

Department for Communities and Local Government

Improvement Plan

October 2014

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

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Foreword

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) continues to build on its reputation for delivery. Over the past few years we have undergone constant change to help us become a stronger, better Department. Our work is helping create better local services, giving people the security and stability of a decent affordable home, supporting the creation of strong communities and helping businesses grow and create jobs. Working with other Departments, Local Authorities and other organisations is crucial in ensuring delivery of our work in a way which supports the Government's agenda.

We are proud of what we have achieved in the last 12 months and our progress against the improvement actions in the 2013 Departmental Improvement Plan. Our key successes include:

- securing funding for integrated health and social care
- passing of the Growth and Infrastructure Act and Local Audit and Accountability Act
- investing to get Britain building affordable homes
- launching the Help to Buy schemes
- reducing homelessness
- working with Local Authorities and their partners to turn around troubled families
- supporting communities through the floods by working with local councils
- the launch of the Public Service Transformation Network, involving seven Government Departments and a number of Local Authorities, to champion a "whole place", multi-agency approach to public service reform

We want to continue building on these successes. To help us achieve this we have brought together all of our change activity under the cross-cutting Better Department priority so that we can clearly identify where to focus our effort and resources. In January we launched our Blueprint which describes our ambition over the next 12 to 18 months. This sits alongside our Business Plan and is 'how' we will deliver our business. Linked to this, we have set ourselves some stretching improvement actions which will be measured and reported on through the Departmental Improvement Plan process.



Sir Bob Kerslake
PERMANENT SECRETARY – Department for Communities and Local Government

1. Assessment

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DCLG was one of five Departments to pilot Departmental Improvement Plans as part of Civil Service Reform. We published our first Departmental Improvement Plan in June 2013 and one year on, are undertaking a refresh. All Departments are now required to produce plans which will be published in 2014.

This refresh reports on progress against the improvement actions and metrics identified in the 2013 Departmental Improvement Plan and also provides an assessment of the work that we have done since, which together result in updated improvement actions for 2014.

DCLG has made significant progress in 2013-2014 and our People and Pulse Survey results continue to demonstrate an upward trend in staff engagement. We intend to continue to build on this and in January 2014, we launched our 'Blueprint' (Annex A) for the organisation, which brings together all our change activity, including our work to deliver Civil Service Reform and the implementation of the DCLG Strategic Review under the 'Better Department' cross-cutting priority.

The Blueprint outcomes and DCLG's priorities under Civil Service Reform, form the basis for the improvement actions for the 2014 Departmental Improvement Plan.

We also recognise that we need to continue to develop the way we work, the way in which we match our resources to priorities and the way we develop and support our leaders to deliver change, manage performance and develop staff. To help us achieve this we have identified key priorities in the Blueprint where we will focus greater attention and assess delivery and impact.

DCLG is proud of its achievements and will continue to build on the significant progress made in creating great places to live and work and in giving more power to local people to shape what happens in their community.

1.1 Departmental Purpose

DCLG's purpose is to create great places to live and work, and give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area. Our work is focused on four main areas:

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DCLG's [Annual Report](#) for 2013-2014 sets out our achievements over this period.

1.2 Civil Service Reform

The Civil Service Reform Plan published in June 2012 outlined plans for cross Government work to create a Civil Service that is more digital, skilled and unified, open and accountable and better at collaborative/joined-up policy making.

The One Year On Report (published July 2013) set out progress against Civil Service Reform Plan actions. Following the report Cabinet Office identified seven actions for cross Government focus. These are – Capabilities, Major Projects, Digital, Functional Leadership, Open Policy Making, Modern Workplace and Civil Service 21.

Of these, DCLG's priorities were: Commercial Capability and Modern Workplace. We have added Matching Resources to Priorities and Talent Management as the areas which will have the greatest impact, present a high degree of challenge and are time critical. These four areas are incorporated within our Departmental improvement measures for 2014/15.

The 'Civil Service Reform: progress report', published on 7 October 2014, reaffirmed the commitment to reform and to focus on the above areas as well as tackling cultural issues.

i) Commercial Capability:

The Department's operating model has changed fundamentally over the last two years. We are no longer solely a grant giving Department but now also manage a portfolio of financial instruments. This has required us to update our existing skills and

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to develop and bring in new expertise. We are implementing new governance and assurance systems to underpin our new commercial roles.

The Homes and Communities Agency is changing to deliver an increasingly commercial role, managing a recoverable investment portfolio of up to £23 billion, alongside its traditional grant programmes, and social housing regulation. An Investment Unit will be established in the Homes and Communities Agency to manage this portfolio. The Homes and Communities Agency will also take on a new role as the Government's main land disposal agency for surplus developable land across Government.

