

NWEGG

Programme Plan

2008 - 2010





NWeGG Programme Plan 2008-10

Report by: [NWeGG](#) Programme Office

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1 Purpose of this paper

This report provides an update of NWeGG's achievements and proposes a new programme for 2008/10 to which councils and their delivery partners are asked to subscribe.

The NWeGG Executive believes that NWeGG has always and will continue to offer good value to the councils in the North West based on the achievement of clear objectives and deliverables.

Indeed this programme has been defined with the input and guidance of a very large number of North West Local Authorities and their partners. It is also designed to complement the North West Improvement and Efficiency Strategy arising from CSR07 and the Local Government White Paper and, it is hoped, complement the sub-regional improvement and efficiency strategies that are being developed in each of the five North West sub-regions.

Any comments on this paper can be made to the NWeGG Programme Office via phil.swan@nwegg.org.uk.

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3 Executive Summary

NWeGG is truly a partnership. It is strongly driven by a large number of councils from across the region via the NWeGG Executive and several large working groups. Since the publication of the last NWeGG two year programme in 2005, NWeGG has helped councils in the North West to be more effective through:

- Over 70 practitioner focused workshops, seminars and conference aimed at increasing skills, knowledge and sharing good practice;
- Helped councils engage with national initiatives such as Tell Us One, Government Connect, the National Process Improvement Programme and more.
- Researched regional needs in areas such as project and programme management, business continuity in customer services and process cost modelling;
- Developed specific tools and thinking for councils, such as the Circles of Need model for mapping broad citizen needs against specific council services.

The total value of this activity is very significant and, it is felt, justifies the contributions that councils are asked to make to support the NWeGG partnership.

Looking ahead, this document describes the programme of work that NWeGG proposes to undertake from April 2008 to March 2010 with support from North West Local Authorities. At the heart of the programme are Local Authorities' needs for support in several key areas that are enablers of change and transformation. These are summarised below in terms of programme areas and target outcomes :

Programme Area	Target Outcomes
Excellence in Business Process Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have seen some really transformed services that are properly modernised • There will be lots of evidence of good practice shared and implemented. • There will have been a culture change in leadership and management that delivers more effective change and encourages staff to be part of change.
Right Track North West	<p>To increase the ability of local authorities to improve their programme and project management capabilities so that more organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and can manage their total portfolio of projects • Are better at delivering individual projects and programmes • Can offer better career development for project and programme managers
Excellence in Customer Service Management	<p>To enable councils to deliver the right front line services to the right people in a cost effective, engaging and joined up way.</p>
Effective Information Sharing and Security	<p>To help enable successful and secure sharing of information between councils and their partners in a number of areas, particularly: Crime and disorder, Every Child Matters and Antisocial behaviour</p>

It is important to emphasise that these programmes of work are expected to dovetail with sub-regional programmes funded through the NW Improvement and Efficiency Partnership and that they incorporate a strong area based delivery element. For example, the emphasis on joining up service delivery around customer needs, that is part of the strategy for Excellence in Customer Services, builds on the need for strong local partnering.

This programme has been developed with input from the majority of North West Local Authorities through discussion and review at working groups between November and April 2007. The development of the NW Improvement and Efficiency Partnership has run alongside this and both the NWeGG Executive and Local Authorities have been mindful that the two programmes fit together effectively.

Budget, Funding and Subscription

The NWeGG Executive appreciates the need to keep costs down and, as NWeGG has done in the past, the partnership aims to be very effective in making good use the resources available. The cost per annum of the 2008-10 programme is shown in the table below and this includes £150,000 of support per annum from the NWIEP which will deliver a number of Added Value activities. The funding for the Core Programme will continue to be subscription based and Local Authorities are asked to continue to support the partnership.

Programme	Core programme	NW IEP funding	Total	Estimated non cashable saving
Business Process Improvement	£47,500	£40,000	£87,500	£614,000
RTNW	£52,000	£42,500	£94,500	£894,500
Customer Service Mgmt	£46,500	£37,500	£84,000	£1,089,000
Information Sharing and Security	£64,500	£30,000	£94,500	£1,515,500
Core hosting and operating support	£20,000		£20,000	
Total	£230,500	£150,000	£380,500	£4,113,000

The subscription rates are slightly higher than for the 2006-8 period as the subscription costs were underwritten by the North West Centre of Excellence during that time, however feedback to date indicates that organisations still believe this to represent good value.

Organization Type	Membership cost (£k)	Number of Members¹	Total (£k)
Upper tier councils (metropolitan, county and unitary status councils)	£9,000	20	£180,000
District councils	£2,000	24	£48,000
Police, Fire, Primary Care Trusts	£2,500	1	£2,500
		TOTAL	£230,500

The programme that underpins this has been designed to meet some of the most immediate needs of local authorities and it is sincerely hoped that, as a region, we can continue to work together to improve through this long running partnership.

¹ Number of organisations are based on the level of membership during 2007-8.

4 Introduction

NWeGG's purpose, put simply, is to help councils to manage change more effectively in order to deliver better services for taxpayers in more cost effective ways. In 2007, this mission was described in terms of the four core principles of NWeGG, as shown below.



The NWeGG Executive believes that these principles are as relevant as ever to North West Local Authorities and their partners, particularly given the rising pressures from Government and expectation of our citizens and customers.

The proposed NWeGG programme draws strongly on these principles and has been developed consultation with a large number of people from Local Authorities across the region, including many senior officers, the NWeGG Executive, representatives of the NWCE and the NWIN. Feedback also includes priorities suggested to NWeGG by Sir David Varney and representatives from the Audit Commission, IDeA and Cabinet Office.

For the past two years, NWeGG has been supported by contributions of the vast majority North West Local Authorities, plus other organisations such as Merseyside Fire and Rescue. Upper tier councils have contributed £8,000 per annum and lower tier, £1500. This has been supplemented by £47,000 per year from the NWCE. This programme asks that Local Authorities and other support agencies in the region continue to engage with and support the NWeGG partnership and, together, help create a better North West.

5 NWeGG headline achievements from 2007-8

Capacity and skills development achievements:

- Over 30 NWeGG events have been held with over 1500 stakeholders who are registered on the NWeGG website.

- special interest groups are regularly facilitated with expert regional and national speakers, administration, venues and web resources. Each group regularly receives specific newsletters that address key issues facing those specific professionals.
- Over 80 speakers have been arranged with materials published on the NWeGG website for subsequent download.
- Working with government departments and programmes, specific regional events on topics such as the new contact centre performance management framework have been held.

