legal, financial and employment issues, against the requirements of the service. These scores can then be used to identify the shared service delivery option which meets the needs of the local authority.

Julie Brown from the North East Centre of Excellence said, "The really big gains in service transformation in the future will come from sharing services but in reality, they are a challenging proposition to deliver successfully. Local authorities will need considerable support and that's why this guidance is so important because it enables councils to make the decision that is right for them."

The guidance is available by going to www.4ps.gov.uk or www.nece.gov.uk

Best Practice – Breckland – The Entrepreneurial Council

As well as setting up groundbreaking shared services models, Breckland Council is developing new revenue streams in order to reduce the pressure on council tax and reduce service costs.

Breckland Council, in Norfolk, is at the forefront in developing new ways of delivering public services ,having set up the groundbreaking Anglia Revenues Partnership with Forest Heath Council over three years ago. This is the first shared service for Council Tax, National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) and Benefits administration in the country. The partnership has reduced the cost of services to the local taxpayer – not just in Breckland, but also for their partners and many clients across local government. In fact, the annual savings will be £1million as East Cambridgeshire District Council has recently joined the partnership

Breckland is not stopping there. The Council is determined to become known as an entrepreneurial council, not wholly dependent on Council Tax payers, but developing new income streams while reducing service costs.

Breckland has recently entered into a partnership with Capita Advisory Services to develop opportunities to trade and to create wider delivery platforms for public services. Within the scope of this work the Council has also included enforcement and neighbourhood services to ensure these work in the way the community wants. Functions such as planning and environmental services will be tackled to uphold standards that bring better quality of life to citizens.

Mobile working, taking services to the customers, while freeing up resources by enabling staff to resolve queries out in the field, is fundamental to the Council's exciting vision for delivering efficiency and improving services to their customers.

Services such as planning and building control are also being considered as part of this initiative. Other councils will be able to gain from Breckland's new approach to regulatory services, as well as businesses and private citizens, from a range of readily available services outside of a typical council's statutory duties.

Many councils have difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff in professional and regulatory areas. Now, with greater access to a strong core team, better use of technology and a new approach to business services, they will be able to overcome these pressures and maintain the same high standards that Breckland Council demands.

These enhanced services will offer other councils the advantage of building on Breckland's development and investment. In addition, a range of services will have potential benefit for small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) that make up the core of many councils' local economies .Breckland also represents a reliable 'brand' to support such businesses, particularly in the early years of business growth.

Capita are excited at working with a Council that has such a strong reputation for seeking out new approaches to developing public services. Gordon Wilkinson, Managing Director of Capita Advisory Services, said:

"Our partnership with Breckland is a new model for partnerships between the public and private sectors. We are delighted at the prospect of working closely with the Council to identify opportunities for improvement as well as supporting their employees in realising the change. We have a great deal of experience in this area and look forward to seeing the benefits to the Council and its citizens".

The framework contract with Capita is for seven years, but the business ventures currently being set up will have a life of their own. The aim is to serve the public sector, work in partnership with the public and private sectors and provide services to both.

Mark Stokes, Interim Deputy Chief Executive of Breckland Council, is spearheading the project. Mr Stokes said:

"We are committed to excellence in public services and are at the leading edge of developing new ways of working and trading, while ensuring increased income to the Council to reduce the pressure on Council Tax and putting our customers first. We have a unique offer to other organisations in the market for high quality, targeted and affordable services. We are in the business of public service excellence".

Contacts:

Breckland Council: Mark Stokes, Interim Deputy Chief Executive *and Business Transformation Director,*

mark.stokes@breckland.gov.uk

Capita: Chris Stirling, Director of Local Government Advisory Services

chris.stirling@capita.co.uk

Case Study – RFID in Essex's Libraries

Essex County Council is using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology in its libraries to drive efficiency savings and create an enhanced customer experience.

Radio Frequency Identification is a technology which has been used in many different industries – principally in the supply chain and logistics sectors - for many years. However, over the past decade, it has also begun to be taken up by libraries around the world looking to improve the service they offer to customers, while also making efficiency gains.

