

<b>To:</b> CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE		<b>Subject:</b> Public Service Improvement Framework [PSIF] - Legal Services
<b>From:</b> HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES		
<b>Date:</b> 12 MAY 2011	<b>Ref:</b>	

**1 Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the outcome of the Legal Services Public Service Improvement Framework [PSIF] self-evaluation exercise, which took place during September 2010.

**2. Background**

Members will be aware of the council's commitment to self assessment as a key element of our business planning process and a requirement of the Best Value 2 arrangements announced by Audit Scotland.

In April 2008 the council joined a number of other Scottish local authorities and public sector organisations in adopting PSIF as the preferred self assessment model to be used across council services where no statutory self assessment model was in place (e.g. VSE for Learning and Leisure and SWIA for Social Work).

PSIF is a self-evaluation framework which encourages organisations to conduct a comprehensive review of their services by looking closely at activities around Leadership, Service Planning, People Resources, Partners and Other Resources, and Service Processes.

Engagement with Customers, People, and the Community are measured via results, together with Key Performance information.

In May 2009 a two year rolling programme at Head of Service level was agreed for PSIF. The programme has progressed on target with year two assessments currently taking place.

Monitoring and scrutiny arrangements for all PSIF action plans were recently agreed by the council's Transformation Board with the first step being a review at service committees. Further developments during 2011 will introduce Peer Reviews to the arrangements through the PSIF network.

**3. Self evaluation process**

An assessment team is created with a range of officers from various roles within the service which is tasked with evaluating how well the service is performing against each of the criterion parts mentioned in point 2 above. The structure of the assessment team is critical to ensuring a true self evaluation is conducted on the reality of practices within the service.

Each assessment is facilitated by a member of the Corporate Service Improvement Team, Chief Executive's Office; full details of the assessment team for Legal Services are attached at Appendix 1.

## 4. Action plan

As a result of each PSIF self-evaluation the service assessment team compiles an action plan to prioritise and progress specific areas of improvement highlighted during the process. The action plan is attached at Appendix 2.

In summary, the PSIF exercise identified clear evidence of strengths and key areas for improvement.

### Key Strengths

#### Leadership

- Managers in legal services review their performance and develop knowledge, skills and behaviours to be effective leaders. They motivate and support employees and promote equal opportunities and diversity.
- Managers are involved in setting the strategic direction of the service which supports the aims of the council through the service planning process.

#### Service Planning

- Service plan priorities reflect current political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal issues.
- Regular communication with client services takes place as part of everyday work and client feedback informs operational developments. Legal Services also have a well established formal approach to gathering information from clients through the council house sales survey and the council wide client survey.
- There is clear evidence that Legal Services implement a systematic approach to performance management that supports the service plan, and that performance is monitored and reported on a regular basis.

#### People Resources

- There is evidence that Legal Services plan, manage, and develop employees to support service delivery. There are equal opportunities for employees to learn, develop, and improve their performance.
- There is evidence of management commitment to fair treatment at work, and appropriate access to support as required.

#### Partner and other Resources

- Partnership working with client services, external bodies and agencies is extensive and clearly supports service delivery.
- There is a systematic approach to the allocation, monitoring and controlling of finances that supports the services' plans and priorities.

#### Service Processes

- Legal services have a systematic approach to planning and managing service delivery which supports both council and service priorities and implement a range of council wide and service specific processes to support service delivery.
- There are clear lines of responsibility for service delivery for service specific purposes.

#### Customer results

- The number of complaints received by legal services is consistently low.
- Results from client services survey are generally positive and show good performance.

#### Community Results

- There is a well established mechanism for community consultation for council house sales.

## Areas for Improvement

### Leadership

- Develop mechanisms to enhance processes for staff engagement, involvement and empowerment in service delivery.
- Review the content of the client survey, and process for client engagement to ensure the arrangements are effective and fit for purpose.

### Service Planning

- Arrange briefing sessions to raise awareness and increase knowledge of the service planning process.
- Establish, where appropriate, service level agreements and ensure regular measurement and review to assess effectiveness
- Develop client consultation process for dedicated service delivery and one-off projects and ensure results are regularly reviewed and used to inform improvement actions.
- Review use of performance information to ensure results inform continuous improvement in service delivery.