Building on recommendations from a review of the DCLG finance function by PricewaterhouseCoopers we have worked with the Shareholder Executive (the corporate finance arm of the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills) to help senior staff build their commercial capability. We will also be recruiting senior investment and commercial professionals who will be predominantly based in the Homes and Communities Agency.

As well as the skills transfer from the new (external) posts to existing staff, there is a continuing emphasis on increasing commercial awareness across the Department. 100 staff received training in 2013/14 to add to 400 in previous years. Below are the key actions undertaken:

- a session for around 70 contract managers in March 2013 with specific focus on Enhancing Contract Management and the launch of a quarterly Contract Managers Network
- quarterly core Commercial and Financial skills training sessions for all staff with 75 staff having completed a six module corporate finance course
- 'How to Produce a Business Case' and 'Finance: the Basics' courses run on a rolling basis to ensure that non-Finance staff have access to core finance skills
- 15 staff including 8 from outside the Commercial team have been sharing their skills by getting involved in Contract Management reviews
- in February and March 2014 further targeted training to address capability gaps included attendance of over 50 key contract managers
- intensive training for around 25 Senior Civil Service staff specifically focussed on the operation and risk management of complex investment programmes and for staff managing high value contracts

We will be organising a workshop to share our experience of developing and building our commercial capability and expertise with other government departments.

ii) Modern Workplace:

DCLG is delivering a modern workplace with improved tools and technologies.

We have moved our headquarters from Eland House to Marsham Street co-locating with the Home Office, saving £9 million per year. We have also recently completed the roll out of new IT provision which will save £3 million a year. The new IT provision is the lever which enables DCLG staff to change their traditional way of working by making them more agile and flexible, working collaboratively as one DCLG across the

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whole group based in different locations and disciplines resulting in a reduced desk space requirement in Marsham Street.

Leading and managing effectively in a dispersed environment will require line managers to use different skills and approaches.

iii) Matching Resources to Priorities:

In December 2013 DCLG completed its Strategic Review which set out the direction of travel for the Department, its future priorities and how we need to adapt to respond well to the challenges of the future. The Review recommended a new approach to how we deliver our work in order to better manage our priorities with the limited resources available.

The recommendations included:

1. developing a much **stronger strategic core:**

- We have brought together our strategy, private office and communications functions in a single directorate at the centre of the Department to support ministers in framing priorities and setting purpose and direction for the Department.

2. developing a new **flexible resourcing model:**

- We are now implementing a model (developed by a team with representatives from across the organisation) which will enable us to prioritise our work, give us greater flexibility in the deployment of our people and enable us to respond dynamically to ministerial priorities aligning resources to those priorities.

3. **streamlining, standardising and strengthening our basic processes:**

- We will shortly be replacing existing IT systems for managing correspondence, Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information work with a single modern, robust alternative, which will support improvements in both quality and performance. We are also undertaking work with teams around the Department to ensure that briefings and correspondence are consistently prepared to a high standard.

Moving to a more flexible approach to matching staff resources with priorities requires a cultural shift within the Department. Staff need to feel that they are here to support the department as a whole, rather than an individual team or policy area. Managers need to feel that they will be recognised for giving up staff to higher priorities and for managing down activity on lower priority work. We are addressing this change as follows:

- we are making our resourcing processes transparent and consistent, operating across the Department as a whole. Managers and staff will see that we are operating as one department, and decisions on allocations are fairly taken by all

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- alongside the reallocation of headcount or posts, we will use the opportunities created by the movement of people explicitly to improve the career development offer to staff. Staff will see moves as an important part of their development
- we will adjust our performance management system to ensure that it recognises and promotes the new behaviours we want to see
- we will ensure our communications with staff set these changes in the wider context of moving to more flexible working in 2 Marsham Street, and the more flexible use of IT

iv) Talent Management:

We have made good progress this year in extending our talent management approach below the Senior Civil Service. At senior levels we have assessed both our people and posts so we know who our talent is, can target development to accelerate their progress, and assess the strength of our talent pipeline for our critical roles. Building on our experience of using the Civil Service Talent Toolkit for our Senior Civil Servants, we carried out a talent review of our team leaders during Autumn 2013. We are working with a small number of similar Departments on a joint talent development offer for those in the high potential pool at team leader level.

