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A Handbook for Citizen-centric eGovernment

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A Handbook for Citizen-centric eGovernment

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Being 'Citizen-Centric'

Citizen-centric governments deliver cost-effective, personalised and relevant e-services that simultaneously enhance democratic dialogue. From our study over 24 months for the European Commission eGovernment Unit[1] we assessed the ways in which organisations are changing to deliver eGovernment services, and found that a simple focus on the organisation was not sufficient – it is the way in which the organisation mediates a critical relationship between government and citizen that matters.

We found that it is not enough just to implement organisational change. Change in itself will not guarantee delivering services that deliver public value. You can make progress in eGovernment through modernisation and the effective use of IT. You can also work on processes that improve the trust of citizens in government. To make real progress on transforming government services you should aim to positively transform the relationship between government and citizens.

Efficiency is mediated via citizen use and public value into effectiveness. Efficiency is the operation of the governance process in a way that continues to demonstrate cost benefits; more for the same, the same for less. Effectiveness comes from the use of efficient processes to construct service portfolios that deliver individual and public value. Managing the transformation of efficiency into effectiveness involves flexible organisational behaviour and relationship management with citizens. Consequently, the true measurement of the benefits of public service modernisation cannot necessarily be found just in the traditional bottom-line financial approach.

In our research we were guided by a network of international experts in eGovernment and organisational change[2]. We stimulated debates[3], carried out desk research on cases and the literature, benefited from the rich collection of eGovernment good practice being gathered for the European Commission eGovernment Unit[4], and we produced the most extensive available bibliography of eGovernment literature[5]. We brought together experts in focused workshops in Warsaw, Athens and Aarhus, and a final event in Brussels[6]. We interviewed in depth leading eGovernment projects in Europe, and our reports are provided in Annex A. And, we have reviewed the resulting diverse portfolio of information and insight to produce a series of policy-oriented 'Think Papers'[7].

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[1] http://ec.europa.eu/egovernment
[2] http://www.ccegov.eu/?Page=Working+Group
[3] http://www.ccegov.eu/forum
[4] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/epractice
[5] http://www.ccegov.eu/?Page=Bibliography
[6] http://www.ccegov.eu/?Page=Workshops and http://www.epractice.eu/workshop/cceGov
[7] http://www.ccegov.eu/?Page=ThinkPapers

From these activities we have observed a complex interplay of issues, and in this document we focus on actions which, in combination, can help deliver 'public value' where:

> *Citizen-centric eGovernment services are designed to deliver increasingly cost-effective, personalised and relevant services to citizens, but also serve to enhance the democratic relationship, and build better democratic dialogue, between citizens and their government, which then enhances the practice of citizenship within society.*

As the starting base we note a key conclusion of our investigation into the relationship between service delivery and service uptake:

> *While investment in infrastructure and eGovernment service development is fundamental to service delivery, the governance characteristics of transparency and trust are critical in legitimating the investment and in creating the conditions for widespread usage of services[8].*

We have argued in detail that public value is not a process, but it is a relationship built on participation[9] , organisational transparency and trust[10]. Set within the European eGovernment policy context[11] the interplay of efficiency (administrative burden reduction), organisational transformation, the use of integrated information (eID) within interoperable systems built on open standards, and operating on a pan-European basis, trust and transparency have become more important than ever.

Therefore this Handbook notes that change involves more than just restructuring an organisation. After all, an organisation can be technically and procedurally efficient, but can still not deliver value for citizens – for example Estonia has efficient systems and structures to maintain a successfully integrated identity card for citizens[12], but the UK (with similar organisational and technical conditions in place[13]) has been experiencing major

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[8] BLAKEMORE, M. & LLOYD, P. (2007). *Think Paper 10: Trust and Transparency: pre-requisites for effective eGovernment.* (August) Ccegov Project, [cited September 1 2007]. http://www.ccegov.eu/Downloads/Paper%2010%20Trust,%20Transparency,%20Efficiency%20and%20eGovernment%20v2.3.pdf

[9] HALL, N. (2007). *Think Paper 6: The participative citizen.* (January) Ccegov Project, [cited January 31 2007]. http://www.ccegov.eu/Downloads/Think%20Paper%206%20v2%200%20Jan%202007%20Final.pdf

[10] BLAKEMORE, M. & LLOYD, P. (2007). *Think Paper 10: Trust and Transparency: pre-requisites for effective eGovernment.* (August) Ccegov Project, [cited September 1 2007]. http://www.ccegov.eu/Downloads/Paper%2010%20Trust,%20Transparency,%20Efficiency%20and%20eGovernment%20v2.3.pdf

[11] EUROPE. (2007b). *Ministerial Declaration: Interoperability and Reduction of administrative Costs are the Objectives.* (September 20) European Commission, [cited September 20 2007]. http://www.epractice.eu/document/3928w

[12] EPRACTICE. (2006a). *eGovernment Factsheet - Estonia - eServices for Citizens.* (September) European Commission, [cited May 4 2007]. http://www.epractice.eu/document/3333

[13] KABLENET. (2007i). *Whitehall to boost identity spend by £5.2bn.* (August 21) Kable Government Computing, [cited August 21 2007]. http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/27BED2385A407FB38025733E003B057C?OpenDocument

concerns over privacy intrusion and surveillance by central government[14]. In our first Think Paper we noted:

> *Successful organisational change does therefore not rely on the mere one-to-one transfer of 'tried and tested' concepts from the private sector to government but rather translating concepts across sectors, testing their practical usefulness in context, and at times transforming them[15].*

Consequently we do not offer a single organisational model for what we observe is a bricolage of different eGovernment practices and cultures in Europe[16], but we do identify important underlying processes that will enable organisations to deliver citizen-centric services. We have explored the potential for interchange of customer practices between the public and private sectors[17], concluding that organisational efficiency gains need to have customer relationships embedded in them:

> *"Focus on re-building and strengthening relationships between citizens and government, including eParticipation, social partnerships, ethics, to provide citizens with abilities to help them evaluate their roles and responsibilities in service delivery"*

We explored the potential of advanced technologies in maximising efficiency in organisations[18], concluding that:

> *There should be a clearer focus on technologies that use citizen-relevant channels to deliver citizen/public value, rather than just to deliver efficiency gains and cost savings. The technology component of e-Governance services should aim to use 'everyday' and commonplace technologies to maximise inclusion and utility, and to avoid unnecessary demands (skills, device purchase etc.) on citizens".*

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[14] KABLENET. (2007f). *Paper calls for local ID cards.* (August 20) Kable Government Computing, [cited August 21 2007].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/4A318022AD7AEA5A8025733D0047E54F?OpenDocument

[15] JUNGE, K., KELLEHER, J. & HADJIVASSILIOU, K. (2006). *Think Paper 1: What is the scope for organisational change in the public sector in Europe?* (October) ccegov Project, [cited November 22 2006].
http://www.ccegov.eu/thinkpapers.asp

[16] BLAKEMORE, M. (2006b). *Think Paper 4: eGovernment strategy across Europe - a bricolage responding to societal challenges.* (November) Ccegov Project, [cited November 22 2006].
http://www.ccegov.eu/thinkpapers.asp

[17] BLAKEMORE, M. (2006a). *Think Paper 2: Customer-centric, citizen centric. Should Government learn directly from business?* (October) Ccegov Project, [cited November 22 2006].
http://www.ccegov.eu/thinkpapers.asp, BLAKEMORE, M. (2007). *Think Paper 7: 'Consumizens': Taking Ryanair to the Public Sector?* (February) Ccegov Project, [cited February 18 2007].
http://www.ccegov.eu/thinkpapers.asp, MCDONALD, N. (2006). *Think Paper 5: Is Citizen-centric the same as Customer-centric?* (October) Ccegov Project, [cited November 22 2006].
http://www.ccegov.eu/thinkpapers.asp

[18] WILSON, F. (2006). *Think Paper 3: Trends in Technology for Citizen Centricity.* (October) Ccegov Project, [cited November 22 2006]. http://www.ccegov.eu/thinkpapers.asp, WILSON, F. & BLAKEMORE, M. (2007). *Think Paper 8: Technology Futures - and why Government should Care.* (May) European Commission, [cited June 1 2007]. http://www.ccegov.eu/Downloads/Paper%208%20-%20Technology%20Futures%20v2.pdf

Being citizen-centric is crucial for three groups[19] which produce and/or consume eGovernment services;

- Politicians and Policy Makers - those setting the policy and regulatory environment;
- Producers - those who are tasked with enabling the policy through organisational and business strategy; and
- Users - those who are the recipients/consumers of services. In this particular study these are citizens.

For each of the three key groups of eGovernment stakeholders we now identify the key themes that you could consider as you read this Handbook.

1.2 Messages for Politicians and Policy Makers

For you eGovernment is a central action in achieving two important goals: reducing the cost of government, and delivering quality services to customers (businesses and citizens). The cases we have studied encourage you to:

- Reform the legislative and regulatory frameworks to maximise accessibility of services through relevant ICT channels.
- Provide sustainable investment and business models for agencies that are tasked with building eGovernment services.
- Set a new vision of government that combines the characteristics: lighter, simpler, swifter, available, trusted.

Those actions deliver the eGovernment environment – in essence the producer dimension. To maximise the consumption dimension (the uptake, use and impact of eGovernment services) requires more than just the availability of infrastructure and services, no matter how well the services are designed. What helps to really maximise consumption is a healthy and trusted relationship with citizens:

- Be transparent with your citizens, for example be open about what you are doing with citizen information.
- Build their trust in your custodianship of their information; citizens need to be confident that their data are not being misused, and that their data are securely held.

1.3 Messages for those developing and delivering eGovernment services

For you, it is about what type of organisation are you, what type of organisation could you become, and how much organisational independence you have. The successful organisations we have studied combine characteristics such as strong independence in

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[19] We stress that the three are not discrete groups: for example, politicians are citizens, and citizens work in the organisations that are delivering services to other citizens.

financial and staff planning, flexibility in the development of the eGovernment service strategy, and constructive relationships with citizens and businesses. The cases we have studied encourage you to understand first how organisational independence can help:

- Review the benefits and strengths of your organisational structure: are you constrained by being part of a vertical bureaucracy with limited financial and strategic flexibility, or can you become an Executive Agency or Business Unit with more strategic autonomy?
- Can you plan financially beyond a budget year? For example, are you able to benefit from cost savings you are making by re-investing savings into new and better services?

For some organisations the uptake of eGovernment services is about maximising income. It is not surprising that early implemented services are those that form the income stream for government: taxes, customs and excise, licensing etc. These we describe as 'procedural' services. There is a direct relationship between electronic service use and cost-effectiveness where the cost of collecting a unit of income can be reduced through customers using electronic channels.

More challenging is the electronic delivery of all or part of what we term 'emotionally-laden' services, typical examples being health and social services. As an organisation you have much less influence over the income (unless a service is subject to user fees) and significantly less influence over demand (other than through waiting lists, or prioritising particular illnesses).

There are organisational challenges in balancing first the need to become a leaner, smarter organisation, second in achieving structural change within the context of civil service staffing codes, and third in retaining organisational knowledge and skills:

- Become a knowledge-rich learning organisation.
- Build flexibility but retain stability in your organisation.
- Respond to the policy and regulatory environment, such as Inclusion.
- Implement change management, dignity and effectiveness in the workplace.
- Empower employees to be service design and delivery agents.
- Provide Leadership: Objectives, organisational values, clear roles and responsibilities.

Lastly, there is the critical relationship with your customers, which is mediated through two major processes which form customer relationship management. First is the process of understanding the needs and behaviours of your customers. Second is the process of developing customer trust in the use of your electronic services. Here the case studies can provide guidance about understanding what is meant by citizen-centric design, about using personas (profiles relating to the needs and characteristics of various 'typical' citizens) and segmentation to identify and understand citizen needs. Many successful projects emphasis building and maintaining the trust of citizens and businesses, utilising cost-effective and relevant ICT security strategies, and aligning channels to multiple user needs: Multi-channel strategies, using familiar channels as well as new ones. Lastly there

are opportunities to build organisational capacity by engaging effectively with social intermediaries, and delegating responsibility to employees – can they operate outside the procedural structures when it benefits citizens?

1.4   Messages for citizens who will use eGovernment services

Citizens are not passive in the construction of efficient eGovernment services. There are important considerations both for individual citizens, and for the important intermediary organisations which represent and help citizens, and groups of citizens, to be included in eGovernment service consumption. Our research has identified a critical participative and trusting relationship where we also found highly utilised services.

As a citizen you should:

- Understand the relationships between your rights to receive services from government, and your obligations when using them.
- Understand the important relationship that exists between the use of your personal information, and delivering the right services to you.

After all, it is your money, contributed through taxes, that is re-invested in your services, and you should no more waste that money than you would do your own.

2.0 ENSURE ACCESS

A range of antecedent issues concerning eGovernment services is at the core of improved service quality: providing access to infrastructure, customer services, skills training and knowledge. It is a truism that access is linked strongly to availability of services – for example an appropriate ICT infrastructure at an appropriate price. However, the issue of access is also closely related to managing citizens' expectations, in the sense that speed and convenience of access is increasingly important to people as they become accustomed to online transactions.

Sometimes, as is the cases in the community of Neunen (in the Eindhoven area of the Netherlands), a coordinated provision of access can occur, where high-speed fibre - 100 megabits speed (symmetrical) has been provided to every home[20]. Also there can be access to an increasing service portfolio such as by Rabobank[21] (NL), going beyond its core service delivery of banking and finance to provide online health checks and advice to citizens via video as well as services targeted on the elderly. Investing in IT literacy and skills at a national level has been undertaken in the Czech Republic[22], while integrated access to information about government services has been widely undertaken at national levels, for example in Austria[23] and France[24], and at a more local level in the Service Birmingham[25] partnership in the UK.

In Birmingham the public have been directly involved in the development of service provision, while constituents have also been able to provide feedback on the website redevelopment process. While this localisation of services has been facilitated by the use of IT innovations, it has also has encouraged face to face visits, with members of the public now able to access council services in their local area. The interaction between policy, producers and consumers introduces the important aspect of scale and geography, and in larger countries there are tensions between central control of strategy[26], and local implementation of services and relationships that help build customer relationships[27].

The approach taken by the France Internet Accompagne[28] initiative has been to simplify ICT equipment and connectivity, and make sure that all French citizens can master it through the government supporting, mentoring and encouraging citizens. Availability of cost-effective Internet access supports these efforts: since the deregulation of telecoms in 2002, French citizens have benefited from low subscription rates for internet access, and with 99% broadband coverage.

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[20] http://www.onsnet.tv/
[21] Annex A
[22] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1042
[23] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/289
[24] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1941
[25] Annex A
[26] Political change also can influence the relative role of local and central, as was the case with Finland in early 2007 where a new government brought some aspects of local eGovernment back into central control.
[27] For example read (Annex A)about the tensions between local and central government in the UK and about the specifically local initiative in Greece, e-Trikala which operates at a very local, almost unique level.
[28] http://www.epractice.eu/document/297 , and Annex A

3.0 MAKE THE FRONT OFFICE FULLY CUSTOMER-FOCUSED

3.1   Multi-channel

Ensuring that citizens have a number of channels via which to access public services is perhaps one of the most common principles or goals that inform the development of eGovernment services. Many initiatives across Europe share this vision of a multi-channel world and the personal choice that it appears to embody, but the issue of choice is not as easy to understand or resolve in the public sector as it is in the private realm. And if, as some evidence suggests, people want choice between services rather than just choice between channels, then this has significant implications for current eGovernment approaches. The technology component of e-Governance services should aim to use 'everyday' and commonplace technologies to maximise inclusion and utility, and to avoid unnecessary demands (skills, device purchase etc.) on citizens.

The Netherlands e-Citizen Charter[29] explicitly embodies the channel-choice principle: "*As a citizen I can choose myself in which way to deal with government. Government ensures multi channel service delivery, i.e. the availability of all communication channels: visit, letter, phone, e-mail, and internet*". This expresses the multi-channel approach as an 'across the board' response to service transformation in the Netherlands, and this approach is also central to regional and local challenges.

In the UK for example the Scottish Government's Customer First[30] programme is based on an 'all channels open' approach, focusing on back office re-engineering rather than reducing customer-facing channels. Service Birmingham's[31] re-organisation is interesting for the emphasis the Council places on keeping traditional contact routes open to the public while using e-government services to complement – and promote – the methods already available. Here, the use of electronic information has actually strengthened face to face contact between Councillors and residents.

There are also many examples where specific services benefit from it: the modernised Ireland[32], where new customers may interact via the Internet, touch-tone phone, text message etc. as part of a more customer focused service. RDW, The Netherlands Vehicle Licensing Agency[33] provides another example where a multi-channel focus is maintained through modernisation, where although there are 25 million visits a year to the website, one million telephone enquiries are still supported.

Multi-channel strategies imply the desire not to deny users the options to use traditional means of interaction with their public service provider (telephone, face-to-face), but at the same time efficiency savings may only be achieved by encouraging people towards the online option. The UK's Transformational Government Strategy[34] emphasises choice and

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[29] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1034 and Annex A
[30] Annex A
[31] Annex A
[32] Annex A
[33] Annex A
[34] Annex A and http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1029

multi-channel delivery, but the initial focus was strongly on monetary savings, which put pressure on the strategy to deliver cost savings at a time when it was being broadened to understand the need for delivery of services through multiple channels. The answer may be that it is possible to maintain traditional channels, but this requires government to work flexibly, and in partnership with industry and the voluntary sector[35].

In some cases, such as in Denmark, where uptake of online services is high, and where businesses can see clearly the benefit of online interaction[36], we also see an approach in the Municipality of Aarhus[37] where there is a multi-channel strategy, but it is accompanied by an explicit policy to encourage citizen migration to the online channel[38] - noting the advice that "*online services that are not designed around how internet users actually behave will not optimise take-up, resulting in poorer value for money*"[39].

3.2 Procedural Services

In many cases, simply using ICT to make processes more efficient provides significant benefits to delivery organisations and customers. This is particularly the case where the service provided is relatively routine, or at least not emotionally laden. Labour issues, particularly the challenge of maintaining employee morale and commitment in the face of uncertainty of jobs and organisational change, also often arise in these cases.

The Irish Tax Office[40] is an example of a fully automated online service with rapid automatic responses relating to rebates (the phrase used is 'efiling not efilling'). Repayments of up to €5,000 are made automatically. A 'peace of mind' confirmation is sent once tax information is filed, and the information is sent back into the customer ROS inbox as double confirmation. For companies it is possible to set levels of access for people within their organisation. Customers can look at their account details over the last seven years. Monthly use of the service in early 2007 was about 490,000 accesses and about 70% of business returns were processed online.

In another example, the Finnish Finance Ministry[41] operates a system where pre-filled tax forms are sent to Finns, and if they accept the details they do not even need to sign it. Information is collected automatically from employers, banks, insurance companies, and

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[35] In 2007 the review of Transformational Government noted ongoing underpinning activities of Website rationalisation and shared services/information. CABINET. (2007b). *Transformational Government: Enabled by Technology. Annual Report 2006*. London: Cabinet Office. January. http://www.cio.gov.uk/documents/annual_report2006/trans_gov2006.doc

[36] For example companies applying online for sickness compensation for employees http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1030

[37] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/2384

[38] FURLONG, R. (2006). *E-revolution forces Danes online.* (March 2) BBC, [cited March 4 2006]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4767852.stm. Note also that the nature of governance can be influential, such as in Dubai where 'Project Zero' aims to oblige all citizens and businesses to interact online with Government, and to pay for that facility. See Annex A

[39] NAO. (2007). *Government on the internet: progress in delivering information and services online.* (July 13) National Audit Office, [cited July 13 2007]. http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/06-07/0607529es.htm

[40] Annex A

[41] Annex A

the trust in the electronic process is underpinned by proactive and ongoing work on data and network security.

In the Netherlands, both the Kadaster[42] and the Netherlands Vehicle Licensing agency (RDW) provide examples where a 'routine' service has been re-configured to achieve efficiency gains. They provide an improved service and deliver cost reductions to customers. RDW is producing cost benefits through the disintermediation of some channels. Notification of change of car ownership used always to be via the Post Office and took 6-7 days. Some 6 euros of the 9 euro fee were retained by the Post Office.

Now with online notification at the 20,000 garages in the Netherlands the process is instant and the fee is retained by RDW – the garages are happy to see the business benefit of online registration, valuing the convenience of the service above revenue sharing. The Netherlands Kadaster collects information about registered properties, records them in public registers and on maps and makes this information available to members of the public, companies and other interested parties. Over recent years investment in IT has resulted in efficiency gains that have been passed onto customers in the form of reduced tariffs: 2004 had a tariff reduction of 4%, 2005 and 2006 were 10% each, meaning that tariffs reduced nearly one quarter over the three year period.

3.3   Emotional Services

One of the main differences between the public and commercial sectors is the 'emotionally- charged' nature of certain public services, such as health. This means that citizens and customers are not directly and simply interchangeable terms, for people tend to regard the public sector as "*important and different from the private sector*", referring in particular to important life events – birth, health, education and death[43]. The provision of consistent and robust integrated health information in Lithuania[44] and Poland[45] aims to provide an underpinning infrastructure for better health provision to citizens.

In the context of health service provision however, we saw how the UK Health Service is developing the concept of 'patient choice'[46], but where choice is constrained by two factors. First, is the fact that most people wish to go to a local hospital, for example because relatives and friends can visit them more easily. Second, performance targets and financial restrictions may mean that their first choice hospital may not have capacity, and will reject their 'choice'. Here we saw how organisational behaviour, focused on being efficient and in delivering customer choice, failed to effectively research the customer behaviours.

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[42] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1805 and Annex A

[43] MCDONALD, N. (2006). *Think Paper 5: Is Citizen-centric the same as Customer-centric?* (October) Ccegov Project, [cited November 22 2006]. http://www.ccegov.eu/thinkpapers.asp

[44] http://www.epractice.eu/document/289

[45] http://www.epractice.eu/document/244

[46] BLAKEMORE, M. (2006a). *Think Paper 2: Customer-centric, citizen centric. Should Government learn directly from business?* (October) Ccegov Project, [cited November 22 2006]. http://www.ccegov.eu/thinkpapers.asp

One of the most significant examples of the delivery of emotionally-laden services is the Crossroads Bank in Belgium[47]. To deliver proactive social security services for citizens they have sought to provide reassurance in areas of privacy, and to change behaviour in stakeholders. For example they have focused on the construction sector where historically many people did not pay contributions. Instead of a large-scale data surveillance activity, they changed the regulations. Now, an organisation that employs a construction company becomes liable for contributions of the construction company employees if it is found they are avoiding social security payments. Therefore the 'users' of the social security services have a greater interest in ensuring compliance throughout their employment chain.

One of the key drivers behind the Scotland Customer First[48] programme is to ensure that public services in Scotland deal better with so-called major life events. For example, in the past, confusion about who to contact and what to following the death of a family member has caused distress. Now, with as a joined-up back-office, such situations should be avoided in future. Across a range of services the goal is to make sure the appropriate public service actors have access the information they need to proactively provide the services citizens need.

There is a clear acknowledgement of 'emotion' and service delivery by Rabobank NL[49]. The focus is on TV and video, as well as the Internet, allowing contact with Rabobank 'Advisors' who are real people who can provide video advice for private banking. Only 1% of all contact with the bank is now non-digital, but there still are 5-6 million calls a year. They also will maintain physical outlets, with local banks being important. Building on this close contact with their customers other developments include the 'Window on Nuenen' for elderly people in care homes. Another applications provided is a 'digital health check', a facility that was available from project partner Achmea[50], which made the 'Health' facility available some five years ago as an extra benefit for insured customers, with a quick check of 5-6 key health items.

Healthcare has emerged as one of the most sensitive areas of emotional services, and any successful delivery of such services links technical efficiency and security with trusted relationships (see the later section on trust), in ways that overcome a previous "*lack of methods to evaluate the social and economic costs of healthcare ICTs: the development of new methodologies is urgently required*"[51], and which constructively engage the skills and knowledge both of specialists and citizens.

For example, there have for long been concerns about online health sites (quality of information, accuracy and liability etc.), but emerging arguments indicate a possible joint approach:

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[47] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1908
[48] Annex A
[49] Annex A
[50] http://www.achmea.nl/bv/portal/ep/home.do
[51] ROYAL. (2005). *Digital healthcare: the impact of information and communication technologies on health and healthcare*. London: Royal Society, iv+60 p.

"Patients who live with chronic diseases such as epilepsy often know more about them than their doctors, contends Daniel Hoch, a professor at Harvard Medical School who helped to found BrainTalk. Many doctors, he says, 'don't get the wisdom of crowds.' But he thinks the combined knowledge of a crowd of his patients would be far greater than his own. A wiki capturing the knowledge of, say, 300 epileptics could be invaluable not only to others with epilepsy, but also to the medical professionals who care for them"[52].

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[52] ECONOMIST. (2007a). *Health 2.0.* (September 6) Economist, [cited September 16 2007]. http://www.economist.com/science/tq/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9719054

4.0 ACHIEVE A LIGHTER AND SMARTER BACK-OFFICE

4.1 Information: Integration, Interoperability and Sharing

One of the key messages of Think Papers 3 and 8[53] was the importance of integrating information across a range of hitherto administrative silos. ICT infrastructures need to be better linked to the information infrastructures. Services in safety critical areas require joined-up information systems and services that increasingly are dependent on National and European level interoperability and interchange. European level 'communities of practice' can be identified and supported to ensure European level interoperability and interchange.

Public authorities have been quick to recognise that in sharing information between departments and service actors the internal users have to deal with a huge amount of information, much of which is not directly required for their own service tasks. Structuring and searching information now involves techniques such as 'information mark-up' (such as XML, an extensible mark-up language), also known generically as 'metadata', which encodes content so that external users and processes may know what is contained there.

An example of this is the RISER project[54], which has created a European registry information service. The service offers an online one-stop shop providing uniform, centralised access to the registries of a number of European countries. Built on open standards (such as the emerging XML-based formats for e-government transactions in Germany and in particular the data format for citizens registration processes OSCI-XMeld) the service is supplied with data by national and local civil registration offices. Importantly, the integration of information is not through a single integrated database, but through protocols that interoperate between existing information silos at national and regional level. As with the Crossroads Bank[55] in Belgium the fact that sensitive data are not held by the application is an important reassurance for citizens about their privacy and security being protected.

Information sharing through interoperability is evident also in the Estonian eGovernment Strategy, which emerged from a strong desire to build up governance from the ground level, and to build also on existing Departments and delivery channels (silos) using ICTs. Rapid prototyping was possible given the relatively small size of the country with a population of 1.3 million people. Local and Departmental autonomy meant that departments and municipalities could design and develop systems and services rapidly, and the integration of these systems has been achieved through a secure system of interoperability, known as the X-Road[56], and in early 2006 355 agencies and 50 state

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[53] WILSON, F. (2006). *Think Paper 3: Trends in Technology for Citizen Centricity.* (October) Ccegov Project, [cited November 22 2006]. http://www.ccegov.eu/thinkpapers.asp, WILSON, F. & BLAKEMORE, M. (2007). *Think Paper 8: Technology Futures - and why Government should Care.* (May) European Commission, [cited June 1 2007]. http://www.ccegov.eu/Downloads/Paper%208%20-%20Technology%20Futures%20v2.pdf

[54] http://www.epractice.eu/document/1425 and now a business at http://www.riserid.eu/magnoliaPublic/en.html

[55] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/268

[56] http://www.ria.ee/?id=27309&&langchange=1

databases were operating within the X-Road. The X-Road provides the operating base for the document exchange centre[57] (DEC) where "*Documents are messages with described semantics and structure. These can be letters, draft legislation, financial documents (including eInvoices and payment orders), electronic forms, documents related to public procurement procedures etc*". The X-Road permits interoperability also between public and private services, such as banking and finance.

In Denmark, a new web portal for Danish citizens Borger.dk[58] was launched in January 2007, as a central instrument of the government's objective to improve public online services and thus to digitise all relevant communication between the citizen and the public sector by 2012. Borger.dk is an integrated project: it brings together different government services to make it easier for people to use them. This means, however, that the different administrations need to work together to provide the kind of 'easy access' to services that people want. The project has therefore resulted in what is described as an "*internationally unusual*" arrangement[59] where representatives from all three levels of government (local, regional and national) are brought together to collaborate on the implementation of the project. This is an example of re-organising public institutions on the basis of a 'pull through' from citizens rather than a 'push out' from public policy offers potential for improved public services and higher user satisfaction.

