

Solace/IS Transformation Work

National Self Evaluation Framework

How good is the delivery of key processes?

Self evaluation areas:

5.1: Delivering services

5.2: Developing, managing and improving partnerships

5.3: Inclusion, equality and fairness

5.4: Improving the quality of services



How good is the delivery of key processes

Self-evaluation area 5.1: Delivering services

Explainer

Evaluating the impact and effectiveness of service delivery is at the heart of any strategic self-evaluation.

Potential evidence

- Service standards reports
- KPI reporting
- Audit Scotland performance audits
- Internal audit reports
- Policy and procedure documents such as procurement, governance and digital transformation
- Stakeholder feedback
- Process improvement case studies
- Change management evaluations
- Reviews by external consultants
- Peer reviews involving staff from other councils
- Results and impact of any relevant internal self-evaluation or improvement activity e.g. PSIF and Peer Collaborative Improvement

Reflective questions

Service Quality and Standards

- Are our services consistently meeting defined quality standards and statutory requirements?
- How do we assess and assure the quality of front-line delivery across different teams and locations?

- Where are we performing strongly — and where do services fall short or fail to meet expectations?

Responsiveness and Accessibility

- How easy is it for people to access the services they need, when and how they need them?
- Are services delivered in ways that are responsive to changing individual and community needs?
- Are our access channels — online, telephone, face-to-face — inclusive and effective?

Efficiency and Value for Money

- Are we delivering services in the most cost-effective and resource-efficient way possible?
- Have we streamlined processes to reduce waste, duplication, or unnecessary delays?
- How do we measure the return on investment for key services and interventions?

Equity and Fairness

- Are services delivered fairly and equitably across different areas, groups, and population needs?
- How do we ensure services are inclusive of people with protected characteristics or facing disadvantage?
- Do we monitor take-up, outcomes, and satisfaction disaggregated by equality groups?

Integration and Joined-Up Delivery

- Are services joined-up across departments and with partner agencies (e.g. health, education, third sector)?
- Are we reducing siloed working and duplication through integrated or co-located teams?
- How well do service users experience smooth, coordinated support — especially those with complex needs?

Innovation and Improvement

- Are we actively improving how services are designed and delivered, using learning, data, and feedback?
- What innovative practices or pilots have we introduced to tackle persistent delivery

challenges?

- Are we scaling what works — and stopping or redesigning what doesn't?

Staff Capability and Support

- Do staff have the tools, systems, and autonomy they need to deliver services effectively?
- How confident are we that training, supervision, and leadership support consistent delivery standards?
- Are front-line staff empowered to adapt services to meet individual needs while maintaining consistency?

Digital and Technology Use

- Are we using digital tools and automation to improve efficiency and accessibility?
- How do we ensure digital services remain inclusive for people with limited access or confidence?
- Are we using technology to support proactive, predictive, or preventative service delivery?

Risk, Continuity, and Resilience

- How well do we manage operational risks and ensure continuity of services during disruption (e.g. staff shortages, severe weather)?
- Are contingency plans and emergency response protocols robust and tested?
- How resilient are our core services to financial, social, or environmental pressures?

Performance and Accountability

- How do we measure performance in service delivery (e.g. KPIs, complaints, user outcomes)?
- Are performance reports used to identify improvement actions and learning?
- How transparent and accountable are we in reporting on service performance to the public?

Self-evaluation area 5.2: Developing, managing and improving partnerships

Explainer

Strong partnerships are essential for delivering joined-up services, achieving shared outcomes, and making best use of local assets and capacity.

Potential sources of evidence

- Commissioning Intentions
- CPP progress reports and documentation
- MoUs and their efficacy
- IJB reporting
- Audit reports and evidence of action as a result
- Stakeholder and partner feedback
- Qualitative feedback reports
- Place-based reports demonstrating impact and improved processes
- Case studies of joint initiatives – based on evidence
- Funding partnership reports
- Shared outcome reports e.g. LOIP reporting
- Partnership review mechanisms
- Locality / area-based evidence of partnership working
- Results and impact of any relevant internal self-evaluation or improvement activity e.g. PSIF and Peer Collaborative Improvement

Reflective questions

Strategic Purpose and Shared Outcomes

- Do our partnerships have a clear and shared purpose aligned with local priorities (e.g. LOIP outcomes)?
- Are all partners committed to delivering shared outcomes rather than protecting

organisational interests?

- How well do we align partnership goals with national priorities (e.g. National Performance Framework, Fairer Scotland Duty)?
- How well do we identify shared priorities?

Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities

- Are roles, responsibilities, and contributions of each partner clearly defined and understood?
- Is there a shared understanding of who leads, who supports, and who is accountable for key actions?
- Do our partnership structures support effective governance, delivery, and risk-sharing?

