

new ways of working in local authorities



a routemap to help implement cultural change

introduction

about this routemap

This routemap is intended to help you implement cultural change when introducing new ways of working in your local authority. If you are a manager, the routemap will help you to assess the impact of new ways of working in your authority and the associated cultural implications. If you are a member of staff involved in change, these questions will help you in the consultation process.

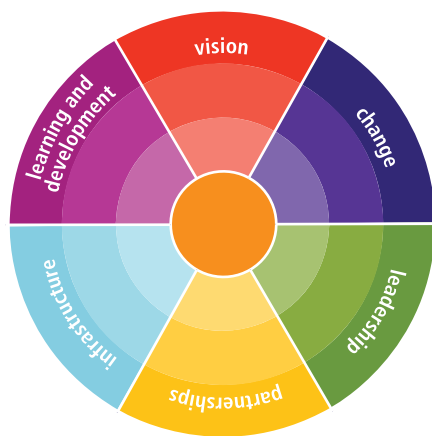
The main themes of cultural change are inter-related, as shown in the diagram opposite. The routemap explores each of these themes from a strategic, business and operational perspective to help you to plan and manage the change.

what are new ways of working?

New ways of working are about a coalition of interests between customers, who want more flexibility in accessing services, employees, who desire greater choice and control over their working patterns, and councils who are providing improved customer services and making efficiencies.

New ways of working involve culture change to realise improved customer focused service delivery through the benefits of ICT. They are about much more than just flexible working hours; they are about developing workforce flexibility in the sense of how, when and where people work, and what they do when they are at work.

New ways of working are part of the people strategy that local authorities should develop to become fleet of foot in their ability to change. They need to have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time.



What will help your council to succeed?

- Plan for the long term: take a long term approach to change, rather than implementing change in a disjointed and reactive way.
- Manage the change: treat change as an important business process, as part of a planned programme, with dedicated individuals responsible for formally leading and managing change before, during and after implementation.
- Communicate openly and honestly: keep stakeholders regularly informed, encourage feedback and act on it throughout the project.
- Don't underestimate the cultural change: understand what change will mean for the workforce; involve them in defining the change; provide them with adequate support to make the change a success.

vision

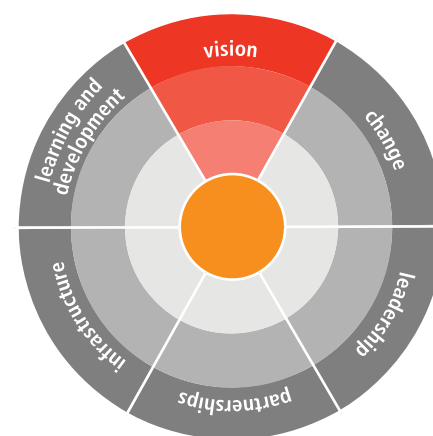
The vision is a statement of the end goal – what your council and partners are trying to achieve with new ways of working.

strategic perspective

- Is the vision for your council and its community clear and challenging enough?
- Does the vision define what your council wants to achieve, why and how, as well as benefits to the customer, the council and staff – in a way that people can identify with and be enthusiastic about?
- Is it based on a shared understanding amongst the council and your partners of local needs?
- What lessons can be learned from the experiences of others?

RBT Connect Ltd is a partnership between Rotherham Council and a private sector IT company, winner of the Guardian innovation and progress, recruitment and retention award for 2005. Investment in new technology and training in the Revenues and Benefits service has already improved services for the user and allowed staff to undertake home working to achieve a better work-life balance. 'This ambitious project shows a commitment to making radical change, improving employees' lives and the effectiveness of the council.' The main drivers were reducing an ageing property portfolio of council offices, improving recruitment and retention of staff and productivity improvements to attract a wide range of employees.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council



business perspective

- Are the priorities clear?
- What compromises need to be made between local priorities, mandatory requirements and partners' priorities?
- Can better value for money be achieved from use of resources, such as improved cost management, procurement practices and efficiency gains achieved?

operational perspective

- Does the vision focus on what matters most – aiming for better performance, rather than productivity improvements and cost reductions alone?
- Is it realistic about what can be achieved with the current skill sets, budget and timeframe?