### People resources

- Establish arrangements to involve staff in the development of people processes to enhance staff involvement, empowerment, motivation, and satisfaction
- Ensure management commitment to consistent approach to staff performance review and development
- Improve communication and the sharing of information and knowledge

### Partners and other resources

- Review the use and impact of council in-house information systems
- Further develop current partnership working to enhance and support –

### Service Processes

- Raise awareness of the council wide complaints, comments and compliments policy

### Customer Results

- Enhance communication with client services providing, where appropriate, feedback
- Ensure results of client engagement processes are regularly reviewed and inform improvement actions

### Key Performance Results

- Progress benchmarking opportunities and ensure results inform service delivery

The outcomes from the PSIF self-evaluation will provide further improvement direction within the service and inform the strategic improvement agenda.

## 5. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the content of this report.



**Head of Legal Services**

For further information on this report please contact June Murray, Head of Legal Services  
Telephone number 01698 302554

## Appendix 1

### PSIF process for Legal Services

The Head of Legal Services together with a lead officer from the service identified officers from within the service to be the assessment team. The assessment team is made up of employees from a selection of roles, responsibilities, and functions across Legal Services.

#### Facilitator

Susan Lawrie, Chief Executive's Office

#### Lead Officer

Aileen Howson, Chief Solicitor

#### Service Experts

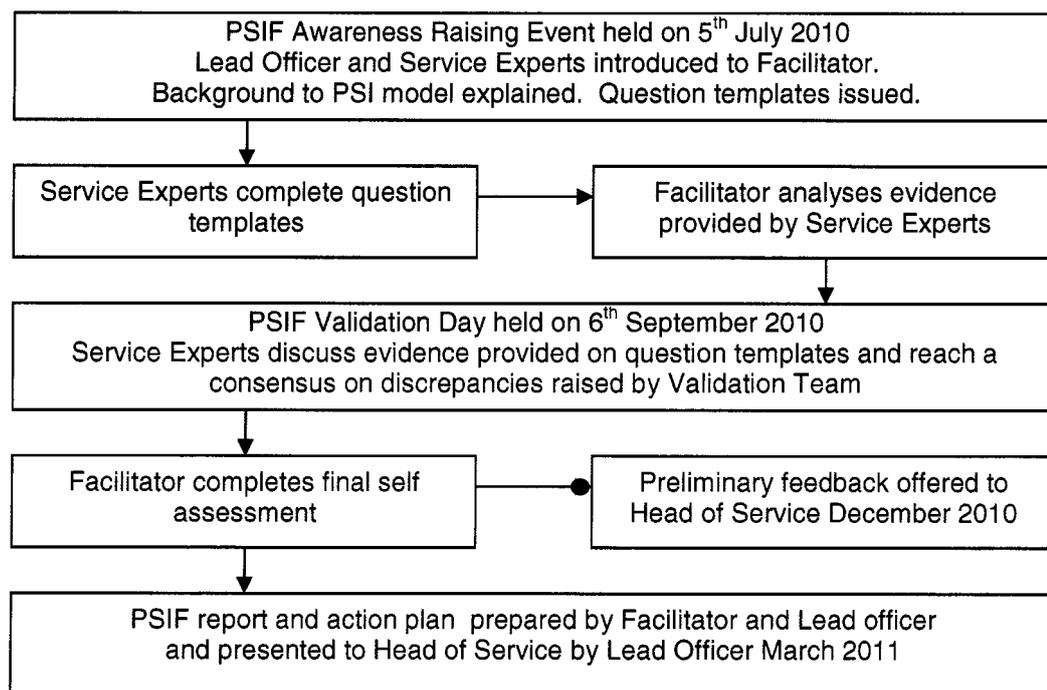
Mitch Kerr, Chief Solicitor  
Paul Corrigan, Principal Solicitor  
Georgina Green, Principal Solicitor  
Lesley Gardiner, Systems Manager  
Donis Hudson, Systems Manager  
Pamela Burt, Office Supervisor  
Harvey Baird, Chief Solicitor

