

Focusing on *Impact*

You should read this fact sheet if you want to:

- ❑ Test whether your project is ‘task’ or ‘outcome’ focused
- ❑ Determine the extent to which your plans will ‘guarantee’ a successful outcome

Curious?

It’s the golden rule of any quality improvement system: that you need to focus squarely on the outcomes you intend to achieve – your intended impact. The problem with so many SMART targets, however, is that they’re based on ‘terminal’ indicators that only tell you if you got there, rather than if you are getting there. Take success rates as an example. You cannot derive any meaningful milestones from these data as they are not produced until the end of a course. And whilst there is no more important indicator of the quality of provision, a success rate is the weakest piece of data we have for managing quality improvement; it’s simply too late. If you’re interested in understanding the ‘game-changing’ data you will need to monitor and manage every step of your project, then read on.

Making the most of this resource

This isn’t just a fact sheet, it’s the start of a journey on which you will consider some simple yet transformational ideas and create a vision of how they could be achieved. You will be given the opportunity to complete a short task to collect your emerging thoughts and ideas and translate them into your context. You can make notes on the *SS Ideas* back page.

intended impact it should produce; these are printed on the wings. The definition of these low-level impacts is essential if you are to chart your course to achieving your ultimate goal – keeping your project on track every step of the way.

Here’s some relevant hindsight from three of the Efficiency and Innovation project leads:

Scenarios and issues

- You may be concerned about increasing bureaucracy.
- You may be concerned about gaining and maintaining buy-in from staff and governors.
- You may have a tendency to be too task focused.
- You may be curious as to how best to project manage your cultural change.

“Too much focus on what was to be done, at the expense of what was to be achieved.”

“There was a failure to gain consensus to an ‘in principle’ scoping document at the outset”

“There was a failure in the alignment of aspirations.”

Solutions

In order to work out the game-changing data you will need to ‘guarantee’ the success of your project, you need to specify the impact you intend to have with every activity/step you take. Consider the Impact Totem poster on the reverse of this fact sheet. Working from the bottom up, you’ll see that listed in the trunk is the to-do list for a typical shared services project. For each of these tasks, you’ll then see a suggestion of the

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Reading the Impact Totem

To read the Impact Totem, simply follow the rubric below:

| When you | Task (trunk) | Impact (wings) |
|----------|--------------|---|
| | ABC | you should evaluate the extent to which you have |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">XYZ |

Shared Services Impact Totem

Improve the service

Increased savings and/or income

Shared services

Formalise the shared services vehicle, legal structure and sign service-level agreements