'The benefits are vast in terms of being able to work at a time in the day convenient to you and your customers.'

'Happy employees means less stress, less sick leave and a more productive workforce. Fact.'

Bracknell Forest Borough Council

change

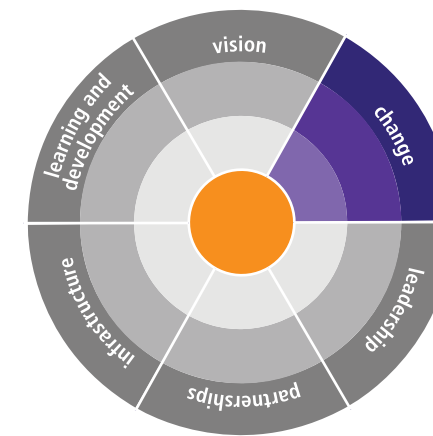
The change initiative defines the outcomes to be achieved, the stakeholders involved and plans for implementing the change.

strategic perspective

- Why is this initiative important for your council – improved recruitment and retention, business continuity, opportunities for efficiency gains, better management of assets and resources or enabling a better learning organisation?
- What benefits will this initiative achieve for staff, customers and partners?
- Who are the stakeholders you need to involve in the development of your strategic plan?

business perspective

- Consultation – how will stakeholders (including staff, officers and members) be consulted and informed throughout the project about the proposed changes and about how they can play an active role in improving front line services?
- How will your council work with staff to best match the service requirements to the person and job profile?
- What equalities and diversity issues will need to be addressed? What are the opportunities for workforce development and improved work-life balance?
- What are the baselines for current performance? How will performance be measured and assessed – quality measures, productivity measures and cash savings?



operational perspective

- People – what are the impacts of policy issues relating to health, safety and welfare at work? What will be the most challenging issues such as isolation and need to communicate in different ways?
- Processes and systems – where are the opportunities for efficiencies? What equipment and support systems will be required, such as remote data connectivity and security?
- Performance – how will managers make the switch to managing performance by output?
- Resources and finance – what is the estimated whole-life cost of new ways of working – not just the initial installation of new equipment but its maintenance over time; changing cost of accommodation; funding of shared services; staff costs etc? What upfront investment do we need?

'Adapting to new working practices is a learning curve. The success of the project has been driven by management trust and staff know they are assessed on achievement. Through regular creative team meetings the council continues to ensure that staff do not feel isolated.'

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

sources of advice and help

Improvement and Development Agency
www.idea.gov.uk
IDeA Knowledge delivers in-depth improvement news and examples of good practice from councils across England and Wales, and provides access to IDeA's range of tools and services.

New Ways of Working Knowledge Base
www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/flex/intro.do?qid=1075083

This knowledge base is a signposting tool that addresses questions and issues that councils face when implementing new ways of working and associated cultural change. The questions are presented under key topics and perspectives.

Project Nomad
www.projectnomad.org.uk
Project Nomad – The National Project supported by the ODPM, and owned by Cambridgeshire County Council, met its objectives to create, under one umbrella, a comprehensive set of deliverables to enable any council to establish a mobile working operation with ease and confidence.

Employers Organisation (EO)
www.lg-employers.gov.uk
The EO's role is to help councils achieve high standards of people management and development needed to ensure continuous improvement of services.

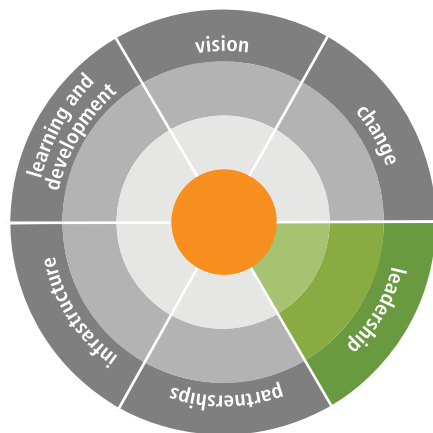
eCapacity Building Programme
www.ecapacitybuilding.org – (on the IDeA site Spring 2006) www.idea.gov.uk
The eCapacity Building Programme is funded by the ODPM as part of the Local e-Government Programme and the wider Capacity Building Partnership with the LGA.

