

Shared Service for Innovation

Background

In 2005, a group of UK local authorities (all Microsoft customers) met to discuss collaborative working and the possibilities of working together on joint initiatives across a number of common business areas.

It quickly emerged that a formal arrangement was required for any collaborative authority work to be effective; consequently the Microsoft Shared Learning Group (SLG) was created.

The SLG was formed in response to members' demand to work more closely with Microsoft and other like minded councils, with the aim to maximise the value of council investment in Microsoft technologies, learn and collaborate more effectively on key business issues and support the joint development of technology solutions to deliver transformational government.



What is the Shared Learning Group?

The Shared Learning Group (SLG) is a shared service for Innovation. Members jointly deliver business driven innovative solutions with ICT as the key enabler, to improve Council services and consequently the experience of the citizen. The group of UK local authorities work in collaboration with Microsoft's Public Sector Division to share best practice and knowledge – saving time, resources and money. The Group is programme managed by Mouchel.

The group is driven by the Councils' strategic priorities and is co-ordinated through the use of workstreams, whose longevity is determined by the nature of the project and needs of the group. Each workstream is outcome focussed with objectives and benefits identified at the early stages and monitored through to completion.



Membership Benefits

The current workstreams provide the following benefits to its members:

Citizen centric services: With the citizen at the heart of what councils do, the group aims to provide secure and innovative methods of consolidating access to all services for the citizen, leading to a better customer experience.

Influencing suppliers & central government: The SLG creates a powerful voice for UK local authorities that can be used to influence suppliers in order to shape products to suit local government requirements and lobby central government to secure funding for key initiatives.

Increase in collaboration: The SLG has jointly developed and shared information on how to increase collaboration and integrate services between authorities, creating cost reductions, avoiding duplication and improving communications amongst the Councils.

Service delivery innovation: The SLG tests and deploys the latest technologies and applications to assist in the development of products that can enhance service delivery across council services.

Maximising current and future investments in Microsoft technologies: By collaborating and sharing experiences with a large knowledge pool, the group can ensure that members deploy solutions in the most efficient and effective way.

These themes help produce business driven and integrated services across local government and the wider public sector.

Workstreams

The Group typically focus on approximately 6 to 8 key issues; the current 6 being:

Identity management – allow customers to trade securely with their council Sharing best practice and jointly delivering solutions that can support citizen and staff authentication through the use of advanced technology, to address common business priorities. This is a fundamental enabler to Citizen self Service which is expected to reduce contact centre staff by typically 5 FTE in a mid sized unitary council.

Flexible & collaborative working – helping council workers to work online anywhere Jointly delivering solutions based on common strategic objectives and priorities to improve employee productivity, support new ways of working and increase collaboration across organisations and partners.

Technology in the home – using technology to help people to stay in their own homes. Identifying and designing solutions that can improve accessibility to a broad range of services and enable the improvements to technological skills in the home e.g. support for long term conditions like Alzheimer's disease, learning difficulties, dementia etc.

Service improvement – redesign business processes once and use many times Share or jointly define priority Council processes in order to deliver shared business benefits across the group and to share experiences in the use of business process design methodologies and tools.

Sustainability - share best practice in carbon reduction, develop solutions that can help reduce a council's carbon footprint through the use of IT and raise awareness of how IT can play a significant part in achieving 'green sustainability'.

Software compatibility – ensuring local government systems work on new versions of Microsoft. A collaboration between Microsoft and Camwood to perform application compatibility testing between the Microsoft product set and key local authority business applications in conjunction with the SLG members.

How to join?

The SLG is keen to attract new members that can meet the following criteria:

- Have recent or planned initiatives that show innovation and shared learning that the group could benefit from
- Have a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement in place
- Up-to-date with latest Microsoft software stack or have plans to migrate to the latest versions
- Must be able to allocate resources to the initiatives that are of interest and also appoint 1 or more lead resources who will attend the Quarterly Review Meetings
- Can offer Senior Executive sponsorship

If you're interested in joining the SLG and believe you can positively contribute to the Group, please contact the Programme Office Manager, Matt Cole at matt.cole@mouchel.com.



□ For further information

If you would like more information, please contact one of the following members:

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