We are active participants in the Civil Service High Potential Stream with a number of our top talent on the central talent development programmes designed to grow our future supply of Director Generals and Permanent Secretaries. We are building our capability in commercial skills through secondments to the private sector and bringing in expertise for specific projects from the banking sector.

For the future we will improve skills in having career conversations and spotting and developing talent so that creating a strong internal talent pipeline becomes second nature.

2. CHANGE PROGRAMME

2.1 Better Department

Over recent years DCLG's Better Department Change Programme concentrated on addressing the cultural aspects of the Department which were creating barriers. We built levels of engagement and ownership across the Department which has resulted in 57% of staff saying that they are clear how they can contribute to making DCLG a Better Department and 66% reported that their line managers encouraged them to get involved. We also achieved an increase of 6 percentage points in our People Survey Engagement Index for 2013 taking it to 49% and a further one percentage point increase to 50% in the 2014 Pulse Survey when compared to the 2013 People Survey. Although this was the joint best improvement in Whitehall, we still recognise there is more to be done and have set ourselves ambitious targets for the next 12 to 18 months through the 2014 Departmental Improvement Plan measures/metrics.

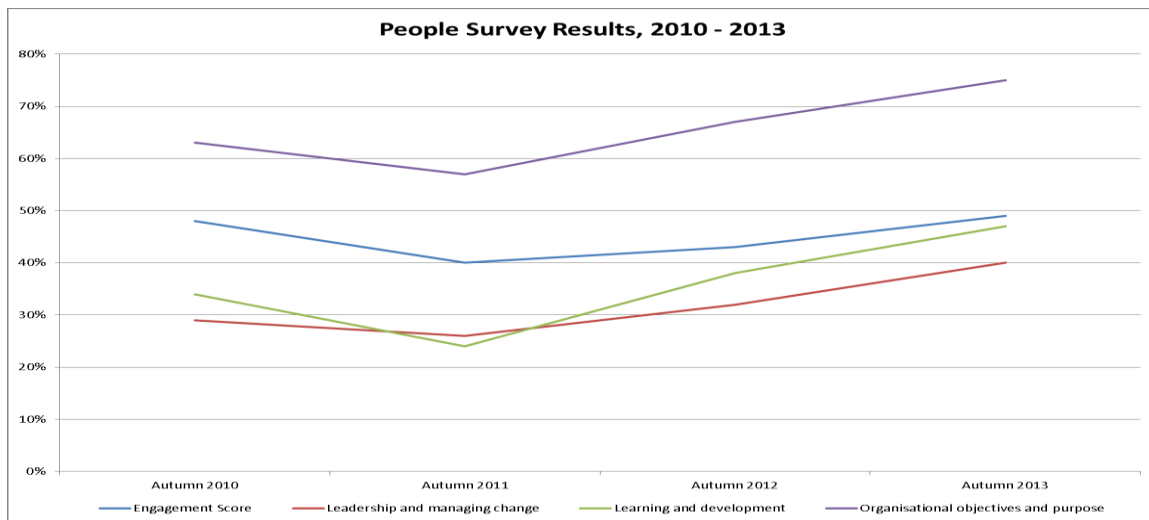
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Task and Finish Groups

Task and finish groups are the way in which we engage our staff in shaping the future and get them involved in things that matter to them. There has been significant activity during the last five months on task and finish groups which has resulted in the following outputs:

- the production of a “Write First Time” package containing resources and notices of events to improve staff capability to produce high-quality written work
- design and development of a new flexible resourcing model so that staff deployment is better aligned with Ministerial priorities and new pressures can be resourced more quickly
- delivery of a successful One Department Day in November 2013 which brought together all the work of the Department through events, stalls and learning sessions
- practical changes to help create a common DCLG identity and culture across all DCLG sites
- delivery of five leadership events in October 2013
- development of space sharing protocols for our way of working linked to the move to Marsham Street

The People Survey results also showed significant improvements in those areas we had particularly focused on:



i) Leadership and Management of Change

What we did:

Undertook leadership upskilling and improved the briefing and involvement of senior staff ahead of important changes and announcements. Encouraged volunteers to participate in task and finish groups on topics that matter to them. At the beginning of March 2014 there were 14 active task and finish groups involving 18% of the workforce.

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Survey questions and results:

Staff feel that change is managed well in DCLG (up 7 points to 29%) and that when changes are made they are usually for the better (up 7 points to 20%). They also feel that DCLG keeps them informed of matters that affect them (up 6 points to 60%).

ii) Learning and Development

What we did:

Focused on marketing and explaining how to maximise use of the Civil Service Learning portal which puts all available core training in one place. Improved the quality of training courses through effective feedback and linked development and improved performance by self-assessment against the Competency Framework.