Information can therefore be integrated, shared and interoperated – but whatever the action is needs to be driven by citizen needs. Sensitivity to the ways in which end-users will consume a service was further evident in the Revenue Online Service in Ireland[60]. The staffing structure has moved from silo-based activities to a fully integrated approach to case management. Furthermore, the Agency has needed to extend its IT remit beyond the historical silos, to be sensitive to the systems used by major customers. For example, there was liaison with third party payroll software vendors to ensure that their systems interfaced well with ROS.

Sharing services, facilitated by new back-office IT systems, is one way to achieve greater cost-efficiency, while improving service delivery[61]. Local accountability can be retained, while sharing services to achieve economies of scale. There are many examples of this across Europe. For example, as part of the Customer First[62] programme in Scotland, a citizens' portal being deployed across multiple channels underpins the delivery of the whole programme. Although service delivery is the responsibility of 26 different local authorities (and other bodies), the model adopted has a single underlying infrastructure built on customer data, allowing access to different services *via* one account. The original specification was not technically detailed but instead focused on what the system was designed to do in terms of outputs and business outcomes. For example, that service providers could summon customer details on-screen at the start of any enquiry that

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[57] http://www.ria.ee/28567
[58] Annex A
[59] http://www.e.gov.dk/english/egov_projects/citizen_portal/index.html
[60] Annex A
[61] EUROPE. (2007b). *Ministerial Declaration: Interoperability and Reduction of administrative Costs are the Objectives.* (September 20) European Commission, [cited September 20 2007]. http://www.epractice.eu/document/3928
[62] Annex A

customers should be able to be posted to the relevant service provider, that any service provider should be able to offer services within the portal.

An example where responsibility is shared across government organisations, with potential impacts on the quality of service delivery, was examined by the UK's National Audit Office, which acknowledged the need for shared service delivery but noted that, *"People are, however, most interested in services, such as how to obtain support or care for an elderly relative, which is often the shared responsibility of a number of organisations"[63].* In fact our case study on the UK Transformation[64] strategy highlighted some mixed messages about the joined-up services requiring joined up data, ranging from sharing of Council Tax information[65], to the paradox that people increasingly share personal information online through virtual communities[66], yet often react adversely to the integration of personal information on identity cards[67]. Concerns often are expressed by citizens even though there is clear public value in the use of electronic identity management in the health services – for example in hospitals by avoiding errors identifying patients and linking them to the correct treatment[68].

4.2 ICT Strategy

In Think Paper 7:"Consumizens, taking Ryanair to the public sector"[69] we explored the paradoxes between service delivery expectations from the public and private sectors, in particular examining service quality and organisational change using the low-fare airline business as a metaphor. Although it is easy to demonise businesses such as Ryanair, the business model works well in service relationships that are short-term and generally largely devoid of emotion. Furthermore, some of the business processes being used by governments indicate a strong crossing-over of strategies, ranging from flexible working, creating new agencies, and market testing service delivery.

The main organisational change resulting from the Bremen.online[70] initiative was the creation of the private limited company GmbH. This company is owned completely by the

[63] COMMONS. (2002). *Public Accounts - Sixty-Sixth Report: Progress in Achieving Government on the Web.* (December) House of Commons, Public Accounts Committee, [cited December 14 2002]. http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200102/cmselect/cmpubacc/936/93602.htm

[64] Annex A

[65] KABLENET. (2007d). *ICO approves council tax data share.* (January 31) Kable Government Computing, [cited January 31 2007]. http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/E456485EBEEAFCA0802572720061F411?OpenDocument

[66] ANON. (2007f). *Web information-sharing the new force for social progress says Cabinet Office.* (February 8) Public Technology, [cited February 8 2007]. http://www.publictechnology.net/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=7689

[67] This issue became politicised, with the Conservative Opposition party proposing to abolish moves to create identity cards. See: HIGGINS, J. (2007). *ID Cards: IT trade association blasts Conservative pledge to kill ID cards.* (February 8) Public Technology, [cited February 8 2007]. http://www.publictechnology.net/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=7696

[68] BBC. (2007e). *Hospitals pick hi-tech clipboard.* (February 21) BBC, [cited February 21 2007]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/6383035.stm

[69] BLAKEMORE, M. (2007). *Think Paper 7: 'Consumizens': Taking Ryanair to the Public Sector?* (February) Ccegov Project, [cited February 18 2007]. http://www.ccegov.eu/Downloads/Paper%207%20%20-%20Consumizens%20-%20Taking%20Ryanair%20to%20the%20Public%20Sector%20v2.pdf

[70] Annex A

Free Hanseatic City of Bremen and is charged with running Bremen.de by providing editorial services and taking care of the commercial exploitation of the portal on behalf of the City. The overall task of Bremen.online GmbH is thus to develop Bremen's online presence whilst ensuring that this matches the city's eGovernment strategy and is also in keeping with an 'integrative' offer. The approach in Bremen seems to combine the ethos of the public sector (citizen service, non-discrimination for reasons of profit etc.), with the efficiencies that can be gained from private sector working practices and financial independence. Indeed, financial independence combined with the ability to set a staffing strategy relevant to the services being developed, was evident in the Crossroads Bank and the Netherlands Kadaster (both discussed earlier).

Partnership with the private sector (whether it is contracting out a service, or a sharing of risk through a public private partnership PPP) more explicitly acknowledges the need of the private sector to make a profit. The controversial cost benefit justification for such approaches assumes that the profit for the business will be more than offset by the combination of hard financial efficiency gains and the more 'soft' intangible benefits for the customers. This is possibly one of the most controversial areas in government service delivery, with a rich literature that on one hand warns governments that they need to be more business-like when developing large scale IT projects[71], while on the other hand there are detailed concerns that business-led IT projects can also fail[72], and that some initiatives such as PPP may risk deferring, not avoiding costs[73].

Security is a concern that consistently appears high on the eGovernment agenda, prompted by fears that privacy is compromised when data is provided to the government. Overcoming these fears is a central process for successful citizen-centric eGovernment, with trust and transparency playing a major role. Clearly, technologies have an important role to play. Attention is needed to privacy and security in data sharing and integration, and to the natural oligopoly (i.e. single dominant sources of information) that exists with public sector information providers. In Think Paper 11: "Trust and identity in interactive services[74]" we explored how the use of verifiable identity in electronic services requires

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[71] JACKSON, W. (2007). *IT security: Too big for government.* (August 13) Government Computer News, [cited August 19 2007]. http://www.gcn.com/print/26_21/44843-1.html, ANON. (2007b). *Gartner highlights massive future risks in large scale enterprise IT projects.* (September 21) Public Technology, [cited September 22 2007]. http://www.publictechnology.net/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=11620

[72] ANON. (2007d). *IT managers hugely cynical & fearful of large-scale transformation projects.* (September 6) Public Technology, [cited September 10 2007]. http://www.publictechnology.net/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=11293, CARVEL, J. (2007). *Concern over NHS's IT systems after 50 view celebrity's details.* (September 19) Guardian (London), [cited September 20 2007]. http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,,2172039,00.html

[73] For example Standard and Poors survey noted "Some of the 161 respondents said PPPs performed no better than the most efficient public sector procurement processes, which incorporated many of the stringent standards and penalty regimes that PPPs tended to employ". GRIGGS, T. & TIMMINS, N. (2007). *PPPs 'no magic bullet for public sector'.* (April 12) Financial Times (London), [cited April 13 2007]. http://www.ft.com/cms/s/6a57952c-e893-11db-b2c3-000b5df10621.html

[74] WILSON, F. (2007). *Think Paper 11: Trust and Identity in Interactive Services: Technical and Societal Challenges.* (November) Ccegov Project, [cited November 12 2007]. http://www.ccegov.eu/?Page=ThinkPapers

robust trust and security mechanisms. "*Trust enables security' and 'security enables trust*" – the requirements of each must be met.

In Finland, from the 1960s, Finns had a single personal identification number[75] that was used in all services, and also in commerce – extending to banking, commerce, video rentals etc. There were clear efficiency benefits, and change of address notification was an easy activity, since a single central notification meant that all other stakeholders were automatically informed, ranging from government departments, commercial companies, churches, municipalities and shops. The Electronic Identity Card (EIC) was launched in 1999. In 2005 the former citizen ID card and the EIC were combined, but overall use of the card was low given the investment. However, since service use is dependent on need for a service, many people do not use the card generally because they do not need to access services. Given the extensive integration and interoperation of government services, the saturation level of mobile phone use, and the single data point of the Identity Card, Finland could be seen as an ideal candidate for the most tracked citizenry – yet the issues of surveillance and privacy are minimal for citizens, and as their President stated "*The emphasis on human resources and social justice has benefited us in social terms. This has increased social cohesion, promoting good governance and preventing corruption*"[76].

The Scotland Customer First programme clearly took the approach that information should only be provided where justified, and where a valid use could be demonstrated. Where the sharing of information is in the interests of the citizen then citizens will be happier to provide personal details. A key element here is that no one body or organisation has access to all of an individual's personal information and sharing is driven strictly by customer service need.

Estonia's eGovernment strategy includes the development of a fully integrated identity card that can be used for a wide range of services from social security to transportation. Underpinning the identity card is a dramatic act of transparency. An Estonian citizen can log onto a secure Web service and see which civil servant in which ministry has used their data, and for what purposes, on a daily basis. The previous Soviet regime experienced low levels of citizen trust in government, and citizens now accept that the ICTs allow them to verify and audit government services and employees in a way that maintains trust through transparency. Participation also encourages trust, and this is maintained through the interactive citizen portal[77], and through the specific linking of rights to consume public services being accompanied by obligations of being a citizen.

The same process of trust and intervisibility is championed by the Netherlands eCitizen programme, and the Netherlands OV public transport chip-card[78] is a particular example

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[75] http://www.fineid.fi/vrk/fineid/home.nsf/pages/2F1722857B8D77C5C2257054002C5C6B
[76] HALONEN, T. (2007). *Keynote Address by President of the Republic Tarja Halonen At the Seventh Doha Forum on Democracy, Development and Free Trade in Qatar on 23 April 2007.* (April 23) President of Finland, [cited May 3 2007]. http://www.kauppalehti.fi/4/i/yritykset/stt-info/tiedote.jsp?selected=kaikki&oid=20070401/11773460033730
[77] http://www.eesti.ee/est
[78] http://www.ov-chipkaart.nl/

of this. Concerns over privacy are balanced by the utility and flexibility (in particular time saved purchasing individual tickets for journeys, and a guarantee that the lowest fare will be charged for your journey) that the card gives a user. This is similar to the London Oyster Card[79], where there also is an 'over the counter' version that does not need any personal identification.

4.3 Organisational Knowledge, Skills Capacity and Learning

In Think Paper 1: "Scope for organisational change in the public sector", we began to understand some of the characteristics of public sector organisations, the environment in which they operate (that is, what motivates and influences change processes in this sector) and began to elucidate some of the implications for approaches to organisational change. Public sector organisations do have characteristics that make them distinct from business. Successful organisational change does therefore not rely on the mere one-to-one transfer of 'tried and tested' concepts from the private sector to government but rather translating concepts across sectors, testing their practical usefulness in context, and at times transforming them. Developing knowledge, skills and learning can therefore be critical determinants of success.

In Finland the current approach to organisational change involved re-training and cross-training, but there are reductions expected in overall agency size through retirement. There is a central productivity programme that has involved pay reform[80], moving away from salary according to grades to "*three basic components of the salary, that is, a job-related component and an individual component, possibly also a results-based component*".

In Norway it has been the experience of eHandel[81] electronic procurement initiative that the key with e-procurement is to change the focus away from paper-handling and re-allocate time to improving supplier lists and making the contracting process efficient. By increasing performance in these more strategic areas, e-procurement actually increases the number of people dealing directly with procurement. So while there may be two additional people working in procurement, this does not imply losing two front-line staff (e.g. nurses); rather, the administrative workload of the two front-line staff will be reduced by maybe 10-15 per cent. This idea almost leads to a need to analyse the whole system to reveal impacts in a chain. Efficient procurement online is a feature of many eGovernment strategies such as in Germany[82], Latvia[83], France[84], and Austria[85].

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[79] https://sales.oystercard.com/oyster/lul/entry.do
[80] http://www.bit.hut.fi/samapalkkaisuus/clD0_1131en.htm
[81] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1894
[82] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/2261
[83] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/2238
[84] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1945
[85] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1939

Revenue Online in Ireland[86] was initially created as a high-interaction customer service, but subsequently the reduction in the need for staff interaction with clients allowed organisational restructuring to take place. However this was achieved without staff job-losses (the overall staff complement remains about 6300-6500 employees), an issue described as an important 'comfort factor' when dealing with workplace changes. However, there was an expectation that staff will become broader in their skills and be able to move roles within Revenue. It also was acknowledged that this process allowed important organisational knowledge to be retained, although there is some labour flexibility through the combination of core employees, contract and agency staff (particularly temporary staff to deal with workload peaks).

In the case of the transformation of Birmingham City Council's online services, some staff were still coming to terms with the new technologies and ways of working. Therefore, in some cases progress to change/modernise was slower than anticipated. As with any new technology however, the partnership found that finding the best solutions for maximum efficiency involved working with staff throughout to assess the positive and negative effects of all new tools while looking for ways to further improve provision and internal organisation.

The Dutch vehicle licensing authority's (RDW's) change to independent agency status was viewed with mixed feelings by the employees. However, the majority in the end accepted the need for change – after consultation it was apparent that some resistance was the result not of unwillingness to change, but of mixed and confusing messages being heard by employees. With independence came responsibility – if the service fails then jobs will be lost, so there was an incentive to address service quality with a sense of urgency.

The experience of the Crossroads Bank in Belgium shows that there is a middle-ground between IT staff inflexibility with people on normal civil service contracts, the potentially high costs of PPP projects, and the short-termism of commercial contract staff. This is achieved through the establishment of an intermediary skills organisation that provides services to a range of IT-rich projects. We could term this combination of stability and flexibility as being what Jens Rose terms 'flextability[87].

The Netherlands Kadaster gained agency status in 1994 and with more business being undertaken online it is logical to plan for fewer staff. Every person in Kadaster was interviewed about goals and competencies and the need to go through change and job mobility programmes. This process allowed organisational change to occur, but with a business focus on the dignity of employees. Some people may develop particular skills relevant to new projects such as digitising the Archives. The organisation is focused on retaining knowledge and developing skills, rather than just dispensing with a target number of people.

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[86] Annex A
[87] http://www.amazon.com/Weiterbildung-Besch%C3%A4ftigter-Arbeitskr%C3%A4fte-Wissenspool-FlexStAbility/dp/3825503437

A feature of the eDialogos project in Trikala[88], Greece is the employment model the Mayor of Trikala is using. Few of the leaders in his team are civil servants linked to their position for life, whereas the opposite generally is the case with municipal employees elsewhere. Employees are keen to acquire new skills as well as to look for additional funding and projects as they create their own raison-d'etre in the municipal structures[89].

Sharing experiences such as these is a fundamental action for the EU through initiatives such as the Good Practice Framework and now the ePractice[90] initiative. It has been an important initiative in stimulating the structured exchange of experience throughout Europe, but the methodologies by which good practice is assessed has been a difficult process of balancing objectivity and quantification: is innovation and excellence generic, or is it context and geographically sensitive?; where and how can best practice be transferred? Enacting the communication of good practice, however, involves a difficult balance between sharing experience, providing advice, prescription, and judgement.

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[88] BASU, I. (2007). *Digital City.* (June 1) Govtech.com, [cited June 25 2007].
     http://www.govtech.com/gt/articles/124734
[89] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/edialogostrikala
[90] http://www.epractice.eu/

5.0 UNDERSTAND YOUR CUSTOMERS – BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

5.1 Delivering Public Value

An improved understanding of citizen-customers is critical to transforming government to a more citizen-centric model. New technologies increasingly allow this. In Think Paper 2: "Should government learn from business", we saw that the identification of citizen and customer needs is an iterative process (an 'emergent' strategy) involving dialogues, informal knowledge gained by employees in their dealings with customers, and formal knowledge gained for example through customer surveys. We also found that the cross-matching of citizen data, with commercial data, can generate new insights into service demands and delivery.

From the broad set of interviews and cases reviewed in this study it is consistently clear that a full understanding of citizen preferences is fundamental to inform re-design of services and organizational change aimed at increased citizen-centricity. The concept of 'public value', around which there is an emerging literature[91], has offered the potential to help us explore the needs issue. An important component of the public value concept is that which considers public preferences, since in a democracy only the public can determine what is of value to them.
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5.2 Customer relationship management and customer engagement

Think Paper 2: "Should government learn from business" reviewed how business manages customer relationships and the transferability of commercial approaches to the public sector. Commerce seeks to retain customers and to generate customer loyalty, whereas government service delivery, such as social services and health, ideally want fewer customers who will make reducing demands on the services. For this and a range of other reasons, it seems unlikely that governments can become customer-centric in the business sense, but will often remain product centric where services remain delivered through silo-based organisations. Customer-centricity can be achieved through integrated and personalised packages of service, support, education, consulting, for example the integrated assessment and proactive payment of benefits in Belgium, also in Andalucia[92],

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[91] For example: MOORE, M. H. (1995) *Creating Public Value Strategic Management in Government,* Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, COLE, M. & PARSTON, G. (2006). *Defining Public Value.* (December 19) Public-cio.com, [cited January 3 2007]. http://www.public-cio.com/story.php?id=2006.12.19-102969, EGOVBARRIERS. (2007). *Overcoming obstacles to improving European public services. Modinis study Contract no. 29172: Solutions for eGovernment. Draft Deliverable 3.* (September 13) egovbarriers.org, [cited November 10 2007]. http://www.egovbarriers.org/downloads/deliverables/Draft%20deliverable%203Sep.rtf, MILLARD, J., WARREN, R., LEITNER, C. & SHAHIN, J. (2006). *Towards the eGovernment Vision for the EU in 2010: Research Policy Challenges*. Seville, Spain: Joint Research Centre (DG JRC), Institute for Prospective Technological Studies. August, xii+276 p. http://fiste.jrc.es/pages/documents/eGovresearchpolicychallenges-DRAFTFINALWEBVERSION.pdf, HORNER, L., LEKHI, R. & BLAUG, R. (2006). *Deliberative democracy and the role of public managers: Final report of The Work Foundation's public value consortium*. London: The Work Foundation. November, 53 p.

[92] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/2222

and in the formal adoption of enterprise-wide customer relationship management by the Scottish Executive[93].

Think Paper 5: "Is citizen-centric the same as customer-centric?" considered the dominance of customer-handling in many discussions about making public services more citizen-centric. It is the essential non-discriminatory aspect of service delivery makes a citizen-customer rather than a commercial customer[94]. This raises the distinction between the nature, scope and quality of services themselves and the systems in place to make the flow of information and communication better and therefore deal more effectively with beneficiaries. Nevertheless, without a detailed understanding of customers (any by that we mean the customer as a person with many needs, not just a consumer of one particular service) it is difficult to deliver services effectively and efficiently. Therefore, eGovernment is concerned more with the process of 'customer insight':

> *"Insight can be defined as 'a deep 'truth' about the customer based on their behaviour, experiences, beliefs, needs or desires, that is relevant to the task or issue and 'rings bells' with target people."[95]*

There are opportunities for government to use business customer information. The cross-matching of citizen data, with commercial data, can generate new insights into service demands and delivery. For example Experian Business Strategies[96] has worked with the public sector in areas such as health, to 'drill-down' from aggregate official statistics of deprivation, to build intelligent household level profiles, and to use these to model demand and supply more effectively.

Many transformation initiatives emphasize the key role of customer relationship management (CRM), and investments in this area have been significant in recent years. These investments are often underpinned and complemented by the goal to understand customers better. For the Scottish Customer First project a fundamental challenge was for local authorities to have a better understanding of who their customers were, in particular overcoming their inability to track customers and how to contact them. As well as making the back-office process more efficient and effective, it was also critical to address customer concerns and misperceptions of how local authorities function.

A range of methods is available to understand citizen needs better and feed this knowledge into service development. Citizens' Services in Aarhus[97] deliver a one-stop-service for citizens including tax, passport, drivers licence, child care, social security and notification of moving house. In developing the strategy a tool called 'personas' (profiles

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[93] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1792

[94] Although we did explore more the blurring of this difference. For example, public services can use discriminatory filters, such as eligibility tests, means tests (tested against your financial well-being), and the most frequently used of all is the 'waiting list' – you are eligible for a service, you can obtain it, but only at some time in the future.

[95] CABINET. (2007a). *Establishing an effective Customer Insight Capability in Public Sector Organisations*. London: Cabinet Office. January, 18 p. http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/publications/delivery_council/word/emerging_principles.doc

[96] http://www.business-strategies.co.uk/Public%20sector.aspx

[97] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/2384

relating to the needs and characteristics of various 'typical' citizens) has been used to provide a better understanding of citizen behaviour, thus targeting efforts in the right direction.

5.3   Participation, engagement and e-democracy

In Think Paper 6: "The participative citizen" we noted that in the context of participation administrations can learn from the citizen and vice versa in an environment of mutual enrichment. This is increasingly being facilitated through online tools and mechanisms such as online consultations and online petitions, although there are associated concerns about the extent to which such activities widen representative participation[98], or amplify existing uneven participation[99]. We identified four main types of citizen behaviour: the disengaged, the expert, the activist and the excluded.

In the eDialogos initiative in Greece, the Access2democracy[100] system acts as a trusted intermediary and supports a holistic eDemocracy approach, not just the online forum[101]. It facilitates mediation between Government (national/regional/local) and ICT companies to help them understand each other, and importantly shows that eDemocracy must be clearly linked to changing policy outcomes, otherwise it can be counterproductive by facilitating unstructured and 'noisy' debates.

The DenmarksDebatten[102] initiative is an online discussion forum designed to allow citizens and elected representatives in Denmark to contribute to debates on current topics affecting them locally and nationally. Local authorities and other government bodies can use the system to instigate debates based around a current issue facing citizens in a locality. Citizens are then able to engage in an exchange with their elected representatives by submitting their views through DanmarksDebatten. DanmarksDebatten was conceptualised in a political climate characterised by the declining interest in political engagement on the one hand and the rise of eGovernment on the other. As elsewhere in Europe, Denmark experienced a declining interest among the population in political engagement. From the ensuing debate about this phenomenon the idea of using 'e-dialogue' to allow citizens to contribute to the political debate emerged. To ensure that citizens' views do indeed feed back into the political process, and avoid that DanmarksDebatten becomes a mere talking shop, a number of facilitating features were incorporated into the design of the system.

A range of other cases illustrate democratic participation initiatives at the national level (Slovenia[103], The Netherlands[104], the UK[105], Scotland[106], and Italy[107]) and at more local

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[98] TEMPEST, M. (2007). *E-petitions could undermine democracy, MPs warned.* (March 8) Guardian (London), [cited April 29 2007]. http://society.guardian.co.uk/e-public/story/0,,2029433,00.html

[99] SCOTLAND. (2007). *Review of the Renewing Local Democracy Project.* (July 27) Scottish Executive, [cited July 31 2007]. http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/07/26144456/0

[100] Annex A

[101] Note also other platforms that are available such as the Local Channel. LOCAL. (2006). *The Local Channel.* The Local Channel, [cited August 16 2006]. http://tellmeabout.thelocalchannel.co.uk/home.aspx?p=1&m=130

[102] www.danmarksdebatten.dk and Annex A

[103] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/2007

levels (Madrid[108] and Issy-les-Moulineaux[109]) where there is a stronger opportunity to retain and strengthen traditional place-based relationships between government and citizens.

5.4 Trust and Transparency

In Think Paper 9: "Aarhus discussion paper" we noted that while organisations need to change, the impact of the change is strongly mediated through the trust relationship between citizens and government. Culture therefore matters, because the extent of trust varies across European countries. Another component of the process is transparency, most evident in Estonia where the comprehensively integrated information that underpins the ID card, and enables joined-up services, is linked to full transparency. Citizens in Estonia can log onto a secure Web site and see which civil servants have accessed their data, and for what purposes. This nicely inverts the rights and obligations argument, implying that if government has rights to use citizen data, it has associated obligations to inform the citizen when data have been used. In addition, this process also involves citizens in the process of data maintenance and quality, since they will be able to request corrections for data errors.

Think Paper 10: "Trust and transparency: pre-requisites for effective eGovernment", presented a deeper analysis of the importance of these issues, noting that while investment in infrastructure and eGovernment service development is fundamental to service delivery, the governance characteristics of transparency and trust are critical in legitimating the investment and in creating the conditions for widespread usage of services.

Trust is a central underpinning to the development of services for citizens and businesses in the Nordic countries in particular. In Finland[110] for example we found that trust in government is not the same as trust in politicians – Finns have a low level of trust in politicians. However, politicians generally are very accessible, and the Prime Minister is not routinely surrounded by high levels of security. Furthermore, the levels of trust are maintained also by high levels of openness and transparency, for example being able to see the salaries of government employees. Trust in government has enabled the Nordic Welfare State model to operate, with high levels of taxation and high acceptance of this by citizens who receive services that are citizen-centric and comprehensive, and the Finnish Information Society Strategy argued[111].

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[104] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1034
[105] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1021
[106] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1812
[107] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1035
[108] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1012
[109] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1019
[110] Annex A
[111] FINLAND. (2006). *A renewing, human-centric and competitive Finland.* (September) Information Society Programme, Prime Minister's Office, Finland, [cited May 2 2007]. http://www.tietoyhteiskuntaohjelma.fi/esittely/en_GB/introduction/_files/76222690188788831/default/Strategia_englanti_181006final.pdf

"Finland is a strong society of trust: people trust one another, the public administration, other actors in society and electronic services. The easy availability of information has led to a situation in which citizens trust their own expertise but are also able to utilise experts if necessary. This has promoted responsible citizenship: initiative and creativity in everyday activities and problem solving".

We noted earlier in this document how Estonia developed a fully integrated identity card where an Estonian citizen can log onto a secure Web service and see which civil servant in which ministry has used their data, and for what purposes, on a daily basis. This mutuality was also noted with the Netherlands eCitizen project where citizens cannot expect to receive services unless they are aware also of their obligations to society. It was put simply to us: you have a right to live in peace in your house, and that is accompanied by your obligations not to inflict noise and disturbance on your neighbours. Transparency reduces suspicion in emotional areas such as planning decisions where citizens may expect insider deals and corruption. Therefore Malta[112] has a planning system where there is transparency of information, as does local government in Ireland[113] where online mapping is provided that allows citizens to rapidly pre-test the potential feasibility of their own development intentions. The service provides citizens with clear information about possible restrictions and problems, leading potentially to more informed discussions with local government planning official.

Trust can also be built within organisations through transparency of process. This was evident in the Irish tax agency Revenue Online (ROI), where organisational reform was undertaken in a partnership with employees, who have become flexible in skills and knowledge, as the service priorities of ROI have shifted from checking paper forms to checking broader compliance. By valuing the knowledge that is embedded in its human capital, ROI has built trusted and flexible relationships with staff.

In Think Paper 10: "Trust and transparency: pre-requisites for effective eGovernment", a quantitative ranking was developed using a broad set of existing surveys that cover governance, eGovernment, and the Information Society. While acknowledging that this does not in itself provide a definitive segmentation of eGovernment in Europe, it does have a role in helping to underpin some of the key outcomes from the research, interviews, and workshops undertaken during the cceGov project. There has been a clear and consistent message regarding trust and transparency. Overall, our analysis produced the following grouping:

- Scandinavian role models
- Authoritative and trusted government
- Service delivery and trust challenges
- Iberian and Italian usage and trust challenges
- Eastern and southern European investment and trust challenges.

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[112] http://www.epractice.eu/cases/1036
[113] Annex A

Out of all the countries studied Estonia is a very individual model by maximising investment in trust and public value. It ranks low on the cost of government, medium on trust and peace. However, it ranks strongly on sophistication and availability of services, network readiness, and ICT spend per head. Combined with the particularly impressive information transparency Estonia shows how low cost, effective investment, and the building of citizen trust, translates into clear public value. Although levels of service use by citizens and business ranks only medium, the conditions are in place for continuing and effective uptake of services, as was evident in the use of eVoting in 2007[114], participatory governance[115], and the integrated ID card[116] with very transparent use by Government. These conditions provide strong foundations for trusted use of electronic services.

