

West Dunbartonshire Council

Continuous Improvement Strategy

Appendix 1



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1. Purpose

1.1 The Continuous Improvement strategy has been designed to harmonise and systematically manage the use of quality management frameworks and techniques, across the Council to ensure that both review and improvement activity meets the requirements of best value and drives improvement.

1.2 The Continuous Improvement strategy's main aim and objectives is:

Support and promote continuous improvement across the Council to secure the delivery of best value

which will be achieved by implementing the following objectives:

- Harmonise review and improvement activity
- Provide systematic approaches to deliver best value and continuous improvement implementing the 4C's; challenge, compare, compete and consult
- Implement Audit Scotland recommendations about improving competitiveness and reviewing the most efficient service delivery option
- Provide a PSIF as a corporate umbrella framework to support continuous improvement across the Council and partners
- Develop a continuous cycle of improvement which is driven by proportionality based on the results of review detail of improvement plans and external inspection activity
- Transforming the way services are delivered

2. Rationale for the selection of the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) and targeted review activity to meet the 4C's

2.1 PSIF will be used as the corporate approach to support continuous improvement which will involve open and transparent self assessment and improvement planning. The framework will be used across the Council and will act as the catalyst for identification of improvement activity using the principles of independent ***challenge and improvement***. (See details of PSIF in Appendix 3)

2.2 WDC are fully committed to delivering the recommendations of Audit Scotland as a priority, a broader view of improvement needs to be taken to ensure sustainability of the approach in the current economic climate and to develop a culture which is capable of delivering continuous improvement.

2.3 Reviews have been selected to improve efficiency and productivity across the Council and to explore ways in which services can be delivered more efficiently in the future which will include examining options for models of service delivery.

2.4 Improvement plans generated from PSIF self assessment can be used as

evidence for BV2 and the Shared Risk Assessment (SRA) activity. The quality and reliability of self evaluation documentation will inform decisions on the level of risk and scrutiny to be conducted by Audit Scotland and the various inspection bodies. Ideally PSIF roll out should be aligned to the Assurance and Improvement Plan inspection and audit activity to ensure auditors have access to our own self evaluation evidence.

2.5 However, PSIF on its own will not deliver best value it will provide a framework for continuous improvement. Programmes of review to address the 4C's are scheduled, particularly competitiveness testing are part of this strategy.

2.6 The cultural and employee benefits which can be gained from using PSIF self evaluation cannot be underestimated. The framework will encourage and empower staff to be open about performance, make them feel valued and trusted to make decisions about improvements and create a sense of ownership and responsibility for the success of improvement plans.

3. The Approach

3.1 The strategy has been tailored to meet the needs of both internal and external stakeholders. It includes systematic approaches to target immediate priorities identified by Audit Scotland and strategic PSIF Assessments and the identification of a corporate umbrella approach to promote and support continuous improvement across the Council.

3.2 PSIF Self assessment will act as the overarching framework used to identify targeted improvement activity which will involve implementing improvement plans and conducting other types of reviews which cover the 4C's of best value.

4 Rationale for services selected to participate in review activity

4.1 The rationale for selection of services to participate in the review and Improvement programme will be based on the results of:

- PSIF which is scored using the RADAR Approach
- Relative importance of PSIF criterion part
- external evaluations carried out by the Shared Risk Assessment team
- current performance

which will also be used to determine a level of risk and priority which should be included in performance management systems. In the short term, whilst the number of PSIF assessments accumulate selection of services will be based on internal and external performance results.

4.2 Services who have not participated in reviews covering the 4C's need to fastrack the process and ensure services can prove they are competitive, that the

processes they use to deliver service are efficient, that stakeholders have been consulted and that we have compared our performance against both the private and public sectors.