Trust and Relationship Building

- Do we have strong, trusting relationships across sectors (e.g. third sector, NHS, Police, education, community groups)?
- How do we invest in relationship-building — not just structures or formal agreements?
- Are we good at resolving tensions and maintaining productive dialogue even when priorities differ?

Communication and Information Sharing

- Are there effective and open channels of communication between partners at all levels?
- Do we share relevant data, insights, and intelligence in a timely and secure way?
- Are we transparent with each other about constraints, risks, and organisational changes?

Joint Planning and Delivery

- Are we co-designing services, strategies, and policies with partners — not just consulting them?
- How well do we coordinate resources (budgets, staff, estates) to support integrated delivery?
- Do we have shared planning cycles, reporting frameworks, or aligned commissioning processes?
- How have we dealt with 'conflict' or problems arising from partnership working?

Community Involvement in Partnerships

- Are communities and service users meaningfully involved in partnership working — not just statutory agencies?
- Do Community Planning structures reflect local voices, including those often underrepresented?
- How well do we support community-led or third sector partners to participate on an equal footing?

Innovation and Joint Problem-Solving

- Do our partnerships foster creativity, joint learning, and innovation?
- How well do we come together to tackle complex or 'wicked' problems (e.g. poverty, mental health, climate)?
- How well have we shared risk, tried new approaches, and learned from failure together?

Monitoring and Accountability

- Do we have clear and shared measures of success across our partnerships?
- How do we hold each other accountable for delivery and continuous improvement?
- Are performance reports and outcomes monitored jointly, not in isolation?
- How do we understand if our actions are improving outcomes, experiences and impacts for people?
- How well do we review our priorities to make sure that they remain the most important?
- Do we know when a partnership has achieved its purpose and should be ended?

Capacity and Resourcing

- Are our partnerships resourced appropriately — not just in funding, but in time, leadership, and admin support?
- Are smaller or voluntary sector partners supported to participate meaningfully (e.g. through funding, training)?
- Are we making the most of combined assets (e.g. estates, data, local knowledge)?

Reviewing and Improving Partnerships

- Do we regularly reflect on the effectiveness of our partnerships — not just what we're doing, but how we're working together?
- Are partnership structures, membership, and ways of working reviewed and refreshed to stay relevant?
- Are we learning from external evaluations, inspections, or peer reviews of partnership work?

Self-evaluation area 5.3: Inclusion, equality and fairness

Explainer

Inclusion, equality, and fairness are foundational to good governance, effective service delivery, and community trust. A robust self-evaluation should examine not just compliance with equalities legislation, but how deeply these principles are embedded in culture, decision-making, and outcomes.

Potential sources of evidence

- Equality Outcome Reports
- Corporate equality and diversity strategy
- Results of Equality Impact assessments
- Community engagement reports focussed on marginalised groups
- Public feedback and complaints data
- EHRC reports or interventions
- Workforce diversity statistics
- Internal staff surveys
- Accessibility audits
- Digital inclusion or poverty reduction strategies
- Results and impact of any relevant internal self-evaluation or improvement activity e.g. PSIF and Peer Collaborative Improvement

Reflective questions

Leadership and Commitment

Do senior leaders and elected members actively champion inclusion, equality, and fairness in word and action?

Are these principles embedded in our strategic vision, values, and planning frameworks (e.g. LOIP, service plans)?

How visible is our commitment to tackling structural inequalities and advancing social justice?

Understanding Needs and Inequalities

- How well do we understand the experiences, barriers, and needs of different equality groups in our area?
- Are we using data (including intersectional data) to identify and monitor inequalities in service access, experience, and outcomes?
- How do we engage people with lived experience of inequality in identifying priorities and shaping responses?

Inclusive Service Design and Delivery

- Are services designed and delivered in a way that meets the needs of diverse groups, including disabled people, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ communities, and others?
- How do we ensure reasonable adjustments and accessible formats are built in — not added on?
- Do we take a trauma-informed, person-centred approach across services?

Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)

- Are EqIAs meaningfully integrated into all key policies, plans, and decisions — not treated as a tick-box exercise?
- Are staff trained and supported to carry out high-quality impact assessments?
- Do we monitor the actual impact of decisions on equality outcomes over time?

Workforce Diversity and Inclusion

- Does our workforce reflect the diversity of the communities we serve — especially in senior roles?
- How do we monitor and address inequality in recruitment, progression, pay, and working conditions?
- Are staff supported through inclusive policies, training, and networks (e.g. for race, disability, gender, carers)?

Tackling Poverty and Structural Disadvantage

- How well do we apply the Fairer Scotland Duty in shaping our strategic decisions?
- Are we addressing the root causes of poverty and disadvantage, not just the symptoms?
- Are resources and services targeted effectively to communities most affected by inequality?