Project led achievements:

- Over 100 people are involved in the North West Programme and Project Management improvement programme, called Right Track North West. This is helping councils address high failure levels in projects and programmes, low capacity, governance issues and costs. It was recently given an award for Innovation in Programme and Project Management, by the Best Practice User Group and sponsored by the OGC. Right Track North West is also supported by NWIN.
- The 120 people in the Customer Service Managers group specified the need for a common basis on which to improve business continuity in customer services. The results from this report are startling and a copy has been sent to all North West Chief Executives and Customer Services Managers. The recommendations will be pursued as part of the 2008-10 programme.
- The 150 people in the Business Process Improvement (BPI) community highlighted the need for standards in process costing to enable councils to compare processes and transaction costs. NWeGG attracted CLG funding for this work and developed the Cost Architecture methodology. This is currently being prepared for publication by the CLG with Ministerial support for a national adoption of the approach and standards it proposes.
- NWeGG funded 7 NW councils to develop a new model for mapping services around specific customer needs. The term derived for this is 'Circles of Need'. This identifies enormous opportunities for both service improvement and generation of front and back office efficiencies. Chorley BC, the lead authority, recently secured funding from the CLG to pilot this work and, working with the same group of councils, develop it further.
- NWeGG supported the NW Shared Service Programme during 2007-8, alongside the NWCE. This has helped define collaborative service delivery strategies for each of the North West sub-regions.

Live services

- NWeGG runs the NW Warning Advice and Reporting Point (WARP) for 17 councils in partnership with Liverpool John Moores Universities.

6 Strategic Context

NWeGG's purpose, put simply, is to help councils to manage change more effectively in order to deliver better services for taxpayers in more cost effective ways.

NWeGG was formed to help councils tackle the 'eGovernment' agenda. In the final year of the eGovernment programme there was also a push for councils to meet a number of Priority Outcomes, which included requirements that councils adopt more fundamental

changes to the ways in which services were delivered. Whilst the relevance of some of those outcomes was debated, the Priority Outcomes signified a shift towards a more systemic and joined up level of ICT enabled service delivery that was the forebear of the Transformational Strategy, which was published in late 2005 by the Cabinet Office².

That paper highlighted the role that technology has to play in the transformation of public services for the benefit of citizens, business, taxpayers and staff. The challenge posed was not just to improve services and generate efficiencies, but to think differently and innovatively about how, where and with whom services could be delivered more effectively.

The Varney Review, published in 2006, and the subsequent CSR-07 and associated Service Transformation Review further clarified Government's aspirations for transformation of service delivery across all tiers of public service delivery. In particular there has been a call for:

- Better and more effective sharing of information to enable joined up service delivery
- A greater awareness of the needs of citizens and a greater respect for the amount of time and effort citizens often have to make in dealing with the public sector
- Co-location of services to better meet the needs of citizens

What does this mean for councils? It means that a new paradigm of service delivery is required that is driven by a comprehensive understanding of what our customer want and which requires an very open minded view of the best methods of delivering services, taking into account the potential for different partners to work together at a deeper level of collaboration than currently practiced.

Added to this, the CSR-07 settlement has placed a requirement for the North West to reduce costs by some £650 million³ by 2010-11 as an ongoing annual cost reduction compared to the baseline in 2007-8. This is clearly a massive challenge for almost all councils and will place a real premium on people will be capabilities to deliver efficiencies without impacting service levels.

Individual councils are looking to deliver services against a backdrop of local priorities within twenty two Local Area Agreements and which are now being reformed in line with the new guidelines. In addition, four Multi-Area Agreements which will reshape service delivery across traditional boundaries, are being negotiated across Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Fylde Coast and Pennine Lancashire respectively. Finally, the two tier structure in Cheshire is being split into two the new unitary councils of Cheshire East and Cheshire West as part of the Local Government Review of services.

The one factor that is constant throughout all this is change. More specifically, consistently delivering improvements and generating efficiencies by understanding the needs of citizens and thinking differently about how services can be delivered, including fundamental service redesign and getting into difficult areas like productivity.

This means delivering change in line with citizens needs, on time, on budget, as planned, innovatively, with good leadership and buy-in from staff and managers, learning from the successes and failures of other councils and applying the most appropriate tools and standards. This is not easy. Every council has examples of initiatives or projects that failed

² Further information on the national policy drivers for North West Local Authorities can be found in the Appendix.

³ Source: North West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership strategy

to deliver on their promises and it is important for the North West as a region that our public sector is better at it.

NWeGG was created to help councils tackle the eGovernment agenda and has evolved to serve the needs of councils since then. The purpose of the NWeGG programme for 2008-10 is to help councils in the North West to tackle these new challenges in line with the needs of their communities and the wider policy agenda.

7 NWeGG and the North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership

The North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NWIEP) was formed in early 2008 by a merger of the North West Improvement Network (NWIN) and North West Centre of Excellence (NWCE). It was agreed by the NWIEP Steering Group that other support organisations in the North West such as the Employers Organisation and NWeGG would not form part of the programme scope out the outset, but the NWIEP would look to these organisations to support the NWIEP's programme.

NWeGG's programme of work closely aligns with the NWIEP strategy and in particular will help the NWIEP tackle the following areas⁴:

- Linking the transformational changes currently required in many local services, with the drive for efficiency
- Supporting collaboration, between local authorities and with other public service providers, to achieve whole system change

Specifically the NWeGG programme will help the NWIEP fulfil its objectives in two of the nine priority areas:

- Transformational government and the citizen
- Efficiency

On the 20th May 2008, the NWIEP agreed to support an Added Value programme of NWeGG activities with £150,000 per annum over two years. This supplements a Core Programme that will still be subscription based. Both of these elements are described below.

⁴ Source: NWIEP Strategy, 25th February 2008

8 2008-10 Programme Introduction

The NWeGG Programme for 2008-10 is centred on four programme areas that complement each other and which lie at the heart of any organisations change agenda. The desire to focus on these four areas and to offer more individual organisation support reflects the needs that councils and their partners have articulated to NWeGG above and beyond the traditional information brokering through working groups, seminars and projects that NWeGG offers.

There is also a strong sense that, as a region, if we do not collaborate on these areas then we will not effectively tackle the changes that are required of local government in the coming years. The four areas and the target outcomes for 2008-10 are clearly defined in the following sections of this document and are summarised in the table below.

Programme Area	Target Outcomes
Excellence in Business Process Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have seen some really transformed services that are properly modernised • There will be lots of evidence of good practice shared and implemented. • There will have been a culture change in leadership and management that delivers more effective change and encourages staff to be part of change.
Right Track North West	<p>To increase the ability of local authorities to improve their programme and project management capabilities so that more organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and can manage their total portfolio of projects • Are better at delivering individual projects and programmes • Can offer better career development for project and programme managers
Excellence in Customer Service Management	<p>To enable councils to deliver the right front line services to the right people in a cost effective, engaging and joined up way.</p>
Effective Information Sharing and Security	<p>To help enable successful and secure sharing of information between councils and their partners in a number of areas, particularly: Crime and disorder, Every Child Matters and Antisocial behaviour</p>

Each of these areas is described in greater detail in the following sections.

9 The Excellence in Business Process Improvement Programme

9.1 Introduction

The CSR-07 report and accompanying documents from the Communities and Local Government⁵ suggest that the North West has an objective of saving in the region of £234 million⁶ from business process improvement (BPI) related activities as an annualised improvement by 2011. Ignoring the relative sizes of councils, this equates to just over £5 million per council. In fact, the figure is likely greater as most councils need to save in excess of the 3% required by Government during this period as a result of local and demographic financial pressures.

This is an enormous challenge for us as a region in part because of the relatively short timeframe in which these savings needs to be achieved and in part because of the pressures to maintain service quality and performance.