Estonia is significant because it provides a pathway through the dilemma of how other countries could produce and sustain a high-cost, highly-trusted Nordic government model. It would be a brave, indeed foolhardy, government that expected to be re-elected on the basis of a dramatic increase in taxation to reach the Nordic levels of funding. Furthermore, the challenge for Nordic countries now is how they can maintain trust and service levels in an atmosphere of pressure on taxation levels. Keeping the citizen both engaged, and committed to governance is crucial, and trust and transparency therefore emerge as central enabling factors for citizen-centric eGovernment.

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[114] BBC. (2007d). *Estonia claims new e-voting first.* (March 1) BBC, [cited May 4 2007]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6407269.stm
[115] EPRACTICE. (2007b). *New website gives Estonians their say in government issues.* (July 13) European Commission, [cited August 9 2007]. http://www.epractice.eu/document/3708
[116] EPRACTICE. (2006b). *Estonian eID card passes 1 million threshold.* (October 23) European Commission, [cited October 25 2006]. http://www.epractice.eu/document/295

6.0 BECOME A FLEXIBLE AND A STABLE ORGANISATION

Being trusted and transparent is not something that can be achieved and then maintained easily. Hard to build, and easy to destroy[117], trust and transparency need to be worked on as core organisational goals, and it is in that context that organisational change comes back to the centre stage. To be flexible, agile, and knowledgeable an organisation needs to have strong autonomy in its ability to reform and refocus, while still maintaining a focus on the higher level public service goals of delivering citizen-centric services.

There is a difficult challenge of moving away from centralist bureaucracy that is easily critiqued as being big, slow, costly and ineffective[118], with confrontational situations over a need for major reform at all levels[119], towards organisational strategies that combine the strengths of flexibility with security (as we have noted with Revenue Ireland for example): "*Flexicurity combines active labour market policies, flexible contractual arrangements, lifelong learning and modern social protection systems*"[120].

6.1   Structure, 'Ownership' and Leadership

In Think Paper 4: "eGovernment strategies" we highlighted the political messages of the i2010 Strategy continue to promote European societal goals of; reducing poverty and exclusion; promoting competitiveness and job creation; to achieve the highest possible rates of participation in the democratic process; to ensure that government delivers the services needed by citizens, through the channels they want, but not necessarily to deliver the services itself; and, achieve the goals cost effectively[121]. Financing change and innovation remains challenging in the context of "*shrinking budgets, long term ROI, ICT*

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[117] ZETTER, K. (2004). *Wrong Time for an E-Vote Glitch.* (August 12) Wired.com, [cited August 16 2004]. http://www.wired.com/news/evote/0,2645,64569,00.html, KABLENET. (2006f). *Public prefers banks for ID.* (April 4) Kable Government Computing, [cited April 7 2006]. http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/CFF04626BDC74F8E80257146004BD885?OpenDocument, BBC. (2007c). *Consumers 'shun' hacked stores.* (April 17) BBC, [cited April 17 2007]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/6559509.stm, ANON. (2007g). *You can't trust directors with digital data, says new survey.* (September 6) Public Technology, [cited September 10 2007]. http://www.publictechnology.net/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=11309

[118] BAIN, B. (2007). *Giuliani: Federal workforce is too big.* (September 21) Federal Computer Week, [cited September 23 2007]. http://www.fcw.com/article103822-09-21-07-Web, EPRACTICE. (2006e). *Minister calls for reform of state administration to facilitate eGovernment.* (December 4) European Commission, [cited December 5 2006]. http://www.epractice.eu/document/232

[119] BBC. (2007f). *Sarkozy announces huge job cuts.* (September 19) BBC, [cited September 20 2007]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7003866.stm

[120] EUROPE. (2007a). *European partners join lively debate on flexicurity.* (April 20) European Commission, [cited April 24 2007]. http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/07/519&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=fr

[121] EUROPE. (2006). *i2010 – First Annual Report on the European Information Society.* Brussels: European Commission. May 19, Report COM(2006) 215 final, 12 p. http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/eeurope/i2010/docs/annual_report/com_2006_215_en.pdf

costs too high"[122]. In that paper we described the various strategies European governments have adopted.

One common outcome of modernisation or transformation is to move responsibility for service delivery from a government department to an agency. In the case of the Dutch vehicle licensing authority (RDW), prior to receiving agency status RDW was a small part of the Ministry of Transport and Water Management, having only 8% of all employees in that Ministry. Agency status led to a big change in emphasis, with independence in budget, and strategic autonomy proving major enablers for culture change. RDW could now start to understand its own performance – there was a move from focusing on inputs (staff and allocated budget) to outputs (service quality, income levels etc.)

A similar case is the Netherlands Kadaster, which has been a 'Self-Administering State Body' since 1994, the first ten years involved cost-cutting, raising income while reducing prices (and making the pricing policy open and transparent), and developing a business approach to customers. Financial flexibility has been provided because Kadaster no longer operates within traditional civil service budgets of yearly budgets and 'revolving funds'[123], and one third of a yearly balance can now be kept as a strategic reserve.

Cross-roads Bank Belgium is one of the beacon projects for European eGovernment, having won awards and praise for it efficient and effective electronic management of social security payments through employers, and a proactive monitoring and payment of social security benefits as and when citizens qualify for them. A new institution was created to 'house' the Bank, so there was not an issue of organisational legacy, and few of the normal issues of staff redeployment (natural wastage is primarily used to rebalance staff resources), although staff reallocation is undertaken within the Bank according to skill needs of the service. The core employees of the bank are civil servants, having been recruited through the normal civil servant competitive examination, and having statutory rights of employment. There was consideration of how best to meet the ICT demands of the service, because the civil service structure does not provide the flexible IT resource needed, and they did not want to rely on short-term contract staff. To maintain both flexibility, and stability of skills and knowledge, a new Association was created between Social Security Institutions to provide a core of IT expertise for this, and other projects.

In Finland, until the recent election (spring 2007), the Ministry of Finance had focused on central government, and the Ministry of Interior was focused on municipal and regional issues. Two Department of the Ministry of Interior would then move to the Ministry of Finance. eGovernment had been undertaken by a small staff component, with 35 people in the Ministry of Finance, and 50 in Interior, so eGovernment was not high profile within the Ministries. The Information Society Commission (ISC) was a much larger programme

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[122] LOTTI, S. & MANCINI, C. (2006). *The impact of e-government in the Regions: results and future perspectives.* (September 9) European Commission, Impact of eGovernment Conference: Helsinki(13.09.06), [cited October 26 2006].
[123] Revolving funds have featured strongly in traditional civil service structures. Any income received by a Department is not kept, but is sent to the Treasury – hence the revolving door analogy. This process damages any process of developing markets, since resources are diverted in the Department to develop a service, and the income received is not then used to offset those costs.

of activities, but had very bureaucratic structures involving many staff working part-time on around 75 actions in support programmes. The new Minister was considering the status of the ISC. Information Society issues were moved to the Ministry of Traffic and Communications. The approach to organisational change involved re-training and cross-training, but there were reductions expected in overall agency size through retirement. There is a central productivity programme that nvolved pay reform[124], moving away from salary according to grades to "*three basic components of the salary, that is, a job-related component and an individual component, possibly also a results-based component*".

There is much in the literature of organisations about leadership, about creating a 'learning organisation, and about having senior staff who 'champion' a project[125]. While there is much literature also about poor leadership, there are also beacon projects of eGovernment where leadership was central to the successful development and implementation of a service. In the Belgian Crossroads Bank there was high level ministerial support from the outset, and Frank Robben was the central champion of the project, having the advantage of both a working relationship with ministers, and with experienced civil servants at managerial levels. In the e-Trikala[126] initiative in Greece leadership of the Mayor was central in developing successful local government services, having seized the initiative after the Greek Prime Minister promoted e-Democracy. Both models of leadership will have relevance depending on the political environment in which a project is being developed.

6.2 Performance Management

Lastly, but crucially, how do we measure the success of an organisation in delivering public value through eGovernment services? Measuring the impact of non-emotional services is far easier than for emotional ones – cost savings for procurement for example can be stated clearly[127]. Furthermore, Hodgson warns of the risk that measurement "*studies are more concerned with improvements in processes rather than improvements in services in the form of outputs or outcomes for consumers*"[128].

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[124] http://www.bit.hut.fi/samapalkkaisuus/cID0_1131en.htm
[125] ANON. (2006b). *Q&A Mike Watts, Director of HR Transformation, The Cabinet Office.* (July 3) Egovmonitor.com, [cited July 7 2006]. http://www.egovmonitor.com/node/6581, JONES, A. & WILLIAMS, L. (2005). *Public Services and ICT - FINAL REPORT. How can ICT help improve quality, choice and efficiency in public services?* London: The Work Foundation, 25 p. http://www.theworkfoundation.com/Assets/PDFs/PublicServicesandICTFinal%20Report.pdf , CODAGNONE, C. (2006). *Bench-learning in government - reflections from eGEP experience and beyond.* (September 13) European Commission, Impact of eGovernment Conference: Helsinki(13.09.06), [cited October 26 2006]. http://www.egov-goodpractice.org/event_details.php?&eventid=125
[126] BASU, I. (2007). *Digital City.* (June 1) Govtech.com, [cited June 25 2007]. http://www.govtech.com/gt/articles/124734, and Annex A
[127] KABLENET. (2007g). *Record e-auction saves £100m.* (June 29) Kable Government Computing, [cited June 30 2007]. http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/76EE5DCF16B7F69D8025730800594115?OpenDocument, KABLENET. (2007e). *IT overhaul saves council £5m.* (September 3) Kable Government Computing, [cited September 4 2007]. http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/830C45CBE1688C0E8025734B00353BA6?OpenDocument
[128] HODGSON, L., FARRELL, C. M. & CONNOLLY, M. (2007) Improving UK Public Services: A Review of the Evidence. *Public Administration, 85*, 355-382.

In Think Paper 5: "Is citizen-centric the same as customer-centric?" we explored changes in the reform agenda in the UK, where the rather narrow focus of New Public Management on cost savings during the 1980s and 1990s (accompanied by the construction of indicators that are most easily measured into objectives) has given way to models, such as the public value model, that take account of public preferences. This is partly as a result of the difficulty in reconciling technical gains in efficiency with service quality, for example where efficiency is measured solely in terms of average costs of processing inputs, with no regard for public preferences or perceptions. ICT is one of the main ways in which the cost of service inputs can be reduced. What may be less clear in some instances is the extent to which outputs and outcomes are 'better' (more citizen-centric?) from the recipients' perspective.

Quantitative approaches on a pan-EU scale include the EU- funded eUser[129] study is a major research and support project which provides evidence about users' needs regarding eGovernment, eHealth and eLearning, as well as providing data about their attitudes and the levels of uptake of current public online services. It provides empirical information and assesses the demand/supply match in these fields.

Measurement also needs to be trusted and transparent, and it needs to be a process which operating within a "*corporate framework for management and accountability of data quality, with a commitment to secure a culture of data quality throughout the organisation*"[130]. The Crossroads Bank does not measure performance themselves, but this is carried out independently by the Federal Planning Bureau. Most of the direct cost savings are experienced by the companies who now provide information electronically to the Social Security system. In 2002 the cost of processing the forms was €16m of the €1.7billion earned by the companies – a 1:100 cost. Now, with 500million electronic exchanges in 2006 the costs are minimal. There are commensurate gains in the quality of social protection through proactive granting of benefits, which avoids previous short-term poverty traps where citizens need services, but spend time applying for them.

A final approach is more collaborative and qualitative, moving towards what Picci terms "*Reputation based governance*" that links customer feedback (the CRM issues noted in earlier sections) with formal metrics that allow comparison between service deliverers[131]:

> *"Reputational effects have three main positive effects on governance. First, at a given moment in time they help discriminating between providers of different quality … Secondly, they allow selection forces to weed out the least fit. … Thirdly, they provide incentives to invest in quality".*

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[129] http://www.euser-eu.org
[130] AUDIT. (2007). *Improving information to support decision making: standards for better quality data.* (November 9) Audit Commission, [cited November 10 2007]. http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports/NATIONAL-REPORT.asp?CategoryID=&ProdID=AE298947-73F0-4dcb-AF77-D2520EECBCFB&fromREPORTSANDDATA=NATIONAL-REPORT
[131] PICCI, L. (2007). *Reputation–based governance.* (Volume 12, number 9 (September)) First Monday, [cited September 22 2007]. http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue12_9/picci/index.html

The key lessons about measurement are first that it should be simple and elegant (long sets of prescriptive measures risk changing organisational behaviour towards the activities that are measured), second that it should be clearly linked to policy aims and public value outcomes, and third that it should be standardised to allow for comparisons or benchmarking. Finally, measurement is designed to inform the organisation, not to be a central controlling activity.

7.0 LEARN BEYOND THE ORGANISATION

Let us be clear – organisational change has been, and remains, a critical action in the wider process of delivering public value to citizens through efficient and effective eGovernment services. Let us also be clear – organisational change by itself will not necessarily deliver public value, nor will it deliver the full extent of public value that is needed by citizens. This is clearly acknowledged in the criteria used in the European Commission 2007 eGovernment Awards[132], where the winners were assessed for innovativeness and effective management, real practice results and impact, and relevance and transferability in four thematic categories; Better public services for growth and jobs; Participation and transparency; Effective and efficient administration, and Most inspiring good practice.

Research for the European Commission continues to emphasis the importance of citizen-centricity, with the 2007 eGovernment benchmarking process involving a new indicator of citizen-centricity[133]. The 2007 National Progress reports[134] communicate "*impressive progress in transforming public administrations, thereby boosting economic growth by placing citizens and businesses at the centre of government services*", and the comparative review of progress in European eGovernment 2005-2007[135] advises that in achieving inclusive and citizen-centric eGovernment "*much effort is still highly fragmented in terms of both policy and practice, resulting in a failure to benefit from critical mass and mutual learning, and there is still too much focus on silo-specific solutions which are not joined up*". The European Commission therefore maintains a central role in promoting the sharing of excellence across Europe, in providing strategic guidance about government service priorities, and in driving forward the development of efficient ICTs that can help organisations become more efficient and effective.

The wider literature is well populated with examples where in both public and the private sectors large IT projects and organisational change processes have been problematical[136]. However, that has been the case throughout history[137], and the important

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[132] http://www.epractice.eu/document/3917

[133] CAPGEMINI. (2007). *The User Challenge: Benchmarking the Supply of Online Public Services: 7th Measurement.* (September 13) Capgemini, [cited September 20 2007]. http://www.epractice.eu/document/3929

[134] http://www.epractice.eu/document/3915

[135] MILLARD, J. (2007). *European eGovernment 2005-2007: Taking stock of good practice and progress towards implementation of the i2010 eGovernment Action Plan (2007).* (September 20) European Commission, [cited September 20 2007]. http://www.epractice.eu/files/download/awards/ResearchReport2007.pdf

[136] EPRACTICE. (2006c). *European project to banish dumb call centres in public administrations.* (August 28) European Commission, [cited August 31 2006]. http://www.epractice.eu/document/363, ECONOMIST. (2006a). *Never doubt the power of bureaucrats to waste your money.* (November 23) Economist, [cited November 23 2006]. http://www.economist.com/world/britain/displaystory.cfm?story_id=8329090, ECONOMIST. (2007c). *Toughing out a rethink.* (March 29) Economist, [cited April 10 2007]. http://www.economist.com/world/britain/displaystory.cfm?story_id=8934853, GRIGGS, T. & TIMMINS, N. (2007). *PPPs 'no magic bullet for public sector'.* (April 12) Financial Times (London), [cited April 13 2007]. http://www.ft.com/cms/s/6a57952c-e893-11db-b2c3-000b5df10621.html, BBC. (2007b). *Complacency 'rife' in IT projects.* (June 4) BBC, [cited June 5 2007]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/6720547.stm

context is provided by Jane Fountain's research[138] showing that the people in organisations are "*central enactors of technology in the state*", and it is through their "*organisational networks*" that they integrate the delivery of public services and deliver public value. Put simply, people matter more than the technologies, and the maxims that have emerged advise us to:

- Work with citizens to build and maximise their trust:
    - Develop and open and quality- controlled information strategy – allow them to see their data, and encourage them to be quality controllers of their data.
    - Be transparent about what you are doing with their data – tell them who is using it and why.
    - Inform them clearly about the security and data protection procedures you are using to protect their data, their privacy, and their identity.

- Be very clear about the complex demands of emotional services such as health and social security:
    - Understand that transforming your organisation and delivering an emotional e-service will not guarantee that all citizen demands will be met.
    - Work with citizens to build a mutual understanding of the importance both of their rights to access a service, and their obligations as citizens to use the services acceptably and ethically.

- Do not undertake organisational change simply to reduce bottom-line costs:
    - Develop strategies to maximise the engagement of staff in organisational change so that knowledge is retained within the organisation.
    - Maximise staff flexibility through a combination of performance management linked to job security.

In our research we have seen that organisational change has been used best where it has helped to mediate the challenging trust relationships between citizens and government – Estonia is a beacon of excellent practice. We have also found that organisational change, even where it uses the latest technologies and management practice, can fail to deliver public value because there is a lack of transparency – this is seen most in the integration and sharing of citizen information for emotional services such as health, and in the context of security and terrorism.

Organisational change will rightly continue to be centre-stage in the delivery of public value to European citizens. For countries in Scandinavia used to relatively high-cost government there are challenges of ageing populations, a declining tax base, and organisations will need to be smarter and more efficient, while still retaining the core trust of citizens through transparency of process.

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[137] WHITTAKER, B. (1999) What went wrong? Unsuccessful information technology projects. *Information Management and Computer Security,* 7**,** 23-29.

[138] FOUNTAIN, J. E. (2001) *Building the Virtual State: Information Technology and Institutional Change,* Washington DC, Brookings Institution.

In larger nations such as France[139] governments have been elected on platforms of organisational change and reform – citizens are giving clear messages that they want public value, but that they also expect it to be delivered cost-effectively. In nations such as Greece[140] the investments in technology and eGovernment services must also be accompanied by dramatically increased trust in government if they are to deliver public value. In November 2007 the UK suffered a major setback to citizen trust in eGovernment security[141] when confidential information about 25 million citizens was lost when one agency transferred it to another agency on disks through unsecured postal channels.

Many new member states in Eastern and Southern Europe face difficult challenges[142]: how can you increase tax income to deliver public value while not diminishing fragile trust relationships that exist because public value is not presently being delivered? Organisational change/transformation will therefore be essential in reducing the costs of government, and in delivering more value for the money that is available. As this project has shown, the reduction of costs and the associated efficiency gains, are best translated into public value when citizen trust is placed at the heart of the transformation process.

At national levels, individual governments can work on organisational change strategies that both respect the agendas set by globalisation, demographic change, and economic cycles, with the very local agendas of identity, democracy and participation that can underpin citizenship. The relationship between governance and citizen is therefore mediated through organisations that operate at multiple spatial scales and this is not more evident than in the European Commission 2007 eGovernment Awards[143], where pan-European recognition was given to projects that were strongly locally and regionally-based, and which show how important it is to have strong relationships with citizens.

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[139] COLE, A. & JONES, G. (2005) Reshaping the State: Administrative Reform and New Public Management in France. *Governance,* 18**,** 567-588, BBC. (2007f). *Sarkozy announces huge job cuts.* (September 19) BBC, [cited September 20 2007]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7003866.stm

[140] HAHAMIS, P., ILES, J. & HEALY, M. (2005). *e-Government in Greece: Bridging the gap Between Need and Reality.* (Volume 3 Issue 4 December) Electronic Journal of e-Government, [cited January 6 2007]. http://www.ejeg.com/volume-3/vol3-iss4/v3-i4-art4.htm, EPRACTICE. (2007a). *New on-line services for Greek enterprises through the Citizen Service Centres (KEP).* (February 6) European Commission, [cited February 19 2007]. http://www.epractice.eu/document/167, ECONOMIST. (2007b). *School for scandal.* (April 4) Economist, [cited April 10 2007]. http://www.economist.com/world/europe/displaystory.cfm?story_id=8972460

[141] BBC. (2007g). *UK's families put on fraud alert.* (November 20) BBC, [cited November 20 2007]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/7103566.stm, HOULDER, V. (2007). *HMRC chairman resigns after loss of records.* (November 20) Financial Times (London), [cited November 20 2007]. http://www.ft.com

[142] For more detail refer to: BLAKEMORE, M. & LLOYD, P. (2007). *Think Paper 10: Trust and Transparency: pre-requisites for effective eGovernment.* (August) Ccegov Project, [cited September 1 2007]. http://www.ccegov.eu/Downloads/Paper%2010%20Trust,%20Transparency,%20Efficiency%20and%20eGovernment%20v2.3.pdf

[143] http://www.epractice.eu/document/3917

These interviews took place between the summer of 2006 and the spring of 2007. At the request of some interviewees, not all interview reports are available for public distribution.

8.1 Denmark – borger.dk

Borger.dk is the new web portal for Danish citizens. It has been launched in January 2007 as a central instrument of the government's objective to improve public online services and thus to digitise all relevant communication between the citizen and the public sector by 2012. The site combines the two previous portals denmark.dk and netborger.dk. It has been set up in close co-operation between the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and Local Government Denmark as the main entrance for the citizen to the public authorities on the Internet. Borger.dk deals with public authorities, legal matters and topics with editorially prepared texts and news and with digital self-service in order to advance the digitization of the citizens. As well as providing a gateway to online services, the portal also offers services in e-democracy, e.g. the new version of the online discussion facility danmarksdebatten, which from June 2007 will include a parallel voting facility.

Borger.dk is developed in two stages. The period 2006 and 2008 sees the inception and development of the current portal. This is a "*citizens' information guide*" to the public sector. The purpose of the guide is to make it easy for the citizen to find information and answers to their questions on issues relating to the public sector, whether it is related to law, rules, rights, duties, facts or digital self service. The period 2008 to 2012 will see the development and release of a second, more advanced, version of the portal which will use digital signatures to offer personalised services to citizens. There will be a 'My Page' functionality which will make it possible for the citizen to find and put all their personal data in relation to the public sector in one personal 'online drawer'. My Page will be launched in its first edition in 2008.

The project can be described as 'citizen centric' in several ways. It is based on the evidence generated by recent research that "*seven out of ten Danes wish to use the digital media more in their dialogue with the public (sector).*"[144] This research, however, has also shown that citizens are not necessarily interested in who provides a public service, and that the public sector has to provide one entrance to online services and make these easier to use. The project was therefore grounded in a clear idea of what the demand for online services looked like.

Borger.dk therefore provides one main entrance for the citizens to access public services. It does not implement these services but provides an overview of them and guides people

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[144] http://www.e.gov.dk/english/egov_projects/citizen_portal/printer.html

directly to the relevant service where they can complete their online transaction. This design certainly reflects the desire for ease of access highlighted in the research.

The portal also has a user-friendly interface. In design and structure it has attempted to take a citizen perspective rather than the perspective of a bureaucracy. Thus, the site is not structured by provider organisation but by type of service. Furthermore, the site has been developed with 'personas' in mind, ie three different user perspectives reflecting no, some and high Internet skills. These have subsequently been extended so that the site now caters for a total of 12 different 'personas' reflecting different life stages and life situations.[145] This design is likely to make it relatively easy for people with different skills levels and different backgrounds to use the site and find their way. Furthermore, ease of use was further facilitated by the fact that the site was developed with the help of a usability consultant. Regular user testing was undertaken while it was developed which resulted in "*quite fundamental changes*", including the structure of the subjects on the main site which now includes an overview after each main topic area. Furthermore, a call centre has been set up to help citizens with problems they face using the site.

While the site has not been 'live' long enough to come to a comprehensive understanding of the impact of this citizen-centric philosophy, the fact that the site has had more than 80.000 unique users per day[146] since going 'live' suggests that the citizen-centric design of the services has had some initial success.

Borger.dk is an integrated project: it brings together different government services to make it easier for people to use them. This means, however, that the different administrations need to work together to provide the kind of 'easy access' to services that people want. The project has therefore resulted in what is described as an "*internationally unusual*" arrangement[147] where representatives from all three levels of government (local, regional and national) are brought together to collaborate on the implementation of the project.

Further organisational change will be the 'natural consequence' of the next stages of the project which will result in personalisation and further digitisation of government services. For instance, in a parallel process to the development of borger.dk from 2008, the workflows of the providing organisations will be brought in line with the requirements of the site. As part of this development the collaboration of representatives from different governance levels will be institutionalised in 2008 as a unit within the Ministry. A strategy for how these changes will be implemented does, however, not yet exist.

As borger.dk only started as a project in January 2007 it is too early to draw conclusive lessons.

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[145] These personas are to be used for other IT projects in the public sector.
[146] http://www.nnit.com/EN/Secondary/Press/News/Borger.dk+in+the+air.htm
[147] http://www.e.gov.dk/english/egov_projects/citizen_portal/index.html

8.2 Denmark – DanmarksDebatten

DanmarksDebatten (www.danmarksdebatten.dk) is an online discussion forum designed to allow citizens and elected representatives in Denmark to contribute to debates on current topics affecting them locally and nationally. Local authorities and other government bodies can use the system to instigate debates based around a current issue facing citizens in a locality. Citizens are then able to engage in an exchange with their elected representatives by submitting their views through DanmarksDebatten. Debates tend to be time-limited. Organisers are encouraged to take stock half way through the cycle and to summarise what was agreed to date and to keep the debate on track. The site has been live since 2002 and will from summer 2007 have a representation on the new web portal for Danish citizens - borger.dk (meaning 'citizen.dk').

DanmarksDebatten was conceptualised in a political climate characterised by the declining interest in political engagement on the one hand and the rise of eGovernment on the other. As elsewhere in Europe, Denmark experienced a declining interest among the population in political engagement. From the ensuing debate about this phenomenon the idea of using 'e-dialogue' to allow citizens to contribute to the political debate emerged. As the idea of eGovernment gained ground (both in Denmark and across Europe), the Danish government realised that the same e-government technology could be used for democratic purposes and to bridge the gap between politicians and the citizens. The idea was that citizens would be more interested in engaging in political processes if new technologies are used to provide local information that people can relate to.

> "*For instance, if a family can see from the municipality's website that the waiting time for the crèche is six months, the municipal authorities may on the same page invite the family to discuss the municipality's future childcare policy. There may be links to similar debates at local, regional or national level, where the family may find inspiration or voice its opinion. From a discussion of municipal childcare policy the family may thus rapidly proceed to e.g. a debate on government family policy.*"[148]

Finally, the design of the project also benefited from the objective of the Danish government to put citizens at the heart of its IT policy and to measure this policy "*against the yardstick of how well it contributes to furthering individuals' opportunities for active participation and contributory influence.*"[149]

DanmarksDebatten is available to all public authorities and interests groups in Denmark, such as local authorities and government agencies. Local authorities and other agencies using the system can integrate it into their own websites and place their own design on top of the template supplied by the National IT and Telecom Agency. Furthermore, the system applies the XML standard, a markup language used to structure data so that it becomes recognisable and thus searchable. This means that completed debates from across the country, which are all collected in a database, can be searched through the

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[148] http://www.danmarksdebatten.dk/sitemod/design/layouts/default/index.asp?pid=5020&ContentArea=1
[149] www.danmarksdebatten.dk

national site DanmarksDebatten.dk by those interested in finding out what moves people in Denmark. Currently a new version developed in open source is about to be released as an integrated part of the national site www.borger.dk . Citizens are at the heart of DanmarksDebatten, and this focus weaves through project intention, design and execution.

Against the background of growing political apathy, DanmarksDebatten was to offer citizens an alternative means to get involved in current issues, especially those that affect them locally. There was also an expectation that this could help make the public sector more responsive to citizens' needs as the system would offer an insight into the issues that really concerned people. Hereby the sum of the local debates would give a picture of the 'state of mind' in Denmark. Whilst debates can only be instigated by public sector organisations themselves, citizens may propose the topic of a debate to them.

To ensure that citizens' views do indeed feed back into the political process, and avoid that DanmarksDebatten becomes a mere talking shop, a number of facilitating features were incorporated into the design of the system. Firstly, the initiators regarded it as crucial that debates are time-limited so that the system does not become an excuse for not acting. It was further regarded as important that some structure is provided to the debate. Thus, 'owners' of a debate (ie the local authority of government agency) were encouraged to be actively involved: to steer it, carry out a 'mid-term evaluations' of each debate to take stock of what was agreed to date and to further secure the direction of the debate as well as to publish a summary of the debate and its results after its completion. Government bodies were also encouraged to make use of moderators to facilitate the online debates. Not only does this mean someone monitors and if necessary moderate the debates, it also signals to the public that the debate is taken seriously. Finally, completed debates from all governance levels are archived in a single database. This can be searched by citizens and gives public authorities "*valuable information on the citizens' preferences, values and attitudes*"[150] which can be used to inform the policy process.