The main advantage RFID offers over existing library technology is its ability to combine the functions of barcode and security device into one tag, without the need for line of sight. This combination of

features enables libraries to provide (among other things) customer-friendly self-service to its borrowers, freeing up highly-trained staff from routine processes to help customers more directly.

Essex County Council's library service was an early adopter of RFID, with Colchester becoming its first live site in 2003. With its successful introduction into three more libraries over the next couple of years, it was clear that the benefits of the technology were transferable across the county, and so a business case was drawn up to extend RFID, in partnership with BT (the county's ICT strategic partner) and system supplier Intellident, to 31 more sites. Using the "Invest to Improve" principle, the business case outlined how RFID could help transform the library service by improving customer service and re-deployment of existing resources.

However, such a transformation clearly couldn't rely simply on new technology, and so the RFID rollout became incorporated into a major programme of workforce and audience development, involving a fundamental re-branding of the service and a re-alignment of staff roles.

This programme - "Making it Happen" – drew on existing staff development packages such as FISH! (from the Pike Place Fish Market in Seattle) and Frontline (a reader development-based online course in customer service provided by Opening the Book), and combined them with advice from John Stanley Associates on how to adapt retail techniques in libraries.

As a result, library staff are now free to take on a floorwalking role, available to assist customers without the constraints of routine procedures at the counter, and are able to make full use of their training.

At the same time, a branded approach to the library entrance gives each site a similar, uncluttered feel designed to welcome and relax customers, while "Express Zones" located close by the self service units provide rapidly-changing selections of books and DVDs that "you don't have to think twice about borrowing" for those in a hurry.

Having started in January 2006, the rollout is now near completion, with all 35 sites in the programme successfully going live on schedule and within budget.

Public take-up of self service has been high, with all sites meeting the level stipulated in the business case, and many exceeding it substantially. Future developments will include a self-payment facility, and improved stock management, but "Making it Happen" has already achieved its two main aims. The efficiencies gained from self-service have enabled the library service to make its required contribution to the Gershon agenda, while the modernised approach to service delivery has seen resident satisfaction survey results improve significantly over the past three years.

For more information, contact:

Martin Palmer

Strategic Manager: Transformation & Resources

Essex County Council: Libraries

T: 01245 244954

E: martin.palmer@essexcc.gov.uk

Case Study – eProcurement at Rotherham

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council has introduced one of the most advanced eProcurement systems of any local authority in the country. The achievement was recognised earlier this year when it won the Efficiency category of the national eGovernment awards.

The way the council buys in goods and services has been transformed, and the result is efficiency savings of £2.5m in the current year. This money is being used to help fund brand new one stop customer service centres throughout the borough.

The radical change was made possible by a pioneering partnership between the council and BT. It means a £30m investment by BT over 12 years. In return, BT takes a share of the efficiency savings generated and the council ploughs back the rest of the savings into radically improving its front-line services for the citizens of Rotherham.

A joint venture company was set up in 2003. Called RBT (Connect) Ltd (Rotherham Brought Together) the partnership took over responsibility for running five departments on the council's behalf – Revenues and Benefits, ICT, HR and Payroll, Rotherham Connect (a telephone contact centre) and Procurement.

It generated investment in new technology and better, more efficient ways of doing things. This has led to more efficiency in many areas of the council's work, including procurement.

Benefits in procurement include significantly quicker and more efficient processes, a drastic reduction in paperwork generated, and major cash savings. Better buying of goods and services creates supply-chain opportunities for local and regional businesses, and the voluntary and community sectors. This significant boost to the jobs market and local economy is helping to regenerate the borough, which is re-inventing itself following the demise of its traditional coal and steel industries.

Despite an annual spend of £85m a year on buying goods and services, procurement before the partnership was fragmented and disjointed. The council has a 15,000-strong workforce on a large number of sites spread across the borough. Each departmental unit handled its own buying. There was a myriad of different supply arrangements - for example, one supplier had 40 separate contracts with the council. It was not maximising its spending power or operating with an efficient system.