Given these pressures it is evident that for the North West to successfully apply business process improvement there will need to be a high level of effective collaboration that will enable organisations to

- Share information on service areas where quick gains can be made.
- Develop skills and capacity.
- Access private sector skills quickly and cost effectively.
- Draw on the resources and experiences of others in the region.
- Identify and use the most appropriate tools for the jobs in hand.

9.2 Overall Aims and Objectives

Over 35 North West councils have contributed to the development of the programme proposed below. The people involved are passionate about the real and tangible need for a better approach to BPI in the region and both the awareness raising that is needed at senior level and capacity to make it happen. They identified three overriding objectives for the BPI programme:

Summary objective	Detail
We will have seen some really transformed services that are properly modernised	<p>Councils would have taken a more strategic approach to efficiency savings, rather than just looking to achieve a 3% across the board. In particular, councils will have moved from a 'sticking plaster' approach to change, and moved to a more proactive and holistic strategic approach including applying appropriate governance.</p> <p>Councils will have put in place solutions that sustain or improve service levels whilst achieving efficiencies, and not just reduce staff headcount.</p> <p>Councils will be able to evidence value for money and have</p>

⁵ Delivering Value for Money in Local Government: Meeting the Challenge of CSR07

⁶ Based on a regional target of £650m annual saving by end 2011 as described in the NWIEP strategy.

	<p>driven change from an understanding of their customers' needs.</p> <p>Councils will have worked effectively with central government departments in delivering significant change.</p> <p>Citizens will have been encouraged successfully to change their habits to help councils be more efficient and effective.</p>
There will be lots of evidence of good practice shared and implemented.	Councils will not just be sharing good practice, but there will be tangible evidence that they are adopting it from each other.
There will have been a culture change in leadership and management that delivers more effective change and encourages staff to be part of change	<p>Councils will have been successful in making their organisations more receptive to significant levels of change and encouraged continuous improvement.</p> <p>Senior officers and members will have been leading this change and have a better understanding of risk management.</p> <p>Change management will have been recognised as a discipline in councils, including BPR and programme and project management.</p>

These objectives are wide ranging and represent very significant challenges to the status quo and will require a real and concerted effort to deliver through an approach that will need to engage with and support a wide number of stakeholders at different levels.

Based on these objectives and with input from councils, a BPI programme has been developed that consists of a set of 'Core' activities that would be funded by the NWeGG subscription and 'Added Value' activities that are being supported by the NWIEP.

9.3 Core BPI Programme

The following section describes the activities proposed within the core NWeGG programme for 2008-10.

<p>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contacting all NWeGG member councils to confirm who the BPI or transformation lead is within each council and ensuring that they are aware of the NWeGG programme.
<p>SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and maintenance of information to enable councils to identify other councils that are improving similar service areas and to hold benchmarking information on transaction and process costs using a common approach. - Matching making between councils working on the same service areas or using the same tools. The focus will be on high cost areas with the potential for joining up across other partners such as Fire and Police. - Ad hoc support for queries from councils on BPI and work that is currently ongoing in the region.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 SPRINT training courses run at a discount for NWeGG members. - Promoting existing framework agreements for BPI consulting support and training.
<p>KNOWLEDGE SHARING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good practice, information and links to relevant initiatives published on the NWeGG website. - Online community tools for knowledge sharing on the NWeGG website. - 5 regional good practice focused knowledge sharing and networking events with particular focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Change in major service areas, such as adult social care. o Customer insight driven transformational programmes within individual councils. o Cross or multiple organisational change on LAA themes such as crime and disorder or antisocial behaviour. - Coordination between the sub-regions and region on BPI related support and activities so that sharing occurs and duplication is avoided. - Effective sharing of analysis on information and policy from government of BPR and change, such as the CLG's Business Improvement Package, the esd toolkit and the 4Ps Improvement Network.
<p>SHAPING NATIONAL AGENDAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying opportunities for NW councils to engage with national programmes

9.4 Added Value BPI Programme

As described above, NWeGG has sought NWIEP funding to deliver an Added Value BPI Programme. A significant programme was proposed in recognition of the emphasis that councils are placing on ramping up their process improvement and organisational streamlining activities.

In discussion with the NW IEP and members of the regional BPI community it was agreed that the following two high priority tasks would be supported:

<p>SUPPORT FOR COUNCILS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual visits to councils including a review of current BPI activities, successes, needs and including support and guidance for individual councils on topics such as which techniques to use, which vendors have been widely used across the region, which tools to use. - Sub-regional events for Council Members and senior officer teams that will help them understand management and leadership of structured change.

This work complements the core NWeGG programme and will complements sub-regional activity in such a way as to improve the extent of regional collaboration.

9.5 Business Case for the Excellence in BPI Programme

The business case is made by writing down and weighing up two things: The positive things that will come from completing the programme project (the Benefits) and the cost and effort of doing the project compared with individual councils tackling these issues.

Description of benefits	Potential Measures for the Benefit	Potential scale of the benefit
Improved delivery of change and process improvement projects across the North West.	Improved BPI programmes within councils and between councils. A record of the specific instances of councils assisting one another as a result of NWeGG activities. Improved CPA (or CAA) assessments.	Relevant to all 46 councils and their partners.
Better and more cost effective BPI programmes within individual councils.	Success rate of BPI programmes and their efficiency savings	Target, over three years, in £239 million
A better appreciation of the opportunities for process improvement at Chief Executive and Leader level	More ambitious BPI programmes Better level of engagement across councils with BPI. Improve council governance and management of BPI programmes	The measure will be whether or not the NW meets (or exceeds) the efficiency target for BPI by 2011 and whether the scale of individual projects is truly ambitious.
Better and more comprehensive identification of potential joint working on BPI opportunities between councils including benchmarking of process costing	Greater number of BPI collaborations across the NW. Reduced consultant expenditure as a result of better peer support Clarity of process / transaction costs across the NW enabling more effective benchmarking and target setting within councils.	Number of collaboration instances and resultant benefits

Efficiencies

The following table summarises the budget per activity and includes an estimate of non-cashable efficiencies based on the cost of organisations performing these activities alone.

They represent annual costs for each of the 2008-2010 years.

Task	NWeGG Programme budget	Cost per council of doing this alone	Regional non cashable saving
Sub-regional awareness raising seminars for CX and Leaders	£7,000	£3,000	£131,000
5 knowledge sharing and learning events for practitioners	£11,000	£1,000	£35,000
Identifying the corporate BPI lead in each council and sub-region.	£45,000	£10,000	£415,000
Individual visits to each Local Authorities to discuss whether there is good practice that could be adopted and to identify good practice that others could benefit from.			
Helping the NW engage with national agendas and programmes.			
Capturing BPI projects information on esd toolkit.			

Match making between councils and promoting common approaches to service improvement			
4 SPRINT training courses	£6,000	£250	£5,500
Identifying, reviewing and promoting existing framework agreements	£2,000	£1,000	£44,000
External communications costs	£5,000	£0	-£5,000
Programme management overhead	£8,500	£0	-£8,500
Website maintenance costs	£3,000	£0	-£3,000
TOTAL	£87,500	£15,250	£614,000

9.6 Governance of this work

The BPI Forum is currently chaired by John Morrissy, Greater Manchester ePartnership Programme Manager and managed by the NWeGG programme office.