Community Engagement and Participation

- Are our engagement and participation processes accessible, inclusive, and empowering for all communities?
- How do we ensure the voices of seldom-heard or marginalised groups are not only heard but influence change?
- Are we supporting community-led solutions and leadership from underrepresented groups?

Fairness in Decision-Making and Resource Allocation

- Are decisions about services and resources made transparently, with fairness and equity considered from the outset?
- How do we involve communities in prioritising difficult choices (e.g. budget setting, service redesign)?
- Are our processes for complaints, appeals, and redress accessible and trusted?

Measuring Impact and Progress

- Do we have clear, measurable equality outcomes — and are we tracking progress against them?
- How do we know whether our actions are reducing inequalities and advancing fairness?
- Are we learning from what works — and what doesn't — in improving equity?

Continuous Improvement and Culture Change

- How do we foster a culture of inclusion and anti-discrimination across the organisation?
- Are staff at all levels engaged in ongoing learning around equalities, unconscious bias, and inclusive practice?
- Do we regularly review our equalities performance, listen to challenge, and act on feedback?

Self-evaluation area 5.4: Improving the quality of services

Explainer

Improving the quality of services is a core aim of any local authority's self-evaluation and improvement process. It requires a strong focus on service design, user experience, performance management, staff development, innovation, and learning. It can be impacted by resource availability, culture and leadership.

Potential sources of evidence

- Formal improvement project specifications
- Evaluation reports into improvement projects
- Transformation Programme
- Service performance reports
- Customer satisfaction surveys
- Follow-up reports on previous external scrutiny
- Pilot programmes or tests of change initiatives
- Citizen panels and user forums e.g. Pupil Voice
- Staff suggestion schemes
- Awards or recognitions
- Case studies of Improvement approaches
- Results and impact of any relevant internal self-evaluation or improvement activity e.g. PSIF and Peer Collaborative Improvement
- Reviews against Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework – Principle G

Reflective questions

Defining and Understanding Continuous Improvement

- Do we have a shared understanding across the organisation of what “continuous improvement” looks like in each service area?
- Are quality standards clearly defined, measurable, and aligned with service user expectations and national guidance?

- How do we ensure that our definitions of quality reflect values such as dignity, choice, accessibility, and effectiveness?

Measuring and Monitoring Quality

- What data and evidence do we use to measure service quality (e.g. satisfaction, outcomes, complaints, audits)?
- Are performance indicators focused on outcomes for service users, not just outputs or process measures?
- How regularly do we review service quality at operational and strategic levels?

Leadership and Culture

- Do leaders at all levels demonstrate a strong commitment to continuous improvement and service excellence?
- Are managers and teams encouraged to take ownership of continuous improvement in their areas of responsibility?
- Is there a culture where staff feel safe to highlight issues, suggest improvements, and learn from mistakes?

Service User Feedback and Involvement

- How do we gather and use feedback from service users, carers, and communities to improve quality?
- Are there mechanisms for co-design and co-production of services to better reflect lived experience?
- Do we close the loop — informing users how their feedback has led to tangible change?

Benchmarking and Best Practice

- How do we benchmark our services against other councils and national standards (e.g. LGBF)?
- Are we learning from other high-performing authorities, organisations, or sectors?
- Do we systematically apply lessons from audits, inspections, and external reviews?

Innovation and Service Redesign

- Are we actively redesigning services to improve quality and outcomes (not just efficiency)?

- How do we test and evaluate new approaches before scaling them?
- Do we involve users and staff in innovation processes?
- How effective is our evaluation of improvement projects? Does it consider longer-term impact?

Staff Development and Support

- Are staff trained and supported to deliver services to a high standard?
- How do we support professional learning, peer support, and reflective practice?
- Are we equipping teams with the right tools, resources, and technology to enable quality delivery?

Quality Assurance and Improvement Plans

- Do we have robust quality assurance processes (e.g. case audits, peer review, internal QA frameworks)?
- Are findings from self-evaluation used to inform improvement plans at both service and corporate levels?
- Do service improvement plans include clear actions, timelines, accountability, and review points?

Addressing Poor Performance

- How do we identify and respond to areas where service quality is falling short?
- Are underperformance issues addressed promptly and constructively?
- How do we ensure that improvement actions are sustained, not short-term fixes?

Partnership Working to Improve Quality

- Are we working with partners (e.g. NHS, third sector) to secure improvement in integrated services?
- Do we share data, insights, and best practice across organisations to support improvement?
- Are multi-agency improvement efforts aligned and resourced?

Staff and Stakeholder Involvement

- How engaged are managers and front-line staff in monitoring and owning their service performance?
- Are we supporting staff to understand and use performance data in their roles?
- How do we involve citizens, service users, and partners in defining what good performance looks like?

Innovation and Responsiveness

- Are we open to trying new approaches when performance stalls?
- How quickly can we adapt our services or processes in response to poor performance data?
- Do we have a culture that embraces improvement rather than defensiveness?