Survey questions and results:

Staff are able to access the right learning and development opportunities when needed (up 12 points to 60%) which has helped to improve both performance (up 10 points to 50%) and career prospects (up 7 points to 41%). Alongside this, 45% of staff said they had participated in at least 5 days learning and development activity in the last 12 months.

iii) Organisational purpose

What we did:

Improved internal communication channels and introduced a framework for setting up task and finish groups to help shape change across the Department. This enabled colleagues to understand that delivering the Department's priorities through change is part of the drive to create an exceptional Civil Service.

Survey questions and results:

Staff have a clear understanding of DCLG's purpose (up 9 points to 75%) and objectives (up 9 points to 72%) and understand how their work contributes to DCLG's objectives (up 6 points to 78%).

2. Improvement Plan

OUR ORGANISATION

- Delivers ministers' priorities professionally and takes pride in what the Department does to improve people's lives
- Matches resources to priorities quickly and transparently
- Has an excellent reputation across the Civil Service and beyond for public service transformation
- Has the best offer for career development in the Civil Service and is where people choose to work
- Leads in having the skills to invest taxpayers' money wisely and deliver better outcomes

***Our Blueprint for
the organisation
we want to be***

OUR PEOPLE

- Perform consistently at a high level and strive to improve year on year
- Take responsibility for their own learning and development and use their five days to improve their skills
- Are open to and value feedback
- Are positive about change and are engaged in building a Better Department
- Support each other and are self-reliant and resilient in the way they work

OUR DCLG

OUR LEADERS.....

- Are visible and inspiring, and open and honest about what change means
- Give everyone the opportunity to work across the organisation in a wide variety of roles and to develop new skills
- Give their people accountability for delivery and the support they need to do this
- Value and reward their people according to their contribution
- Manage performance effectively and invest in their people on the basis of quality development discussions

OUR WAY OF WORKING IS.....

- Agile and flexible - and measures outcomes, not time spent at the desk
- Collaborative and as one DCLG – across the Group, locations and disciplines
- Innovative – putting digital by default, open policy making and commercial capability at the heart of our approach
- Enabled by modern, flexible ICT and our use of workspace
- Efficient - and continues to generate savings, increase productivity and deliver value for money

3. Metrics to Measure Improvement

Improvement being made	Metric used to measure progress	Date to review metric & details of who undertakes review	Trigger that will signal mitigating action needs to be taken
1. OUR ORGANISATION...			
<p>i) Delivers ministers' priorities professionally and takes pride in what the Department does to improve people's lives</p>	<p>Maintain the 2012/13 performance on actions completed on time at year end compared to other Departments.</p> <p>Increase the overall People Survey Engagement Index in 2014 by a further 6 percentage points to 55%.</p> <p>Increase the representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff to match the 11% economically active representation (the ethnic diversity of the UK's workforce) as well as 15% at all grades within the next three years.</p> <p>Improve female representation to 50% at all grades over the next two years.</p>	<p>Through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Plan reporting cycle • 2014 Pulse Survey and People Survey • Executive Team meetings 	<p>Feedback fails to demonstrate positive performance against Business Plan in comparison to OGDs.</p> <p>Pulse Survey and People Survey results in 2014 fail to demonstrate upward trajectory.</p> <p>Analysis of the workforce fails to demonstrate upward trajectory.</p>
<p>ii) Matches resources to priorities quickly and transparently.</p>	<p>People resources are moved across the Department in response to a systematic and transparent process of prioritisation. Staff are transferred to new high profile or emergency activity based on a clearer understanding of who is available to move and their development needs. Staff feedback is that we are better at matching resources to priorities.</p>	<p>At Executive Team following the Autumn 2014 People Survey.</p>	<p>That resource moves are not happening and staff feedback shows on-going concern about "overload" of work.</p>
<p>iii) Has the best offer for career development in the Civil Service and is where people choose to work.</p>	<p>90% of staff will have undertaken at least 5 days learning by 2015.</p>	<p>Through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly People Committee meetings • 2014 and 2015 Pulse Survey and People Survey 	<p>Pulse Survey and People Survey results in 2014 and 2015 fail to demonstrate upward trajectory.</p>