In addition, a BPI Expert Guidance Group was formed in late 2007 in order to guide this programme of work and ensure that it continues to meet with councils needs. Members of the BPI EGG include BPI experts from Salford, Warrington, Sefton, Liverpool, Wirral, Tameside, Cumbria, GMeP and Chester City, although it is open to any council willing to commit the time and within a limit of 15 people. The EGG will be reformed early in the programme in order to steer this programme area.

9.7 Conclusion and Cost / Benefit Summary

Local Authorities in the North West are seeking to achieve enormous efficiency savings through BPI based activities and this programme has been designed to help them to achieve this. It includes a combination of guidance, support, opportunity identification, match making, tools and leveraging framework agreements which together will help councils make real savings and improve services for citizens.

The programme will generate some enormous benefits for councils which allow NWeGG to work more closely with councils and enable a greater degree of peer working and support as well as coaching and training.

The annual cost of this programme is £87,500 with potential non cashable gains alone equating to over £600,000.

10 The Right Track North West Programme



“Our ability to manage and deliver projects is increasingly becoming a measure of our success as an organisation”. *Sir Howard Bernstein, Chief Executive, Manchester City Council*

10.1 Introduction

By 2011 the North West will have delivered on a demanding and comprehensive change agenda reflecting the increasing focus on joined up, personalised services based on the major themes in the new Local Area Agreements.

A key component in the delivery of this success will have been effective and disciplined management of change relying on using project and programme management thinking and techniques, indeed the North West’s success over the next three years is inextricably linked to how good we are as a region at delivering programmes and projects.

10.2 National and Local Drivers

It is clear that Local Authorities are facing a massive change agenda and that effective project and programme management will be a vital component of delivering success. This is emphasised by the £22+ million that is coming to the North West to support delivery of the North West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme and the emphasis that the Audit Commission places on project management in the CPA and draft CAA framework.

However, this is nothing new. A straw poll of councils in the Right Track North West Programme suggests that there are in the region of 11,000 projects running at any one time in Local Authorities across the North West.

However, the results from a maturity assessment across 23 councils in the North West produced some worrying results. It found that over 75% of project managers do not hold project or programme management qualifications and 55% of councils’ respondents reported that project boards are staffed inappropriately and 59% reporting that project boards have no training on project management.⁷

The good news is that many North West councils feel that they have significantly improved their project management capabilities over the past 4 or so years⁸. However, there are some big challenges including:

- Ensuring that every project contributes towards delivering achieve strategic objectives (and stopping the ones that don’t)

⁷ Source: RTNW business case (see NWeGG website)

⁸ Source: North West Project and Programme Management maturity assessment, May 2007, NWeGG

- Knowing how many projects can be run at any one time without overloading staff and senior management
- Understanding, controlling and managing the interdependencies between projects
- Knowing which other councils are running similar projects in order to share approaches, ideas and good practices

In particular, councils asked with specific help in a number of key areas:

Challenge Area	% Respondents asking for help
Delivering the benefits of specific projects	86%
Capacity Building for Senior Managers	82%
Capacity Building for Programme / Project Managers including Staff Management	77%
Quality Assurance / Management	77%
Programme Management	73%
Project Review / Evaluation and Performance Reporting	73%
Requirements Management	73%
Effective use of systems and technology	70%

In addition, 81% of councils were interested in a regional contract framework for training services.

These findings were produced in mid 2007 through work led by Manchester City Council on behalf of NWeGG and NWIN and Right Track North West was created to act on the findings. Progress to date has focussed on development of a number of tools and materials including:

Short Description of Product	Benefit
A project and programme manager capability assessment and profiling tool.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A competency framework for project and programme managers - A tool for identifying new project managers based on existing competencies.
A repository of good practice guidance and materials developed jointly with the audit commission and a number of NW councils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good templates and materials are hard to come by and managers and officers really appreciate good ones.
Presentation on PPM for senior officers and councillor level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A means of highlighting what RTNW is doing to help councils.
Review of consulting framework agreements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommended PPM consulting frameworks available for councils.
Contributing to guidance being developed by the OGC on Project and Programme Support Office capabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councils that have a programme support office capability have a single view of their total portfolio of projects, however few have one.
An online knowledge sharing and community capability for project and programme managers in the region (available July 2008).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge sharing and support.

The work in the Right Track North West programme was officially recognised at the international Best Practice User Group Congress in February 2008, when the Chair of RTNW, Jean Hunter who is Chief Executive of South Ribble Borough Council, collected an award for Leading Edge Innovation in a User Organisation.

The next phase of work builds on phase described above and aims to address the specific challenges posed by councils in the region.

10.3 Overall Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of the RTNW programme is to significantly raise the level of programme and project management capability in the NW region by 2011. Within the context of the NW Improvement and Efficiency Partnership RTNW aims to underpin each of the sub-regions programmes of work by supporting the project and programmes managers in each area.

The following table lists the key objectives.

Summary Objective	Benefits
Support all 5 sub-regions and every NW Local Authority in setting up a corporate programme support office capability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate awareness of all projects and their relative importance to the organisation. - Increased likelihood of project success. - Effective reuse of good practice and capture of successful methods. - Coordinated and more efficient corporate training for project and programme managers - More effective use of technology.
Help all 5 sub-regions and all NW Local Authorities to adopt programme management thinking and practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More effective portfolios of projects. - Clear alignment between projects, programmes and corporate strategy. - Better governance and more successful delivery of corporate objectives. - Improved ability for councils to deliver change that cut across operational siloes.
Generate significant efficiencies by working regionally on good practice materials and guidance, rather than each council re-inventing the wheel at significant cost.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Efficiency savings (see below).

10.4 Core RTNW Programme

The Core RTNW programme will be funded from the NWeGG subscription and includes the following activities.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Identifying the corporate programme support office lead in each council and sub-region.

- Sub-regional briefings for Chief Executives and Leaders, clarifying the specific benefits of PPM in delivering change effectively and on time.

TOOLS AND GUIDANCE

- Review of the good practice available with recommendations for effective programme management in a Local Authority context.
- Promoting the work on the OGC and others on the why and how to set up a corporate programme or project support office.
- Promoting existing framework agreements for consultancy services.
- Promotion of the project management methodologies that NWeGG members developed for the CLG and OGC that now reside on the IDEA website.
- Letting and setting up a training framework agreement for Project and Programme Management.
- Promoting the RTNW project and programme manager competency development model.
- Completion of the knowledge store and the online community tools.

SUPPORT

- Hosting sub-regional discussions with lead project and programme managers on techniques, framework and other good practice.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

- Events and seminars including:
 - o 4 meetings of the North West Project and Programme Management Forum to shared wider good practice.
- Support for online information sharing via the knowledge store.

10.5 Added Value RTNW Programme

As described above, NWeGG has sought NWIEP funding to deliver an Added Value Right Track North West Programme. A significant programme was proposed in recognition of the emphasis that councils are placing on ramping up their process improvement and organisational streamlining activities.