Acknowledgements
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Improvement and Development Agency
Layden House, 76-86 Turmill Street, London EC1M 5LG
telephone 020 7296 6600 fax 020 7296 6666
www.idea.gov.uk

leadership

Leadership is about setting policy and providing effective direction to the planning and management of new ways of working, together with continual championing of the change.



strategic perspective

- Thinking about success from the perspectives of managers and workforce – what will make them want to adopt new ways of working? How will senior managers sell the vision across the council, inspiring and engaging the stakeholders, including partners?
- Strengthening the strategic objectives in the business case – what benefits will this initiative achieve for your staff, for your customers and partners using your authority's services? How will the benefits be managed?
- Your stakeholders, including partners – how will they be involved in development of your council's strategic plan, including governance requirements, changes to processes, the funding required and the main risks?

business perspective

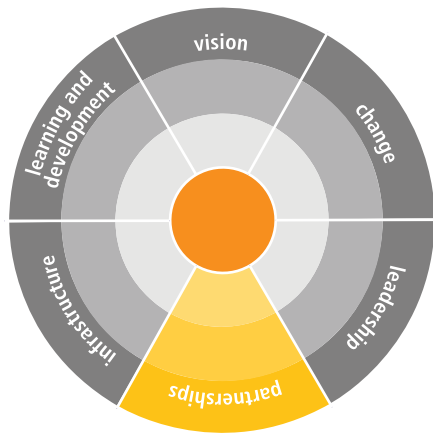
- Who will lead and manage the consultations with stakeholders, especially staff as the key stakeholders?
- What are the potential cultural barriers to success that will need to be addressed, such as concerns about how performance will be judged?
- What are the financial issues to be resolved, including remote/home working costs and insurance?
- How will communications with staff need to change after implementation, such as more face-to-face team meetings?

operational perspective

- How will your council establish a governance framework for effective working across members, officers and partners?
- Who should lead and where do accountabilities/responsibilities lie?
- What internal policies will you need to change/create? What can be learned from the experiences of other councils?
- What ICT support will be needed and what is the scope for rationalising property/accommodation?

partnerships

Partnerships are key relationships between the authority and other organisations involved in service delivery, who may be in the public or voluntary sectors or private sector suppliers; there are also key stakeholders whose interests must be addressed.



strategic perspective

- Who are your council's key partners? Are their relationships with your council and with each other clearly understood and agreed?
- Which of the project's stakeholders have a strategic interest in the change, such as trade unions? How will you engage with them?
- Are the priorities of partners and other stakeholders aligned? If not, how will conflicting interests be resolved?
- How will your council with its partners provide leadership across the community and ensure effective partnership working?

business perspective

- What opportunities have service managers identified to improve service delivery? How much will they need to redesign business processes and systems to realise the benefits of new ways of working?
- What are the key equalities and diversities issues, such as reaching socially excluded groups? How will these be resolved?

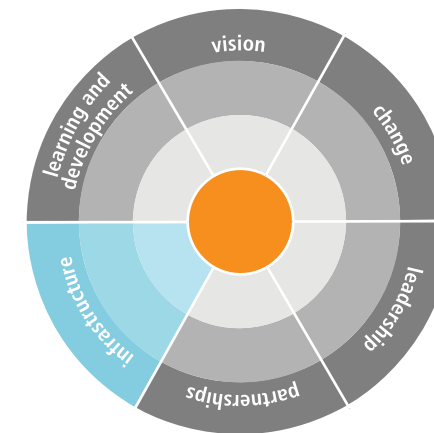
operational perspective

- How will partnerships be managed at the everyday operational level? What needs to be done about roles, expectations, responsibilities and priorities? How will trust be established and what communications are needed?
- How will partnership performance be managed? What baselines and benchmarks are required?