The focus on the citizen also extended to efforts to make the system user-friendly. Thus, users were considered at the design stage of the debating site. Moreover, a user manual was drawn up which explained to both public sector organisations and citizens how to use the system. There is also a call centre which local authorities can use to help them start a debate.

Though citizens were at the heart of the project, it was not conceptualised with particular target groups in mind. Indeed, rather than replacing traditional democratic processes, the idea behind DanmarksDebatten was to supplement them, to 'facilitate democratic influence/participation for people having a hectic everyday life.' As a 'lightweight' system and relatively small-scale project, DanmarksDebatten did not require (or lead to) organisational change within the Ministry. In fact, the project was less about organisational change than providing an additional opportunity for citizens to be heard in the political process. Nevertheless, those local authorities running debates are likely to have been in need of changing bureaucratic processes to accommodate citizens' participation in policy

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[150] http://www.danmarksdebatten.dk/sitemod/design/layouts/default/index.asp?pid=5020&ContentArea=1

making.[151]   Overall, however, the delivery of citizen-centric online services requires more of a cultural change than organisational change: it's about shifting mindsets from one focusing on bureaucratic procedures to one with a citizen-centric focus.

DanmarksDebatten is a well-functioning 'e-dialogue' tool which has been used for a variety of debates over the years some of which have made a difference to policy formulation. For instance, one of the most popular debates at the beginning of the project was one instigated by Aarhus Council to discuss their traffic plan for the inner city. The Council used the results of the debate to inform the eventual design of the traffic plan.

Even though DanmarksDebatten could not be anchored in the political system, its existence has raised awareness about the possibilities of using Internet tools for the purposes of democratic participation. Importantly, this awareness has been slowly distributed through the political system.

The project also generated some lessons for how to run 'e-dialogues'. Most notably, these are:

- A clear objective: what is the purpose of the debate and how do you plan to use the outcome afterwards?
- Relevance: 'What's in it for me? - make sure, that the citizen know what the outcome of their participation will be.
- Time-limited debates: Only run time-limited debates and remember to maintain the interest as well as the visible overview by making small summaries every now and then. And when closing a debate - remember to express you appreciation for the received contributions and be keen on announcing any eventual activities regarding the same issue - be it town hall meetings, workshops etc.
- Results and feedback: remember to brief the participants about any outcome of their efforts.
- Recruiting participants - create a participant profile, use existing networks, and partner with local media. 'Timing is everything'.
- Adaptation period - make sure that the citizen feels comfortable and has access to any help or guidance that they might need.

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[151] As the interviewee for this case study is based in the national ministry no details on these processes are available.

8.3   Finland – Ministry of Finance

There had recently been a General Election in Finland, with a change of Government, with a new Centre-Right coalition[152] which in its early days was having debates over the levels of taxation[153], over the need for public sector management reform, and which was formulating policies to expand the labour market at a time when an ageing population was putting increasing demands on services[154].

This represents a significant shift in the political landscape after 20 years of policy stability. While Finland has a strong economy, there are challenges ahead in sustaining the Nordic economic and social model, and the country still has high levels of residual debt from the 1999s. Until the Election the Ministry of Finance had focused on central government, and the Ministry of Interior was focused on municipal and regional issues. Two Department of the Ministry of Interior will now move to the Ministry of Finance.

The current approach to organisational change involved re-training and cross-training, but there are reductions expected in overall agency size through retirement. There is a central productivity programme that has involved pay reform[155], moving away from salary according to grades to "*three basic components of the salary, that is, a job-related component and an individual component, possibly also a results-based component*".

eGovernment has been undertaken by a small staff component, with 35 people in the Ministry of Finance, and 50 in Interior, so the activity is not high profile within the Ministries. The Information Society Commission (ISC) was a much larger programme of activities, but had very bureaucratic structures involving many staff working part-time on around 75 actions in support programmes. The new Minister is considering the status of the ISC. Information Society issues have now been moved to the Ministry of Traffic and Communications.

Telecoms penetration in Finland is 120% - saturation of mobile/landline – and the emphasis now is on increasing broadband speeds. Commercial success stories in ICT use involve the Netbank service[156], where over 3 million citizens (of a total of 5.2 million in Finland) use online banking that interoperates also with mobile phones.

Trust is a central underpinning to the development of services for citizens and businesses. In March 2007 a visit to Finland by Scottish MSPs noted:

[152] ANON. (2007a). *Finland getting centre-right government with a shade of green.* (April 4) Helsingin Sanomat, [cited May 5 2007]. http://www.hs.fi/english/article/Finland+getting+centre-right+government+with+a+shade+of+green/1135226349957

[153] ANON. (2007c). *Intense bargaining over taxation expected in government talks.* (April 11) Helsingin Sanomat, [cited May 4 2007]. http://www.hs.fi/english/article/Intense+bargaining+over+taxation+expected+in+government+talks/1135226487704

[154] FINLAND. (2007). *Finland's new government says to overhaul labour policy.* (April 16) Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland, [cited May 4 2007]. http://newsroom.finland.fi/stt/showarticle.asp?intNWSAID=15500&group=Politics

[155] http://www.bit.hut.fi/samapalkkaisuus/cID0_1131en.htm

[156] http://www.nordea.fi/sitemod/default/index.aspx?pid=760204

> "*One of the key themes to emerge from the trip was the extent to which citizens trust government in Finland. This is primarily based on a long tradition of openness in the administration as well as an emphasis on a national political consensus including close co-operation between the trade unions, business and government*".

Note that trust in government is not the same as trust in politicians – Finns have a low level of trust in politicians. However, politicians generally are very accessible, and the Prime Minister is not surrounded by high levels of security. Furthermore, the levels of trust are maintained also by high levels of openness and transparency, for example being able to see the salaries of government employees.

Trust in government has enabled the Nordic Welfare State model to operate, with high levels of taxation and high acceptance of this by citizens who receive services that are citizen-centric and comprehensive, and as the President of Finland stated the model "*emphasises equal opportunities, social justice, participatory governance and the rule of law*"[157].

From the 1960s Finns had a single personal identification number that was used in all services, and also in commerce – extending to banking, commerce, video rentals etc. There were clear efficiency benefits, and change of address notification was an easy activity, since a single central notification meant that all other stakeholders were automatically informed, ranging from government departments, commercial companies, churches, municipalities and shops.

The Electronic Identity Card (EIC) was launches in 1999. In 2005 the former citizen ID card and the EIC were combined, but overall level of use of the card is low given the investment. However, since service use is dependent on need for a service, many people do not use the card generally because they do not need to access services. Given the extensive integration and interoperation of government services, the saturation level of mobile phone use, and the single data point of the Identity Card, Finland could be seen as an ideal candidate for the most tracked citizenry – yet the issues of surveillance and privacy are minimal for citizens.

There now is a pre-filled tax form sent to Finns, and if they accept the details they do not even need to sign it. Information is collected automatically from employers, banks, insurance companies, and the trust in the electronic process is underpinned by proactive and ongoing work on data and network security.

The strong trust base will be vital in helping to mediate the difficult debates that will occur over taxation levels and service provision. To date the cost of government has been accepted by citizens, but emotion may now impact on debates at both national and local levels. Health services, for example, are perceived generally as not being adequate for an

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[157] HALONEN, T. (2007). *Keynote Address by President of the Republic Tarja Halonen At the Seventh Doha Forum on Democracy, Development and Free Trade in Qatar on 23 April 2007.* (April 23) President of Finland, [cited May 3 2007]. http://www.kauppalehti.fi/4/i/yritykset/stt-info/tiedote.jsp?selected=kaikki&oid=20070401/11773460033730

ageing population. Higher education is still free, indeed grants are still given to students, and there is a discussion only about whether foreign students should be charged.

The 'local' level is important in Finnish governance, but there is a big variation in the size and economic situation of the 414 municipalities. Some like Helsinki are large and affluent, but some smaller municipalities have serious financial problems (20-30 each year generate significant deficits), with low levels of economic activity and tax revenue, and high levels of elderly residents. So, while in principal the decision-making is close to the citizen, the financial resources are unevenly distributed.

There are discussions about rationalising the municipality model, and reducing numbers through consolidation. There are discussions about efficiency, about staff reductions through natural wastage and retirement, and about performance assessment of staff. Central government can take control of a municipality if the financial situation is very serious. Service delivery can be undertaken through private sector contracts.

There is a yearly survey of citizen perceptions of government services. The survey is undertaken independently by a private sector company, with the Government determining the questions to be asked. The company processes the results and Government writes the report. Four areas of quality are assessed, covering usage, content, management and service production, and benefits to all stakeholders. There are formal recommendations for Web service design known as 'JHS 129'[158].

The results overall have confirmed that citizens accept that the high price of government is cost beneficial given the services being delivered. Citizens are engaged in service design, for example through associations representing disabilities. eGovernment services are available through one-stop shops (there are 200 Common Service Bureaux) and portals, and G2B services are available directly or via intermediaries. There are no transaction fees for using online services.

However, whether service levels can be sustained with an ageing population is problematical. The programme of the new Government is clear in setting out the challenges:

> "*A new sense of community is required. As it continues to build Finland's welfare society, the Government will seek to clarify the division of responsibilities between individuals, communities and society as a whole*"[159].

And the detailed strategy notes the need for more flexibility in the labour market:

> "*A new Finnish modus operandi will be worked out to create greater harmony between job security and flexibility. Promoting these objectives side by side will help respond to the needs of both the employer and employees*"[160].

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[158] http://www.jhs-suositukset.fi/intermin/hankkeet/jhs/home.nsf/pages/F03E0564398BD7B6C2256F570042F443
[159] http://www.valtioneuvosto.fi/hallitus/hallitusohjelma/en.jsp
[160] http://www.valtioneuvosto.fi/hallitus/hallitusohjelma/pdf/en.pdf page 62

8.4 Finland – Ministry of the Interior

The new Finnish Government Programme of April 2007 noted a significant change in the relationships between central and regional/local government:

> "*Central administration will be reformed by reassigning all transferable executive duties from the ministries to regional and local administration. All development responsibilities other than those of nationwide significance will also be allocated to regional and local administration and the division of duties between the ministries will be updated*"[161].

This in part represents a radical shift away from the restricted flexibility imposed to date by consensus politics:

> "*Decision making requires the formation of coalitions and the acceptance of compromises. Nowadays, Finnish politics is characterised by pragmatism and a strong penchant towards consensus – factors that have not always been present. This situation limits the degree of freedom that parties have to articulate their ideologies or programmes and implement them*"[162].

Finland has a strong subsidiarity principal that focuses on local responsibility, and whenever central government imposes new services there must be accompanying resources – services are determined by law, as are service levels, and the local administrations are resourced to deliver them. The majority of relationships and service provision for citizens are at the local level, including health insurance, social security, but there often is little coordination between ministries, and this risks an overload of requirements being imposed on local administrations, resulting in the need for negotiation through the Association of Finnish Municipalities[163].

There has been a change in emphasis from measuring resource inputs, to measuring outcomes and effectiveness. PPP is now used for road projects undertaken by the State (the highway network). Municipalities for some time have undertaken shared service delivery. Helsinki municipality has 40,000 employees in 36 divisions, and for a city of 500,000 citizens the ratio of staff to citizens is 1 to 12.5.

While Finland overall has a high level of taxation, actual levels very because tax is set both centrally and locally. Municipal taxes average 20%, but vary between 14.5% and 22.75%, and there is a mechanism whereby the State can take surplus funds from one municipality to subsidise others, although this can generate unexpected behaviour over the reporting of finances. Hence the new plan states:

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[161] http://www.valtioneuvosto.fi/hallitus/hallitusohjelma/pdf/en.pdf page 60
[162] http://www.finland.fi/netcomm/news/showarticle.asp?intNWSAID=25783
[163] http://www.kunnat.net/k_etusivu.asp?path=1

> "*The system of central government transfers to local governments will be overhauled (beginning in 2010) to make it simpler, clearer, more transparent and more incentive, with due regard to the circumstances and service needs of individual municipalities*"[164].

There are strong indications that historic service levels will be difficult to maintain in the light of economic and demographic change. Hence the considerations of mergers, and the 2006 Bill on Structural Reform of Municipalities considers merging municipalities which have less than 20,000 inhabitants, although this is also set against the shared service delivery that already happens between some municipalities.

Politically, most municipalities are stable, with low levels of electoral volatility and high levels of local trust. Service delivery is generally very effective. Municipalities have a powerful role in building citizenship and national identity. In an average municipality the Director (a salaried Mayor) is non-political, and in well networked with enterprise leaders, teachers, doctors, and most employees. There will be daily contact with neighbouring municipalities. There is a flattened organisational hierarchy with locally embedded and networked leadership. Local enterprise and economic growth, and a caring society, are core priorities for local leaders. Soft, rather than hard, managerial techniques dominate.

Shared services are being promoted especially in municipalities below 20,000 inhabitants, although change can be difficult with a long history of locally-developed IT systems. Given the changes underway in politics and society in Finland, the municipalities will be challenged to maintain their strong local trust relationships with citizens at a time when the diverse portfolio of services is being reviewed by central government.

8.5 Estonia eGovernment Strategy

Estonia's independence in August 1991 created 'clean sheet' conditions for the design of a new form of government and governance. A new Constitution was adopted in July 1992[165], and with the 'clean sheet' theoretically there was a possibility to design a new integrated form of government based on ICTs. However, the strategy was based instead on a strong desire to build up governance from the ground-level, and to build also on existing Departments and delivery channels (silos) using ICTs. Rapid prototyping was possible given the relatively small size of the country with a population of 1.3 million people.

Local and Departmental autonomy meant that departments and municipalities could design and develop systems and services rapidly, and the integration of these systems has been achieved through a secure system of interoperability, known as the X-Road[166], and in early 2006 355 agencies and 50 state databases were operating within the X-Road.

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[164] http://www.valtioneuvosto.fi/hallitus/hallitusohjelma/pdf/en.pdf page 22
[165] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_Estonia
[166] http://www.ria.ee/?id=27309&&langchange=1

The X-Road provides the operating base for the document exchange centre[167] (DEC) where "*Documents are messages with described semantics and structure. These can be letters, draft legislation, financial documents (including eInvoices and payment orders), electronic forms, documents related to public procurement procedures etc*". The X-Road permits interoperability also between public and private services, such as banking and finance

The Estonian electronic identity card[168], and its PKI legitimation, has been the key mechanism for delivering efficient and joined-up services. Started in 2002, the number of cards issued had exceeded 900,000 in February 2006, and by the end of 2006 covered 80% of citizens. The strategy to maximise use of the cards is to provide citizen-centric and citizen-relevant services, rather than to use compulsion. The ICT Strategy 2013[169] importantly identifies pragmatic goals, in particular "*By 2013, 75% of Estonian residents will be using the internet, while household internet penetration will amount to 70%*".

This process is underpinned by important principles: security which leads to trusted use, and informational transparency, where citizens are able to see who and why uses their data:

- To have an ID card the person must be on the official population register. "*Every holder of the national ID card has been assigned an official e-mail address Forename.Surname@eesti.ee, which is the main channel for passing electronic information from government institutions to the citizen*"
- This interaction uses a secure PKI which helps maintain citizen trust in the use of services.
- The services are available in a multi-channel mode, including communication via conventional paper means, email, and SMS texting[170], and by providing free Internet access in public libraries.
- The "*Citizen and Migration Board has made it possible on the Citizen portal (www.eesti.ee) to trace, who and when has been checking the citizen's data from their databases. In case any doubts arise regarding the justifiability of such checking, the citizen can contact the respective agency and demand an explanation*"[171]. Citizens therefore are also active quality controllers of data.

The most frequently checked areas of data are taxation[172] and school examination results, as well as other services such as applications to University[173]. The election in 2006 also

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[167] http://www.ria.ee/28567
[168] http://www.ria.ee/27307 "*ID card is a mandatory ID document for all Estonian residents from the age of 15. The card is valid for 10 years as an iden-tification and travel document (within EU). The certificates entered on the identity card shall be valid for 3 years but not for longer than the period of validity of the identity card*".
[169] http://www.riso.ee/en/files/IYA_ENGLISH_v1.rtf
[170] http://www.ria.ee/27428
[171] http://www.riso.ee/en/files/IYA_ENGLISH_v1.rtf
[172] EPRACTICE. (2006d). *The majority of Estonians submit tax returns electronically.* (August 28) European Commission, [cited August 31 2006]. http://www.epractice.eu/document/368
[173] EPRACTICE. (2006f). *University eAdmissions system takes off in Estonia.* (October 23) European Commission, [cited October 25 2006]. http://www.epractice.eu/document/292

was a motivation to use the ID card, and 30,000 citizens used eVoting[174]. eHealth services are being developed[175], and the PPP-structured primary care application was launched in 2004, initially with 5% take-up by doctors, and early challenges identified[176] such as the need to provide incentives for doctors to change their business practices, and the need to build levels of trust in the use of an electronic service for an 'emotional' service such as healthcare. Childcare services have been combined into a single service involving a range of stakeholder service providers in the social and education area, as well as Internal Affairs. The creation of a citizen-centric service is a complex challenge of overcoming existing power structures within silos, and in negotiating who owns the new service.

However, trust in technology has been high since Independence. The previous Soviet regime experiences low levels of citizen trust in government, and citizens now accept that the ICTs allow them to verify and audit government services and employees in a way that maintains trust through transparency. Participation also encourages trust, and this is maintained through the interactive citizen portal[177], and through the specific linking of rights to consume public services being accompanied by obligations of being a citizen.

Lastly, the development of eEstonia has been undertaken at a relatively low cost to citizens. The level of overall taxation[178] (as a % of GDP) in the EU27 in 2005 was 48.8%, and Estonia's level was 31%. In addition the Estonian Government is experiencing difficulties in recruiting skilled ICT specialists into public service, but there are significant investments in public service reform[179], such as the 2004 '*Framework Document for Public Service Development*' which identifies the need for flexibility, competence and skills, with a performance-related remuneration system that is underpinned also by the 2004 *Anti-Corruption Strategy 'Honest State'*.

8.6 France - Internet Accompagne

Simplifying ICT equipment and connectivity, and making sure that all French citizens can master it is a key objective for the French Government; and the role of the state has been to support, mentor and encourage every one of them to participate in the eRevolution. This drive has been very much helped by the following:

- Deregulation of telecoms since 2002 has meant that French citizens have had access to the lowest subscription rates for internet access.
- With 99% broadband coverage, France has one of the best high speed bandwidth potentials in the world.

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[174] BORLAND, J. (2007). *Online Voting Clicks in Estonia.* (March 2) Wired.com, [cited March 3 2007]. http://www.wired.com/news/politics/evote/1,72846-0.html
[175] http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/care_for_me/e-health/ms_ee_en.htm
[176] http://www.ehealthconference2006.org/pdf/AINAAVIKSOO_ppt.pdf
[177] http://www.eesti.ee/est
[178]
http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=STAT/07/41&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en
[179] http://www.riigikantselei.ee/?id=5710

- Active encouragement and support for cross governmental department working and co-operation in order to achieve the best results for the users.

The Internet Accompagné project was initiated by the department that is tasked with increasing widespread access to the Internet and to ICT's, the DUI (The Delegation for the Use of the Internet). It is a key component of eGovernment deployment and it works in constant close co-operation with the Service du Développement de l'Administration Electronique (SDAE) whose prime focus is establishing (eGovernment) user needs and gaining user feedback. Other input has come from the Ministère de l'emploi, de la cohésion sociale et du logement (responsible for employment and social cohesion).

The French government recognised the need to enshrine their eObjectives in formal legislation and so developed the 'Internet for all' (Internet pour tous) plan.
A key component of this initiative has been a programme targeting young people and families which resulted in a series of projects encompassing the cross section of French citizens from young people in school, through adults, workers and senior citizens. It has also included the broad spectrum of families and those at risk of exclusion because of a myriad of circumstances such as language ability, poverty and sickness. The supported Internet Experience for all was initially launched as one of these pilot projects, it is now an established Action Plan.

Launched in March 2006, Internet Accompagné was a trailblazer project based on a public/private partnership model. This project's overall goal was to simplify the process for all citizens of accessing internet technologies for the first time and to support initial training programmes for citizens in the use of these.

The project was wide ranging and based on four clear priorities:

- The implementation of a legislative framework to enable and support the overall project.
- The establishment of a seal of quality governing standards for the project's work programme, which would ensure clear rules and guidelines about the standards and levels of service provision for users expected, as well as the role and level of engagement expected of all partners involved in the service delivery.
- The development of a legal contractual framework to take the project forward to programme level which would involve contractual agreements with over 200 partners who would ensure a tailor made service for citizens, from hardware and software choice and purchase, through training in its use, access to service providers and the myriad of other actors required to provide the fullest possible offer.
- A programme of job creation in order to introduce a new professional training for individual ICT trainers and make available a home mentoring service for new users of the internet, creating new job opportunities for the unemployed.

The pilot programme having run for the whole of 2006, in 2007 the initiative was rolled out across France and is now in place as a key action plan. With this carefully planned introduction the rate of take up of information technology packages and training among

the citizens of France was stepped up and a new three year target of 68% overall take-up per household became a realistic goal. In addition to this a five year plan has been developed which involves the creation of 30,000 new jobs in the personal services sector which involve giving one to one training and mentoring to new ICT users in their own homes and at specially designed internet hubs. The service offer is now clear and can be summed up in the following steps:

- Equip - provide computer
- Connect – provide connection
- Support – provide home training

Ensure Finance – support the cost through special schemes and measures, including no cost guaranteed loans and social benefit contributions where necessary.

This project has been devised to address a range of issues, including public service delivery, social service delivery as well as access to a range of services provided by the public sector. It is all embracing in its target audience which includes the elderly, the unemployed, those individuals and families on special benefits and receiving financial aids, and from now on students and the disabled. Schemes are now firmly in place to train suitable candidates as support workers for these new companies providing services in the home.

Although this programme has been devised at Central Government level, the emphasis is now on urging and persuading local communities to focus on local needs and set up their own programmes to specifically meet these. This is necessary in order to ensure the best use of scarce resources. It is in this activity that the Service du Développement de l'Administration Electronique (SDAE) continues to be heavily involved by bringing all their user needs expertise to the programme. Using a range of techniques: Focus groups, user based test groups, citizen user groups, online fora and others, the programme implementation can be monitored across France and new elements put in place as a need is identified, sometimes this may involved special needs found in individual communities, at other times national needs may be identified.

With the initial programme now in place and working well, work focussing on the special and individual needs of communities has now commenced. A new and exciting pilot is currently being put in place (June 1st 2007 start) which will see the inclusion of more government based services such as health and social care as well as other services such as internet based telephony and access to a range of private sector services. The focus is on special at risk groups and in this case it involves families and individuals who are cut off and excluded from community involvement for one reason or another.

This involves communities in the Somme and the Alpes-Maritime regions, where 100 families and individuals have been identified to be at risk from exclusion. These families are going to be given the necessary equipment, training and support by Internet Accompagné partners, but in addition they will be supplied with webcams and connected

to a central monitoring and service delivery call centre. There is a range of identified needs within these populations and the support offered will include:

- The possibility to order meals online.
- Medical advice and surveillance if required and requested.
- Access to a range of other social services.
- Access to a range of services delivered by the private sector.
- Internet access and internet based telephony.
- Access to training.

In this scenario the citizen is firmly in charge and can dictate the level and range of services that he or she requires. The webcam is available, but can be turned off if privacy is required and dialogue can take place with the central control station without it. The normal requirements to ensure confidentiality are respected. The overall aims of the programme depend on the target groups involved, but as a general rule they are:

- To enable the elderly and infirm to live as independent a life as possible in their own homes and remain in contact with friends and family outside their immediate community. These may be families in overseas territories or other parts of France.
- To prevent social exclusion and feelings of anomie and isolation, and persuade them that they have a place in society.
- To provide remote access to education and training opportunities to those families isolated through poverty, language and other social situations beyond their control.

This project will be carefully monitored by the DUI using techniques developed in the first project and programme phase of the Internet Accompagne programme; and is an exciting and ambitious plan which should enrich even more the French Government's offer of ICT support for its citizens.

Whilst it is clear that this whole programme has been a real beacon leading the way for French citizens to engage in the eRevolution, it is sensibly acknowledged that over the next years there are still issues that will need to be addressed, some of which are as follows:

- The price of the connection to the internet is still far too high for the poorest, since this is provided by the private sector reducing the cost where necessary is going to be a real battle. Where families and individuals cannot afford the cost, the cost has to be met by the state and this is a drain on resources.
- What should be the role of recycling in this programme? There are all sorts of issues around recycling computers such as the cost. This is an issue that is now being addressed. However consideration also has to be given as to how ICT's can contribute by reducing the need to travel, which could have an impact on city transportation related pollution.
- There are many fears among internet users that have to be addressed: Is it safe to buy online? Is it safe to conduct internet banking? How rampant is identity theft? Is big brother watching our every move?

It has to be said that these issues are already being explored by the French Government and a new initiative called 'Mon Service Public' (My public service) will seek to help all users draw up their own profiles, which will be owned and managed by the users themselves, protected by law and held in secure electronic safes under the care of and administered only by their owners. In this way it is hoped that vital personal information will be protected and the user will feel empowered and engage in new technologies to enhance their own quality of life and lifestyles.

This has been a brief summary of one key initiative set up by the French Government. There are many more and they all interlink to add value to the offer each makes. These initiatives are all supported by a range of methodologies which capture and monitor user needs and feedback. They involve much co-operation between government departments as well as input from the private sector. They have the full support and encouragement of the French Government who have enshrined their adoption and administration in a range of laws covering a broad social spectrum. At their heart is the notion of equality and the need for accessibility.

8.7   Germany – Bremen Online

Bremen Online Services (www.bremen.de) is the eGovernment portal of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen. The portal aims to create a virtual 'image' of Bremen and offer citizens, tourists and businesses an attractive electronic platform with information and communication facilities. The portal is to make available to citizens, tourists, businesses and other interested parties in an electronic format all publicly available information about public and private sector institutions, services and events in Bremen and Bremerhaven. The technology underlying the project is a Content Management System (Six CMS) which can be accessed by different thematic 'editors' (administration, events, business, associations, civil society initiatives) in the Bremen state government and bremen.online GmbH (the private business charged with implementing the project) in order to make changes or create new entries. Institutions, businesses, associations, hotels, restaurants, doctors, lawyers and pharmacies can receive a business card enabling them to provide information about their services and their contact details in the relevant sections of the site. The portal currently offers 270 online transaction services to citizens and businesses. Conceived in 1996, the project has been fully operational since 2001, with new services continuously being added. In 2003, bremen.de won the eEurope Award 'The role of eGovernment for European competitiveness'.

The project was conceived in 1996 as a joint undertaking between the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen and the Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science at Bremen University. Supported politically by members of the Bremen parliament, the creation of the resulting city portal was motivated by three main drivers:

- Bremen already had a well-developed system of information and communication with its citizens at the time when the project was conceived. It was therefore assumed that

making this information available online would not only be more efficient for the administration but would also provide value to citizens.

- A young team was in charge who found the Internet exciting and enjoyed doing something new for the administration.
- In 1996, the Bangemann Challenge called on cities across Europe to compete for the best online service, and Bremen decided to submit its city portal as an entry into this competition.

The eGovernment portal of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen is based on the same content management system as its intranet. Both systems will shortly have the same user interface and functionality. The use of the systems is thus made easier and their further development becomes more cost-effective. New requirements, for instance in the area of accessibility, can be implemented more quickly. In future, modules for Bremen's external website and its intranet will be developed and made available by a 'competence centre' within the city's administration jointly with bremen.online GmbH.[180] Overall, due to limited resources and the risks associated with IT investments, Bremen relies on the use of open standards, successful basic components and standard solutions (rather than the in-house development of tailor made products) for the implementatioin of its eGovernment strategy.