In discussion with the NW IEP and members of the regional RTNW Expert Guidance Group it was agreed that the following two high priority tasks would be supported in order to have greater impact:

SUPPORT

- Individual visits to each Local Authorities to discuss whether there is good practice that could be adopted and to identify good practice that others could benefit from.
- Project Governance (training) coaching sessions at sub-regional level for Project and Programme Board members (SROs).

10.6 Business Case for the RTNW Programme

The business case is made by writing down and weighing up two things: The positive things that will come from completing the programme project (the Benefits) and the cost and effort of doing the project compared with individual councils tackling these issues.

Benefits

The benefits described below are an outline of what might be achieved based on estimates by the authors

Description of benefits	Potential measures for the Benefit	Potential scale of the benefit
A better appreciation at CEx and senior office level of the benefits of better PPM.	Better leadership and management of change in local government Stronger “gateway” processes in place with evidence that some projects are refused Demonstrable alignment of projects and strategic priorities	Relevant to all 46 councils and their partners.
Improved delivery of change across the North West.	Number of councils applying good PPM techniques Improved CPA assessments Increased number of projects and programmes delivered in line with customer expectations and meeting planned benefits.	Relevant to all 46 councils and their partners.
Use of framework agreements allows councils to access services more quickly and at lower cost	Understanding which framework agreements are most useful and how to use them. Use of framework agreements	80% of councils have requested that regional frameworks for PPM are put in place.
Councils are able to understand and profile the skills needed to deliver different aspects of projects and programmes	Better development programme for programme and project managers. Use of the project and programme management competency profiling tool. Case studies published on Right Track knowledgebase	Relevant to all 46 councils and their partners.
Better learning and sharing between councils.	Number of different councils attending each training course or forum event	Relevant to all 46 councils and their partners.
More effective Senior Responsible Officers (SROs) leading to better project and programme outcomes	Number of people who have attended coaching. Feedback on coaching.	46 Local Authorities in the North West

Efficiencies

The following table summarises the budget per activity and includes an estimate of non-cashable efficiencies based on the cost of organisations performing these activities alone.

They represent annual costs for each of the 2008-2010 years.

Task	NWeGG Programme budget	Cost per council of doing this alone	Regional non cashable saving
Sub-regional awareness raising seminars for CX and Leaders	£2,000	£2,000	£90,000
5 knowledge sharing and learning events for practitioners	£11,000	£1,000	£35,000
Project and programme governance coaching for SROs at sub-regional level	£10,000	£3,000	£128,000
Identifying the corporate programme support office lead in each council and sub-region.	£35,000	£10,000	£425,000
Individual visits to each Local Authorities to discuss whether there is good practice that could be adopted and to identify good practice that others could benefit from.			
Helping the NW engage with national agendas and programmes.			
Reviewing good practice available and identifying tools and templates including engaging with work by OGC on programme support offices.			
Providing support for individual organisations			
Identifying and promoting good framework agreements			
Letting and setting up a training framework agreement for Project and Programme Management	£15,000	£5,000	£215,000
Supporting the competency framework model for project and programme managers	£5,000	£500	£18,000
Programme management	£8,500	£0	-£8,500
Website costs	£2,000	£0	-£2,000
External communications costs	£5,000	£0	-£5,000
Professional memberships and publications	£1,000	£0	-£1,000
TOTAL	£94,500	£21,500	£894,500

Method of approach – how does NWeGG propose to get this work done?

Right Track NW has, in the past, employed a collaborative approach to delivery between a number of councils and would seek to continue this in order to deliver the Added Value activities. Councils including Macclesfield, Wyre, Manchester, St Helens, Knowsley, Oldham, Chorley, South Ribble and Chester City have all significantly contributed to this work, as have the Audit Commission and Salford University.

10.7 Governance of this work

The RTNW programme is chaired by Jean Hunter, Chief Executive of South Ribble Borough Council. The programme board makes specific decisions on the programme of work and this is informed by an Expect Guidance Group made up of a number of dedicated and experienced programme and project managers from across the region.

10.8 Conclusion and Cost / Benefit Summary

Right Track North West represents a superb opportunity for councils to collaborate effectively to tackle a challenge all face individually, namely how to deliver change reliably and effectively. This is what project and programme management is designed to do.

The annual cost of this programme is £94,500 with potential non cashable gains alone equating to nearly £900,000 were councils to deliver this programme individually.

11 Excellence in Customer Services Programme

11.1 Introduction

The Excellence in Customer Services Programme aims to help Local Authorities and their partners to address some of the real and immediate challenges they face in improving the quality and effectiveness of customer services. The particular emphasis is on:

- Deepening understanding of customers needs and wants,
- Joining up service delivery more effectively between front and back office, and
- The concept of joining up service delivery for 'shared customers' across partners based on specific customer needs. This will radically improve service delivery and reduce the amount of duplication and non value adding activities that result from fragmented service delivery.

Overall it is evident that for the North West to be providing better services to its citizens than any other region by 2011, then we will have a better understanding of our citizens and be providing higher quality and more effective customer services than in any other area.

11.2 National and Local Drivers

Both local people and the Government are placing increasing emphasis on the quality and effectiveness of service delivery and councils, and rightly so. For example, the CLG's Value for Money in Local Government paper (2007) states:

It is through the focus on users that the agenda for Service Transformation and efficiency are most closely aligned. Actions to achieve a better customer experience by ensuring their problems are resolved as smoothly and quickly as possible are actions that also achieve efficiency by reducing the extent of failure in the system (Page 6 – para. 1.10)

In addition, the CSR-07 Service Transformation Agreement contains a strong focus on improved understanding of citizens needs, joined up personalised services, recommendations on front office shared services and a drive to reduce the amount of failure demand, or avoidable contact, as it has become known.

As part of this, in 2007 the Cabinet Office produced a new Performance Management Framework for all publicly funded Contact Centres and, through a new measurement structure, has challenged the way that councils and other public sector bodies structure and measure service delivery. The North West has been one of the regions that has responded best to this framework, with 38% of councils responding⁹, and whilst this activity is voluntary, the benefit of the new PMF is that it is challenging councils to think constructively about improving customer services.

In the North West, many councils have achieved enormous and tangible service improvements plus significant cashable savings from integrating services through front office operations such as one stop shop and contact centres. There are some great examples of how this is being taken forwards, with new thinking on out of hours and shared

⁹ Source: Cabinet Office PMF feedback 2008

contact centres being implemented and more back office functions being brought into the front office to reduce response and turnaround times on applications and queries.

For many councils, having achieved a certain level of capability, new more sophisticated challenges have emerged which need to be tackled. These include:

- How to join up service delivery based on common but complex customer needs.
- How to effectively manage demand received in the front office with supply that is available in the back office.
- Which other services or functions to move into the front office?
- How to manage service delivery across all the different channels available and know where self service is likely to work best.
- How to get the best return on investment from expensive Customer Relationship Management systems.
- How to measure failure demand, or 'avoidable contact'.

These are not simple issues to resolve and councils are looking to one another for innovative ideas, support and guidance. This programme aims to enable that.

11.3 Overall Aims and Objectives

The overarching objective is to enable councils to deliver the right front line services to the right people in a cost effective, engaging and joined up way. Specifically the programme of work aims to help councils address the particular challenges laid out in the section above although depth of support will of course depend on the resources available, as described below in the Core and Added Value programmes respectively.