Working in partnership with its private sector IT provider, Westminster City Council's Wireless City network delivers wireless broadband access across the borough. It supports a variety of applications to benefit residents, the business community and visitors.

infrastructure

Infrastructure is about providing the physical and technical environment to support and sustain new ways of working; it must enable staff to work when and where required, with access to the information they need.



strategic perspective

- What is the scope? Identify what you do now and how it is done, then establish how you want to do things differently. What are the options for achieving the outcome you want?
- What are the key priorities that would be enabled by investment in ICT, such as completing more casework in the field, saving time by not travelling to the office, better use of resources etc?
- What are the main ICT and property implications of change to the frontline workforce, management, corporate services (HR, Health and Safety, ICT), partners, other stakeholders?
- How will multiple infrastructure-related strategies and policies (eg HR and ICT) for different service areas be aligned/integrated?
- How will ICT enable 'joined up' service delivery across service and organisational boundaries, now and in the future (interoperability)?
- Can/should your authority collaborate with others on ICT investment, such as shared procurement and shared solutions?

business perspective

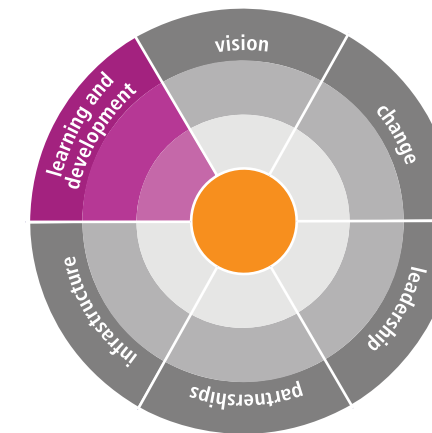
- What are the funding requirements? Are they sustainable and do they facilitate partnership working?
- What changes need to be made to the way information is managed, accessed and protected?
- What infrastructure do you need to enable staff to share sensitive information across different service areas?
- For individual services, what are the technical requirements to support new ways of working eg mobile devices with interface to back office systems and access to real time connections?
- What are the main procurement considerations, eg need for new contracts/providers/partners?

operational perspective

- What are the legal implications relevant to individual service areas, eg social services working with children and those at risk?
- What are the requirements for health and safety, security and risk management?
- What are the ICT support, training and development needs for managers and staff?
- What physical workspace will staff need, such as storage for mobile, touchdown facilities and meeting areas?

learning and development

Learning and development is about learning from the experiences of implementing new ways of working, including the experiences of others, and applying those lessons in order to improve; it should be part of a culture of learning and sharing lessons.



strategic perspective

- What are the success criteria in detail? How will success be measured and assessed?
- What lessons can be learned about redesign of current processes and systems, ICT infrastructure requirements, changes in accommodation requirements?
- Is ongoing communication and engagement with stakeholders effective? If not, what needs to change?
- How will the above be continuously reviewed in order to feed into ongoing learning and development?
- What are the key sources for learning from others? Do you have lessons that your project team should be sharing for the common good?

'The pilot scheme involving some officers was good because it gave others more confidence.'

Bracknell Forest Borough Council

business perspective

- How will staff be empowered to learn and develop their skills?
- What are the requirements for e-capacity? How will they be addressed and improvements measured?
- What are the requirements for e-skills training? Can they be met?

operational perspective

- How will your project learn from others who have already made the change?
- What training and development will be given to staff – and managers – to ensure more effective use of ICT? How will its effectiveness be assessed?
- What lessons are being learned that improve your authority's project management skills? Are they being put into action?

Partially sighted Terry O'Shea is a key call centre operator for Swale Borough Council. He says 'The council has really looked after my needs, ensuring that I'm an important member of the customer contact team, and that I've got the technology I need to do the job to the best of my abilities.'