- 4.3** Review of performance against PSIF and the 4C's is not a one off; it is a systematic process which must be built into existing performance management and reporting systems. (See Appendix 3 paragraph 1.7)

5. Management of PSIF and continuous Improvement

- 5.1** It is vitally important that the element of independent ***challenge and improvement*** exists in self assessment and review activity which will be provided by professionally qualified independent facilitators from the Chief Executives Department. A virtual team of Officers from Departments will assist in the process of training, review, assessment and evidence collation. (See appendix 4 for support details)

6. Where will PSIF be implemented?

- 6.1** PSIF will be implemented using a hierarchical approach to ensure that the Community Planning Partnership (CPP), the Corporate Management Team, Departments and services are all reviewing and improving their performance. Strategic and operational self assessment will be phased across the Council, the scope will include staff representing every level:

- Corporate Management team will evaluate the performance of the team and the Council
- (CPP) will evaluate performance of the Board and Thematic group work and outcomes
- Extended Directorates (including Managers) will evaluate the performance of their Departments
- Section Heads will evaluate the performance of their service(s) and appropriate services delivered in partnership

- 6.2** This will consist of six strategic evaluations including the CPP (see table 1). A definitive number of service evaluations are currently difficult to determine due to a number of Departmental and service based restructures. However nine PSIF evaluations have been scheduled from September 2010 till April 2011 which can be seen in table 2. Educational services have picked one service to participate as the majority of other services like schools, community learning and development and psychological services all use statutory inspection frameworks.

PSIF Strategic timeline

Table 1

Department	PSIF Training	Pre work	Self assessment and improvement	Planning
Corporate Management Team	September 2009	October 2009- November 2009	December 2009	January-March 2010
Social Work and Health	October 2009	October 2009	October 2009	November/December 2009
Corporate services	February 2010	February 2010	February-March 2010	April-July 2010
Chief Executives	January 2010	January 2010	January 2010	April-July 2010
HEEDS	March 2010	March/April 2009	April 2010	May 2010
Community Planning Partnership	November 2010	November 2010- December 2010	December 2010	January 2011

PSIF Operational timeline

Table 2

Assessment Area	Department	Timescale
Homecare	SW&H	November 2010
Learning Disability	SW&H	March 2011
Economic Development services	HEEDS	October 2010
Grounds Maintenance	HEEDS	April 2011
Community Planning Partnership	CED	December 2010
Internal Audit	CED	January 2011
Contact Centre	Corporate Services	December 2010
Registration services	Corporate Services	May 2011
Resources or the schools estate	Educational Services	February 2011

- 6.3** PSIF implementation will include the Department of Social Work and Health who currently use the statutory quality inspection framework called the SWIA Performance Improvement Model (PIM). Educational services were subject to HMIE inspection in May 2009 and are implementing an Improvement Plan. They have also planned to participate in Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) with HMIE in September 2011 so will not participate in a strategic PSIF review. However, both frameworks have been mapped against PSIF and cover the same ground so any

service can participate in PSIF (See Appendix 4 for mapping of how PSIF compares to other statutory and non statutory frameworks)

6.4 The scope of PSIF roll out will not include schools, community learning and development or psychological services who currently use the How Good is Our series.

7. Competitive Benchmarking

7.1 Two of the four C's of best value are to **compare** and **compete**, according to The Local Government Scotland Act, services must prove they are competitive and are delivering best value. This can be done in a couple of ways. However WDC will use competitive benchmarking to review levels of competitiveness across Council services.

7.2 Competitive benchmarking involves making a comparison of costs and quality against other providers and establishing the relative position in the market.

7.3 To meet Audit Scotland recommendations and the WDC Best Value Improvement Plan twenty one services are participating in a programme of competitive benchmarking (see Table 3) to establish their position in the market and their ability to provide services at a price people are willing to pay.

7.4 To standardise and improve the approach to competitive benchmarking a toolkit and learning outcome has been developed to assist Managers with the process and ensure sustainability of the approach

7.5 The toolkit has been designed to train Managers in active learning using actual WDC case studies. It is broken down into four stages:

- 1) Types and scope of benchmarking
- 2) Performance indicators and service profiles
- 3) Competitor analysis
- 4) Sourcing partners and planning for improvement

7.6 The toolkit will be submitted to this committee in October 2010 and launched to Managers at the Senior Managers Network in October/November 2010.

