

Foreword

The current state of the public finances means that service redesign and new delivery models need to be actively and urgently considered, challenging the fundamental nature and scope of the services being provided. In recent years, because of the economic climate, greater emphasis has been placed on collaboration, particularly between organisations providing public services and support.

Unfortunately the results of collaboration and shared services has left a lot to be desired and the push for greater effectiveness and efficiency has not always resulted in benefit for the organisations involved or for the UK tax payer.

There is a plethora of methodologies and structures aimed at delivering a successful outcome. Most focus on what could be described as the ‘hard’ elements of service development – finance, organisation structure and process. Yet the failure rate of shared and new services remains high, indicating that there is something missing.

Research has shown that new shared services and collaborations often lose sight of their fundamental driving purpose – the provision of service to individual customers – leading to disappointment and ultimately to failure. Too often, the emphasis is on process and structure, and not on the core component – people.

Perhaps it is time to take an alternative view of some of the issues that need to be addressed when creating and launching shared services and collaborations; one that concentrates on people – how they are motivated, developed, organised and encouraged to innovate.

This publication approaches the subject of service sharing and collaboration from this perspective. It has been developed to provide practical help and food for thought for all those involved in designing and operating such developments. It contains a bibliography that lists a selection of useful resources on the topics addressed in this publication for those who are interested in pursuing particular aspects further.

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