

Registers of Scotland

RoS Board

12 December 2023

Understanding Supporting Services

Purpose

1. This paper introduces the approach taken to understand both the current shape and size of RoS' supporting services as well as *how* these services underpin the effective delivery of RoS' operational and customer facing services.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that the Board note that this work is underway, and that Board advice will be sought at appropriate points as the work progresses.

Background

3. We want to make informed decisions about our supporting functions ensuring they are lean, efficient, and delivering value for money. They should be fit for purpose as well as adaptable to match the ways in which our operational and customer facing services are evolving to deliver our corporate plan and eventually align to our future vision.

4. Across the organisation we have interchangeable terms and definitions for these services. Referred to as 'supporting services', 'enabling functions' and 'corporate services' the difference in how they are defined and how they are classified reduces our ability to understand fully how we are set up to serve the operational and customer facing services we provide.

5. We need to be considerate of our commitment to support public service reform (PSR) and be in the best possible position to seize opportunities and mitigate risks that present themselves in the short, medium and long term.

6. We are also cognisant of increasing costs to RoS over the duration of the corporate plan and beyond, as well as increasing costs to deliver public services in Scotland more generally. This will result in significant challenges to budgets across the public sector and increased focus on value for money and the ratio of supporting functions to delivery functions.

7. To move forward we need to better understand the current shape and size of our supporting services and gain insight into *how* they underpin the effective delivery of operational and customer facing services.

Scope of activity

8. Four key deliverables have been identified for this work.

9. Deliverable 1 is to create working definitions for our supporting services to allow us to more fully understand how these aspects of the business are set up to serve and for segmentation into two key areas:

- a. Services and functions that are core to the delivery of our registration and customer facing services
- b. Services and functions that enable or enhance delivery of our registration and customer facing services that are not *essential* for operational and customer delivery (regardless of impact if they were to be removed)

10. Deliverable two is mapping of the relevant parts of the organisation to the definitions and providing a single view of their shape, size, cost and how we are set up to serve across the organisation.

11. Deliverable three is benchmarking against other relevant organisations to gain a greater depth of understanding of how RoS' supporting services are designed in relation to others. The list of organisations will be similar in one or more aspects of size, nature or sector however other organisations that emerge during this research process may be included if deemed that the data gathered could provide valuable information to the overall output.

12. Deliverable four is to provide the context within which this work is being undertaken. Synthesis of push and pull factors for change (both internal and external to RoS) will provide added value to the data when presented back and provide more depth to support decision making around next steps.

13. It is worth noting, in relation to uses of the outputs from this work, that potential models or ideas for future design of supporting services is not in scope however discussions with key *internal* stakeholders will initiate consideration of such and therefore any ideas or opportunities that are surfaced will be kept for future use.

14. The same can be said of the engagement with *external* stakeholders therefore effective stakeholder engagement will be essential for identifying future opportunities and ensuring strong networks are built to allow these opportunities to be pursued in the future.

15. Sensitivity of the subject matter along with good communication and collaboration will be key to successful delivery of this work. The outputs will be valuable however they are designed to underpin potential changes to the ways in which our teams are set up and work therefore gaining buy-in at this early stage will support delivery now and for future strands of activity to come.

16. Regular feedback on progress will be provided through relevant governance channels as well as direct reporting to the Accountable Officer and Director for Policy and Corporate Services. We will keep the board updated on progress as appropriate, and report back to the Board in due course.

Conclusion

17. This work as outlined within this paper will be completed within this financial year with scoping, stakeholder engagement and planning already underway.

18. RoS Board members are invited to review the outline provided and provide any feedback to strengthen the approach.

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