7.7 Information generated about services will be included in a document called a **Service Profile** which will provide Managers with data on the market, customers and finance which can be used to improve the business.

List of services participating in competitive benchmarking and option appraisal from September 2009-March 2011

Table 3

Competitiveness review area	Department
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Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing	HEEDS
Soft Facilities Management	HEEDS
Architectural Services	HEEDS
Planning and Building Control	HEEDS
Housing Management	HEEDS
Procurement	Corporate Services
Recruitment	Corporate Services
Contact Centre	Corporate Services
Printing Services	Corporate Services
Legal services	Corporate Services
Homecare	Social Work and Health
Older Peoples' Residential	Social Work and Health
Social Work Field Work	Social Work and Health
Older Peoples Daycare	Social Work and Health
Welfare Rights	Social Work and Health
Sport Development	Educational Services
Pre 5's	Educational Services
Libraries Service	Educational Services
Community learning and development	Educational Services
Outdoor Education	Educational Services
PR and Marketing	Chief Executive's Department

8. Option Appraisal and shared services

8.1 PSIF self evaluation and competitive benchmarking will show how services are performing against others and standards of excellence.

8.2 However, it will not identify the service delivery option that represents best value. To meet Audit Scotland recommendations and the WDC Best Value Improvement Plan services listed in table 3 who are participating in competitive benchmarking should also review if the service delivery configuration is meeting stakeholder needs with regard to cost and quality. If it is found that services are not competitive or delivering best value, they should be subject to an appraisal of the service delivery option.

8.3 As illustrated in appendix 1 option appraisal should be a natural progression if services cannot prove they are competitive. Option appraisal will help identify what service configuration is best with regard to best value and efficiency which may include a shared service, joint working, improve the in house service or to externalise the service or parts of the service to the private sector.

9. Process and efficiency reviews

- 9.1 We also must **challenge** the way we deliver our services and that includes processes.
- 9.2 Where a significant area for improvement is identified via PSIF assessment or performance management information the use of appropriate business improvement tools and techniques will be used to initiate process improvement, solve a problem or find a solution.
- 9.3 The overall objective of using process management and review is more efficient processes which meet stakeholder needs and identify new ways of delivering Council services.
- 9.4 A programme of process management reviews has been developed to address areas of duplication and potential inefficiencies (see Table 4)

Process review activity from September 2010 till April 2013

Table 4

Process review area	Department	Timeline
Complaints	Across the council	March 2011-July 2011
Reception areas	Across the Council	A 2011-November 2011
Member services	Corporate services	September 2010-January 2011
Welfare rights	SW&H	April 2012- August 2012
Administration and clerical services	Educational services	September 2012-December 2012
Planning applications	HEEDS	January 2013- April 2013

- 9.5 A total of thirty six reviews including PSIF, competitiveness testing and process reviews are being carried out over a period of 2/3 years which equates to 8 reviews per Department. The Council has in excess of 50 service areas so this means that over 75% of Council services will be subject to some sort of review activity during this period.

10 Conclusions

- 10.1 PSIF is the umbrella framework of self evaluation and improvement in WDC and will act as the catalyst for the identification of other improvement activity in the future. However, due to a number of external and internal evaluations in the past it has been identified that review work is required immediately to look at how we are performing against the 4C's of best value, particularly competitiveness.
- 10.2 Programmes have been developed to harmonise and roll out PSIF both strategically and operationally and competitive benchmarking will be used by 21 services to check how we compare against the market and others who operate within it. If the 21 services are found not be competitive they will progress to an

