



Using the Golden Thread to deliver your SOA

With the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) and Best Value 2, you will be judged more and more on what you deliver. And that means that making sure your performance management is top notch will be crucial. As the SOA guidance* says:

“Below the waterline of the SOAs ...there must be robust performance arrangements, to which there should be a very clear line of sight from the SOA document” .

The prize? Better services and reduced scrutiny.

So, what do we offer?

Healthcheck

We look at how you manage your performance, starting with the SOA and going to service plans or beyond. There's a knack in managing performance so that you can be as sure as possible of achieving targets, without drowning in paper work. We'll analyse your plans and performance reports and look at how your staff use them to see if what you do is robust and streamlined eg:

- Are your SOA commitments picked up in your plans?
- Have you got the right measures?
- ...and not too many of them?
- Are performance reports clear and succinct?
- Is corrective action taken when things aren't going to plan?
- Will SOA reports be able to fulfil the 'dual purpose' (SOAs – Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships) of public and government audiences?

Based on our work, we'll make straightforward recommendations for making improvements.

Making Improvements

We can work with you to improve your performance management eg strengthening your plans, simplifying your reports – improving all the “below the SOA waterline” mechanics that are vital to delivery.

We'll work with you to tailor-make solutions that are right for you and your situation. Some examples where we have worked with staff to make improvements:

- Developed new service planning guidelines to simplify plans and make sure that they actually delivered the corporate priorities.
- Developed performance reporting to councillors so that reports were clearer, simpler, more balanced; showed corrective action; and took less time for staff to produce.
- 'Critical friend' analysis of draft plans and performance reports followed by constructive and supportive feedback to staff. This is especially helpful when new formats are being introduced so that the entire council is operating new arrangements effectively from day one.
- Expert advice on how to manage, in a streamlined way, the potentially conflicting roles of theme and locality committees in considering performance plans and reports.
- Developed innovative approach to integrating locality planning with public performance reporting on the SOA.

What is the starting point?

A discussion with you. From there we will prepare a detailed proposal with number of days required, what we plan to do and what the benefits to you will be. We are happy to work also with your community planning partners.

Our experience

Lesley Bloomer and Karen Chapman deliver this work. We are experts in performance management and, crucially, have the ability to work alongside staff to help them understand why changes are needed and how to make them.

We have worked with West Lothian, Perth & Kinross, South Lanarkshire, Glasgow, Fife, Renfrewshire, Aberdeen, South Ayrshire and East Dunbartonshire Councils. The value of our input is demonstrated by the level of follow-on work our clients ask us to do.

For further information please contact the Resource Centre.

You can either phone on **0845 601 0649** or email resource.centre@solaceenterprises.com To find out more about SOLACE Enterprises and our full range of consultancy services see www.solaceenterprises.com

* SOAs – Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships, Oct 08; SOLACE Scotland, Improvement Service, COSLA, Audit Scotland, Scottish Government.