It is important to emphasise that this programme of work is expected to dovetail with sub-regional programmes funded through the NW Improvement and Efficiency Partnership. Many of the challenges that councils need to address in order to support LAA implementation, generate efficiencies or free up resources for other purposes or improve service delivery have a strong customer focus and customer service management focus. This programme will help join up these activities and provide a strong basis for shared learning and thinking whilst preventing rework and duplication of activities that can be achieved more effectively on a regional basis.

The content of this programme has been developed with input from a wide number of councils at the North West Customer Service Managers group and incorporates the outcomes of a specific Customer Services Expert Guidance Group. This programme of work is led by Roy Wainwright, Head of Customer Services at Halton council who has passionately and consistently led the NW Customer Services Group for several years and to whom NWeGG and many councils are greatly indebted.

11.4 Core Customer Services Programme

The Core Excellence in Customer Services programme will be funded from the NWeGG subscription and it is proposed that it includes the following activities for each of the two years from 2008-2010.

<p>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contacting every member council's CSM lead to understand their CSM strategy and underlying technology as a basis of future support and matching making between councils.
<p>TOOLS AND GUIDANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Getting a consistent measure of NI14 for the North West and recommendations, based on council experiences, on how to measure them.
<p>SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A single 'place to go' for NW Customer Services support for practitioners via the NWeGG CSM Programme Lead and the Knowledge Sharing website, including a matching making service where councils can share knowledge and experience. - Support for councils' use of esd toolkit Mosaic data, citizen profiling tools, cost modelling tools and guidance (developed by NWeGG on behalf of the CLG) and channel use tools and guidance. - Advice on Customer Journey Mapping guidance published recently by the Cabinet Office. - Support for councils wishing to adopt the recommendations from NWeGG's Business Continuity in Customer Services project.
<p>KNOWLEDGE SHARING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Events and seminars including 5 meetings of the North West Customer Service Managers Forum to engage with industry experts and share (and bad) good practice.
<p>SHAPING NATIONAL AGENDAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with government departments and agencies to bring useful knowledge into the region via events, the website and newsletters. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Cabinet Office, Contact Council and Performance Management Framework o IDeA Front Office Shared Service programme. - Work with government programmes to ensure that NW councils are well positioned and aware of the opportunities that these programmes may present.

11.5 Added Value Customer Services Programme

Support for delivery of these activities is sought from the NWIEP

<p>TOOLS AND GUIDANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A review of the most successful front office capabilities and the technology that they are using to deliver their services.
<p>SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual visits and support for each Local Authority to discuss whether there is good practice that could be adopted and to identify good practice that others could benefit from.

11.6 Business Case for the Excellence in Customer Services Programme

The business case is made by writing down and weighing up two things: The positive things we think will come from completing the programme (the Benefits) and the cost and effort of doing the project compared with individual councils tackling these issues.

Benefits

The benefits described below are an outline of what might be achieved based on estimates by the authors

Description of benefits	Potential Measures for the Benefit	Potential scale of the benefit
Consistent approach to measuring failure demand (NI14)	Take up of materials and guidance	This is relevant to all 46 Local Authorities.
Examples of effective back office integration into front office	Take up of materials and guidance	46 Local Authorities and their partners
Match making on common issues	Numbers of instances of 'matching'	Anecdotally NWeGG helps form 50-70 connections annually, with more arising from seminars and events.
Guidance on tools	Take up of tools and guidance	46 Local Authorities and their partners
Updates for CXs and senior officers on key issues	Feedback on briefing notes.	46 Local Authorities and their partners
Effective use of technology	Take up and use of guidance	46 Local Authorities and their partners

Efficiencies

The following table summarises the budget per activity and includes an estimate of non-cashable efficiencies based on the cost of organisations performing these activities alone.

They represent annual costs for each of the 2008-2010 years.

Task	NWeGG Programme budget	Cost per council of doing this alone	Regional non cashable saving
5 knowledge sharing and learning events for practitioners	£11,000	£1,000	£35,000
Identifying and contact CSM leads in every member organisation and NW council	£30,000	£10,000	£430,000
Capturing organisations CSM priorities, performance, good practice & technologies to support and enable match making between councils.			
Helping the NW engage with national agendas and programmes.			
Promoting this knowledge to other councils			
Support for councils' use of esd toolkit Mosaic data, citizen profiling tools, cost modelling tools and guidance (developed by NWeGG on behalf of the CLG) and channel use tools and guidance.	£8,500	£3,000	£129,500
Advice on Customer Journey Mapping guidance published recently by the Cabinet Office.			

Support for councils wishing to adopt the recommendations from NWeGG's Business Continuity in Customer Services project.			
Providing support and guidance, as needed, for councils to support measurement of NI14 (reducing avoidable contact)	£8,000	£4,000	£176,000
Review of the most successful front office capabilities and the technology that they are using to deliver their services, including understanding which services have been effectively brought into the front office.	£12,000	£7,500	£333,000
Programme management	£8,500	£0	-£8,500
Website costs	£2,000	£0	-£2,000
External communications costs	£4,000	£0	-£4,000
TOTAL	£84,000	£25,500	£1,089,000

11.7 Governance of this work

Members of a number of other councils have worked closely on this programme and an Expert Guidance Group has met in order to shape and led it going forwards.

The Excellence in Customer Services programme has been by Roy Wainwright, Head of Customer Services at Halton Borough Council until recently and a discussion is ongoing about the future Chair.

11.8 Conclusion and Cost / Benefit Summary

The Excellence in Customer Services programmes is strongly desired by councils across the region that would otherwise be working independently or in small clusters to address challenges that are common to all.

There are clear synergies between this programme and the other three NWeGG programmes such that the BPI community and the Customer Services community are increasingly working together and shared their knowledge and experiences.

Overall, the annual costs of this programme is £84,000 and the potential non cashable gains alone are estimated to be over £1 million.

12 Effective Information Sharing and Security

12.1 Introduction

This Effective Information Sharing and Security programme pulls together a number of streams of NWeGG work with the aim of helping Local Authorities and their key partners to join up service deliver and address key issues such as benefit fraud.

12.2 National and Local Drivers

Information sharing and security has recently had a high profile as a result of the loss of 25 million child benefit records, however it has been gathering momentum since before the start of the eGovernment programme in 2002 and has been gathering momentum as a result of new legislation such as the publication of the Children's Act in 2004.

Information sharing between Local Authorities, other agencies and central government is an increasing challenge for councils and one that needs tackling sub-regionally and regionally in order to address effectively without re-inventing lots of wheels. It is plainly evident that localities that wish to effectively address issues like crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, identifying children at risk and benefit fraud need to have robust and effective procedures and methods for sharing information and being able to use the information that they receive.

Not only are there a number of driving agendas, but councils are coming to grips with new national capabilities, including Government Connect and ContactPoint, and have requirements to meet internal compliance standards such as the GC Code of Connection.