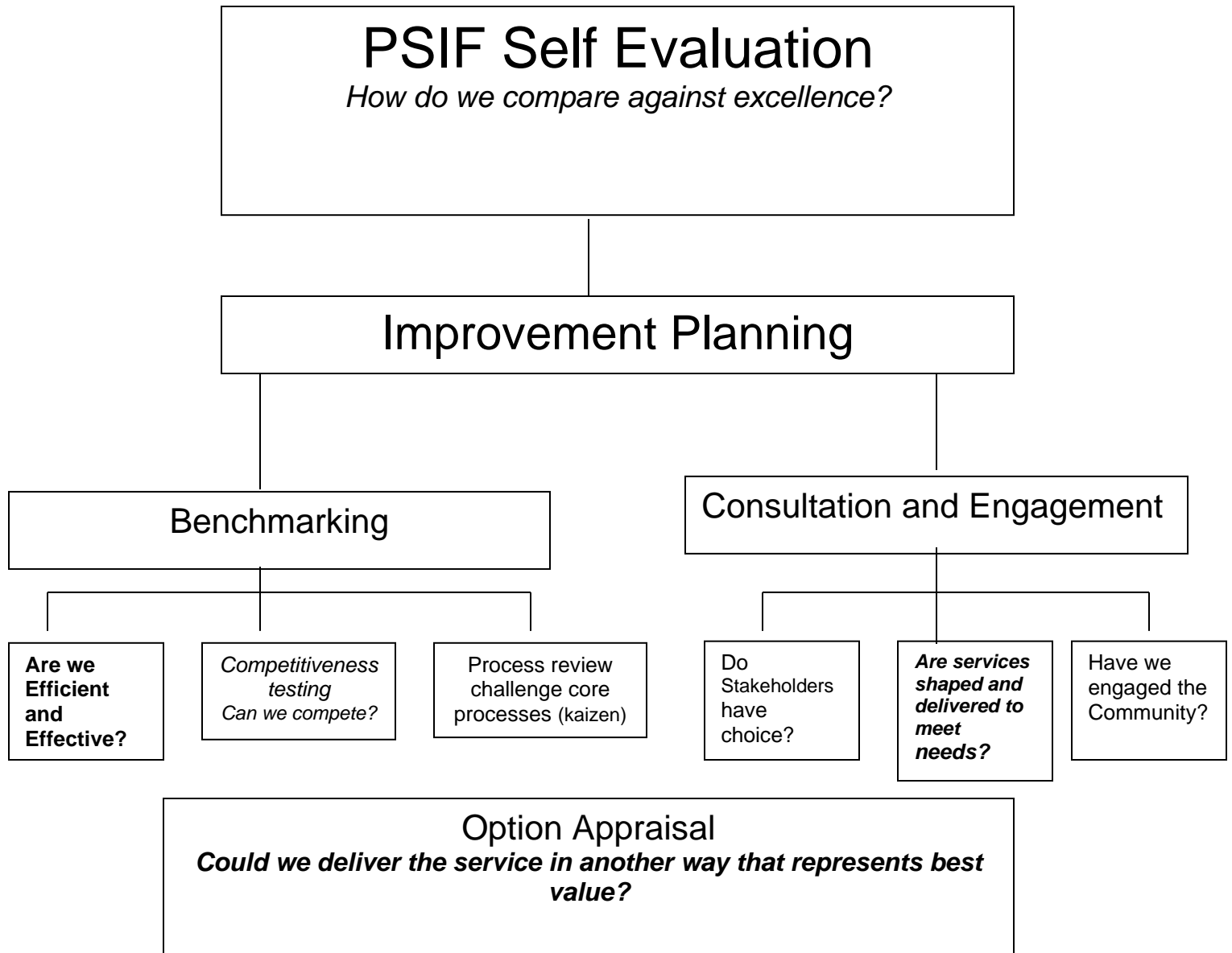
assessment of the service delivery option. This may involve services being delivered using alternative operating models.

- 10.3** A process review timetable has been established to look at efficiency and effectiveness which will result in streamlining and transforming service delivery which may generate much needed efficiency savings.
- 10.4** The review and improvement activity scheduled over the next two years includes over 75% of council services with representatives from each council Department. Completion of the cycle to include all Council services will be completed in five years.
- 10.5** The timeline for the roll out of PSIF is planned from September 2010 till April 2011. However, this will be extended once the picture is clearer about the financial situation of the Council.