From the beginning, bremen.de was conceptualised as an additional service offered by the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen to people in the region. As such, the project has three main target groups: citizens, tourists and businesses. There is no particular focus on any of these groups or sub-groups.

bremen.de achieves citizen centricity with the help of the following measures:

- The creation of 'thematic editors' who view the citizens of Bremen as their customers.
- The content for the site is being produced by the administrative departments of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen themselves (the so-called 'integrative approach') which ensures that content is relevant and accurate. At the same time, staff at bremen.online GmbH are charged with ensuring that this information is easy to understand.
- Information on the site is organised according to 'life situations' (e.g. births, deaths, marriage, moving). This means citizens can access online services depending on their needs.
- The language on the site is simple and easy to understand.
- Efforts were being made to provide public Internet access points so that individuals not owning a computer can access the online services. In addition, multi-platform access is being explored with the help of a project offering some of the sites on Bremen.de in a portable format, ie making them accessible through mobile phones and PDAs.
- The development of the site was supported by members of the Bremen Senate (parliament) as well as a computer science expert at Bremen University, Prof. Dr. Kubicek, who is an expert in organisational theory and specialises in questions relating to the social impact of new technologies.

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[180] http://www.finanzen.bremen.de/sixcms/detail.php?gsid=bremen53.c.1633.de

The main organisational change resulting from the project to date is the creation of the private limited company bremen.online GmbH. This business is owned by the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen and is charged with running bremen.de by providing editorial services and taking care of the commercial exploitation of the portal on behalf of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen. The overall task of bremen.online GmbH is thus to develop Bremen's online presence whilst ensuring that this matches the city's eGovernment strategy and is also in keeping with an 'integrative' offer. To achieve this, bremen.online GmbH carries out three main activities:

- Maintaining and expanding the content of the portal, in particular by providing search functions and content relevant to particular population groups.
- The commercial exploitation of the site through advertising on the first three levels of the site, fees for 'click throughs' and the provision of added value services (such as the development of logos).
- Concluding co-operation agreements to achieve better content on the site.
- Co-ordinating the work of the different editorial departments.

A contract between the city administration and bremen.online GmbH lays down rights and responsibilities of the two parties. Overall, the city's administration keeps a tight rein over all issues on the site relating to the provision of eGovernment, and there is frequent communication between the IT director at the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen and the Managing Director of bremen.online GmbH. For instance, content relating to individual departments is provided by these departments themselves; the editors at bremen.online GmbH are primarily charged with ensuring that the text is easy to read. The city's administration also decides which technology is used to run the site, and has therefore been able to ensure that the CMS of the external website and the city's intranet is the same. A steering committee has recently been put in place to set the priorities for the further development of the site. This comprises representatives of the different departments of the city administration (economics, administration, city marketing). By contrast, bremen.online GmbH has total freedom over those issues that are not related to the online provision of public services, for instance questions of marketing and advertising, but also those parts of the content on the site which relates to services by private providers (for instance the notification of gas and electricity companies in case of a domestic move).

The decision to run the site with the help of a private limited company owned by the city state of Bremen was a result of the end of the dot-com-boom when plans to set up a public-private partnership (PPP) had to be abandoned as private investors were reluctant to commit themselves to what they perceived to be a risky undertaking with uncertain profit margins. Yet, the establishment of a limited company to run bremen.de is now seen as having had a favourable impact on the project as it prevented disputes resulting from different organisations 'owning' different parts of the project (as might have been the case in a PPP). Moreover, the private nature of the delivery organisation means it is able to run and develop services going beyond eGovernment functions with the flexibility and adaptability they require.

In addition to the organisational changes already implemented, the civil service of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen will need to undergo a significant cultural change over the next years. Bremen passed a far-reaching freedom of information act which goes beyond what is being done at federal level and in other regions in Germany. This law foresees that as soon as an administrative procedure is completed, information relating to it is made publicly available (also via Bremen Online Services). As German bureaucracies are traditionally very closed, developing a culture of openness with regard to public information will be a long-term process. This will be kicked off with the help of cross-departmental projects which aim to raise awareness amongst civil servants on the benefits of the new Act.

Bremen Online Services has won national and international recognition for the quality of information it provides and has seen the number of visitors rise significantly since it went live. The site has won a number of national and international awards in the last 10 years (Winner of the city information systems test run by the news magazine Focus in 2000, twice winner of a ranking carried out by the computer magazine Computerbild, winner of the eEurope Award 2003). The site now achieves more than 10 million hits per month. Income from advertising and any other 'added value' services now means that bremen.online GmbH is able to sustain itself financially.

At the same time, some aspects of the project are currently highlighted as requiring more work. For instance, while Bremen.de contains more information and services than most other city portals in Germany, the autonomy of individual departments of the city's administration means that it has not yet been possible to provide complete information about the city's services on bremen.de. In the field of tourism a parallel privately run site to bremen.de has emerged which makes it more difficult for customers to find the information they need. Discussions are currently taking place relating to the integration of the two sites. The events diary experienced technical difficulties and it proved difficult to collate a sufficiently high number of events to fill it for months ahead. Finally, there is less information available on the site for businesses than might be desirable, though a sub-portal focusing on providing information relevant to businesses is in the process of being developed.

The three most important learning points from the project are:

- Using a content management system is essential if a city portal is to be financially feasible and be of a high quality.
- Where individual departments within an administration possess a high degree of autonomy, a decentralised approach to developing the content of a city information portal is desirable as it ensures that the individuality of the departments is safeguarded. However, the information thus provided should be displayed using style templates to ensure that it is searchable and that a uniform graphic identity vis-à-vis the public is maintained.
- Questions of access and accessibility are crucial if the system is to gain broad acceptance in the population. Public Internet access is important to avoid that every

person must own a computer if they want to access the portal. At the same time, the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen also raises awareness of the site by including the hyperlink into any written communication it sends out. Accessibility can be ensured if the language in which the site is written is simple and easy to understand.

8.8   Greece - access2democracy (A2D)

A2G[181] is an NGO, established in 2003, following the successful conclusion of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs 'eVote: Vote for the EU you want' project, that ran during the Greek Presidency of the EU, and which had 190,000 online participants. There was strong high-level political support at a time when Internet access in Greece was only 20%. For example, the then Greek Foreign Minister George Papandreou promised to take the results of the votes to the European Council, which he did. Crucially, there were many resources behind the eVote project, not least because it had high political endorsement and authority, since the Greek Minister of Foreign affairs was also leading the EU presidency in that time.

The access2democracy NGO was created to follow up this work. Christoforos Korakas joined in May 2004 after working in the Greek Ministry of Economy and Finance for the Secretary for Information Society. In Greece there is no specific legal framework for the full deployment of eGovernment, and the National Strategic Reference Framework for 2007-2013 is one of the mechanisms through which th Greek Government is prioritising the eGovernment Strategy.

The project team of access2democracy (now 3-4) are voluntary, and are paid only through the projects they work on. Before becoming a voluntary organisation, they functioned with paid staff of 8-9, but due to the lack of maturity of the eDemocracy issues in Greek society and Government and in combination with problems in management at the beginning, they had to reduce running costs and personnel to keep the NGO alive. In 2006 things started to move on eDemocracy and eParticipation in Greece, following the general EU trends.

A key project is the innovative e-Dialogos project at the Municipality of Trikala[182]. It is funded through the *Politeia* Programme of the Ministry of Interior and the Region of Thessaly, and it is championed by the Mayor of Trikala himself. The project is about providing an innovative and fully fledged eDemocracy methodology and platform for citizens of Trikala to participate in the decision making processes of the Municipality, combining online deliberative and voting processes.

Access2democracy developed the strategy, methodology, the user requirements and specifications while IMC (a Greek IT company that leads the project) developed the

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[181] www.access2democracy.org
[182] http://www.e-trikala.gr/index.php?sel_lang=english   http://www.trikalacity.gr/

web based platform that will host and support the processes. It mainly comprises three tools: a top-down eSurvey system, where municipality can ask citizens to respond to specific issues of interest to the municipality; a bottom-up ePetition system; and, what is termed a deliberative process. The latter is a 'serial process' with several steps embedded in a tight methodology:

- The Mayor and Councillors decide on a pool of potential topics for deliberation (the focus is on topics that have a strategic and long term developmental impact on the Municipality).
- Information is gathered on this pool of topics. The objective is to create short condensed and meaningful insiders documents on each of the proposed issues, written in plain language and a journalistic style, for the information to be accessible to all citizens.
- The pool of suggested issues is put to an online (e-) Vote process where citizens can decide which topics will finally be part of the deliberative process. They are also allowed to add issues they consider important that have not been picked up by the municipality.
- The selected topics are discussed among citizens in professionally moderated (by a journalist) online forums with the participation of the Mayor, civil society, experts etc.
- The codified results of the discussion, lead to the drafting of a detailed and thorough questionnaire (e-Vote) that will record the final position of citizens on the specific issues.
- The results of the online discussion and e-Vote are forwarded to the Municipal Council, which will discuss and decide on these issues in a dedicated session which will be webcasted, with a citizen-envoy collecting and reporting emails and chats sent by citizens injecting their views and questions into the debate at regular intervals.

Citizens must register on the e-Dialogos site in order for them to participate, where they also create their own demographic profile. The demographics will also be used to weigh the results accordingly, balancing the views of over or under represented segments of the population.

The municipality of Trikala offers a fertile environment for such experiments, since it provides its citizens free Internet access for all (Municipal Wireless), and an advanced strategy and wide array of ICT related projects and services for its constituents.

The ICT strategy and projects are championed by the Mayor himself who has built a strong team around him dealing efficiently with ICT challenges and opportunities, utilizing to the maximum opportunities offered through Greek and EU funding programmes. Indeed, the Municipality of Trikala has the biggest list of EU-funded projects than any other municipality in the region and eventually Greece (if taken as a per capita income). This effort leads to Trikala being recognized as the first digital city of Greece. The Mayor is also active in building partnerships with other Mayors across the EU, participating as the first Greek city in the international network of e-

communities (iNEC[183]). The second CISCO academy of Greece[184] (the first being in the capital, Athens) is deployed in Trikala, training among others municipal staff.

New capacity to develop initiatives is being built through channels of opportunity. Another major project is Demosthenes[185]. The Mayor is promoting business process re-engineering, using a hotline for citizen complaints to transform service delivery through the eTrikala desk (telephone, email etc.), where citizens can register a need (such as a streetlamp needing attention), receive a complaint number, and can be called back when the service has been delivered. This produced performance statistics, with the service objectives being to solve a problem in 48 hours – the current performance level was 65%, and the target for 2007/8 is 75-80%.

When the service was launched there were, 1500 communications from citizens in a municipality of 65,000 people in the first few weeks. By installing this hotline and the platform the Mayor capitalised on a feature of Greeks to complain a lot by putting it online and allowing citizens to report faults. This in turn can have emotional benefits especially when combined with quick resolution (48 hours).

The value of this project to the Mayor is great since it enables him to stay in constant touch/dialogue with the citizens of Trikala. The Mayor is also using ICTs to have a top level management information system which would then enable him to take executive action. By having citizens report faults, the Mayor is also saving money by streamlining services. It seems that this policy followed by the Mayor is politically beneficial as well since he has been re-elected for a second term in office by a large margin.

We discussed the strong champion nature of the Trikala initiative. It can work in this manner because the political structure allows a new Mayor to appoint directly employees in a Municipality. Hence organisational change is built into the political process, but local organisational autonomy also allows municipalities to resist change being imposed from the centre.

A new Mayor in effect has a clean sheet to implement organisational change, but this can mean rapid and uncertain changes in organisations and service delivery for citizens – who, it must be admitted, voted in the majority for regime change. During the discussion we discussed whether other municipalities were copying this form of initiative, but some have tried with only limited success. eTrikala therefore sits as a beacon project with high-level political support. Indeed, the Mayor is using his own power to ember ICT-related organisational change.

There is a paradox whereby strong local autonomy can produce projects that deliver significant citizen value, but they run the risk of being islands of excellence in a sea of organisational resistance. At the same time, centrally-imposed strategies can lead to projects not being tuned to local needs.

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[183] http://www.smartcommunity.nl/
[184] http://www.cisco.com/edu/emea/government/partnerships/index.shtml
[185] http://www.e-trikala.gr/modules/smartsection/item.php?itemid=7

The Access2democracy acts as a trusted intermediary and support the whole eDemocracy approach and not just the online forum. In general, they mediate between Government (national/regional/local) and ICT companies to help them understand each other.

Another interesting feature of the Trikala example is the employment model the Mayor is using. Few of the leaders in his team are civil servants linked to their position for life, whereas the opposite generally is the case with municipal employees elsewhere. The upshot of this is that employees are keen to acquire new skills as well as to look for additional funding and projects as they create their own raison-d'etre in the municipal structures.

A key question would be whether this individualistic approach based on the vision of this particular Mayor is more effective that a legislative agenda imposed centrally.

8.9   Greece – Gov2U

The project aims to develop the 'classical representative democratic process', through a citizen and elected official-centric approach to using ICTs. In principle anything an official sees should be visible to citizens (transparency). Democracy enables (or should enable) any level of Government to be transparent and ready to engage the citizen. The model aspires to be citizen-centric and elected-official centric. By creating an evolving platform (Gov2DemOSS[186]) for transparency where the elected official can put info, this eDemocracy model aims to empower the elected official to become more transparent through ICTs, while the citizen can view and assess this info.

It is not based on a generalised freedom of information approach, but on a case-by-case development of good practice. In other words, each Government department has its own approach as regards freedom of information. Hence practice is uneven across government departments since each develops its own policy. There is some engagement with local universities to promote eDemocracy courses, and these are proving popular. Academics also are used as moderators in the online forums (e.g. University of St Thomas, Houston). Other than that there is no formal monitoring of content by the project – they describe the deliberation spaces as being 'wide open'.

The issue of Freedom of Information (FOI) therefore can be contested. National legislation produces resistance at Department levels, so the implementation of legislation can be uneven – albeit being monitored by a regulatory authority if it exists. Ground-level best practice may develop with more unevenness, but could be built on the basis of mutually build codes of behaviour.

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[186] Gov2DemoSS is an open source, generic, informative and collaborative e-participation platform customized by Gov2u.

The inspiration is the Greek 'Agora/Demos' (where if 6,000 citizens gathered then laws could be enacted). The engagement of citizen in the process is validated, because they must provide their national identity details, and these are verified by a local council. Participation can therefore be assessed on the basis of demographics etc. The Gov2U project is also taking part in the eRepresentative project which is a research and development project that will deliver a virtual desktop to support the mobile elected Representative daily activities. The project is co-funded under the IST Programme by the European Commission[187].

The administrative focus for developing applications is still very much based on a local champion. The first application of the Gov2DemOSS platform in Upper Kirby District, in Houston, Texas (USA) where they have built a citizen engagement platform and where the District authorities wanted to be transparent to citizens. In this context, any decision is brought to the citizens, and they can discuss it, vote, open a forum, come to a resolution, etc. They have an online and offline strategy for engagements: they complement the platform with other activities such as publications, seminars, etc because they want to enable people to express view using any channel.

They are working closely with the University of Saint Thomas, Houston which has started a course on eDemocracy which has been filled up. There are three professors involved, one specialising on eDemocracy, another on eGovernment and the third on political science who will be involved in the preparation of question for the online forum as well as in its moderation. People who use the municipality platform have to identify themselves and this is in turn verified by the Council. This in itself is a legitimation process which gives eParticipation greater credibility. The platform serves as a social platform as well, for example where people put photos. They want to engage students from early on; in fact, one of the plans of Gov2U is to engage young citizens in the democratic process will involve the creation of a virtual online eDemocracy game (Fantasy game.)

The project is also starting a campaign in Spain to engage close to 60 municipalities in online deliberation with citizens, and they are also in contact with possible collaborators in Nigeria. In the framework of the Spanish eConsensus project Gov2DemOSS platform is being customized for the use of some 60 municipalities. A single portal will provide access to all 60 municipal sites with common user registry and management, and a single sign-in for all the portals. The portal will serve various entities including city councils, citizens and local associations. It shall also include an e-voting function, as well as a dedicated citizen community space where citizens can create their own space and select different tools for their area.

Gov2DemOSS is also implemented in the Spanish city of Amposta. The platform that is currently under public consultation allows the City of Amposta to create digital communities and interact with its citizens in decision-making processes. They also collaborate with Mexico (8th in the UN Index on eDemocracy), in a project based in

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[187] http://www.erepresentative.org/site/

Monterrey, where there is the use of webcams in the regional Nuevo Leon Congreso plenary meetings, and real-time voting information online.

In Greece which is characterised by low Internet penetration, it has been difficult to find test-beds but they found one in Karditsa which, is not however a very good test bed due to low Internet penetration, but local authorities would like to promote citizen engagement. The project entitled 'Electronic mobilization of NGOs and local authorities in order to promote gender equality in Karditsa' will be implemented in cooperation with the local authorities and the development agency of Karditsa (ANKA SA) and is funded by the Greek Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. It will focus on exploring the potential of ICT in strengthening local initiatives directed at promoting equal opportunity and cooperation between civil society and the local authorities. A customized and dedicated version of our Gov2DemOSS Platform will be created for the project. A series of publications and workshops are also foreseen. They are also developing a platform for the Aghios Stephanos municipality in Attiki, which has a visionary mayor that is acting as the champion for this approach. The importance of having such project champions was also discussed.

They see this as a long-term democratic process, in particular focusing on engaging the voters of the future – young people, although there is a growth in inter-generational learning occurring. Those participating in engagement are positive about the benefits. We discussed objective measures of success, such as re-election rates of local politicians, media coverage, and blogs. Overall 'politics becomes less about doctrine and more about transparent engagement'.

This project further highlights the process of deepening local heterogeneity at a time when national politics often confronts globalisation processes by imposing more homogeneity from the centre[188].

Are we trying to move away from the electronic centre-periphery mechanism of government to a former community-focused form of governance? Telecoms killed distance and allowed the centre to control the local[189] in ways not previously allowed because it took time for information to travel to the centre of an organisation. The Internet now provides a new 'distance' from the centre, by joining up the local in ways that overcomes local frictions of distance. In addition, the regional and local disengages from the centre be 'stealth', wherever it can become different in policy terms for the benefit of the local[190]. As he said, ICTs eliminate physical distance but allow for local embedding, with the local now creating a new distance between itself and the centre

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[188] This also has affects in the other direction. In early 2007 the UK Minister Hazel Blears, supported a local constituency campaign against cuts in local health provision, but was criticised because this brought her into conflict with official government policy that she was obliged to support as a Minister.

[189] STANDAGE, T. (1998) *The Victorian Internet,* London, Wiedenfeld and Nicolson.

[190] For example in the UK, Wales now provides free prescriptions for citizens, whereas they are charged in England: BBC. (2007a). *AMs vote for free prescriptions.* (January 23) BBC, [cited February 1 2007]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/6288663.stm. Scotland is investing centrally in broadband availability: ANON. (2006c). *Scotland puts 5 million funding into broadband roll-out plan.* (December 27) Public Technology, [cited December 30 2006]. http://www.publictechnology.net/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=7245.

Overall, the outcomes of the Gov2U initiatives are longer-term increases in participation of young people in the activities of governance. As such they are the building blocks of future organisational change (through behaviour change) and citizen-centricity.

Another point made was the eDemocracy does not by itself improve the quality of democracy at national level but can do so at local level in the near term. This is important in view of the growing number of regional participation initiatives. Politicians in general try to build national homogeneity (e.g. through national targets), whereas at local level there is a lot of heterogeneity. In the long term the project hopes that National eDemocracy benefits will occur as several connected local authorities constitute a true regional citizen's voice while several regional initiatives connected will compose a National Government.

It was also noted that an eDemocracy project cycle is 10-15 years. This fits uneasily with the normal political cycle of 4-5 years between elections. So a key question is how would political actors be motivated to get actively involved in a project whose benefits would be probably be enjoyed by an opponent? For example, in the Monterey example the previous party wanted to keep the credit for the project. Its successor thought that the system did not follow the legislative requirements as regards majority rule; there was a fundamental lack of trust in the system. However, after they project team educated the new party about the benefits of the system, the new party is now one of its main champions.

The overall aim of the project is to increase transparency, citizen engagement and elected official accountability. Two of their key themes are (i) to educate young people (citizens of tomorrow) and (ii) provide for tomorrow, e.g. by finding local champions to further the aims of the project. As an NGO/technology NGO, they are looking at macro-level change in society,

Asked whether they have observed any change in the behaviour of the elected officials, he could not comment apart from the fact that officials who see the potential of staying in touch with their constituency are very positive about it. They do not have any info on re-election rates. Key questions here would be (i) whether politicians feel that eDemocracy helps them get re-elected; and (ii) does eDemocracy increase participation of young people in the functions of Government. Another area of interest is the e-citizen rights/digital rights of citizens and their freedom of speech. To this end they will engage a specialist on civil liberties to look at these issues of e-citizens and the Internet.

Gov2u also places great importance on knowledge dissemination activities. A workshop was organised during the INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM on the theme of security and specifically on the use of ICT as tools for strengthening the relationship between citizen and Government, and promoting Governmental efficiency and transparency. Gov2u was an official partner in the 2006 World eGov Forum. At

the request of the Forum organizers, Gov2u created an online platform dedicated to eGovernment Representatives from National Agencies, Institutions or International Organizations to facilitate debates and information sharing. The results of the questionnaire were analyzed and presented during the World eGov Forum.
This year Gov2u supports the 2007 Global Forum.

8.10 India – Governance Projects

Professor S Ramnarayam, Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad

Professor Ramnarayan is a faculty member of the ISB (www.isb.edu), and is a Director of Change Management at the Centre for Good Governance, which I visited later in the week.

India is unlike much of Europe, in that there is not an 'entitlement crunch' where an ageing population is to be supported by a declining working age population. The population pyramid is very different, with much of the population being below the age of 25. Furthermore, India uses the term eGovernance, as opposed to eGovernment, reflecting the perspective of the largest democracy in the World. The challenges in India are more about building a larger income base for the Government (a small proportion of the population only pay taxes, since those employed in agriculture are exempt from income tax) to meet the growing demands of economic growth and social development.

We started by discussing where organisational change is enacted most effectively. The role of the 'champion' is significant, and an authority model has been important in making change happen at various levels. We discussed some cases:

The Tiruvarur district of Tamil Nadu championed by the District Collector, C Umashankar, who took the initiative to computerise the land, and other records, for his district, and who then delivered significant service improvements to citizens. The population is 1.1 million, 80% of whom live in rural villages. The services were delivered first through online eGovernance 'camps' which visited areas and where citizens could be provided with services. The case is documented in detail[191], but two key quotes provide insight:

> "*The ownership feeling of the employees was revealed to the Union Ministers Mr.T.R.Baalu and Mr.Raja when they came to Tiruvarur to formally inaugurate the Jamabanthi and Birth and Death Registration software during June 2000. When Mr.T.R.Baalu raised a hypothetical question about discontinuing the software in future, the employees, notably the Village administrative officers*

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[191] UMASHANKAR, C. (2007). *Process Automation based e-governance implementation in core government functioning in Tiruvarur district of TamilNadu. (India).* (January 6) egovernance.worldpress.com, [cited January 22 2007]. http://egovernance.wordpress.com/2007/01/06/india-e-district-process-automation-based-e-governance-implementation/

retorted by saying that they would resort to State wide strike to seeking restoration of the software".[192]

"*In his 14-year experience in the IAS, this writer has found that the lower and middle level bureaucracies are like raw clay. They could be moulded in any shape. They change colours according to their leader. If the leader is honest and efficient, they also try to be honest and efficient. They can reach up to any level of efficiency provided the leader is ready to motivate them. If the leader is corrupt, they all cooperate with him/her*".[193]

Municipal Commissioner for Hyderabad – Sanjay Jagu[194] - A project in the municipality was developed mainly to increase revenues. A component of the project involved monitoring people down the line of responsibility, but when they realised that their success could then be linked to project success, the employees engaged with the project. See the 'Hyderabad First[195]' portal for more details.

The 'Mapping the Neighbourhood[196]' project in 20 schools within Almora district in Uttaranchal, provided schoolchildren with a palm-pilot GIS and map information, so that they could so things such as "*extend their understanding to issues of agriculture and irrigation, health and nutrition*"[197]. The unpredicted outcome of this project, however, involved the children mapping the location of rubbish, and then confronting local politicians to ask why nothing had been done – indeed the children suggested the relocation of rubbish bins.

Three points emerge at this stage

- A change champion, through the very administrative power that a senior manager has, can enable change downwards through the organisation[198]. While there is the inevitable concern that the departure of the change manager can leave, and the project may destabilise, there are circumstances where leadership can rapidly embed a project into the working patterns, particularly:

- A project that requires change can initially start as administratively imposed, but then can have a viral impact – spreading benefits throughout the organisation, and leading to the employees taking ownership of the project, especially where they see the project as providing information transparency that mitigates against

[192] Ibid.
[193] UMASHANKAR, C. (2005). *e-Governance: The key players.* (January) egovonline.net, [cited March 14 2005]. http://www.egovonline.net/jan_feb_05/notebook3.htm
[194] http://www.aspeninstitute.org/site/c.huLWJeMRKpH/b.2249849/k.4779/2006_Fellows.htm
[195] http://www.ourmch.com/
[196] http://www.csdms.in/nm/
[197] CHOWDHARY, S. (2004). *Now, govt involves school kids for mapping neighbourhood.* (October 5) Financial Express (Delhi), [cited October 24 2004]. http://www.financialexpress.com/fe_full_story.php?content_id=70505/
[198] Pragmatism also works. In an interview in 2005 with a champion in the India Revenue Service, he noted that he did not have the authority to change a job description easily, but he could instruct employees to receive training in IT, would "put them on a charge" if they refused, and would then expect them to make use of the training in their jobs.

prejudicial decision making regarding career developments by their line managers and above.

- Ground-level, local projects, with a focus on building educational and knowledge capacity, can empower citizens to request, or require, organisational change in their local service providers.

Indian Railways now uses CONCERT[199] (Country-wide Network of Computerised Enhanced Reservation & Ticketing), which is "*performing reservation for over 8,820,000 seats and berths (peak rush as high as 10,170,000) daily*"[200]. The development of the system dramatically reduced the corruption and uncertainty previously involved in making a train reservation through the human intermediaries. Thus passengers can make a seat reservation knowing that it should not be multiply sold, thus decreasing anxiety when 'consuming' the service.

Process automation can in itself lead to organisational change, particularly where it disintermediates customers from previously unreliable gatekeepers. There is both a decrease in corruption, and a commensurate increase in trust in the actual service itself.

We discussed what now happened to the booking office clerks who historically had sometimes supplemented their wages through bribes. This group clearly did not have the political muscle to block the computerisation process, and could move in one of two directions. Either they could seek other processes where they could intermediate between service and citizens, or could become staff who delivered new value in the organisation. This aspect is worth researching.

The Centre for Good Governance (CGG - see visit details later) was established by the previous Chief Minister for Andra Pradesh (AP). He used the CGG for performance modelling, but there was much manipulation of data to meet targets, and he politicised the process of performance management by holding public videoconferences where people were named and shamed. This led to the CGG initially having a negative reputation since it was seen as part of the process where every department had to produce a performance plan with hard targets. There was no organisational change component in this process. Consequently much organisational learning was lost in the political transition between Chief Ministers of AP.

We then reviewed some of the other key drivers that would bring government employees closer to customers:

- Individuals need to be exposed to alternative perspectives, and to be able to work through them to visualise and identify the benefits. This can be achieved through 'contested learning' (for example, where the Tamil Nadu employees themselves

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[199] http://www.indianrail.gov.in/abconcert.html
[200] JAIN, A. K. & JAIN, S. (2006). *Taking e-Government onto a fast track.* (September) EGov Magazine, [cited September 24 2006]. http://www.egovonline.net/articles/article-details.asp?articleid=782&typ=Cover%20Story

understood the benefits both to citizens and to themselves). This is very different to training as 'conditioning' where the employee is instructed, rather than the employee learns.

- Within an organisation there need to be mechanisms for inter-functional work, particularly through skills mobility. This is different to job mobility. For example, the UK Civil Service employs generalist civil servants who generally have moved jobs every few years – this is process or silo mobility. (Skills mobility was evident in the Revenue Ireland case)

We returned to the hierarchical nature of the India Civil Service, and the fact that its structure has made it resistant to change. In AP services that require some form of 'regime change' (for example data sharing, or merging of silos) have sometimes been outsourced. For example, the sSeva[201] service in Hyderabad allows citizens to go to a commercially provided kiosk in 46 service centres to pay utility and other bills. It provides a fully multi-channel service: Debit / Credit Cards at the website ; e-Seva Counters; AP Online Service Delivery; Citizen Service Centers; Bill Collectors; Mobile Collection Vans visiting localities. Therefore business remediation can be an effective way of delivering public value where the organisational structure of bureaucracy is resistant to change.