3. Metrics to Measure Improvement

Improvement being made	Metric used to measure progress	Date to review metric & details of who undertakes review	Trigger that will signal mitigating action needs to be taken
2. OUR LEADERS...			
<p>i) Are visible and inspiring, and open and honest about what change means.</p>	<p>Achieve a 6 percentage point increase to 76% in the Senior Civil Service Employee Engagement Index and are ranked in the upper quartile across the Civil Service.</p> <p>Increase the overall 2013 People Survey score by 6 percentage points for the 'leadership and managing change' theme.</p> <p>Reduce the performance variation in the overall engagement score and in the 'leadership and managing change' theme across DCLG. 2013 SCS range varied from 16% to 81%.</p>	<p>Through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014 Pulse Survey and People Survey 	<p>Pulse Survey and People Survey results in 2014 fail to demonstrate upward trajectory.</p>
<p>ii) Manage performance effectively and invest in their people on the basis of quality development discussions.</p>	<p>Increase the People Survey score by 10 percentage points to 75% for "the feedback I receive helps me to improve my performance" question.</p>	<p>Through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014 Pulse Survey and People Survey 	<p>Pulse Survey and People Survey results in 2014 fail to demonstrate upward trajectory.</p>
3. OUR PEOPLE...			
<p>i) Are positive about change and are engaged in building a Better Department.</p>	<p>Increase the overall 2013 People Survey score by 6 percentage points for the 'leadership and managing change' theme and the overall People Survey Engagement Index in 2014 by a further 6 percentage points to 55%.</p> <p>Increase the reach of the task and finish groups by a further 10% by March 2015.</p>	<p>Through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014 Pulse Survey and People Survey • Monthly People Committee meetings 	<p>Pulse Survey and People Survey results in 2014 fail to demonstrate upward trajectory.</p> <p>% of staff across locations and grades involved in a Task & Finish Group fails to demonstrate upward trajectory.</p>

3. Metrics to Measure Improvement

Improvement being made	Metric used to measure progress	Date to review metric & details of who undertakes review	Trigger that will signal mitigating action needs to be taken
4. OUR WAY OF WORKING IS...			
<p>i) Collaborative and as one DCLG – across the Group, locations and disciplines.</p>	<p>Increase the People Survey score by 10 percentage points to 42% for “I am proud when I tell others I am part of DCLG” question.</p> <p>Increase the 2013 People Survey score by 9 percentage points for ‘I have a clear understanding of DCLG’s objectives and purpose’ question.</p>	<p>Through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014 Pulse Survey and People Survey 	<p>Pulse Survey and People Survey results in 2014 fail to demonstrate ongoing improvement.</p>
<p>ii) Innovative – putting digital by default, open policy making and commercial capability at the heart of our approach.</p>	<p>Improvement to commercial awareness and skills against the 2014 baseline scores in the commercial skills survey for: “I would rate my general financial and commercial awareness and skills on a scale of 1 to 10”.</p> <p>By March 2015, train and coach 75% of colleagues to find and listen to relevant online conversations about their area of work and feed this insight into their work going forward.</p>	<p>Through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014 and 2015 commercial skills survey • Annual Digital Survey 	<p>2014 and 2015 Commercial skills survey results for relevant question fails to demonstrate year on year upward trajectory.</p> <p>Results from Digital survey fail to demonstrate relevant progress.</p>
<p>iii) Agile and flexible - and measure outcomes, not time spent at the desk.</p>	<p>Undertake an exercise across the organisation to identify required changes to our ways of working for the next 12 to 18 months and assess our success in delivering these.</p> <p>Wellbeing scores in the 2014 People Survey mirror the upward trend in overall staff engagement scores.</p>	<p>Through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monthly People Committee meetings/Better Department Board. • 2014 Pulse Survey and People Survey 	<p>Exercise does not sufficiently identify required changes or required changes do not achieve the desired outcome.</p> <p>2014 Pulse and People Survey results fail to demonstrate ongoing improvement.</p>
<p>iv) Efficient – and continues to generate savings, increase productivity and deliver value for money.</p>	<p>10% saving in 2015-16 against 2014-15 baseline reducing annual running costs by a further £26 million.</p> <p>Co-locate with Home Office at Marsham Street by Sept 2014 saving £9 million per year.</p>	<p>Through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly Business Reviews to the Executive Team • 2MS Project 	<p>Annual savings not realised.</p>

3. Metrics to Measure Improvement

Improvement being made	Metric used to measure progress	Date to review metric & details of who undertakes review	Trigger that will signal mitigating action needs to be taken
	New IT system to generate savings of £3 million per year.	Board <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connect Project Board	

PROGRESS AGAINST 2013 DEPARTMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

We have undertaken a rigorous assessment against the metrics set out in our 2013 Departmental Improvement Plan against the three improvement actions:

1. Reduce our costs and drive further efficiencies by exploiting opportunities for sharing services and delivering our business through new models

i) Shared Services and New Commercial Models

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- deliver a transformation programme for corporate services
- outsource the delivery of transactional back office services
- continue to develop and implement arrangements for the sharing of middle office functions

Progress made:

- **Legal Service and Records Management** - shared service already established
- **Facilities Management** – entered into a joint contract with the Department for Education, saving DCLG £1.6m in 2012/13
- **Human Resources** – moving towards the Civil Service HR model and will access shared Services from the central Civil Service Employee Programme set up to provide an expert shared service across the Civil Service
- **Transactional back office services** - signed a call-off agreement with arvato in December 2013. Currently establishing the project management arrangements to deliver this change and the first Project Board meeting was in January 2014. Engagement with arvato will start later in 2014
- **Procurement** - transferred entire procurement function 'as is' into the cross-government Crown Commercial Service in February 2014
- **Internal Audit** - played a leading role in establishing the Cross-Departmental Internal Audit Service set up in Summer 2013. In December 2013, through publication of the Financial Management Review, Ministers announced that in the medium term all Government Departments' internal audit teams and their arms length bodies will come together in an independent agency of the Treasury. By Autumn 2014 the current shared service will form the core of the new agency followed by the rest of Whitehall

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- deliver through new commercial models

Progress made:

- August 2013 - DCLG received a good response to expressions of interest for investing in the future **Planning Portal**. We held workshops with over 60 Local Planning Authorities and 20 private sector planning professionals to explore the way forward for the Portal. These have informed a decision to move to a commercial procurement
- April 2013 – Launched the **Help to Buy: Equity Loan scheme**. In the first eight months 20,000 families reserved a new home and in the first six months, over 5,000 became homeowners. 92 per cent of these were first-time buyers. The re-invigorated Right to Buy scheme continues to gain momentum. In the first half of the year, 5,000 sales were achieved, which is over three times higher than the same period in 2012/13

- the Homes and Communities Agency's focus is changing from grant-giving to the management of complex financial instruments. Returns on these are critical to future delivery and involve significant financial risk. The financial instruments portfolio is predicted to increase from £0.4 billion to £15.7 billion in March 2016
- the £10 billion Housing Debt Guarantee Schemes offer housing providers a Government guarantee on debt raised to invest in new privately rented homes and additional affordable housing. This uses Government's fiscal credibility to drive down the cost of borrowing for investment in additional rented housing; encouraging institutional ownership, increasing the supply of high quality new build homes for rent, and supporting economic growth. To manage this and other Departmental risks a review by DCLG, Homes and Communities Agency and the Shareholder Executive recommended establishing a unit of around 100 expert staff (60 from the commercial sector) by Summer 2014. DCLG policy leads will have sharper focus on up-front commissioning, engaging the Homes and Communities Agency in policy design and development before handing over to them to deliver

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- complete reform of Arms Length Bodies

Progress made:

- West Northants Development Corporation ceased operations on 31 March 2014
- Audit Commission will cease in March 2015
- Arms length Bodies reduced from 26 to 12 and on track to deliver contribution to the cross Whitehall reductions from the Public Bodies Reform Programme of £2.6 billion

ii) Estates

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- reduce the overall size and cost of the estate

Progress made:

- by September 2014 - moves will be phased over eight weeks commencing in July. The move to Marsham Street will save £9 million per year
- Audit Commission relocated to Marsham Street in August 2013
- Local Government Ombudsman relocated in October 2013
- DCLG has cut property costs by £8 million a year from 2010 to 2014, through better property management, reducing unnecessary space and sub-letting vacant space

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- operate lower carbon, more resource efficient estate

Progress made:

- DCLG has achieved a 50% reduction in carbon emissions since the 2009/10 baseline. This is largely attributable to better building management (primarily heating and cooling), estate rationalisation/co-location, and adopting more resource efficient behaviours
- DCLG has reduced domestic business travel flights by 34% and ensures necessary travel is undertaken by the most sustainable mode of transport. Replacing the need for travel through flexible working and by utilising technology solutions for communications and meetings, we can demonstrate that good environmental governance also results in cost saving and value for money
- DCLG worked with its facilities management contractor to improve waste and recycling

services and consistency in recycling facilities across the estate to reduce waste by 56%. Awareness campaigns will run throughout 2014/15 to further reduce waste and increase recycling rates