APPENDIX 2

Improvement process in West Dunbartonshire (priorities in italics):

Figure 1



APPENDIX 3

1. What is PSIF?

- 1.1 PSIF is a generic framework which can be applied to any public sector organisation. It is a bespoke self evaluation framework which is based on the European Foundation Quality Model (EFQM) which is a framework of excellence. (See figure 1)

Figure 1



- 1.2 PSIF was designed by West Lothian Council to harmonise Best Value, Customer Service Excellence, EFQM & the Investors in People Standard. It was mapped with statutory HMIE Quality Management in Education (QMIE) and SWIA performance Improvement (PIM) Model used in social work services and results show that the frameworks broadly cover the same areas with the exception of risk and commissioning.

1.3 Who else uses PSIF?

The use of PSIF is widespread across Scotland with 27 public bodies' mainly local authorities and fire and rescue services self assessing and improving using the framework.

1.4 What does the PSIF process involve?

- Identification of staff Improvement teams for allocation of particular elements of the nine criteria
- Completion of pre-work over a two to three week period which will consist of evidence gathering, identification of strengths and inputting information to the E'tool. Corporate support and quality assurance will be provided by the Chief Executive's Department during this phase to ensure understanding of the question set and reliability of evidence being cited

- Two days self evaluation using the full PSIF question set, facilitated by EFQM qualified assessors from the Chief Executives Department
- Half day improvement planning to convert the areas for improvement into measurable actions and outcomes
- Prioritisation of actions based on the level of risk

1.5 The reduction in actual self evaluation time and increase in pre-work and evidence gathering will improve the quality of management information, decision making and prioritisation of improvement.

1.6 What research has been completed to inform the selection of PSIF?

To determine if PSIF could be rolled out across all Council services from strategic to operational, five services participated in a national PSIF pilot assessment with Quality Scotland. The Department of Social Work and Health participated in a pilot of PSIF with SWIA and the Improvement service. As a result five service based improvement plans and a Departmental improvement plan have been developed. The SWIA pilot evaluation has been published which shows the success of the project.

Lessons learned from subsequent reviews of the pilots have informed the approach for full roll out of the framework across the Council. Particularly in relation to the level of pre-work, evidence gathering, level of scrutiny and recognition that a philosophy of accountability and transparency can be completely new to some staff.

1.7 How will we build PSIF Improvement Plans into WDC performance management, planning and reporting systems?

To ensure improvement is embedded in performance management and planning, self evaluation improvement plans should inform corporate service, and operational plans:

- CPP PSIF Improvement Plan should inform the Single Outcome Agreement which should be managed and monitored by the board on a quarterly basis
- Council PSIF Improvement Plan will inform the Corporate Plan which should be managed and monitored by the Strategic Leadership Group and the Corporate and Efficient Governance committee on a quarterly basis
- Departmental PSIF Improvement Plans will inform Service Plans which should be managed and monitored by Departmental Directorates and the

relevant service committee on a quarterly basis

- Service based PSIF Improvement Plans will inform Operational, Business and Development Plans which should be managed and monitored by Service Managers and the CED PSIF team on a quarterly basis
- Service based Improvement Plans developed as a result of statutory and non statutory audit and inspection should be managed and monitored by Departmental Directorates and the relevant service committee on a quarterly basis

Improvement Plans should be developed using a Covalent scorecard and reported via the performance reporting system.

1.8 How will we quality assure PSIF improvement plans?

The CED will quality assure all improvement plans during the assessment phase. The Council is also a member of an external team with the Improvement service and other local authorities who have agreed to peer review and quality assurance each others assessments.

APPENDIX 4

1. **Corporate support for implementation of PSIF improvement plans and other review activity**

PSIF self assessment and improvement will be managed by the Chief Executive's Improvement section to retain the element of independent challenge. A virtual team consisting of Officers from each Department will assist with the process.