Using the combined skills of the public and private sector, the partnership set about designing and introducing a tailor-made eProcurement system which would be more efficient and create savings to be ploughed back into front-line services.

Now the vast majority of council goods and services are selected, ordered and paid for on-line, without a single piece of paper being generated. The new eProcurement operation includes both leading-edge strategic sourcing and a council-wide eProcurement system.

Rotherham is in the top 10 local authorities for delivering efficiency gains for the last three years, and last year was awarded Beacon Status for procurement.

Rotherham is now using its expertise to procure goods and services for other local authorities. The procurement of shared services across local authorities is an area currently being explored by BT.

RBT (Connect) Ltd Chief Executive, Paul Broadberry, said: "It's a completely new way of buying for a local authority, and what we've achieved in Rotherham has attracted national interest. But the real winners in the end are Rotherham residents, with savings made being ploughed back into vital services."

For more information, please contact RBT Head of Procurement, Brian Leigh, on 07789 617840.

Moving Joined Up Government into the Mainstream

Andy Key, director in PricewaterhouseCoopers government and public sector practice, questions if the time has come to move joined-up government into the mainstream

It is fair to conclude that this issue has been analysed, discussed and written about extensively. Type in joined-up government and Google returns 31 million results. But how far have we travelled along the road to seeing design and delivery of public services taking the practical steps required to turn elegant theory into practice - realising the full benefits to customer service and value for money that are claimed?

There have unquestionably been some notable successes, including the national initiative to reduce child obesity and the introduction of Local Area Agreements. And there is equally no doubt that senior government figures are enthusiastic about the potential that joined-up working offers to deliver desired policy outcomes effectively and efficiently. But this good news has to be balanced against the wider reality which is that in the ten years since joined-up government was first mentioned by the Prime Minister, successful practical implementation of the concept is far from widespread.

Why the slow progress? Perhaps one of the side effects of the prolonged debate and analysis is that the conceptual frameworks for joined-up government have developed into a counsel of near-perfection, making its achievement, though desirable, seem too large and complex and just plain difficult. The truth is that it is a highly challenging and demanding undertaking in a complex and ever changing environment.

However, the value to be gained from the transformational effects that 'joined-up' brings to the customer and the taxpayer is irresistible. There are plenty of examples in the private sector of organisations - with similarly high levels of complexity, public scrutiny and cost of failure - that have made the needs of customers their organising principle. None claim perfection. But the gains made along the way and the lessons learned highlight the disparity between public and private sector productivity, growth and customer satisfaction. There is no reason why the public sector cannot make similar strides towards placing citizens' needs at the centre of its operations. When it does, the results can be astounding – witness the Identity & Passport Service's customer ratings that are well ahead of many High Street and Internet retailers.

So has the time now come to make joined-up government mainstream? The three prongs of the government's transformation strategy - back office reform, professional skills for government and front office reform – are providing a real attempt to join-up government in order to provide better value services for citizens. Along with the departmental capability review findings on the need for proper consumer insight and the Varney recommendations adopted in the last pre-budget report, there is at last a coherent and ambitious drive for change.

There will of course be further challenges and debate along the way. The current debate over the legitimacy - or otherwise - of the creation of a single repository of personal information on each citizen is just one example. Achieving change to organisational ways of working is not going to be easy. But the potential rewards in terms of efficiency and effectiveness are significant. With the ever increasing emphasis on value that underpins expectations of public service delivery, the will to achieve change has never been stronger. The mechanisms for breaking down silos and instilling new ways of working are well understood. It is now time to see them put into practice.

For further information on the contents of this article please contact andy.key@uk.pwc.com.