Clear mandate for change

Clarity and confidence from all parties in the final outcome

Produce an implementation plan

Develop the 'third' way, adopting best practice and harmonising system

Changed the culture and ambition for the service

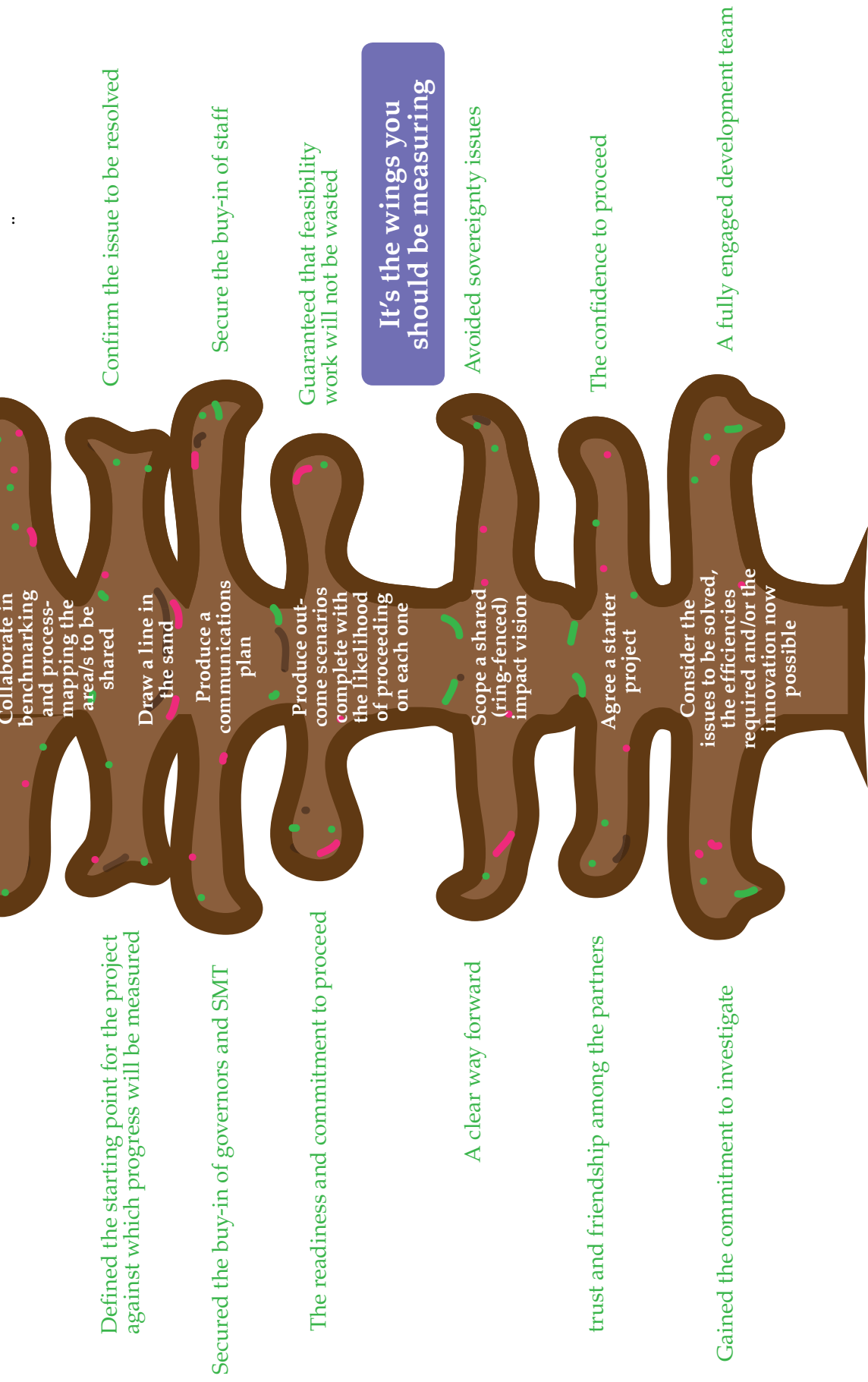
Created an expert network

Created a vision for a 'third way'

Understand the problems to be solved and the opportunity to be innovative

Articulated common issues and strength

Trust the friendship among the partners



| Task (trunk) | Impact (wings) |
|--------------|--|
| When you ABC | you should evaluate the extent to which you have XYZ |

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Spend a few minutes reading the tasks in the ‘trunk’ and considering the suggested impact given in the wings.

Once you are comfortable with the format, consider any additional or alternative tasks that may be required for your own project, then complete Task 1.

What the **Impact Totem** doesn’t show are the indicators you will need to observe/measure to determine whether or not you are achieving (and eventually achieve) your intended impact. For instance:

Task 1: Add your alternative or additional task/s to your SS Ideas page and define the impact you intend it to have.

| | Task (trunk) | | Impact (wings) | Indicators (used to measure the impact) |
|----------|--|--|---|--|
| When you | Produce outcome scenarios complete with the likelihood of proceeding on each one | You should evaluate the extent to which you have | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The readiness and commitment to proceed | Recognition of the possible outcome scenarios and a clear statement of whether or not to proceed for each one. |
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guaranteed that feasibility work will not be wasted | |

Once you have completed your project plan, produce your own version of the Impact Totem to keep you project outcome-focused. A strong graphic representation of your project, such as the poster overleaf, can greatly aid your communication strategy. You will also need to produce the data/indicators that you will use to determine whether or not you are achieving, and ultimately achieved, the impact you were after. This clear focus on precise and measurable outcomes will also give governors the confidence they need to back your ideas.

| | Task (trunk) | | Impact (wings) | Indicators (used to measure the impact) |
|----------|--------------|--|----------------|---|
| When you | | You should evaluate the extent to which you have | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
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