If resources allow the CED Improvement team will provide advice and guidance to services to support them to implement common areas for improvement identified from PSIF improvement plans. The four Improvement and Efficiency work streams will develop approaches to meet the requirements of the best value improvement plan which are the same areas identified during internal PSIF assessments and

Further review and improvement activity like process review, competitiveness testing, option appraisal and shared services will also be managed by various functions within the Chief Executive's Department

2. **Staff development PSIF**

To support WDC approach to developing a culture which is capable of supporting challenge and improvement, self assessment will include staff from all levels. Open discussions about performance and method of service delivery will create an ethos where change and improvement are part of the everyday job.

PSIF assessor training will be provided in house for all staff participating in self evaluation. Learning outcomes and toolkits are being developed to assist staff participating in benchmarking, option appraisal and consultation training.

3. **Communication of PSIF**

The success of the roll out of PSIF across the Council will only be achieved by effective communication and preparatory work to launch and promote the model, a Communications Strategy and Action Plan will be developed.

APPENDIX 5

1. PSIF, BV2 and Shared Risk Assessment

PSIF self assessment and improvement plans can be used as evidence for BV2, Shared Risk Assessment (SRA) activity, SWIA *PIM* and HMIE *QMIE* inspections. It is also likely that the self evaluation will satisfy the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator. (SHR)

The quality and reliability of self evaluation documentation will inform decisions on the level of risk and scrutiny to be conducted by Audit Scotland and the various inspection bodies. The Shared Risk Assessment will inform the level of proportionality that the inspection and audit bodies will follow. Based on the risk assessment an Assurance and Improvement Plan has been designed for each Council.

It is vitally important that the element of independent challenge exists in self evaluation to ensure there is no mismatch between shared risk assessment and the Council's own self evaluation.

2. PSIF relationship with statutory inspections and European Foundation Quality Model, Investors in People and Customer Service Excellence (see Table 5)

The PSIF is a self assessment tool which is largely based on the EFQM Excellence Model. However it has been further refined to include the requirements of various recognised quality frameworks, including the National Excellence Standard, Investors in People, ISO 9000;2000 series, and the key characteristics of best value.

Services who are pursuing Investors in People and Customer Service Excellence (*previously known as Chartermark*), or who are preparing for scheduled external review should **continue**. Priority should be given to retaining certification. However no new plans should be developed as the route to certification against any quality framework should be via the PSIF.

The HMIE Inspection framework for education Quality Management in Education (QMIE) and the SWIA Inspection framework for social work services Performance Improvement Model (PIM) and other integrated inspection frameworks like the Child Protection framework are also derived from the EFQM Excellence Model.

WDC have been working with a national group to establish if PSIF can be used to challenge and evaluate performance in social work. Findings show that PSIF and

PIM broadly cover the same criteria/theme. However there are differences in the frameworks and scoring systems, particularly in relation to risk and commissioning. WDC participated in a recent pilot of PSIF with SWIA which has been evaluated and deemed extremely successful.

WDC have been working with a national group to establish if PSIF can be used to challenge and evaluate the performance of the education functions. HMIE, Improvement Service, WLC and WDC have been working together to map QMIE and PSIF. Findings indicate that PSIF and QMIE broadly, cover the same criteria/theme.

Educational services who currently use the HMIE Inspection frameworks How Good is our School 3 (HGIOS), How Good is our Community Learning and Development 2 (HGIOCLD) and How Good is Psychological Services (HGIOPS) should continue to follow the statutory HMIE Inspection frameworks.

Table 5

Quality Framework	What it covers	What will it produce?	How are results Validated?
PSIF	9 criteria focus across all areas of business, leadership, service planning, people resources, partners and resources, processes, customer results, people results community results, key performance results	Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan	Internal Quality Assurance systems and Improvement service
BV2	10 criteria focus across all areas of business, vision, performance management, community engagement, sound governance,	Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan	Audit Scotland will conduct proportionate inspections which are based on risk
EFQM	9 criteria focus across all areas of business leadership, policy, people resources, partners and resources, processes, customer results, people results community results, key performance results	Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan	Quality Scotland
HMIE QMIE	10 criteria focus across all areas of business including capacity for improvement, leadership, impact on community, learners,	Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan	HMIE proportionate basis based on risk

	staff, policy and strategy, resources		
SWIA PIM	10 criteria focus across all areas of business including capacity for improvement, leadership, impact on community, learners, staff, policy and strategy, resources,	Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan	SWIA proportionate basis based on risk
SHR Quality Standard	Operational standard	Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan	SHR proportionate basis based on risk
Care Commission	National care standards, mainly operational		CC inspection
Investors in People	6 criteria focus on people	Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan	IIP Assessors
Customer Service	5 criteria focus on customer service	Self Evaluation and Improvement Plan	CSE Assessors