12.3 Overall Aims and Objectives

The following objectives have been agreed for this programme of work:

- Councils across the North West will be successfully and securely sharing information with each other and their partners enabling better, more effective services in a number of areas particularly:
 - o Crime and disorder
 - o Every Child Matters
 - o Antisocial behaviour
- Councils will have a better understanding of how to do this and clear agreed methods of working collaboratively.
- All North West councils will have signed up to a common or similar information sharing protocol.
- NWeGG will have helped North West councils to connect to the Government Connect secure communications infrastructure.

12.4 Core Information Sharing and Security Programme

The core Effective Information Sharing and Security programme will be funded from the NWeGG subscription and it is proposed that it includes the following activities for each of the two years from 2008-2010.

<p>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging leadership at a sub-regional level on the information sharing agenda
<p>TOOLS AND GUIDANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and adoption of common information sharing concordat for the North West - Developing a regional perspective on three principle information sharing agendas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Crime and disorder o Antisocial behaviour o Children's agenda
<p>SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a single point of contact for information sharing and security related queries. - Relevant updates posted on the NWeGG website and via briefings. - Working across the sub-regions on potential information mapping projects. - Events and workshops to support councils in connecting to Government Connect and meeting the Code of Connection.
<p>KNOWLEDGE SHARING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A series of regional events relating to the guidance and relevant 'hot topics' with local and national speakers including items such as ContactPoint and Government Connect.
<p>SHAPING NATIONAL AGENDAS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement with government programmes and departments on relevant aspects of the information sharing agenda and keeping NW councils up to date on these agendas.

12.5 Added Value Information Sharing and Security Programme

As described above, NWeGG has sought NWIEP funding to deliver an Added Value Information Sharing and Security Programme for 2008-10. In discussion with the NW IEP and key practitioners across the region, it was agreed that the following priority tasks would be supported in order to have greater impact:

<p>TOOLS AND GUIDANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of guidance for councils and sub-regions in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Multi-organisation process and information mapping o Multi-organisation data control methods and standards o Ethics of information sharing o Agreeing and maintaining protocols for sharing o Secure networking between organisations
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12.6 Business Case

The business case is made by writing down and weighing up two things: The positive things we think will come from completing the Core Programme project (the Benefits) and the cost and effort of doing the project compared with individual councils tackling these issues.

Benefits

The benefits described below are an outline of what might be achieved based on estimates by the authors

Description of benefits	Potential Measures for the Benefit	Potential scale of the benefit
Engaging leadership	Feedback from leadership	Raised awareness and reduced risk of information security failures
Regional perspectives on key information sharing subjects	Volume and quality of guidance produced	Relevant to all 46 councils and their local partnerships
Sharing approaches between the sub-regions	Number of instances of joining up	Relevant to all 46 councils and their local partnerships
5 information sharing and security events	Feedback on event quality and usefulness.	Relevant to all 46 councils and their local partnerships
Guidance is a number of key challenge areas	Take up Feedback on usefulness	Relevant to all 46 councils and their local partnerships.

Cost and Efficiencies

The following table summarises the budget per activity and includes an estimate of non-cashable efficiencies based on the cost of organisations performing these activities alone.

They represent annual costs for each of the 2008-2010 years.

Task	NWeGG Programme budget	Cost per council of doing this alone	Regional non cashable saving
Engaging leadership at a sub-regional level on the information sharing agenda	£5,000	£1,000	£41,000
5 events on information sharing hot topics in areas such as codes of connection, Contact Point and information security.	£10,000	£1,000	£36,000
Supporting adoption of a common information sharing concordat for the North West	£10,000	£3,000	£128,000
Providing support for councils including identifying information governance leads in each council, capturing and sharing good practice, match making between councils and helping the NW engage with national agendas, with a particular focus on crime and disorder, antisocial behaviour and the childrens agenda	£30,000	£10,000	£430,000
Helping the NW engage with national agendas and programmes.			

Development of guidance for councils and sub-regions in areas such as:	£25,000	£20,000	£895,000
- Multi-organisation process and information mapping			
- Multi-organisation data control methods and standards			
- Ethics of information sharing			
- Agreeing and maintaining protocols for sharing			
- Secure networking between organisations			
Programme management	£8,500	£0	-£8,500
Website costs	£2,000	£0	-£2,000
External communications costs	£4,000	£0	-£4,000
TOTAL	£94,500	£35,000	£1,515,500

12.7 Governance of this work

This programme of work includes the IT and Information Security Forum, currently chaired by Graham Crowther from Knowsley MBC, and will be aligned with the NW Information Sharing Group, chaired by John Curtis of Mersey Fire and Rescue.

This programme will also draw on the skills and capabilities of the Local eGovernment Standards Body, which NWeGG and Tameside host as a national body.

12.8 Conclusion and Cost / Benefit Summary

In the same manner as all the NWeGG programmes, the Effective Information Sharing and Security programme is badly needed by councils across the region that would otherwise be working independently or in small clusters to address challenges that are common to all.

Indeed, by its nature this area is not something that can be addressed on its own and requires a joined up approach in order to make effective progress.

The benefit of the programme are evident as it includes a number of activities that councils and indeed sub-regions would be pressed to achieve individually whilst gaining the most benefit. For an annual cost of £94,500 this programme will produce an estimated non cashable benefit of over £1.5 million, however the real wins will be in the cashable savings and service improvements that it engenders.

13 Resources and funding

The above sections describe each of the NWeGG programmes in turn and their component activities, benefits and costs. The costs of the core and added value programmes are summarised below:

Programme	Core programme	NW IEP funding	Total	Estimated non cashable saving
Business Process Improvement	£47,500	£40,000	£87,500	£614,000
RTNW	£52,000	£42,500	£94,500	£894,500
Customer Service Mgmt	£46,500	£37,500	£84,000	£1,089,000
Information Sharing and Security	£64,500	£30,000	£94,500	£1,515,500
Core hosting and operating support	£20,000		£20,000	
Total	£230,500	£150,000	£380,500	£4,113,000

The financial cost of this programme does not include the voluntary effort that individuals make from across a broad range of councils in the region and which is widely recognised as being the lifeblood of the partnership. The costs above are mainly for the programme office and events which are support and enable effective collaboration, joined up working, knowledge development and good practice across the region. The NWeGG Executive believes that NWeGG does this very efficiently with a high output in relation to the cost involved.

13.1 Cost to Local Authorities and Partners

Local Authorities and their partners are asked to contribute to the Core programme at the following rates for 2008-9 and 2009-10. These are slightly higher than for the 2006-8 period as the subscription costs were underwritten by the North West Centre of Excellence during that time, however feedback to date indicates that organisations still believe this to represent good value.

Organization	Membership cost (£k)	Number of Org's	Total (£k)
Upper tier councils (metropolitan, county and unitary status councils)	£9,000	20	£180,000
District councils	£2,000	24	£48,000
Police, Fire, Primary Care Trusts	£2,500	1	£2,500
		TOTAL	£230,500

14 Conclusion

NWeGG's 2008-10 programme is more ambitious, more focussed and aims to provide more tailored support for individual councils and sub-regions than in previous years. This is a challenge for NWeGG however it is clearly what NWeGG is being asked to deliver on behalf of its membership.

It is hoped that Local Authorities, Police Authorities, Fire and Health organisations will continue to see the value that NWeGG offers and support the programme of work until March 2010.