The Centre for Good Governance, Hyderabad

The CGG[202] was established in 2001 with funding from DfID[203], UK, and was opened by Tony Blair. Its mission focuses on transforming governance within AP, although it is now being seen as a model for national good governance development[204].

Phase 1 of its operations, 2001-2005, included work on citizen charters, social accountability tools, a health sector strategy document, and hosting a website for a network of social accountability practitioners.

They noted the importance of freedom of information legislation in liberating information for citizens, and indeed also for government agencies. The silo basis of most agencies and processes had previously led to information protectionism even among government agencies. CGG has suggested modifications to the legislation, and is a National Implementation Advisor to the Government of India. In this context they; network with other training institutes to provide capacity building; produce publications and manuals for media and civil society[205]; provide training modules and

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[201] http://esevaonline.com/
[202] www.cgg.gov.in
[203] COMMONS. (2004). *International Development: India.* (June 15) House of Commons, Hansard, [cited February 4 2007]. http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmhansrd/vo040615/text/40615w04.htm
[204] ANON. (2005). *Action plan on good governance: panel stresses need for blueprint* (March 30) The Hindu, [cited February 4 2007]. http://www.hindu.com/2005/03/30/stories/2005033003811100.htm
[205] http://www.cgg.gov.in/CGG%20Information%20Hand%20Book.pdf

courses for Public Information Officers (PIO)[206], and an annual report for the Information Commissioners. They noted also the important role of the India media is promoting access to information, particularly through the highly independent newspapers. However, the biggest use of FOI has been by government employees, not just to obtain information for their work, but also to obtain information relating to promotion and performance so that they can challenge perceived bias or lack of transparency. Therefore where there are strong silos that are resistant to information sharing, employees can themselves become governance activists by using FOI to unlock the silos.

CGG has also focused on behaviour change in organisations with poor reputations for corruption – the police have been regarded by citizens as the most corrupt sector. CGG gave training to the PIOs (2500) in the AP police, over three months, and the outcome has been dramatic. Police officers are reported as generally being more responsive to citizen requests, and CGG report citizen comments such as challenges to other organisations to be as transparent as the police are now. Therefore organisational change can be enacted through subtle training that enables employees to see the value in changing mindsets and work practices. We could term this as 'organic organisational change'.

Phase 2, from 2005, involves building projects for other State Governments. This includes a Strategic Performance Innovation Unit in a range of departments that are involved in taking services to the poor. Service delivery reforms are central to this activity through to 2009.

They are developing an 'eDevelopment cell[207]', inaugurated by the Finance Minister, K. Rosaiah in January 2005, with around 20 tools for Government mostly in G2G areas, with a few G2C activities. I asked about the drivers for the activity. First, there is the aim of reducing the burden of work for government officials when delivering services. I asked then what the officials would do with the time 'released' through the process? This led to the observations that:

- In developing transformed services, the work is going into modes of service delivery that hitherto were not available. Consequently it may be unrealistic to expect an early release of capacity to do 'yet more things for the same money'. Transformed services are 'leap-over' services that deliver more public value, rather than a reduction in organisational size.

- Furthermore, in the last 8-9 years there has been a general freeze in civil service recruitment, so workloads are increasing, and eGovernance projects help to increase service delivery capacity.

They noted that the Indian Civil Service is highly unionised, with significant inbuilt rigidity in employment and work practices, so doing more for the same resource is a

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[206] http://www.digitalopportunity.org/article/view/124992/1/7759
[207] http://www.cgg.gov.in/home_inside_terms.html

pragmatic aim. Doing more for less may be a consideration in the future, and the term used tends to be 'rightsizing', although it is admitted that this will not occur just through natural wastage[208]. They did note that there has been a lot of re-skilling of staff, with some flattening of organisational hierarchies, particularly where staff which were previously responsible for specific paper-based processes, no longer have those tasks as a result of automation[209]. Overall, however, there is structural inflexibility between 'cadres' of civil servants, with promotion usually only within a cadre, and little mobility between them.

A standard management consultancy focus on process automation often does not deliver a wide range of benefits. In the CAG Department (Audit) there has been much computerisation of processes, but the IT consultants employed to develop computerisation had insufficient domain knowledge about the public value aspects that should lead on from process computerisation.

We also talked about what I term 'the choreography of the screen'. I noted that the computers on the desks of CGG staff were to the side of the desk – positioned as a tool – whereas often a computer is positioned centrally on a desk and acts as a form of screen between the staff member and someone sitting opposite[210]. Organisational change therefore involves the physical design of a workplace to make it customer-friendly.

We then covered some of the CGG programmes and the outcomes. eJustice[211] is funded by UNDP. Laws are translated into simple, and local, languages. They are available via a Web kiosk in a way that is accessible to marginalised communities. Self-help womens' groups are trained in the operation of the service, and act as knowledgeable intermediaries. The intermediaries can contact CGG by email to obtain legal clarification.

Uncertain outcomes occur. At the time of the tsunami of January 2005, a man from the fishing village of Veerapattinam, near Pondicherry, who was posted in Singapore surfing a site in Singapore, and saw that it had posted a tsunami warning[212]. He alerted people in the village, who used the public address system to warn residents, and the village suffered no casualties.

Two points emerge:

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[208] TOI. (2002). *VRS may result in recruitment freeze for 5 yrs.* (June 2) Times of India, [cited February 4 2007]. http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/11749248.cms

[209] In a later meeting with Mr L K Joshi (Secretary, Ministry of Personnel) he informed me that a recent training course for senior civil servants was met by hostility from senior managers who did not want to engage with computers. Paradoxically, therefore, the lower to mid levels of the Indian Civil Service may see IT as a means of empowering themselves, and forcing organisational transparency, and we would expect relatively few senior level 'champions' to emerge from such a resistant cadre.

[210] The British TV programme 'Little Britain' parodies this situation with a travel agent positioning the screen in from of the customer, and always replying "Computer says no" to any customer request.

[211] http://www.ejustice.org.in/eJusticeHome.do

[212] TOI. (2005). *Singapore call saves village from tsunami.* (January 4) Times of India, [cited February 4 2007]. http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/980195.cms

- The provision of skills and information (through structured services, access to the Web, and via FOI) develop information asymmetries that allow citizens to unpack the failings of government organisations, and to force behavioural and organisational change in response.

- The same provision can provide the conditions for organisational change within the community, particularly where citizens can access information that is in the common good.

The existing e-Choupal initiative was mentioned as a similar empowering service:

> "*ITC eChoupal is a one-stop-shop on the internet, transmitting Information (weather, prices, news), transferring Knowledge (farm management, risk management), facilitating sales of Farm Inputs & Consumption goods (screened for quality, price) and offering the choice of an alternative Output marketing channel (convenience, lower transaction costs) to the farmer right at his doorstep*"[213].

Through a simple process of accessing market price via a mobile phone a farmer can make an evidence-based decision about transporting goods to a market for sale. Distance, uncertainty, and unnecessary cost are therefore disintermediated.

The CGG School Score Card project[214]. This started out as a management tool for the 22,000 villages in AP, the 4-5 schools in each village, and the 300,000 teachers. Information in the geographical information system (GIS) database includes school infrastructure, teacher availability (qualifications, experience etc.), and teaching resources. Teachers have to enter information, and have it verified, before they receive a component of salary. However, they also have verification access to their own data. What started as a management tool has (like the Tamil Nadu application of Umashankar) become an empowering tool for teachers. They now champion the system because it forces transparency in job appointments and promotions.

By giving citizens and employees transparent access to information, and by not restricting them to a specific use of the information, they can stimulate improvements in the quality of governance through their unexpected uses of an application.

The INSTAXX[215] project (Instant Alert Network) is a state-wide system of communication using multiple channels including SMS, fax, and email[216]. Every District Collector[217] is now mandated to use this service.

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[213] STOCKHOLM. (2006). *Stockholm Challenge.* (July) Stockholm Challenge, [cited August 2 2006]. http://stockholmchallenge.se/projectdata.asp?id=4&projectid=366

[214] PRASANNA, M. G. B. (2006). *School Score Card: A Performance Monitoring System for Schools in India.* (October) Digital Learning India, [cited February 4 2007]. http://www.digitallearning.in/octmag06/perspective.asp

[215] http://59.145.112.212/instaxx/

[216] GEETANATH, V. (2005). *National status likely for Centre for Good Governance.* (February 16) The Hindu, [cited February 4 2007]. http://www.hindu.com/2005/02/16/stories/2005021607490400.htm

[217] In a later meeting with SPEG there was a discussion about how to change the now anachronistic job titles of civil servants. A District Collector was a term used by the British Raj for someone who collected local

The Society for Promotion of e-Governance (SPEG)

SPEG[218] is a non profit society registered with Government of India that works as a think tank and mission mode organization to accelerate the adoption of ICT and new media for promoting good e-Governance initiatives in South Asia. The organization does research studies, training programs and international workshops to enable the sharing of learning practices among the stakeholders. We discussed the current state of developments in the domain of e-Governance in India with Mr. Vikas Kanungo, The Chairman and Secretary General of the organization.

The e-Governance initiatives in India are steered through national e-Governance Plan[219] (NeGP) that is being conceptualised to be implemented through centralized planning and monitoring while allowing decentralized implementation given the diversity and geographic spread of the country. The discussion brought out that compared to the earlier orientation of government departments on computerization of existing systems and the implementation in an ongoing operations basis, the focus in NeGP is towards:

- Mission Mode approach: i.e. working in the project-oriented mode and having clearly defined start and end dates for each of the Mission Mode Projects. There are 27 mission mode projects in India's NEGP segregated into Central Mission Mode Projects, State Mission Mode Projects and Integrated Projects).
- Clear focus on service levels rather than the technologies in the e-Governance initiatives under NeGP.
- Implementation of the projects through PPP (Public/Private Partnership) models instead of outsourcing models. The aim is to ensure the sustainability of the projects and also to benefit from the business process knowledge of the private partners. The payment for most of the projects to the private player is based upon per transaction basis rather than the Hardware/Software cost.
- Clearly defined and stringent service level agreements between the government agencies and the private partners for ensuring the quality of service to the citizens.
- Emphasis on the capacity building of the government agencies for implementing and monitoring e-Governance initiatives. The Planning Commission has made a special provision in the budget where any government agency can ask for funding for capacity building if required even if the fund is not allocated in the annual budget for the respective agency.

Other approaches that are under active discussion among the government as well as civil society organizations include building the capacity of the media to understand the eGovernance issues, to change the bureaucratic structures (such as the renaming of anachronistic titles such as District Collector), and moving to performance-related promotions of the civil servants as opposed to the seniority related promotions. All of these activities are aiming to confront entrenched power positions. As one of the latest

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revenue. Some DCs now show clearly that they are local governance providers, and a better term would help to formalise the organic organisational change that they already have enacted.
[218] http://www.egovindia.org
[219] http://www.mit.gov.in/actionplan/about.asp

developments, selected public servants have been made to undergo a course in e-Government from JFK centre of e-Governance from USA and will be evaluated based upon the results of the exam they take up after the course.

In order to ensure the delivery of services to rural areas and to the citizens who do not have access to computers, Common Service Centres[220] (CSC) are being established at village level. It is planned that by the end of 2007, 100,000 such centres will become operational. The CSCs will be created and run in a PPP model with Village entrepreneurs who are guaranteed 30% funding from Government services , and they have the freedom to provide value add services for rest of the revenue. The investment is recovered through the provision of value-added services such as IT training, selling and recharging phone cards and phones. Therefore there is a vested interest in them making the CSC the service of choice for citizens, using marketing 'stickiness' (encouraging customers to return) rather than simple compulsion to use a service.

Organisational change is in part driven by funding requirements. Government lacks the resource to provide the required services, and therefore partnering with the private sector forces organisational change through the bilateral relationship.

In addition to the e-Government a 'Public Services Reforms Commission[221]' is mandated by the Prime Minister. Members[222] include representatives from the Public Services Commission (PSC) as well as private sector members. The influence of the big consultancies in Indian eGovernment is less evident in the context of process automation and organisational change. They recognise the major challenges involved in changing the bureaucracy, and consequently promote more attention on service delivery and quality. Change management is not promoted by the consulting agencies as per the management books but is customised to be a gradual process as per the priorities and thinking of the government. It was communicated that though there are many multinational consulting agencies working with the government, PWC is the most prominent in e-Governance consulting.

- The overall picture at the national level is that subtle and indirect organisational change will happen through the implementation of project and services and capacity building in a gradual manner

- Consequently there needs to be a clearer focus on public value concepts. Change will be enacted through the focus on public value[223].

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[220] http://www.mit.gov.in/cscguidelines.pdf
[221] http://arc.gov.in/
[222] http://arc.gov.in/mem.htm
[223] It should be acknowledged that much organisational change in Europe is event-led anyway, sometimes through political crises. In January 2007 the UK Home Office was split into two organisations following scandals over the credibility of its statistics and its performance in fighting crime and terrorism.
KABLENET. (2007c). *Home Office to be split.* (January 22) Kable Government Computing, [cited January 22 2007].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/106892D5C24A1E278025726B003D8434?OpenDocument

Government policy is not to mandate that only public sector information is used by government, but there currently is little institutional capacity to utilise private sector data, and there is a general lack of private sector data on a wide enough geographical scale[224]. In addition, while government agencies do not have to turn to the National Informatics Centre[225] (NIC) for advice and support, the NIC has a strong legacy presence, and is still very influential.

8.11 Dubai Municipal Authority

The eGovernment portal is advanced[226]. Even back in 2001 Dubai had an advanced portal with well developed service provision[227], and in 2005 the acting eServices Director was quoted as stating "*from 2005 to 2007, the focus will increasingly shift to the end-user as, by that date, we envisage the total level of online service use to be at least 50 percent", and that the overall goal is to offer 90 percent of government services online*[228].

Dubai currently has 470 services to citizens, of which 90% are now online[229]. These are often complex systems, with 25,000,000 transactions a year undertaken using them. Service re-design was undertaken from the outset, through a process of surveying service provision and need, classifying services, re-engineering them and then automating them. eGovernment has led to a change in the business environment of Dubai (more effective consumption of services), to a strengthening of trust in ePayment, and to a focus on building use of the services through a combination of encouragement and obligation.

Current priorities are: generate cost savings; generate efficiency gains; and generate efficient business growth for Dubai. The G2B services have been complex and costly to construct, and there is now discussion about introducing charges for service use – businesses benefit from speed, quality, and accuracy of these services. This will be part of 'Project Zero' where there is total use of eGovernment services by citizens and businesses. There is considerable interest now in benchmarking services, and in assessing the cost-benefits and return on investment. We discussed some of the approaches taken in Europe, and in the emphasis now being placed on measuring and assessing 'public value'.

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[224] This is largely due to the lack of available national map information for commercial use, and security restrictions on private sector companies being able to fly their own aerial surveys. Consequently, there is both a lack of official and unofficial geographic information that could underpin many eGovernment applications.

[225] http://home.nic.in/

[226] http://egov.dubai.ae/

[227] DUBAI. (2001). *E-government Services.* (December 26) Government of Dubai, [cited December 26 2001]. http://portal.dubai-e.gov.ae

[228] LEATHAM, S. (2005). *Global e-government 30 March.* (March 30) Electricnews.net, [cited April 10 2005]. http://www.enn.ie/news.html?code=9596313

[229] The vision statement is "Ease the lives of people and businesses interacting with the Government and contribute in establishing Dubai as a leading economic hub".

Organisational change has been fundamental to the move to Project Zero. Dubai could perhaps be compared and contrasted to Singapore, where the government has both the benefits of scale (relatively small population and territory), and a clear directed strategy that has identified where legacy issues can be overcome.

8.12 Ireland – Planning Portals

Simple to use, intuitive, and citizen-centred services can be delivered using interfaces to GIS[230]. These applications provide people with a quick overview of likely planning issues should they with to develop some land. The organisations themselves are not so much re-organised, since Compass Informatics developed the applications, albeit in conjunction with the client authorities. However, the cost savings within the organisation can be significant if the use of the applications screens out proposals that may be problematic.

http://www.mayococo.ie/en/Planning/ToolsReference/SSPS/
Mayo County Council: Self Service PrePlanning System (SSPS)
http://www.donegal.ie/gplan_donegalssps/
Donegal County Council Pre-Planning Site Information

Extracts from the sites follow, and show the intuitive nature of the service:

"You can now draw your proposed development site boundary on our system and receive an instant report about Council and government policies which might impact on your proposed development".

"Draw your site boundary by clicking at the corners of your proposed site using your mouse. To "close" your boundary outline (i.e. to close your boundary at your starting point) click the RIGHT MOUSE BUTTON".

"When your report is generated, you may notice that some teal lines and circles appear near your site. These are the buffers for the various objects that have been highlighted in your report (e.g. monuments, roads, townlands, etc.). Recent planning application numbers from the area are shown. These are listed as part of your report. You may wish to look up these applications online and see what types of applications have been granted and refused in your area".

"The report links to the relevant sections from the County Development Plan. Some items which appear in your report are too complex to include the full text about them as part of the report. For your convenience, we have linked to the relevant sections of the County Development Plan so you can easily access the full information about these items without reading the whole document. Each of these sections is also linked

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[230] www.compass.ie/

to a full copy of the County Development Plan for easy access to the complete document".

The services allow citizens to rapidly pre-test the potential feasibility of their own development intentions. They provide citizens with clear information about possible restrictions and problems, leading potentially to more informed discussions with local government planning officials.

8.13 Ireland – Revenue Online

To date the customer service was aimed at businesses – some 500,000 - 22 taxes and duties can be filed online. Now individual taxpayers also are targeted, with another 2,500,000 potential customers being encouraged to start 'self-serving' their tax transactions.

A multi-channel approach is taken for these new customers: Internet, touch-tone phone, text message etc. Each customer has a unique PIN. Considerable use of the service is made by tax practitioners – so intermediaries are important in this process. The intermediaries were important in convincing customers of the benefits of online submission, for example the Irish Society of the Motor Industry promoted the service to its members. ROS Liaison Officers are part of the marketing campaign, and are based in each office to promote online use within the local areas.

The online service is fully automated, with rapid automatic responses relating for example to rebates (the phrase used is 'efiling not efilling'). Repayments of up to €5,000 are made automatically. A 'peace of mind' confirmation is sent once tax information is filed, and the information is sent back into the customer ROS inbox as double confirmation. For companies it is possible to set levels of access for people within their organisation. Customers can look at their account details over the last seven years. Monthly use of the service currently is about 490,000 accesses. About 70% of business returns are now processed online.

Revenue online initially was created as a customer service, but subsequently the reduction in the need for staff interaction with clients allowed organisational restructuring to take place. There have not been staff job-losses (the overall staff complement remains about 6300-6500 employees), an issue described as an important 'comfort factor' when they are dealing with workplace changes. However, there is an expectation that staff will become broader in their skills and be able to move roles within Revenue . It also was acknowledged that this process allowed important organisational knowledge to be retained, although there is some labour flexibility through the combination of core employees, and contract and agency staff (particularly temporary staff to deal with workload peaks November, January and February). In the past, when there was no use of temporary staff, the paper processing of tax claims resulted in an overtime approach to 'paper mountains', and also led to periods of overcapacity.

Therefore the successful customer service led to the opportunity to make organisational change. Some staff moved to build up help-desk activities. Online communication is an area where email contact levels and response rates can be demanding.

There now is a consideration of office restructuring and relocation (although the relocation agenda is government-wide and not directly stimulated by the success of this service). The staffing structure has moved from silo-based activities to a fully integrated approach to case management. Fewer employees are needed to process forms, allowing them to focus activities on risk assessment by analysing information, audit and compliance (it is expected that 30% of staff currently on customer service tasks will be able to move to compliance by the end of 2007). There has been a need to increase focus on training, for example in general awareness of the online service throughout ROS, so that customers are pointed effectively towards use of online filing.

Technically there were challenges dealing with the legacy IT systems within the Agency, and they now use real-time link technology. Furthermore, the Agency has needed to extend its IT remit beyond the historical silos, to be sensitive to the systems used by major customers. For example, there was liaison with third party payroll software vendors to ensure that their systems interfaced well with ROS.

There is an organic approach to organisational change. Once the service is fully utilised it will be possible both to move staff to other activities, and also to identify tax miscreants. Organisational benefits thus include the freeing up of resources, reduction in time spent on compliant customers, efficient filing of information (no more lost files), and direct cost savings (postage, stationary, administrative time to process a 24 page tax return etc.).

There is acknowledgment that behaviour changes are needed in customers to encourage many to go online. Early users tend to be those people who know, or expect, that they will be given a refund. It is important to unpack the customer fear that the experience may lead to a hostile tax ruling. Furthermore, a goal of ROS is to move online customer who may be frequent or time-consuming callers, not just those who are already competent at dealing with their tax affairs.

Issues which go beyond organisational change relate to public value. Once the majority of citizens comply, and the tax payments increase, how will the revenue be translated into public value?

8.14 Netherlands – eCitizen Programme

The e-Citizen Charter[231] is the first integrated approach to combining the rights, obligations, and roles of citizenship in relation to governance in the Netherlands. See the full document[232] that expands on the following core principles:

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[231] http://www.burger.overheid.nl/service_menu/english

Choice of Channel

> *As a citizen I can choose myself in which way to deal with government. Government ensures multi channel service delivery, i.e. the availability of all communication channels: visit, letter, phone, e-mail, and internet.*

Transparent Public Sector

> *As a citizen I know where to apply for official information and public services. Government guaranties one-stop-shop service delivery and acts as one seamless entity with no wrong doors.*

Overview of Rights and Duties

> *As a citizen I know which services I am entitled to under which conditions. Government ensures that my rights and duties are at all times transparent.*

Personalised Information

> *As a citizen I am entitled to information that is complete, up to date and consistent. Government supplies appropriate information tailored to my needs.*

Convenient Services

> *As a citizen I can choose to provide personal data once and to be served in a proactive way. Government makes clear what records it keeps about me and does not use data without my consent.*

Comprehensive Procedures

> *As a citizen I can easily get to know how government works and monitor progress. Government keeps me informed of procedures I am involved in by way of tracking and tracing.*

Trust and Reliability

> *As a citizen I presume government to be electronically competent. Government guarantees secure identity management and reliable storage of electronic documents.*

Considerate Administration

> *As a citizen I can file ideas for improvement and lodge complaints. Government compensates mistakes and uses feedback information to improve its products and procedures.*

Accountability and Benchmarking

> *As a citizen I am able to compare, check and measure government outcome. Government actively supplies benchmark information about its performance.*

Engagement and Empowerment

> *As a citizen I am invited to participate in decision making and to promote my interests. Government supports empowerment and ensures that the necessary information and instruments are available.*

Matt had participated in the Athens Workshop, where he talked about the eCitizen Programme. The key points, and the discussion points that arose, follow the next section which summarises the subsequent discussions held in The Hague on April 5th.

The Programme has fundamental starting points. It is a body that is independent of the government agencies that are being monitored. The Steering Committee has

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[232] http://www.burger.overheid.nl/files/burgerservicecode_uk.doc

representation from all stakeholders. To say what is right or wrong about services requires a statement of principles, and therefore obligations are as central as rights. For example, if you have a right not to be disturbed by noise in your home, you also have an obligation not to inflict noise on your neighbours.

Trust is central to the building of services and the use of services[233]. This is very important in areas such as digital signatures and identity cards. The Netherlands OV public transport chip-card[234] is a particular example of this, where concerns over privacy are balanced by the utility and flexibility (in particular time saved purchasing individual tickets for journeys, and a guarantee that the lowest fare will be charged for your journey) that the card gives a user. This is similar to the London Oyster Card[235], where there is an 'over the counter' version that does not need any personal identification, and a second version where personal details are registered, although it should be acknowledged that the London Oyster card now involves a strong element of compulsion, since cash fares were raised to punitive levels to force more people to use Oyster, which is now the only way of travelling cheaply. This shows the uncertainty that involves integrated personal information in a travel context, since what starts out as an option can become a compulsion. This then becomes a form of channel management, and a similar process occurs now with the Netherlands Railways. To purchase a ticket from the automatic machines the payment method[236] must be one of:

- The NS ticket vending machine with touch screen accepts the Dutch 'PIN' pas (cash card) and the international cash card with the Maestro logo.
- Wizzl or Kiosk outlets take the Dutch 'PIN' pas, cash, but not credit cards.
- NS ticket offices on larger stations take cash, Dutch 'PIN' pas and the international cash card with the Maestro logo, but not credit cards
- On larger stations there is normally a GWK bank where you can withdraw cash, exchange currencies, and cash in travellers' cheques. GWK also has cash machines which allow withdrawals on credit cards and international bank passes.

Consequently, those without these forms of payment (and the machines accept only Euro coins, not notes) must go to a booking office (where one is available!) and pay a 1.5 euro supplement for the 'human' booking process[237].

There now is the challenge whereby the statement of principles and obligations, and the reinforcing of the relationship between citizens and government, is translated consistently into outcomes that deliver public value. Clearly this may not be something that is quantifiable in terms of cause and effect (the project has been central in assessing the

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[233] We discussed the different levels of trust in EU states. In the Netherlands there is genera distrust in central government, whereas Scandanavian states experience high levels of trust in government, and so can integrate and share information more readily without serious levels of concern over privacy.
[234] http://www.ov-chipkaart.nl/
[235] https://sales.oystercard.com/oyster/lul/entry.do
[236]

http://www.ns.nl/servlet/Satellite?cid=1083234338230&pagename=www.ns.nl%2FPage%2FArtikelPage_www.ns.nl&lang=en&c=Page
[237] Channel management also leads to selective 'resistance'. When Mike booked a ticket at The Hague station, the booking agent waived the 1.5 euro fee because he mentioned that the automatic machines did not take his international credit cards.

citizen-orientation of Dutch eGovernment services through awards etc.) , and in April 2007 the eCitizen site noted[238]:

> "*The new Dutch Cabinet starts a consultation round to get feedback from citizens about improving government performance. To this end a special website[239] was created. The e-Citizen Programme is invited to adopt the discussion on public service delivery.*"

8.15 Netherlands – Cadastre, Land Registry and Mapping Agency (Kadaster)

The Kadaster[240] "*collects information about registered properties in the Netherlands, records them in public registers and in cadastral maps and makes this information available to members of the public, companies and other interested parties in society*".

Founded in 1832, the Kadaster has been a 'Self-Administering State Body' since 1994. The term for this also is 'Autonomous Agency' or ZBO 'Zelfstandig Bestuursorgaan'. The Kadaster was a winner of an eEurope Award in 2005[241].

Over recent years investment in IT has resulted in efficiency gains that have been passed onto customers in the form of reduced tariffs: 2004 was a reduction of 4%, 2005 and 2006 were 10% each, meaning that tariffs reduced nearly one quarter over the three year period. Both Kadaster and RDW (also interviewed) have delivered cost reductions to customers.

Kadaster collects both topographic and cadastral information, and has a legal obligation to produce maps for defence and public agencies. As the key register in the Netherlands all public bodies must use their data as base data. Information is made available at a price, and the Kadaster uses CRM as a key component in developing pricing and dissemination policies.

Like many national mapping agencies that charge for their services the Kadaster is aware of the emotions involved when customers pay for government information. The debates about freeing up information, and making information free, are particularly evident with the INSPIRE initiative[242]. Kadaster is considering providing base information free of charge to other public bodies, with priced add-ons

The major organisational changes have come since Agency status was granted in 1994. The first 10 years involved cost-cutting, raising income while reducing prices (and making the pricing policy open and transparent), and developing a business approach to

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[238] http://www.burger.overheid.nl/service_menu/english/doing_right_now
[239] http://www.samenwerkenaannederland.nl/overheid
[240] http://www.kadaster.nl/english/
[241] http://www.eipa.eu/eEurope_Awards/Winners_eGov2005.pdf
[242] Roger Longhorn and Michael Blakemore explored these debates in a paper in the Journal of Digital Information http://jodi.tamu.edu/Articles/v04/i02/Longhorn/

customers. Financial flexibility has been provided because Kadaster no longer operates within traditional civil service budgets of yearly budgets and 'revolving funds'[243], and one third of a yearly balance can now be kept as a strategic reserve. Kadaster has a 'business-like' financial structure.

The governance structure includes a Supervisory Board and a formalised governance relationship to the Ministry, where the Ministry is a key stakeholder. There is a Customer Advisory Council with a presence from every strategic customer, and this Council is able, for example, to discuss prices/tariffs and comments on the Annual Report before it is finalised by the Minister.