#### Supporters to Service Experts

Lorraine Nolan, Principal Solicitor  
Joanne Saunders, Solicitor  
Nairn Young, Solicitor  
Jane Walbank, Solicitor  
Aileen Devanny, Principal Solicitor  
Ruth McCormick, Solicitor  
David Carson, Admin Assistant (Debt Recovery)

#### Validation Team

Archie Aitken, Principal Solicitor  
Angelene Kirkpatrick, Paralegal  
Careen Hendry, Solicitor  
John Taylor, Licensing Enforcement Officer  
Heather Grierson, Clerical Officer  
Carol Gordon, Word Processor Operator  
Carol Cluggie, Corporate Freedom of Information Officer



**Legal Services**  
**PSIF Improvement Action Plan**  
**2011/12**

Action Code	Action	Expected Outcome	Milestones	Frequency	Timescale	Lead Officer	Destination
[For CSI team use]				<i>e.g. one off action, or recurring</i>	<i>completion date</i>		<i>e.g. Service Plan, Operational Plan, or other</i>
	<p><b>Leadership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure management / team meetings take place as scheduled.</li> <li>▪ Ensure the results from the staff survey are consistently communicated across Legal Services.</li> <li>▪ Develop mechanisms to facilitate staff feedback.</li> <li>▪ Ensure feedback is provided to staff on the outcome of each voting session.</li> </ul>	<p>Improved management and planning arrangements.</p> <p>Enhanced staff communication.</p> <p>Improved process for staff engagement, involvement, and empowerment in service delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establish meetings schedule</li> <li>- reinstate local staff suggestion scheme</li> <li>- establish voting links to canvas staff opinions</li> <li>- establish process to e-mail feedback to staff</li> <li>- establish process to discuss feedback at staff meetings</li> </ul>	<p>annual</p> <p>bi-annual</p> <p>one off</p> <p>ongoing</p>	<p>April 2011</p> <p>March 2012</p> <p>April 2011</p> <p>April 2011</p>	<p>Head of Service</p> <p>Head of Service</p> <p>Head of Service</p> <p>Head of Service / Chief Solicitors</p>	<p>Service Plan</p> <p>Service Plan</p> <p>Service Plan</p> <p>Service Plan</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review the content of the current Client Survey, and process for client engagement to ensure the arrangements are effective and still fit for purpose.</li> <li>▪ Produce Legal Services brochure to raise awareness of key activities and services.</li> </ul>	<p>Continual dialogue with clients to facilitate continuous improvement in service delivery.</p> <p>More widespread awareness and appreciation of the work of Legal Services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- undertake review of the survey and process</li> <li>- implement improvements to 2011 survey</li> <li>- establish working group to produce brochure</li> </ul>	<p>one off</p> <p>one off</p>	<p>October 2011</p> <p>March 2012</p>	<p>Head of Service / Chief Solicitors</p> <p>Head of Service</p>	<p></p> <p>Service Plan</p>
	<p><b>Service Planning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hold briefing sessions to raise awareness of the service planning process.</li> <li>▪ Establish service level agreements (where appropriate) and ensure they are regularly measured and reviewed for effectiveness.</li> <li>▪ Establish a regular mechanism to measure customer satisfaction for dedicated service delivery and one off projects.</li> </ul>	<p>Increased knowledge and awareness of the service plan and involvement with the process.</p> <p>Customer consultation processes further developed to gather information from a wider range of customers.</p> <p>Customer consultation processes further developed to gather information from a wider range of customers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- set up session with Corporate Services' performance practitioner</li> <li>- identify where SLAs are required</li> <li>- develop SLAs in conjunction with services</li> <li>- develop survey with set of generic questions and set of service specific questions</li> <li>- develop process</li> <li>- roll out survey</li> </ul>	<p>one off</p> <p>one off</p> <p>one off</p>	<p>April 2011</p> <p>March 2012</p> <p>October 2011</p>	<p>Head of Service</p> <p>Chief Solicitors</p> <p>Chief Solicitors</p>	<p>Service Plan</p> <p>Service Plan</p> <p>Service Plan</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish a standing agenda item for management / team meetings for the review of performance indicators and discussion around any improvement actions required.</li> </ul>	<p>Improved use of performance information to inform continuous improvement in service delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- include in meetings schedule</li> </ul>	<p>recurring</p>	<p>April 2011</p>	<p>Head of Service</p>	<p>Service Plan</p>
	<p><b>People Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Involve staff in the development of people processes through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- progressing the training plan through a staff led development group</li> <li>- establishing a mechanism for sharing knowledge</li> <li>- taking forward the results of the staff survey and implementing improvements where applicable</li> <li>- ensuring feedback is provided that identifies improvement initiatives implemented as a result of staff engagement.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Enhanced staff involvement, empowerment, motivation, and satisfaction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establish working group</li> <li>- identify group remit</li> <li>- develop training plan</li> </ul>	<p>annual</p>	<p>October 2011</p>	<p>Head of Service</p>	<p>Service Plan</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the PRD process is carried out consistently and on time across all sections.</li> </ul>	Consistent management commitment to staff performance review and development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>confirm consistent approach to PRD process with reviewers</li> </ul>	recurring	June 2011	PRD Reviewers	Service Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish information display systems.</li> </ul>	Improved communication and information sharing throughout Legal Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>raise awareness of display equipment and contents</li> </ul>	one off	April 2011	Head of Service	Service Plan