Appendix 1

Policy drivers taken into consideration when planning the NWeGG Programme for 2008-10.

Source	Summary	NWeGG Response
1. Need for Efficiencies		
Local Government White Paper (Communities and Local Government)	In order to deliver the transformed services and value for money that communities want, councils will have to challenge traditional methods of delivery, rooting out waste, in order to drive efficiency (Page 134 – para. 7.7)	Value for money is incorporated into all the programmes of work.
The Service Transformation Agreement (Treasury – CSR-07)	The objective for the CSR07 period is to move towards more one-stop shops in places which the public will find convenient; towards greater sharing of generic administrative back office space (for example shared service centres, especially where this makes for improved front-of-house delivery); and towards finding ways of delivering face-to-face services at a place of the customer's convenience through the use of mobile service provision. (Page 16 – para. 3.28)	Incorporated into the Business Process Improvement and the Improving Customer Service Management programmes
Value for Money in Local Government (Communities and Local Government)	Budget 2007 set out a requirement for 3% annual cash-releasing value for money gains from all parts of the public sector over CSR07. Councils have their part to play in meeting this challenge, which amounts to an expectation of £4.9 billion cash releasing efficiencies from revenue and capital expenditure over the period 2008-09 to 2010-11. (Page 5 – para. 1.6)	Value for money is incorporated into all the programmes of work.
Comprehensive Area Assessment	This will place an increased emphasis on how well public sector organisations are managing their financial and other resources to achieve and improve value for money. It will also look at how well organisations are working with their partners to share resources where that improves efficiency and effectiveness. (CAA consultation, p31)	Incorporated into the Business Process Improvement programme and ongoing support for the North West Shared Service Programme.
CSR-07	embedding value for money across government – with savings of at least 3 per cent a year over the CSR07 period, releasing £30 billion by 2010-11 to reinvest in further improvements in key public services (Page 31 – box text)	Value for money is incorporated into all the programmes of work.
2. Customer Focus and Insight		
Value for Money in Local Government (Communities and Local Government)	It is through the focus on users that the agenda for Service Transformation and efficiency are most closely aligned. Actions to achieve a better customer experience by ensuring their problems are resolved as smoothly and quickly as possible are actions that also achieve efficiency by reducing the extent of failure in the system (Page 6 – para. 1.10)	Incorporated into the Improving Customer Service Management programme.
CSR-07	In order to create the conditions in which better public service outcomes are forged in	Incorporated into the Improving Customer

	<p>partnership with citizens, the Government is building a new model of public service delivery for the next decade based on three key principles. (One of these is):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - putting users at the heart of services, through new channels of engagement that help the public shape services; new mechanisms to deliver accountability, including greater use of real-time data; new opportunities for people to exercise choice in how to access and tailor their services, coupled with clear responsibilities for all (Page 35 – para. 3.12) 	Service Management programme.
CSR-07	The challenge now is for more radical cross-government reform that will be the foundation of personalised public services. This means moving away from the old model of service provision which meets the public's various needs through a number of separate government agencies, each with their own interactions with customers. This compartmentalisation of delivery means that, to date, the Government has struggled to keep pace with the expectations set by the leading edge of the new service economy that has emerged over the last decade, which, by focusing on the totality of the relationship with the customer is able to deliver more immediate and convenient services with less intrusion on their time. (Page 8 – para. 3.18)	Incorporated into the Improving Customer Service Management programme and the Shaping National Agendas workstream.
The Service Transformation Agreement (Treasury – CSR-07)	Service transformation is about changing public services so they are tailored more to the needs of people and businesses and less to the structures of government. Public services should be delivered in the ways and at the times that people now expect them; the public service should get it right first time so that people do not have to initiate contact again and again; and rather than expecting people to “join up” government for themselves it should be done for them. (Page 3 – para. 1.2)	Incorporated into the Business Process Improvement and the Improving Customer Service Management programmes
CSR-07	...securing a cross-departmental commitment to build services round the needs of citizens and businesses, will be integral to the achievement of each of the PSA outcomes set in the 2007 CSR (Page 38 – para. 3.19)	Incorporated into the Business Process Improvement, the Improving Customer Service Management programmes and the Shaping National Agendas workstream
Local Government White Paper (Communities and Local Government)	We (<i>Government</i>) will encourage local authorities to have more systematic intelligence on local people's needs and views and work with the Audit Commission to ensure that, as part of new audit arrangements, assessment of local authorities' management and information systems gives due weight to citizen intelligence. (Page 32 – para. 2.21)	Incorporated into the Improving Customer Service Management programme and Shaping National Agendas workstream.
Local Government White Paper (Communities and Local Government)	Few local authorities understand the unit costs of delivering services by different delivery channels – or have a plan for moving customers to the most efficient ones. (Page 140 – para. 7.31)	Incorporated into the Business Process Improvement, the Improving Customer Service Management programmes and the Shaping National Agendas workstream

Tackling Avoidable Contact		
The Service Transformation Agreement (Treasury – CSR-07)	The entire public sector faces a constant battle with "avoidable contact" – demand caused by customers initiating contact because they are confused, need to check on progress, pass on information they have already given to other parts of the public sector and so on. This is contact that would not be necessary if the public sector could get things right first time. It simply frustrates customers and wastes their time; erodes public trust in government; clogs up government offices so that more important demand goes unmet; and wastes money. The challenge for the public sector is to follow the example of leading private sector providers who have rethought the ways in which they interact with people and businesses to improve customer value and reduce costs. (Page 3 – para. 1.5)	Incorporated into the Business Process Improvement, the Improving Customer Service Management programmes and the Shaping National Agendas workstream
Service Improvement		
Local Government White Paper (Communities and Local Government)	...all local authorities must adopt a strategic approach to service delivery..... start from an understanding of the needs and preferences of users, adopt best practice in service design, assess the full range of service delivery options, and implement optimal solutions that balance quality and value for money. Local authorities must work closely with local partners, utilising the capacity of the best service providers in the public, private and third sectors. (Page 135 – para. 7.13)	Incorporated into all the programmes of work, particularly Business Process Improvement and Right Track North West.
Effective Collaboration		
CAA	The organisation has strong leadership with a clear vision and fosters partnership working to make better use of available resources. (CAA Key Lines of Enquiry consultation, p14)	A key part of Right Track North West.
Value for Money in Local Government	Greater collaborative working is a vital step to transforming local services. A literature review and case study analysis by OPM (<i>Local Government Efficiency – Literature review and case studies</i> (OPM, 2007)) found that "... cross sector working is a critical lever in the efficiency agenda. It can enable organisations to reduce financial burdens, produce more efficient methods of working, and share costs across cost centres ... The general view is that accruing efficiencies out of partnerships is the next phase of the agenda". (Page 18 –para. 3.22)	NWeGG, as a practitioner orientated partnership, enables effective collaboration and aims to continue to do so.
Information Sharing		
The Service Transformation Agreement (Treasury – CSR-07)	The entire public sector faces a constant battle with "avoidable contact" – demand caused by customers initiating contact because they are confused, need to check on progress, pass on information they have already given to other parts of the public sector and so on. (Page 3)	Incorporated into the Information Sharing and Security workstream.