Kadaster performs tasks allowed by law. Besides the traditional tasks for Land Registration, Land Surveying and Mapping a new kind of tasks will be performed from 2007 on. The new tasks can be seen as operation of a National Centre for Geoinformation, which is a strategic hub for geospatial information. It is introducing nationwide information delivery of municipal key registers like addresses and buildings. The Kadaster is also introducing new data domains relating to underground cables. They also are creating new projects such as digitising land registry archives (175 years of data since 1832). There may be uncertain benefits from this project, since legal rights going back 175 years may be uncovered.

The Electronic delivery of Deeds service, utilising digital signatures, has seen 90% now delivered online after only 7 months of operation. The process speeds up the payment of money – but an unintended consequence is that the lawyers now have money for less time in escrow accounts, and this is at the same time as prices are being forced down. With the Kadaster Online service, every citizen is able to access this service at a price of €1.40. Real Estate agents and Notaries still remain the vast majority of customers, but as citizens access directly there is a potentially negative financial impact on estate agents.

99% of Kadaster business is now conducted over the Internet, and eight of their branch offices are being closed, leaving six remaining in operation. While there is organisational change in terms of locations and outlets, there are challenges relating to staff structure. The average age of staff in Kadaster is over 50 years, and the average employee has been with Kadaster for 28 years. In the end (by 2010) there will be a decline of several hundred employee numbers from the 2004-2005 base. Since 2004 there is a decline of 200 employees out of a total of 2200.

With more business being undertaken online it is logical to plan for fewer staff. Labour laws restrict what Kadaster can do in terms of compulsory retraining, for example re-retraining traditional surveyors. Therefore they rely mainly on natural wastage, and there are significant challenges in matching skills to organisational needs. New recruits are selected on competences rather than expertise. In 2005 the started to cooperate with schools and Universities to promote courses that would deliver modern GIS-skilled

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[243] Revolving funds have featured strongly in traditional civil service structures. Any income received by a Department is not kept, but is sent to the Treasury – hence the revolving door analogy. This process damages any process of developing markets, since resources are diverted in the Department to develop a service, and the income received is not then used to offset those costs.

surveyors. Despite the steep decline of staff there is as structural inflow of new employees planned to obtain a healthy balanced workforce (age, gender, skills).

Kadaster did consider the cost benefits of making people redundant, but under labour laws this would have cost over €100million. However, they have not left a status-quo situation. Every person in Kadaster is being interviewed about goals and competencies and the need to go through change and job mobility programmes. This process allows organisational change to occur but with a business focus on the dignity of employees. Some people may develop particular skills relevant to new projects such as digitising the Archives.

It may be the case that some employees are not able or willing to change, and that redundancies may occur, (and Kadaster will help people to find new jobs) but the organisation is focused on retaining knowledge and developing skills rather than just dispensing with a target number of people. The first redundancies were being announced in April, so there is naturally going to be some tension during the transitional period. The labour Unions have signed up to this process, which started in 2005 and has a five year timetable.

We could consider this process as being 'Public Value Re-Structuring'?

8.16 Netherlands – Rabobank

Rabobank describes itself as[244]:

> "*Rabobank Group is a full-range financial services provider that operates on cooperative principles. Its origins lie in the local loan cooperatives that were founded in the Netherlands nearly 110 years ago by enterprising people who had virtually no access to the capital market.*
> *The Rabobank Group comprises 218 independent local cooperative Rabobanks in the Netherlands plus their central organisation Rabobank Nederland and its subsidiaries. Rabobank serves more than 9 million private individuals and corporate clients in the Netherlands and a growing number abroad. It employs over 50,000 staff and is represented in 38 countries*".

It places a strong emphasis on corporate social responsibility[245]. The project we discussed is 'Building Digital Communities'[246].

Rabobank was established as a farmers' bank, and still has a mutual and cooperative structure – customers are the shareholders, and local bank directors are selected by

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[244] http://www.rabobank.com/content/about_us/
[245] http://www.rabobank.com/content/about_us/corporate_social_responsibility/
[246] For an overview of the activities in Neunen, Netherlands, see http://www.3-c.coop/news/3-c-news23.html

local members of the bank. The equity of the bank is mutually owned by the members/customers.

The social model has prevailed in the bank's strategy[247]. In addition the bank is looking for new areas of business, because there is less money to be made on the low-level banking transactions and simple products (these may be loss-making due to competition forces), so the emphasis is on generating revenues from activities such as special loans, mortgages, and new business activities. Hence this focus on community building and sustainability meets both the social and commercial objectives of the bank.

They are focusing on the community of Neunen (in the Eindhoven area), where high-speed fibre has been provided into every home[248] - 100 megabits speed (symetrical). One of the applications provided is a 'digital health check', a facility that was available from one of their project partners Achmea[249]. Achmea made the 'Health' facility available some five years ago as an extra benefit for insured customers, with a quick check of 5-6 key health items. They made facilities available such as health clubs, or promoted health food and lifestyle. In Nuenen they now give advice to citizens via video online, and can connect citizens to dieticians and advisors.

We discussed whether this sort of activity should have a positive reinforcement, such as reduced premium. This then linked to a discussion of the new payments to the Dutch health system[250], where from January 2006 the provision is via private facilities, and the private companies cannot discriminate against any citizen – all must be accepted into a scheme where there is a payment of about €100 a month. The policy states:

> "*In the Netherlands, everyone who pays health insurance premiums is now entitled to a rebate of up to 255 euros if no claim is made during the preceding year. The scheme is known as the 'no-claim rebate rule'*".

However, Dr Smeulders observed that there had been unexpected behaviour changes. Some people with severe illness did not go to a doctor, gained a rebate, but then presented with more extreme illness that costs the health system more in resources and treatment. However, the rebate is not affected by visits to a doctor, or for pregnancy. Nevertheless, the rebate policy is being reviewed. In the context of the Achmea approach the better policy may be to argue that people 'feel better'. Furthermore, the rebate policy may be a further form of discrimination against people with illness that is not self-inflicted. This area of the emotional consumption of a

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[247] Interestingly, the April 2007 issue of the KLM in-flight magazine (Holland Herald) has a focus on 'new', and notes that marketing specialises see a move towards ethical consumption, information anxiety and business. Out go conspicuous consumption, mass market and status symbols. In come conscientious consumption, local, customised, lifestyle status, and moral status anxiety. Therefore we may be seeing a paradoxical shift: as government is trying to be more like 'business', business sees value in becoming more focused on 'social governance'.

[248] http://www.onsnet.tv/

[249] http://www.achmea.nl/bv/portal/ep/home.do

[250] http://www.minvws.nl/en/themes/health-insurance-system/default.asp

complex service involves a central debate on the policy of 'mutual support' but citizens and community. The project is aware that uncertain outcomes may arise from such emotion-laden projects, for example pressure from 'active and fit' citizens towards those seen to be failing in maintaining healthy lifestyles.

There is a clear acknowledgement of 'emotion' and service delivery in the Rabobank project. The focus on TV and video, as well as the Internet, allows contact with 'real people'. Rabobank 'Advisors' are real people who can provide video advice for private banking[251]. Only 1% of all contact with the bank is now non-digital, but that still is 5-6 million calls a year. They also will maintain physical outlets, with local banks being important. They are adding emotion to the Web site with movies (explaining for example how ATMs work), and are sponsoring the national cycle club[252]. The bank therefore focuses strongly on openness and transparency of practice, and is delivering value to communities.

Other developments include the 'Window on Nuenen' for elderly people in care homes. A screen, which looks like a window, displays activities in the market place where a camera has been installed. They have engaged specialists to assess the impact on the residents. With Philips they are developing a virtual fitness assistant. This will use smart textiles for monitoring the health of elderly people. The avatar will be displayed on a smart screen that functions as a mirror when it is not being displayed. Advice will be given via the avatar. They are considering also linking to real people to give advice – for example using the sponsorship of the cycle club to provide direct access to some of the national cyclists.

The project in Nuenen was originally part of a Government 'knowledge neighbourhood' project in Eindhoven that ran into problems – too many Government agency stakeholders at too many levels, and the wrong timescales. Nuenen is a relatively wealthy community, where 96% of residents signed up to requesting high-speed fibre. The digital package costs €59 a month, and includes TV,VOIP telecoms, and Internet access. After the establishment of the fibre there was a significant increase in the purchase of home wireless networks and PCs. Therefore there is business benefit in local ICT businesses supporting the establishment of local networks. Training courses are available, focused in particular at elderly people and other potentially excluded groups.

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[251] We discussed the uncertain developments that could occur – for example automatic scanning of body language and eye movements to detect unethical behaviour by customers. The response is that the bank would be open and transparent should any such practices be introduced.
[252] http://www.rabobank.nl/particulieren/sponsoring/wielrennen/cycling_news/

8.17 Netherlands – RDW

The Department of Road Transport, RDW[253], is the national vehicle authority responsible for the safety and environmental aspects of the vehicle fleet in the Netherlands. In addition, the RDW registers the data of vehicles, their owners and the corresponding documents issued, such as vehicle registration certificates and driving licences. The RDW also provides information in this context to both domestic and foreign authorities. With its specialised knowledge, it advises interested parties, meets at EU and ECE level, plays a central role in international information exchange, and cooperates in combating fraud, crime and terrorism. Key functions are:

- ADMISSION: admitting vehicles and vehicle components to the Dutch and European market on the basis of technical regulations.
- SUPERVISION AND CONTROL: supervising companies certified by the RDW and controlling the technical state of vehicles in connection with safety and environmental requirements.
- REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION PROVISION: gathering, storing, updating and managing data about vehicles, their owners and vehicle documentation, and providing information about this data.
- DOCUMENT ISSUE: issuing documents related to vehicles, their owners or keepers.

RDW was established in 1949. Mr Hakkenberg joined in 1995, and RDW was re-established as an independent government agency in 1996. Prior to agency status RDW was a small part of the Ministry of Transport and Water Management, having only 8% of all employees in that Ministry. The general culture of the organisation was one of inward focus with the operation of a monopoly service that is compulsory for vehicle drivers and owners. There were no strategic goals that could have provided a focus for staff in achieving excellence

Agency status led to a big change in emphasis. Independence in budget, and strategic autonomy have been major enablers for culture change. The focus moved to service objectives that are independent of politics within the Ministry. RDW could now start to understand its own performance – there was a move from focusing on inputs (staff and allocated budget) to outputs (service quality, income levels etc.) Prior to agency status there was little understanding of how the inputs caused delays – for example it took 4 hours of staff time to process the records for importing a car, yet the elapsed time for the process was around 49 days.

Now there are key performance indicators (see the Annual Report link at the top), service quality is benchmarked, and there is a 'Council of Clients' to inform RDW of service needs and use.

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[253] (http://www.rdw.nl/nl/voertuigeigenaar/) (see also
http://www.rdw.nl/nl/overrdw/informatie_over_de_rdw/jaarverslagen/ for Annual Reports and Performance Information)

The change to independent agency status was viewed differently by the employees. About one third were enthusiastic about becoming customer-facing (even at the start knowing that facing long-dissatisfied customers would be difficult), about one-third questioned the need to change working practices[254], and other argued for example that the main need for change was in management. However, the majority in the end accepted the need for change – after consultation it was apparent that some resistance was the result not of unwillingness to change, but of mixed and confusing messages being heard by employees.

With independence came responsibility – if the service fails then jobs will be lost, so there was an incentive to address service quality with a sense of urgency. The main processes to achieve culture change involved:

- Overcoming islands of information and practice, involving managers becoming responsible for tasks and outputs, not inputs and processes, and emphasising cooperation; a strong customer focus; and, a focus on results and achievements.
- Competency management is in place, and there is a lot of on-the-job training.
- A change programme was provided for the 80 middle managers, and quality models have been adopted. Most middle managers were recruited from the private sector. With the absence of profit motivation there is greater trust in the role and function of the middle managers by employees.
- There is a strong acknowledgement of the value of employees through social functions and sporting occasions.
- New staff meet senior management early in their job, and it is senior management that informs them of the goals of RDW.

The turnover of staff is less than 1%.

RDW was subject to an independent evaluation after five years agency status. An overall conclusion was that the evaluators were surprised that so much had been achieved in that time without major organisational disruption. The achievement was enabled by a number of factors:

- First, as is the general case in the Netherlands, employees are key members of the Supervisory Board, and therefore employees contribute directly to the management team.
- Second, the collaborative and consensual approach to working practices generates openness and transparency of information and policy. This meant that radical reductions in staff numbers were not an option, but working better and focusing on customers was an option – the number of cars in the Netherlands has increased from 5 million to 7.5 million since agency status was granted. The 'reward' for excellence has been new tasks given to RDW by government; new driving license; evaluation of road pricing; increasing demands from police from 10 million to 150 million enquiries a year; unique chips for bicycles and a

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[254] It is important to note that most governments have operated a 'revolving fund' with income gained by government departments. That meant there was no incentive for civil servants to increase income, since it all went to the central Treasury fund, and did not accrue to their budgets.

computerised register for police to check in real-time when scanning bikes[255]. Consequently employee numbers have increased from 1200 to 1400 during the same period.

- Third, the customers see a real value in engaging with a more efficient service, since compliance leads to rewards. While RDW has financial independence it cannot make a profit in a business sense. In 2006 income exceeded costs by 10%, and this 'surplus' is fed back in the form of reduced fees for 2007 (a 2.5% reduction) and reinvestment into eServices.

A multi-channel focus is maintained. While there are 25 million visits a year to the Web site, one million telephone enquiries are still supported. The call centre service still operates only 0900-1700, although most calls tend to be from garages. If retail opening hours are extended in the Netherlands there may be a need to provide more extensive phone support. However, May 5, which is a national holiday for the civil service, is a working day for garages, so employees are paid extra to provide an extended service – a model that may be difficult to sustain if opening hours were to be extended significantly.

However, the disintermediation of some channels is producing cost benefits. Notification of change of car ownership used always to be via the Post Office and took 6-7 days. Some 6 euros of the 9 euro fee are retained by the Post Office. Now with online notification at the 20,000 garages in the Netherlands the process is instant and the fee is retained by RDW – the garages are happy to see the business benefit of online registration, valuing the convenience of the service above revenue sharing.

RDW is transferring it best practice. Romania is adopting its model for car registration.

8.18 UK – Scotland. The Customer First programme

The Customer First programme is sponsored by the Scottish Executive (SE) and directed by The Improvement Service (IS); a company, which has been, set up by the SE, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). Customer First supports the Improvement Service's core principles of, *"easier to access, better integrated local services; effective collaboration across the public sector; better use of public resources; high standards of public service; and willingness to learn from others*[256]"

The programme was implemented under a broad vision that public services should be designed around the needs of citizens and that anyone who comes into contact with public services in Scotland should have their service delivered at the first point of contact.

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[255] Performance achievements are not just in the areas of increases. By sharing information with the police and insurance companies RDW has helped to reduce stolen cars from 50-60,000 a year when granted agency status, to 20-25,000 a year now. Furthermore, sharing with Social Services means that social benefits are unlikely to be paid to someone with four cars without justification being given.

[256] www.improvementservice.org.uk

Development of the programme also coincided with a wider government policy drive for more efficient government. The efficiency focus is primarily on making the back-office process more efficient and effective. Staff training is central, and a national programme will develop multi-skilled customer services staff. Service targets have also been set with 75% of core service requests from citizens being dealt with at first contact. Customer satisfaction targets are also being set with an initial 90% customer satisfaction rating established.

The programme was launched in October 2004 with a budget of £34.5 million for the period 2004-2007. It was established at a time when it was becoming clear that a number of Scottish Local Authorities were proposing a range of citizen-facing initiatives, but there was a need to rationalise these under a single, national approach (to avoid duplication). It was also initiated with the recognition that it was important to focus on a number of core priorities and avoid spreading resources too thinly across a range of independent projects. The following activities reflect this:

- A local authority 'single view' of each customer through a 'citizen's account' (in reality, the definitive contact details for customers - such as name address, telephone, email, mobile number);
- A multi application public services smartcard (National Entitlement Card) and card management services;
- A national property gazetteer (initially to hold current addresses / address history for customers);
- Gazetteer services, which provide definitive details of every property in Scotland (and – in time – access to geographical information and other data objects such as streets, street furniture etc.);
- A messaging hub, e.g. to exchange customer 'life event' data (where the customer has given prior consent) on such details as death, change of name, change of address;
- A customer services hub – a Citizens Portal - which allows customers access to a range of public services (including an ambition to link this to Government Gateway services at a UK level);
- An authentication service, which allows customers to authenticate themselves to the Citizens Portal or to a council contact centre / one stop shop; to have secure online access to change the personal details in their 'citizen account'; to make service requests; to report a lost or stolen Entitlement Card; to engage in a customer consultation process; to provide – push - information to citizens

An essential dimension to the programme is the citizen focus - and the citizen account being 'owned, and managed by the citizen and only the absolute minimum should be held (such as name, address, date of birth, email address). The principle of 'informed consent' is applied on the understanding that the individual citizen is happy to share this information and that there is trust that the appropriate safeguards are in place. Similarly, service providers need is a clear business justification for extending the basic details to hold the details of individual customers' transactions and that customers should be able to see the details of this data, i.e. pro-actively complying with the principles of data protection.

This is illustrated below
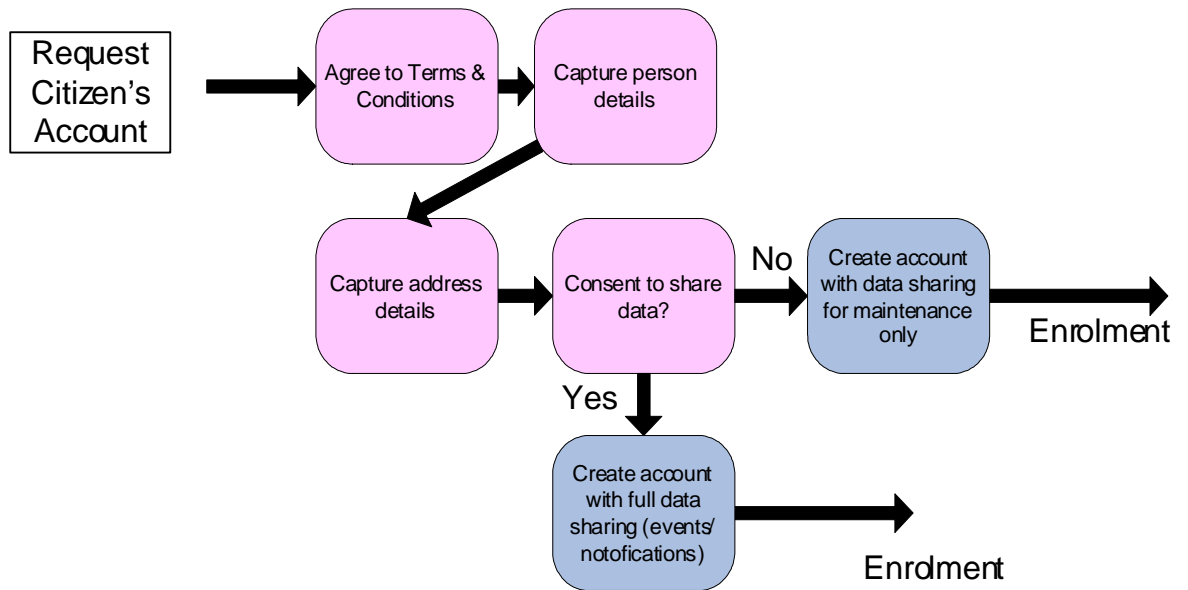
A fundamental challenge to the programme was for LAs to have a better understanding of who their customers where; one of the early problems identified by was that customer relationship management was something that they needed to get better at. This weakness extends to the inability to track customers and how to contact them and improving this knowledge would be is the key to improving customer service.

It was also critical to address customer concerns and wrong perceptions of how LAs function. For example, people assume their LA knows where they live and that if they change their address then departments share this data. In this respect another key deliverable was good quality property register, which encompassed an address history for customers.

Similarly, customers assumed that if a death event were notified, then the LA would share this data and the necessary changes to customer records and any pending transactions would be altered. A critical test of the success of the programme, therefore, will be that these data management aspects are sound and that systems will be able to deal with major life events much more effectively.

All parts of the public sector will be able to use the national infrastructure and share in the value of any event notification such as change of address or death notification.

A citizens' portal being deployed across multiple channels underpins the delivery of the whole programme. The model adopted was therefore has a single underlying infrastructure built on customer data, allowing access to different services *via* one account. The original specification was not technically detailed but instead focused on what the system was designed to do in terms of outputs and business outcomes. For example, that service providers could summon customer details on-screen at the start of

any enquiry, that customers should be able to be posted to the relevant service provider, and that any service provider should be able to offer services within the portal.

To date, the CA model has been set up, together with the basic citizen account dataset and the national property address gazetteer. The initial implementation of the smart-card system has also been completed - these cards do not hold any transactional data and carrying them is entirely voluntary. A number of detailed issues are being addressed – for example each citizen will have a customer number, which will be safeguarded by the General Registers Office for of Scotland. The IS acknowledges that the issue of identity is a challenge, but one which can be addressed effectively through ensuring the issue of identity cards is not confused with the CA and promoting the practical benefits of smart-cards.

The new system requires that LAs adopt a corporate approach and that they understand that they don't all need access to all the data, but can also rely on other sources. In this way they are encouraged to no longer work in silos. While data is held at the hub (in the form of numbers) the spokes of the model (delivery organisations) are only allowed access to, and sharing of, data where this is appropriate, for a specific, time-limited purpose.

There will be no campaign to encourage people to simply switch to online services. Customer choice and convenience is important, allowing them to still choose which channel is more convenient for them (telephone, online or face-to-face).

8.19 UK - Birmingham City Council – Service Birmingham

Birmingham City Council is the largest Local Authority in Europe with ten constituencies and 40 wards, and has achieved Beacon Status for innovation in three different areas of work. The Council, in partnership with Capita, has recently established the partnership Service Birmingham, which represents a new and innovative approach to delivering a wide range of services to support the Council's business transformation strategy. Since April 2006, Service Birmingham has been responsible for the provision of all IT services within the Council in a customer / client relationship structure underpinned by Service Level Agreements setting out the conditions of provision to the Council. The details of the SLA were set out in a series of discussions between the Council and Capita under the banner of Service Birmingham. During the transition, staff from the Council seconded over to the new Service Birmingham structure.

The Council aims to significantly improve services to the people of Birmingham and expects to save £100m a year as a consequence of a number of transformation programmes achieving at least a 15% productivity gain over the next five years[257]. The range of initiatives undertaken through the new service are firmly tied into the modernisation agenda for the Council, with the themes of localisation and devolution

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[257] http://www.sap.com/uk/company/press/press.epx?pressid=6903

being of particular importance primarily in terms of taking discussions and debates over council activities to the local level as well as involving the public in decision making.

The activities undertaken generally fall within two categories: the development of e-government services for public use; and the improvement of internal organisational efficiency. Each of the two themes was explored in the case study visit, and some of the particularly innovative results are discussed here.

The Legal and Democratic Services Department in particular had the objective of using the modernisation agenda to take the Democratic Services Section's activities from being centralised to a local level in order to make Council decision-making more transparent. By means of the development of a range of web-based solutions, Birmingham's residents now have wider access to information about the Council and its business. The solutions undertaken by Service Birmingham and the Council include:

- The Council website is now an established public portal to allow local people to contact the Council electronically for issues including rubbish clearance, pests and Council Tax. Residents can complete an e-form which is sent to the relevant department who then contacts the resident by return. The website also includes a customer service e-form enabling residents to log the three C's – complaints, compliments and comments – with the Council which are then automatically redirected to the right department.
- The creation of a database to contain public and Council meeting information. The database is published online so meeting minutes and other details can be publicly accessed.
- Most information gathered at public meetings has to be recorded and made available on the website as public record, the Democratic Services Section has been looking to find ways to make public meetings themselves more accessible to the public. A new camera and screen system in the chamber allows members of the public in the viewing gallery to be able to see the faces of the person addressing the meeting even if their back is to them. Ultimately, the meetings could then also be web-cast and stored on the website to be viewed remotely.
- Through the Casework Management System, Councillors are able to track constituents' queries and if a query is not dealt with in a timely fashion a reminder is automatically flagged up. The system also generates emails and letters.

The Accountable Decision-Making Electronic System - ADMES
The development of the ADMES service has represented the biggest shift towards modernising the e-government services provided by Birmingham City Council, with the key aim of making Council information available to all. The system was developed through a series of discussions between stakeholders including the Legal and Democratic Services Department, the Council's IT Service and the public via the Council's People's Panel. The system allows for effective recording of Council decisions, information which is then available to the public. Through ADMES, the public or other interested parties such as the press or the Councillors are able to see what stage a particular decision is at, and are able to access relevant and related reports and information. This 'citizen-centric' approach has allowed the Council to make more information available to the public while

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cutting down on the amount of paper copies produced and distributed, which in turn has a positive environmental impact.

As noted, there has been a concerted effort by all those involved in the delivery of Council IT solutions to improve organisational efficiency. A move away from traditional paper-based recording towards new digital solutions has impacted not only on the availability of public information but also on other areas of Council business. New developments include:

- The development of a Members' online service for the benefit of all Members of the City Council. This has involved the initiation of an electronic support system and intranet which allows Councillors to remotely submit requests for information, stationery, transport, and allowance/expense forms for example. The work done in this area represents a move towards a paperless office for Councillors.
- As a pilot exercise, Democratic Services officers have been located in 2 Constituency areas on opposite sides of the City with different demographic profiles. This has given the opportunity to trial new and innovative methods to engage people locally, such as extensive use of email to send details of meetings to residents, organisations etc in areas such as Sutton Coldfield with high computer availability.
- Information gathered at public meetings is recorded and made available on the website as public record, and the Legal and Democratic Services Department has been looking to find ways to make information recording faster and more efficient. Dictation software has been trialled across a range of meetings, along with other new solutions such as digital pens and tablet PCs. The use of new technologies to speed up note-taking at meetings and subsequent transcription, such as the Logi-tech pen and the Via-Voice software that enables the user to 'read' their notes directly into the computer for transcription, has been found to be suited to a variety of meetings and has enabled outcomes from meetings such as schools admissions appeals to be dealt with more quickly and effectively. New technologies have allowed more localised working (within Constituencies for example) and home working, and have also enabled information to be uploaded to the website more quickly. There has been a more proactive approach to discovering what equipment is available on the market and how it could be best utilised within the Council to achieve the over-arching aims.
- All Council Members have an IT package provided to them which allows them to access Council IT provision from home. This has meant time savings in travel and increased representational efficiency.
- Members have been provided with IT training on the resources and equipment that are available to them, and also are able to request subject-specific training. Furthermore, templates for standard documents such as letters have been put in place to assist the Member's workload.
- Councillors use Blackberries to access their emails while out and about. Developments include putting the whole of Birmingham City Council's phone directory onto the Blackberries so that Councillors can immediately refer people to the correct service/organisation while in Ward surgeries, at outside locations, etc.
- Members are now using a computerised voting system in the Council chamber on all voting decisions.

- The service level agreement with Service Birmingham sets out a 99.98% service availability so the systems work more effectively now and feedback shows that the service is more streamlined as a result of the provision of a single contact point and service desk. The same level of service is now available at all localities across the city, as a result of each office being able to access the same service desk for IT queries. It was noted that this has been a great improvement to the previous situation.

Birmingham City Council has met some minor hurdles in its work to publicise information and to develop localised services. For example, the Data Protection Act has impacted on the provision of some documents electronically due to the personal nature of some information (for example personal names and addresses on applications for licences or planning applications). Efforts now have to be made to anonymise documentation before it can be made publicly available.

Following feedback regarding the website, responses showed that the service could be difficult to navigate. Therefore, Service Birmingham is undertaking steps to improve the searching and retrieval of information provided through ADMES.

Birmingham City Council has seen a reduction in its central printing costs, although some costs have been displaced to other parts of the organisation (for example towards Members) when a ready paper copy is still requested.

Some technologies are relatively new and some staff are still coming to terms with the new ways of working. Therefore, in some cases progress to change/modernise has been slower than anticipated. As with any new technology, the partnership has found that uncovering the best solutions for maximum efficiency has been trial and error but is working with staff throughout to assess the positive and negative effects of all new tools while looking for ways to further improve provision and internal organisation.

It was clear from the case study interview that the key achievement of the Service Birmingham partnership has been to improve public access to the Council and its services. The public have been directly involved in the service provision as seen in the consultations for the ADMES service, while constituents have also been able to provide feedback on the website redevelopment process.