	<p><b>Partners and Other Resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review partnership working to ensure the current approach is effective and supports continuous improvement in service delivery.</li> </ul>	Improved service delivery and partnership working.		one off	March 2012	Head of Service	Service Plan
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the use of, and benefits gained from, cross council in house information systems.</li> </ul>	More efficient use of resources that support service delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review results from ERDMS pilot and assess effectiveness</li> </ul>	one off	March 2012	Principal Solicitor	Service Plan
	<p><b>Service processes:</b></p>						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness of the Council's complaints, comments, and compliments policy.</li> </ul>	Staff are better aware of how to deal with complaints if any are received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>arrange presentation from CSI team in Chief Executive's Office</li> </ul>	one off	December 2011	Head of Service	Service Plan

	<p><b>Customer Results:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure the results of the new customer engagement processes (for dedicated service delivery / one off projects) are regularly reviewed and used to inform improvement actions.</li> <li>▪ Ensure feedback is communicated to customers, where appropriate.</li> <li>▪ Review the design and arrangements for the Client Services to ensure that the results can be segmented into the 3 sections of Legal Services.</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback from customer is used to inform continuous improvement in service delivery and customers are kept fully updated with information about Legal Services.</p> <p>Enhanced use of client feedback to inform section specific improvements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establish review and communication mechanism</li> <li>- review survey design</li> <li>- amend as appropriate</li> </ul>	<p>recurring</p> <p>one off</p>	<p>June 2012</p> <p>October 2011</p>	<p>Head of Service / Chief Solicitor</p> <p>Head of Service / Chief Solicitors</p>	<p>Service Plan</p> <p>Service Plan</p>
	<p><b>People Results:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure managers consider the results of the staff survey to further develop Legal Services people processes.</li> </ul>	<p>Improved staff satisfaction and involvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- discuss at management meetings</li> </ul>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>March 2012</p>	<p>Head of Service / Chief Solicitors</p>	<p>Service Plan</p>
	<p><b>Community Results:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure the results of the council house sales survey are used to inform service delivery.</li> </ul>	<p>Improved service delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- discuss at management meetings</li> </ul>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>September 2011</p>	<p>Head of Service / Chief Solicitors / Principal Solicitor</p>	<p>Service Plan</p>

	<b>Key Performance Results:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Progress benchmarking opportunities and implement processes to ensure results are used to inform service delivery.</li></ul>	Enhanced service delivery and best practice in service processes.	- identify benchmarking opportunities	one off	March 2012	Head of Service	Service Plan
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