- further work is required to bring office water use into line with good practice benchmarks. We have set up a Sustainability Water Strategy Board to oversee delivery of a Water Efficiency Action Plan
- DCLG is committed to continuous improvement. Delivery plans are regularly reviewed to identify opportunities for cost-effective reductions

iii) Information Technology

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- implement a new IT service for DCLG

Progress made:

- DCLG has updated its IT service and has replaced over 2000 laptops, desktop computers and applications. In August 2013, we combined the IT service between DCLG Headquarters and the Planning Inspectorate and put in place a migration strategy to move DCLG's IT service to Government Cloud
- April 2014 - DCLG commenced a pilot of Microsoft SharePoint 2010. This is a standard "out of the box" package which allows us to understand the business requirements for a fully functional implementation of SharePoint which will follow later in the year

2. Build our Capability to deliver the Department's priorities

- i) We are **building our capability** to deliver DCLG's priorities within the wider context of the Capabilities Plan for the Civil Service and DCLG's Capabilities Plan.

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- build effective leadership and management capability and roll out the Talent Management toolkit

Progress made:

- the 2013 People Survey 'Leadership and Managing Change' questions show DCLG had exceeded the highest overall increase compared to similar Departments. All the individual questions increased between six and 12 percentage points. DCLG had the highest or joint highest increase on six of the ten questions, second highest for three and third highest for one of them
- to address gaps identified on leading change and ensuring the right leadership capability, we are supporting senior leaders on various Talent Development programmes, Change Leaders and Leadership events and intend to make leadership events accessible to all grades
- to build on this strong upward trend, we clearly communicated Civil Service priorities and how DCLG's priorities fit within them. We have involved senior staff ahead of large changes or announcements and held more effective quarterly Senior Civil Service leadership events. In Summer 2013 we began forming task and finish groups of volunteers from across the Department to develop and implement change. We increased HR Business Partner resource ensuring high-support, high-challenge to Senior Civil Servants on leadership and change management

- in addition to the above, we have published clear leadership expectations for all grades. By developing the collective leadership of Senior Management Teams we will challenge and support managers to 'step up' and lead significant organisational change
- we have invested in our new managers to ensure they understand the management skills and behaviours expected within DCLG and will extend this to our aspiring and experienced managers. A "Good People Manager" assessment tool outlining behaviours expected of DCLG managers was designed and developed by a task and finish group and will be made available to all staff in the next few months
- our progress on talent management is assessed against criteria set by the Cabinet Office. Through the talent management toolkit we have identified our most talented managers. We participate in the Civil Service High Potential Stream and Fast Stream. We are developing our over-arching Talent Strategy and cross-Departmental development offer enabling us to deploy our most able staff to critical roles both within DCLG and across the Civil Service

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- increase Learning and Development activity

Progress made:

- DCLG's overall Learning and Development results in the 2013 People Survey increased by 10 percentage points to 47%
- in the last 12 months, 46% of staff had undertaken 5 days Learning and Development
- more work needs to be done to encourage a learning culture and to help staff recognise the different ways in which they learn and develop. This will be delivered through our leaders and embedded into everyone's role as part of their day to day work
- 99% of our staff registered on the Civil Service Learning portal

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- develop digital awareness and capability

Progress made:

- launched a "Love Digital" campaign which is training 30 digital champions to raise awareness of digital across the Department and complete a digital diploma
- 200 staff have attended monthly sessions on digital issues
- rolled out 23 training sessions on a variety of social media channels to 816 attendees
- DCLG Twitter followers increased by over 29,000 to 69,100 since January 2013

Below are some examples of how DCLG has embraced the digital world:

- Fire Kills campaign - recognised externally for its successful strategy of linking changing the clock to testing smoke alarms reaching 5.3 million people. Recently the campaign won the Marketing Society Award for Excellence, the Account Planning Group Silver Award and the Millward Brown Award for Best Insight
- encouraged staff to sign up to the Fire Kills Thunderclap page, a digital platform that allows mass-sharing of a single message through an automatic twitter and Facebook post, reminding people to check smoke alarms when changing their clocks
- targeted social media activity led to 14 football league grounds being listed as community assets

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- enhance our specialist commercial capability and general commercial acumen

Progress made:

- considerable work has taken place to identify and address the gaps we have around Commercial skills. We developed a high level training programme (Corporate Finance and Property Capital Markets) to support senior managers develop specialist skills which will better support the department in improving its commercial expertise
- an initial 'Commercial fortnight' was followed by quarterly 'core commercial skills weeks' which are a substantial on-going series of events designed to train staff in areas such as contract law, Programme and Project Management, economics, procurement, contract management, and business cases. These were attended by 27% of staff. At least 50 non-London based staff participated in sessions held in Leeds and Birmingham
- 33 staff attended a Commercial Awareness Master Class and 50 people (3% of staff) have completed one or more Civil Service Learning commercial awareness modules
- specialist staff have been recruited to work on specific programmes; for instance the Guarantee and Build to Rent teams have been bolstered by individuals with banking experience and a Task Force with sectoral knowledge
- these activities have formed the basis for a commercial training strategy. The full commercial learning and development plan for DCLG will be incorporated into the Department's formal response to the Capabilities Plan in early 2014

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- strengthen Programme and Project Management capabilities

Progress made:

- DCLG accredited Gateway Reviewers increased in 2013 from 28 to 32. We plan to increase this further by promoting the role including the benefits for individuals
- DCLG has a strong presence at quarterly Heads of Profession meetings run by the Cabinet Office Major Projects Authority and provides regular feedback. We are also involved in the career path and curriculum work currently being reviewed
- Head of the Programme and Project Management Centre of Excellence is involved in developing a Project Leadership Workshop rolled out by Civil Service Learning
- contribute to developing new Programme and Project Management courses which the Major Projects Leadership Academy plans to roll out over the next 12 months

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- building policy expertise.

Progress made:

- November 2013 - ran our newly named "Autumn School" (formerly Policy Summer School) for 32 delegates out of 39 which applied. Based on its success, we plan to run the school again in 2014
- we are working with colleagues in the Policy Profession to develop and embed the profession in the Department

3. Improve Employee and Senior Civil Servant engagement

i) Change

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- refresh of the Better Department Programme

Progress made:

- we refreshed our Better Department Programme and DCLG values to reflect the Department we want to be
- 2013 People Survey - staff engagement index score increased by 6 percentage points matching the highest increase in Whitehall
- staff engagement index score increased a further one percentage point to 50% in the 2014 Pulse Survey, with an increase in all five engagement questions of between one and five percentage points when compared to the 2013 People Survey

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- ensure that our priorities are clearly identified and understood

Progress made:

- 2013 People Survey - average increase of 12 percentage points (compared to the 2012 results) in the Senior Civil Service engagement index score
- DCLG's Senior Civil Service engagement index score is 8 percentage points above the engagement index for Senior Civil Servants across Whitehall
- improvements were also seen in the following questions in the 2013 People Survey:
 "I have a clear understanding of DCLG's purpose" up 9 points to 75%
 "I have a clear understanding of DCLG's objectives" up 9 points to 72%
 "I understand how my work contributes to DCLG's objectives" up 6 points to 78%

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- embed and realise the benefits from the implementation of the new Performance Management arrangements and Competency Framework

Progress made:

- DCLG was an early adopter of the new Competency Framework. We have used it to support our recruitment and selection processes and to identify talent. We encourage staff to complete a self-assessment as part of the performance management process
- DCLG operates the Cross Whitehall Performance management arrangements which assess staff equally on 'what' they do and 'how' they do it. The 2013 People Survey results show that 66% of staff are positive that their performance is evaluated fairly compared to 12% negative, an increase of 4 percentage points from 2012 which puts us on a par with high performing Government Departments. HR Business Partners report that moderation meetings are becoming increasingly robust in ensuring that assessments are fair and evidence based and take account of both the "what" and the "how". The Department reports routinely to the Civil Service Employee Policy team on cross-Whitehall metrics which feed into Civil Service People Board discussions

Key Improvements from year 1 (2013):

- implement the 2013 Internal Communications Strategy

Progress made:

- during 2013, internal communications used audience insight to identify the type of issues and topics that people wanted to hear about. It also implemented the findings from its communications audit to ensure internal channels were being used effectively
- to build a sense of pride and common purpose, the 'What You Do Matters' campaign was launched, highlighting the positive impact that DCLG's policies have out in the community, and tailoring external announcements to celebrate team and individual contributions
- in addition, to help colleagues understand how and why the Department needs to change, communication focused on demonstrating how change is helping the Department deliver its priorities and is part of the drive to create an exceptional Civil Service
- as a result, the following improvements were made on key questions in the People Survey:
 - 'DCLG keeps me informed about matters that affect me' up 6 points to 60%
 - 'I have a clear understanding of DCLG's purpose' up 9 points to 75%
 - 'I am proud when I tell others that I am part of DCLG' up 10 points to 32%
 - 'I feel that change is managed well' up 7 points to 20%
 - 'When changes are made, they are usually for the better' up 7 points to 20%

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