



Benefits Performance Audit – future plans & sharing good practice



Andrew Reddish – Manager Benefits (Technical)

Andrew Reddish (10 mins)

- Background to the new audit work
- Progress to date
- Plans for 2010/11
- Sharing good practice

Rhona McGrath (10 mins)

- Good practice in 'meeting the needs of the community'

Questions for Andrew and Rhona (10 mins)

The Benefits Performance Audit is carried out in 2 phases:

- assessment of risks to improvement in all services + planned improvement
- focused audits if services are unable to improve

The audit provides assurance that:

- all benefits services are taking action to improve
- services unable to improve will be held to account

Progress so far

27 of the 32 benefits services have been assessed to date

On target for completing the assessment of risks in all 32 services by 31 March 2010

Outcomes, so far:

- an assurance that all services in Scotland are planning to improve
- no services identified as unwilling or unable to improve

Trends identified 2008 - 2009

Most frequent risks identified in the areas of:

- business planning
- performance reporting
- completing the improvement cycle

Most good practice identified in 'Meeting the Needs of the Customer'

Accounts Commission has a new 'gate keeping and co-ordinating role' to simplify the approach to delivering local government scrutiny:

- Shared Risk Assessment (SRA) process
- Assurance & Improvement Plans for all 32 councils
- **All** scrutiny activity scheduled annually

Challenges for the Benefits Performance Audit from April 2010

The Benefits Performance Audit will contribute to SRA process:

- an annual risk assessment exercise
- shared intelligence
- annual audit programmes to be scheduled
- BUT, flexibility required to respond to failing benefits services
- MOU with DWP to be reviewed and agreed

Yet to be agreed, but must be risk based & proportionate
....likely to be a combination of:

- evidence based progress reports on action plans
- updated self assessments
- follow up full risk assessments
- further engagement agreed with DWP
- focused audits, if appropriate

Feedback from the syndicate exercise:

- interim reviews to replace full annual reviews ✓
- the process is not really risk based ✓
- annual timetable ✓
- improve guidance on evidence required ✓
- share best practice information on results

There are a lot of good initiatives out there:

- share 'good practice' amongst yourselves
- no 'league tables'
- a role for the IRRV to facilitate councils in sharing of good practice?

Rhona McGrath has agreed to share some of her council's initiatives in 'meeting the needs of the community'

Questions

There will be an opportunity to ask Andrew and Rhona questions at the end of Rhona's session

In the meantime, thank you for your attention