APPENDIX 6

Glossary of abbreviations, word meanings and context

Abbreviation or word	Definition
BV2	This is the new framework audit Scotland will use for evaluating authorities
CED	Chief Executives Department
CPP	Community Planning Partnership
Competition	Competition is a contest between individuals, groups, nations, animals, etc. for territory, a niche, or allocation of resources. It arises whenever two or more parties strive for a goal which cannot be shared. Competition occurs naturally between living organisms which co-exist in the same environment. Business is often associated with competition as most companies are in competition with at least one other firm over the same group of customers
Competitive	Competitiveness is a comparative concept of the ability and performance of a firm, sub-sector or country to sell and supply goods and/or services in a given market.
Contestability	In economics, a Contestable market is a market served by only one firm, but with mandated "competitive" pricing, so as to second the monopoly held by said firm on said market. Its fundamental feature is low barriers to entry and exit; a perfectly contestable market would have no barriers to entry or exit. Contestable markets are characterised by 'hit and run' entry. If a firm in a market with no entry or exit barriers raises its prices above marginal cost and begins to earn abnormal profits, potential rivals will enter the market to take advantage of these profits.
4C's	Compete, Challenge, Compare and Consult used in a review to check if best value is being delivered and part of Local Government Scotland Act
E'Tool	Database used to store evidence from PSIF evaluations

EFQM	European Foundation Quality Model
HMIE	Her Majesty's Inspection of Education
KAIZEN	The term kaizen (改善, Japanese for "improvement") is a Japanese word adopted into English referring to a philosophy or practices focusing on continuous improvement in manufacturing activities, business activities in general, and even life in general, depending on interpretation and usage. When used in the business sense and applied to the workplace, kaizen typically refers to activities that continually improve all functions of a business
Nine criteria	PSIF has nine elements
Option Appraisal	Review of the most efficient service delivery option that represents best value
PSIF	Public Service Improvement Framework
PIM	Performance Improvement Model
Pre-work	Evidence gathered before a PSIF assessment
Process management	Process management is the ensemble of activities of planning and monitoring the performance of a process. Especially in the sense of business processes
Procurement	Procurement is the acquisition of goods and/or services at the best possible total cost of ownership, in the right quality and quantity, at the right time, in the right place and from the right source for the direct benefit or use of corporations, individuals, or even governments, generally via a contract, or it can be the same way selection for human resource. Simple procurement may involve nothing more than repeat purchasing
Process mapping	Business process mapping refers to activities involved in defining exactly what a business entity does, who is responsible, to what standard a process should be completed and how the success of a business process can be determined. Once this is done, there can be no uncertainty as to the requirements of every internal business process.
PID	A Project Initiation Document is a logical

	document that brings together the key information needed to start the project on a sound basis. It should be conveyed to all stakeholders and agreed and signed off by the business sponsors. In short, this is the, "who, why, what, when and how", part of the project. It defines all major aspects of a project and forms the basis for its management and the assessment of overall success.
QMIE	Quality Management in Education
Risk Management	Risk management is the identification, assessment, and prioritization of risks followed by coordinated and economical application of resources to minimize, monitor, and control the probability and/or impact of unfortunate events. Risks can come from uncertainty in financial markets, project failures, legal liabilities, credit risk, accidents, natural causes and disasters as well as deliberate attacks from an adversary.
SWIA	Social Work Inspection Agency
SRA	Shared Risk Assessment , means that inspection bodies and Audit Scotland will work together to assess risk
SHR	Scottish Housing Regulator
VSE	Validated Self Evaluation, education new inspection process