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Useful Links

Modernisation and Efficiency Division

Communities and Local Government
3/G5, Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU
E-mail: med@communities.gsi.gov.uk
Web: [Better Public Services](http://www.betterpublicservices.gov.uk)

Communities and Local Government

Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU
Tel: 020 7944 4400
Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk>

Local Government Employers

Local Government House,
Smith Square,
London
SW1P 3HZ
Tel: 020 7664 3131
Web: <http://www.lge.gov.uk>

Improvement & Development Agency and IDEA Knowledge

Layden House
76-86 Turnmill St
London
EC1M 5LG
Tel: 020 7296 6693
Web: <http://www.idea.gov.uk>
IDEA Knowledge: knowledge@idea.gov.uk

Audit Commission

1st Floor,
Millbank Tower,
Millbank,
London
SW1P 4HQ
Tel: 020 7828 1212
Web: <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk>

4ps

Layden House
76 – 86 Turnmill Street
London
EC1M 5LG
Tel: 020 7296 7777
Web: <http://www.4ps.gov.uk>

Care Services Efficiency Delivery

Department of Health
Wellington House
135-155 Waterloo Road
London
SE1 8UG
Tel: 020 7972 4641
Web: <http://www.csed.csip.org.uk>

Ourpartnership

c/o NCVO
Regent's Wharf
8 All Saints Road
London
N1 9RL
Telephone number: 0207 520 2428
Web: <http://www.ourpartnership.org.uk/>
E-mail: info@ourpartnership.org.uk

The Local Government Procurement Forum

Communities and Local Government
3/H6, Eland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5DU
E-mail: procurement@communities.gsi.gov.uk
Web: <http://www.communities.gov.uk>

The Local Government Task Force

Warwick House
25 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1W 0PP
Tel: 020 7837 8286
Web: <http://www.lgtf.org.uk>
E-mail: info@lgtf.org.uk

Constructionline and National Pre- Qualification Service

PO Box 6441, Basingstoke
RG21 7FN
Tel: 0870 607 1602
Email: mconstructionline@capita.co.uk or
<mailto:npqs@capita.co.uk>
Web: www.constructionline.co.uk or
www.npqs.co.uk

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

Cornwall Court
19 Cornwall Street
Birmingham
B3 2DT
E-mail: laura.divall@uk.pwc.com

Links to the Regional Centres of Excellence

East of England Centre of Excellence

Centre of Excellence East of England
East of England House
Meridan Way
Norwich
NR7 0TA
Tel: 01603 704 010
Web: <http://www.eastspace.net/eecpe/>

East Midlands Centre of Excellence

East Midlands Centre of Excellence
47 Loughborough Road
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 7LA
Tel: 0115 977 3875
Web: www.emce.gov.uk

London Centre of Excellence

London Centre of Excellence
Association of London Government
59½ Southwark Street
London
SE1 0AL
Tel: 020 7934 9967
Web: www.lcpe.gov.uk

North East Centre of Excellence

North East Centre of Excellence
Gateshead Civic Centre
Regent Street
Gateshead
NE8 1HH
Tel: 0191 433 2257
Web: www.nece.gov.uk

North West Centre of Excellence

North West Centre of Excellence
Tameside Metropolitan Borough
Council Council Offices
Wellington Road
Ashton-under-Lyne
OL6 6DL
Tel: 0161 342 4080
Web: www.nwce.org.uk

South East Centre of Excellence

South East Centre of Excellence
Kent County Council
Sessions House Room 1.60
Maidstone
Kent
ME14 1XQ
Tel: 01622 696 317
Web: www.kent.gov.uk/sece

South West Centre of Excellence

South West Centre of Excellence
Suite 5
Stowey House
Bridport Road
Poundbury
Dorchester
Dorset
DT1 3SB
Tel: 01305 757 230
Web: www.swce.gov.uk

West Midlands Centre of Excellence

West Midlands Centre of Excellence
Sentinel House
The Courtyard
Harris Business Park
Hanbury Road
Bromsgrove
B60 4DJ
Tel: 01527 839 200
Web: www.wmcoe.gov.uk

Yorkshire and the Humber Centre of Excellence

Yorkshire & the Humber Centre of Excellence
1st Floor St George House
Great George Street
Leeds
LS1 3DL
Tel: 0113 247 5252
Web: <http://www.yhcoe.rcoe.gov.uk>

National website for the Efficiency Programme in Local Government.

Web: <http://www.rcoe.gov.uk>

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