

PUBLIC SERVICES NETWORK : ACT NOW TO DELIVER YOUR VISION

AFTER THREE YEARS OF PREPARATION, THE PUBLIC SERVICES NETWORK (PSN) IS FINALLY GATHERING MOMENTUM. FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES, THIS OPENS A RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES: TO CREATE NEW LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS, ACCESS NEW RESOURCES AT LITTLE OR NO COST, OPEN UP NETWORKS TO NEW PROVIDERS, AND RECLAIM A POSITION AT THE HEART OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY.

A number of local authorities are already grasping these opportunities as part of the Kent, Hampshire and Wales networks, all of which expect to connect to the PSN in the first half of this year. Similar networks in Essex, Dorset, Cambridgeshire and London are expected to follow soon after.

As well as generating significant cost savings and improvements in service levels, process efficiencies, and new ways of working, the PSN presents authorities with an opportunity to:

- rationalise their IT estate by sharing infrastructure and services with other public (or even private) sector organisations;
- leverage standardized and commodity products to provide citizens with more consistent interactions across a range of public services; and
- create new delivery models by bringing accredited third parties, such as external service providers or community groups, onto their networks with confidence.

These early adopters have demonstrated a strong case for implementing the PSN in rural, urban or mixed geographies, and with a range of public sector and community partners. But how should you go about building your business case? We have identified four key steps that will help you establish a solid foundation for successful delivery:

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1 DEFINE YOUR VISION

It is important that you set out with a clear vision of what you are trying to achieve in the form of a set of clearly articulated objectives. Do your research; look for examples of what has and hasn't worked in both the public and the private sector. Performing a thorough analysis of your existing environment will give you a clearer picture of what is achievable as well as identifying any potential pitfalls.

2 RECRUIT PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

As well as other local authorities, these may also include other organisations such as emergency services, education or healthcare providers, third sector or community groups, or even private sector organisations. Consult widely, but seek to identify as quickly as possible those organisations whose vision and objectives are closely aligned with yours. Trying to accommodate too many or very divergent requirements can lead to unclear direction and a lack of buy-in. Focus instead on creating a critical mass of organisations that share your vision and are committed to the transformation.

3 SET YOUR STRATEGY

Your strategic vision must be explicit (and realistic) about the benefits that can be achieved, and how they will be delivered. Investing time and energy in defining each element of your strategy up front - technical, commercial, sourcing, governance and service delivery - will allow you to identify any additional skills or experience you need to bring into your team to run a transparent and auditable procurement process.

4 DEVELOP THE BUSINESS CASE

In multi-stakeholder environments, establishing an accurate baseline

against which you can measure your benefits is even more important. Clearly defining who is responsible for the delivery of commercial and technical requirements will make the transition easier to manage by ensuring clear ownership and accountability during the service transition. Once approved, the business case should be actively managed and tracked against for the lifetime of the service.

5 CONCLUSION

The PSN represents an opportunity to save money, build new partnerships, and create a new platform for the delivery of services to the front line.

The challenges of achieving these objectives across organisational boundaries are not trivial but, by establishing firm consensus behind a compelling strategic vision, they can be overcome.

Those who act boldly and decisively in the coming months to lead and shape the PSN will be in a unique position to deliver value to their organisations and more agile, flexible services to the communities they serve.

Defining your vision, building support among your partners and other key stakeholders, setting your strategy and developing a thorough and realistic business case are crucial early steps toward achieving these objectives.

ABOUT US

Wavestone is an international consultancy that provides connected thinking, insight and capability to industry leading organisations. We work collaboratively with our clients to plan strategic business transformation and seamlessly turn strategy into action.

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If you'd like to find out more, please contact us by calling at +44 20 7947 4176, or via email at enquiries@wavestone-advisors.com or visit our website at www.wavestone-advisors.com