Perhaps of most interest was the emphasis the Council has placed on keeping traditional contact routes open to the public while using e-government services to complement – and promote – the methods already available. Email and the internet are used to make information and reports available to residents, but with local telephone support by officers in the Constituencies. Also the use of electronic information has actually bolstered face to face contact between Councillors and residents. For example, the publication of advice bureau and local Council meeting details on the website has allowed for and encouraged public drop-in as well as attendance at neighbourhood and local area meetings. Furthermore, the localisation of services which has been facilitated by the use of IT innovations has encouraged face to face visits, as members of the public are now able to access the services of several Council departments in their local area.

Meanwhile, all electronic meeting reports have contact details attached enabling constituents to make contact should they have further queries. All such methods have been developed in order to encourage the public of Birmingham to have a greater and more 'convenient' voice.

8.20 UK - Service Transformation

This meeting involved a broad-ranging discussion about where service transformation is being enacted, and the extent to which organisational change and citizen-centricity are embedded into the transformation. In 2000 the Strategic Framework was explicit about this: "*The Prime Minister's vision is of modernised, efficient government, alive to the latest developments in e-business, and meeting the needs of citizens and businesses. There is no one blueprint for achieving it*"[258]. This is hardly surprising, given the fact that the complexity of service development and delivery for 'UK plc' (if we use a business metaphor) is far more complex that any multi-national business, in particular because the connection between service demand and provision cannot, as with business, be mediated directly through price. This makes it very challenging when devising strategies to radically improve the customer experience of public services.

We focused initially on non-technical issues where citizen-centricity has been improved. For example, where English is not the first language, family intermediaries have been used in Tower Hamlets (London). This contrasts with, or maybe complements, other approaches such as the provision of translators (often anonymous, and therefore perhaps not as trusted in contexts where sensitive personal information is being imparted, such as in a GP surgery), remote translation services (a saving on staff and travel costs), or even attempts to develop fully automated translation facilities online[259]. The use of families and social organisations adds significant organisational capacity in a way that adds value to local and individual needs[260].

We then discussed the role of messages and emotion in the context of citizen-centricity. Citizens may be receiving mixed messages about the rationale for eGovernment, largely through disjointed reports in the media. On one hand they read

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[258] CABINET. (2000b). *e-government: A Strategic Framework for Public Services in the Information Age.* London: Cabinet Office. April, i+34 p.

[259] Like many IT innovations, the push for investment in machine translation comes from military priorities, but has significant potential civilian benefits. See: RATLIFF, E. (2006). *Me Translate Pretty One Day.* (Issue 14.12, December) Wired.com, [cited December 1 2006].
http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/14.12/translate_pr.html

[260] In the promotion of the Third Sector as a partner in service creation and delivery, the Cabinet Office observed central government could "learn lessons from effective citizen involvement models in local government and disseminate those lessons across departments. See: CABINET. (2006e). *Partnership in Public Services: An action plan for third sector involvement.* London: Cabinet Office. December, 57 p.
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/documents/public_service_delivery/psd_action_plan.pdf

about efficiency gains (The Gerson Review[261], examining efficiency), about assessing the capabilities and competencies of government departments[262], about service transformation (The Varney Review[263], and now "*the Service Design Authority is now working on a service transformation delivery plan under the leadership of Sir Gus O'Donnell*"[264]), about bottom-line cost savings through better use of technology and through overcoming legacy issues[265], and about increasing the 'public value' in service delivery[266]. Against the messages of efficiency and cost-savings there then are experiences of paying more each year for local taxes ('Council Tax'), while having supported the better remuneration for local government staff (the current Government introduced a national minimum wage) which then consumes the majority of the funding increase. The same paradox exists in the National Health Service where better pay for staff consumes the majority of the extra budget allocation. In 2005 the Work Foundation concluded:

> "*Improvements in public services also need to be better communicated to the public to improve customer satisfaction. When it comes to Information and Communication Technology, the focus is too often on the 'T', not enough on the 'I' and 'C'. ICT is one way to help provide the information the public needs to make choices and to communicate better. However, technology alone won't improve communication or the information available*"[267].

Then there are mixed messages being received about the joined-up services requiring joined up data, ranging from sharing of Council Tax information[268], to the paradox that people increasingly share personal information online through virtual communities[269], yet often react adversely to the integration of personal information on identity cards[270],

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[261] GERSON, P. (2006). *Public Sector Efficiency – did the Gershon Review make a difference and what comes next?* (November 13) Egovmonitor.com, [cited November 26 2006].
http://www.egovmonitor.com/node/8570

[262] CABINET. (2006b). *Capability Reviews: The Findings of the First Four Reviews.* London: Cabinet Office. July, 26 p. http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/reform/capability_reviews/publications/pdf/summary.pdf

[263] VARNEY, D. (2006). *Service transformation: A better service for citizens and businesses, a better deal for the taxpayer.* London: HM Treasury. December, v+90 p. http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pre_budget_report/prebud_pbr06/other_docs/prebud_pbr06_varney.cfm

[264] ANON. (2007e). *Transformational Government annual report: the Executive summary.* (January 10) Public Technology, [cited January 10 2007].
http://www.publictechnology.net/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=7356

[265] CABINET. (2005). *Transformational Government: Enabled by Technology.* London: Cabinet Office. November, Report Cm 6683, iii+22 p.
http://www.cio.gov.uk/transformational_government/strategy/contents/

[266] ANON. (2006a). *New report says the job of public sector managers is to maximise public value.* (November 2) New Scientist, [cited November 5 2006].
http://www.publictechnology.net/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=6619

[267] WORK. (2005). *Mismatch, mismanagement and miscommunication. The three key challenges to using ICT to improve public services.* (March 29) The Work Foundation, [cited March 29 2005].
http://www.theworkfoundation.com/newsroom/pressreleases.jsp?ref=163

[268] KABLENET. (2007d). *ICO approves council tax data share.* (January 31) Kable Government Computing, [cited January 31 2007].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/E456485EBEEAFCA0802572720061F411?OpenDocument

[269] ANON. (2007f). *Web information-sharing the new force for social progress says Cabinet Office.* (February 8) Public Technology, [cited February 8 2007].
http://www.publictechnology.net/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=7689

[270] This issue has recently become politicised, with the Conservative Opposition party proposing to abolish moves to create identity cards. See: HIGGINS, J. (2007). *ID Cards: IT trade association blasts*

even though there is clear public value in the use of electronic identity management in the health services – avoiding errors identifying patients for example[271].

At the Central Government level there has been an emergent strategy with eGovernment. Nevertheless, while there may be an experience of volatility, there has been since 2000 some consistency in the goals, where: *"IT has to fit closely, for example, with the demands of the public and the new working practices needed to produce the desired changes"*[272], thus emphasising the transformational agenda. Indeed, the eGovernment Strategic Framework of 2000 noted: "*There is no one blueprint for achieving it. But it is possible to envisage, on the basis of what we know will be feasible, how the public sector might be transformed by the end of the process*"[273]. This was direct and honest – 'we know what we want, and the road to it will often be experimental'. In 2000 there was considerable foresight in noting three strategic challenges:

- *"government is not yet doing enough to maximise use of its online services;*
- *government may be insufficiently open to private and voluntary sector service providers who have a crucial role to play in innovative electronic service delivery;*
- *the necessary incentives and institutional structures to realise the full potential of electronic service delivery may be absent in the public sector*"[274].

At times there have been contradictory positions over how the cost-benefits are to be assessed. The National Audit Office (NAO) in 2002 acknowledged the link between efficiency and public value when it noted:

> "*The Office of the e-Envoy should put in place an information base that meets the Public Accounts Committee's 2000 recommendations. It must be able to identify the value-added achieved both by the Office's centrally run campaigns and projects and by the efforts of departments and agencies to develop their e-government policies and electronic service delivery. This information regime should focus on actual usage and take-up of electronic services.*"[275]

But, when the e-Envoy was interviewed by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee the focus was strongly on the 'bottom line' of monetary savings[276], which put pressure on the strategy to deliver cost savings at a time when it was being

Conservative pledge to kill ID cards. (February 8) Public Technology, [cited February 8 2007]. http://www.publictechnology.net/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=7696

[271] BBC. (2007e). *Hospitals pick hi-tech clipboard.* (February 21) BBC, [cited February 21 2007]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/6383035.stm

[272] CABINET. (2000c). *Successful IT: Modernising Government in Action.* London: Cabinet Office, 135 p. http://www.ogc.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?docid=1005071

[273] CABINET. (2000b). *e-government: A Strategic Framework for Public Services in the Information Age.* London: Cabinet Office. April, i+34 p.

[274] CABINET. (2000a). *e-gov: Electronic government services for the 21st century.* London: HMSO. September, online p. http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/innovation/2000/delivery/foreward/frames.htm

[275] NAO. (2002). *Government on the Web II.* London: The Stationary Office, Report HC 764 Session 2001-2002, v+85 p. http://www.nao.gov.uk/publications/nao_reports/01-02/0102764.pdf

[276] MCCUE, A. (2002). *E-envoy roasted over e-government.* (June 17) Network News, [cited June 17 2002]. http://www.networknews.co.uk/News/1132686

broadened to understand the need for delivery of services through multiple channels[277], and the NAO also acknowledged the need for shared service delivery: "*People are, however, most interested in services, such as how to obtain support or care for an elderly relative, which is often the shared responsibility of a number of organisations*"[278].

The iterative development of eGovernment strategy, set within the context of complexity and delivering public value, embraced a number of issues in subsequent years. For example: delivering accessible eServices to elderly people[279]; the role in intermediaries in delivering services[280]; the development of customer relationship management in service delivery[281]; channel delivery using interactive digital television[282]. By November 2005 the Government was reinforcing the strategy in the context of a 'Digitally United Kingdom', stating: "*To meet this need, the Government should seek ways to deliver services across a portfolio of traditional and digital channels. This would require government working in an innovative way, and in partnership with industry and the voluntary sector*"[283].

What is generally evident is that while the strategy is clearly emergent, and was focused on the transformation and value agendas, the mechanism by which central government organisations would deliver transformation was less evident than in the local government area (discussed later in this paper) – the transforming of services was connected with difficulty to the transformation of the central government organisations involved in delivering them, and major changes to the structure of government departments (such as to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, and to the Home Office) were the result of externalities not core to eGovernment service delivery. Thus in November 2005 the strategy noted more that the organisations would be aided by IT in transforming services, rather than the organisations being radically transformed:

> "*However the vision is not just about transforming government through technology. It is also about making government transformational through the use of technology - creating and retaining the capacity and capability to innovate and use technology effectively as technology itself develops. This is*

[277] E-ENVOY. (2002). *Channels framework: Delivering government services in the new economy*. London: e-Envoy, Cabinet Office. September 30, 39 p.

[278] COMMONS. (2002). *Public Accounts - Sixty-Sixth Report: Progress in Achieving Government on the Web.* (December) House of Commons, Public Accounts Committee, [cited December 14 2002]. http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200102/cmselect/cmpubacc/936/93602.htm

[279] NAO. (2003). *Progress in making e-services accessible to all - encouraging use by older people*. London: National Audit Office. February 20, Report HC 428 Session 2002-2003, vi+58 p.

[280] E-ENVOY. (2003b). *Intermediaries: Creating a mixed economy in public services.* (May) e-Envoy, Cabinet Office, [cited June 9 2003]. http://www.e-envoy.gov.uk/intermediaries, E-ENVOY. (2003c). *Policy Framework for a Mixed Economy in the Supply of e-Government Services. Official Response to Public Consultation.* London: e-Envoy, Cabinet Office. October, iv+17 p.

[281] ODPM. (2003). *National CRM programme.* (June 18) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, [cited June 18 2003]. http://www.crmnp.org/

[282] E-ENVOY. (2003a). *Digital Television: A policy framework for accessing e-government services*. London: e-Envoy, Cabinet Office. December, ii+23pp p. http://www.govtalk.gov.uk/documents/digital_tv.pdf

[283] CABINET. (2004). *Enabling a Digitally United Kingdom: A Framework For Action*. London: Cabinet Office. November, iii+88 p.

the only way in which public services can keep up with a continually changing, globalised society"[284].

Although, there was a consistent focus on the evaluation of individual government departments in the 'Capability Reviews[285]. In July 2005 the Prime Minister had re-emphasised the urgency for change, and was quoted in the 2006 Transformational Strategy document (focusing particularly on education) as having stated: "*This is a time to push forward, faster and on all fronts: open up the system, break down its monoliths, put the parent and pupil and patient and law-abiding citizen at the centre of it*"[286]. Here the urgency for radical reform paradoxically contests with the citizens' desire for 'stability' within education. Hence the experiments with City Academies and the role of the private sector in education delivery often were viewed in the media as negatively, not positively disruptive.

Into 2006 the consumption side of service delivery continued to have a strong emphasis on choice and multi-channel delivery[287], and a degree of fragmentation became evident at national level with separate transformational strategies for devolved administrations in Wales and Scotland[288]. Further context is provided by the individual ICT initiatives undertaken by individual government departments – something only to be expected since they each have ongoing service delivery challenges that cannot wait for the eventual emergence of transformed and shared services. The NHS National Programme for IT, a challenging programme to connect the information and services in one of the most emotionally-charged of services to citizens, has been persistently criticised for its complexity, cost, and delivery schedules[289]. For the Department of Work and Pensions there was an urgent need to

[284] CABINET. (2005). *Transformational Government: Enabled by Technology*. London: Cabinet Office. November, Report Cm 6683, iii+22 p.
http://www.cio.gov.uk/transformational_government/strategy/contents/

[285] CABINET. (2006b). *Capability Reviews: The Findings of the First Four Reviews*. London: Cabinet Office. July, 26 p. http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/reform/capability_reviews/publications/pdf/summary.pdf, CABINET. (2006a). *Capability Reviews Tranche 2: Common themes and summaries*. London: Cabinet Office. December, 32 p. www.civilservice.gov.uk/capabilityreviews

[286] CABINET. (2006f). *Transformational Government Strategy.* (March 30) Cabinet Office, [cited April 1 2006]. http://www.cio.gov.uk/transformational_government/index.asp

[287] CABINET. (2006d). *Multichannel Transformation in the Public Sector: Principles and an Emerging Framework for Practical Use*. London: Cabinet Office, 28 p. http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/publications/delivery_council/multi_channel_trans/pdf/multi_channel_trans 061129.pdf

[288] SCOTLAND. (2006b). *Transforming Public Services: The Next Phase of Reform*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive. June, iv+38 p. www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/06/15110925, WALES. (2006). *Beyond Boundaries: Citizen-Centred Local Services for Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government. June, iv+106 p.
http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/makingtheconnections/localservicedelivery/beechamrep?lang=en, SCOTLAND. (2006a). *The future of public services.* (July 15) Scottish Executive, [cited July 16 2006]. http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2006/06/15153531

[289] KABLENET. (2006d). *NAO says NPfIT costs £12.4bn.* (June 16) Kable Government Computing, [cited June 18 2006].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/BADD10C3B20607448025718F00412A96?OpenDocument, KABLENET. (2006g). *Review criticises software for NPfIT.* (August 21) Kable Government Computing, [cited August 21 2006].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/3A1B070EA98A5025802571D10049F577?OpenDocument, KABLENET. (2006e). *NHS urged to use more simple ICT.* (December 13) Kable Government Computing,

overcome the inefficiencies of legacy IT systems[290], yet when plans to join up information to predict benefit fraud, and deliver services more effectively, there were fears that this would further impose a 'surveillant society' on citizens[291]. So, it is only comparatively recently that government has come round the table collectively to discuss real organisational change and delivery issues, as opposed to policy ones.

The Varney Review variously refers and alludes to governance issues and the Cabinet Office is currently addressing the realisation that without proper co-ordination, individual initiatives, however sound, will not lead to joined up service transformation. Hence the creation of the Delivery Council[292] in June 2006, which like any activity that may affect the power and position of individual departments, needed first to agree common ground before it could start taking action on how services are really delivered at the frontline[293]. Informing this activity is a more direct engagement with service users, through the Customer Insight Forum "*as a network to help government gather, analyse and use information about the needs and preferences of citizens and businesses more effectively*"[294].

Two aspects of the terms of reference for the CIF show the complexity of the tasks for linking customer needs with delivery. First there is the challenge of obtaining insight into the needs of the widest community of customers. Second, to overcome some of the departmental and organisational difficulties in the implementation of customer needs:

> "*it is important that each of the main customer facing departments is actively represented and that the person nominated to attend carries sufficient weight in their organisation so as to influence colleagues. Forum members from particular departments should be endorsed, where appropriate, by Delivery Council members and their work on the Forum should be formally recognised in their job description and appraisal*"

[cited December 13 2006].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/7510483749B09EF680257242005E8BA3?OpenDocument

[290] KABLENET. (2006c). *DWP computers 'unreliable'.* (November 2) Kable Government Computing, [cited November 3 2006].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/AD3F5B315A0494B28025721A003391FE?OpenDocument

[291] WHITE, M. (2007). *Blair launches new drive to let officials share data on citizens.* (January 15) Guardian (London), [cited January 15 2007]. http://www.guardian.co.uk/guardianpolitics/story/0,,1990432,00.html, KABLENET. (2007b). *DWP aims to predict fraud.* (January 24) Kable Government Computing, [cited January 24 2007].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/32D68DC6EB33C6B38025726D005A0445?OpenDocument

[292] http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/public_service_reform/delivery_council/

[293] There is nothing new, or shocking, in the natural desire to protect departmental power in the face of dramatic change. See the discussion in: KAVANAGH, D. & RICHARDS, D. (2001) Departmentalism and Joined-Up Government: Back to the Future? *Hansard Society for Parliamentary Affairs,* 54**,** 1-18.

[294] CABINET. (2006c). *Customer insight in public services - A Primer*. London: Cabinet Office. October, 19 p. http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/publications/delivery_council/word/cust_insight_primer061128.doc, CABINET. (2007b). *Transformational Government: Enabled by Technology. Annual Report 2006*. London: Cabinet Office. January. http://www.cio.gov.uk/documents/annual_report2006/trans_gov2006.doc, CABINET. (2007a). *Establishing an effective Customer Insight Capability in Public Sector Organisations*. London: Cabinet Office. January, 18 p. http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/publications/delivery_council/word/emerging_principles.doc

In other words, the enactment of strategy to meet customer needs must matter both to the representative and the organisation they represent. This is a significant change from historical civil service representation at meetings, where 'reporting back' from a meeting often was the only action, and the person representing an organisation had no delegated power to make decisions. Post-Varney the governance framework is beginning to become even more structured with a new Contact Council to sit alongside the CIF, both feeding into the Delivery Council (itself to come under the governance of the new Civil Service Steering Board (CSSB). The role of the Contact Council will be:

> "*to collect and assess departmental performance against agreed benchmarks and performance indicators, to promote cross departmental collaboration and to disseminate good practice arising from positive examples of innovation*".

Customer needs will therefore be directly linked to strategy and organisational behaviour, and that will be directly assessed through performance and service quality.

The realistic picture at the Local Government level is of a timeline of realistic and iterative development of eGovernment strategy. Admittedly the primary agenda is set by Central Government, and Local Government then 'performs' within the framework set for it, such as uniform performance targets which initially focused on the 'production' of eGovernment such as the percentage of services available online[295]. The Local Government Act 2000[296] set an important context in which customer-centric service delivery was highlighted and set as a target for the public sector. From this came the e Government programme and the Local Government On Line (LGOL) work programme[297]. The investments made through the LGOL consisted of £670m to help fund a series of Pathfinder projects as well as individual authorities. The successful Pathfinder projects became National Projects, which helped develop good practice models for the rest of the sector to adopt, for example, the LAWS project[298] which was the local authority website project or the Smart card project[299]. Both of these helped the sector explore options before then being promoted as examples of good practice throughout local government. Funding was also given directly to every local authority in England to help them make investments in technology and capacity building.

The LGOL programme also helped develop consistent standards of practice across the sector by introducing specific targets for delivery of services on the different channels as well as a requirement to deliver a range of identified priority service

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[295] DETR. (2002). *e-gov@local: Towards a national strategy for local e-government: A consultation paper*. London: Department of Transport and the Regions. April, 77 p.

[296] http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2000/20000022.htm and for a discussion of the issues see http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=73225

[297] DETR. (2001). *eGovernment. Delivering Local Government Online: Milestones and Resources for the 2005 Target*. London: Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions and the Local Government Association. February, ii+16 p. and see also http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=6001581

[298] http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=4682930

[299] http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=4682994

outcomes (all of this was developed jointly by local and central government). A performance management process was introduced to help both individual Local Authorities (LA) and the sector monitor its progress and required annual self assessments. The progression of this programme brought into focus the challenge in meeting the urgency for change, the resources needed to underpin change, and the organisational capacity to restructure and deliver the change – the president of the Society of IT Management (SOCITM) in September 2002 "*urged the Government to use targets more effectively for measuring usage and the extent to which public bodies are joined up*", arguing for more, not less, change because "*the strategy has to be far more ambitious to deliver real benefits to users*"[300].

The LGOL programme came to an end in March 2006 and resulted in significant improvements across local government for customers. Now every Local Authority has a website, and many of these are fully transactional enabling customers to book and pay for services online. All LAs have contact centres, most with extended opening hours and recruit and train staff specifically to work so they can deal with a range of enquires. There were initiatives to improve public awareness, such as advertisements on AOL and MSN (targeting key services where citizens access the Web and socialise on it), and the most used transactional services were "*applying to council jobs, checking school term dates and enquiries on child care. These were followed by renewing library books, getting domestic bins emptying and disposing of garden waste*"[301]. As well as the 'front office' visibility of services, there was much work on back-office efficiency, for example through initiatives to centrally licence key data such as statistics and national mapping, and to encourage information sharing[302]. Needless to say, the expectations of the customer continue to increase and the public sector has recognised the need to continue to strive for improvements.

In parallel there has also been the work to identify and obtain efficiency savings by introducing more effective management process both in terms of how services are organised and delivered and the capacity and skills required to deliver them. For example, the National Audit Office reviewed successful IT-led projects where efficiency gains were delivered, posing nine "*Key Questions for departments embarking on major IT-enabled business change*"[303]:

> "*Ensuring senior level engagement:*
> * *Is the board able to make informed judgements about the department's capacity to manage change?*

[300] KABLENET. (2002). *Warning for local e-strategy.* (September 24) Kable News Service, [cited September 24 2002].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/D4526536510C079180256C3E00321C76?OpenDocument
[301] KABLENET. (2006b). *DCLG claims take-up progress.* (July 14) Kable Government Computing, [cited July 14 2006].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/B541C930BA4B8655802571AA005A8D70?OpenDocument
[302] KABLENET. (2007a). *DCLG signs mapping contract.* (February 1) Kable Government Computing, [cited February 1 2007].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/1EFF5DC8A8C3372B80257275004412BB?OpenDocument
[303] NAO. (2006). *Delivering successful IT-enabled business change.* (November) National Audit Office, [cited November 17 2006]. http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/06-07/060733es.htm

- *Does the department have in place a decision making structure that will ensure strong and effective leadership of the IT-enabled business change?*
- *What incentives exist to drive performance?*

Acting as an intelligent client:
- *Does the department have the necessary programme management skills?*
- *What is the natural division of duties between the Programme and Project Management Centre of Excellence and the Chief Information Officer?*
- *How will the department establish and promote an open and constructive relationship with suppliers?*
- *How clear is the department about the business process that it is seeking to change or develop?*
- *Does the technology exist to deliver the change?*

Realising the benefits of change
- *Beyond immediate technical success, how will wider benefits be secured?*"

Again, the Gershon efficiency savings targets set for local government are regarded as having been delivered[304].

Subsequent to the eGovernment Programme and the Gershon Review, LAs have the Transformational Government[305], Varney Review[306] and the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review[307] (CSR07) to maintain a focus on delivering efficient and effective services. There is in place a national strategic approach to help drive improvements across the public sector. Obviously there are variations in how this is implemented in different parts of the sector and across the country. Some of this variation is deliberate as particular organisations focus their efforts on meeting the needs of particular customer groups however, overall there has been significant improvements as well as recognition that is still much to do to both improve the experience for the customer particularly where this requires different parts of the public sector to be joined up around the customer to enable them to carry out their transaction. Also there in recognition for the need to continue to drive out efficiency savings by improving how services are designed and through cross sector partnerships.

Citizens consume uneven and inconsistent messages about the rationale, methodologies, and benefits of eGovernment, and often interpret information emotionally, rather than rationally. Perhaps a focus could move from 'service delivery', to 'service relationships', which then emphasises the role of individual citizen agency

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[304] GERSON, P. (2006). *Public Sector Efficiency – did the Gershon Review make a difference and what comes next?* (November 13) Egovmonitor.com, [cited November 26 2006]. http://www.egovmonitor.com/node/8570

[305] CABINET. (2006f). *Transformational Government Strategy.* (March 30) Cabinet Office, [cited April 1 2006]. http://www.cio.gov.uk/transformational_government/index.asp, CABINET. (2006g). *Transformational Government: Implementation Plan.* London: Cabinet Office, 32 p. http://www.cio.gov.uk/documents/pdf/transgov/transgovt.pdf

[306] VARNEY, D. (2006). *Service transformation: A better service for citizens and businesses, a better deal for the taxpayer.* London: HM Treasury. December, v+90 p. http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pre_budget_report/prebud_pbr06/other_docs/prebud_pbr06_varney.cfm

[307] http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/spending_review/spend_csr07/spend_csr07_index.cfm

in the consumption of services. There have been various attempts to engage citizens through 'Digital Dialogues'[308] which involved the Hansard Society's e-Democracy Programme as a trusted intermediary. The role of a trusted intermediary seems high, both in persuading citizens that the consultation is independent and objective, and in delivering coherent messages to government – something that the direct ePetition portal has found problematical in the context of adverse citizen responses to possible road pricing developments[309].

There has been useful cross-over of some techniques used in the retail sector, for example 'mystery shoppers'[310], and SOCITM carried out a survey where "*mystery shoppers, who contacted 50 councils for planning and building control or education enquiries, found only one – Clackmannanshire - that dealt with the enquiries satisfactorily*"[311]. This approach is being considered within the Varney Review for the Dudley Channel Strategy.

A further approach involves a focus on 'customer journeys', for example looking at the costs and processes involved in successful transactions. One process being considered in the Varney review is bereavement: "*develop a change of circumstances service starting with bereavement, birth and change of address by 2010*"[312]. Here there may also be value in looking not at the cost of notifying bereavement in the public sector, but also at the costs across all sectors[313], and also at the emotions involved in notification. Do people really want a single-stop service, or do they gain emotional benefit from talking to people who can offer sympathy as well as registering details?

Experiences such as bereavement are complex processes, and emotions, loneliness, and anxiety need to be factored into any decision about service transformation. It was clear from the discussions that the rapid, uneven, and fluctuating processes of transformation in government have made it difficult to maintain a coherent brand for

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[308] KABLENET. (2007h). *Whitehall should share digital dialogues.* (February 20) Kable Government Computing, [cited February 21 2007].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/5ADCF278D226DD1B80257287004C849D?OpenDocument

[309] Indeed, the Prime Minister then felt the need to engage over one million people directly: "I will be sending out a response to everyone who has signed the petition against road charging, explaining the problems the country faces and why I believe road charging is surely part of the answer here as it is in many other countries". See: BLAIR, T. (2007). *The e-petition shows that my government is listening.* (February 18) Observer (London), [cited February 18 2007].
http://observer.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,,2015740,00.html

[310] And here we learn importantly that business is not necessarily better, or even more efficient, since an expert mystery shopper observed that "nine out of 10 senior executives are not in touch with their customers". See: KNIGHT, J. (2007). *Mystery shopper takes it to extreme.* (February 2) BBC, [cited February 2 2007]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/6316617.stm

[311] KABLENET. (2006a). *Councils fail to utilise websites.* (December 11) Kable Government Computing, [cited December 12 2006].
http://www.kablenet.com/kd.nsf/Frontpage/D3AC5CD6E2FFFA5780257241005358AE?OpenDocument

[312] VARNEY, D. (2006). *Service transformation: A better service for citizens and businesses, a better deal for the taxpayer.* London: HM Treasury. December, v+90 p. http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pre_budget_report/prebud_pbr06/other_docs/prebud_pbr06_varney.cfm

[313] For example, one of the main problems my mother experienced following the death of my father was that their joint credit and bank cards had to be cancelled, and new ones issued in her name. Thus, for some days, she was without access to finance. Problems exist as much in the private sector as in the public sector.

citizens. This is paradoxical, since brands such as Virgin in the private sector are very strong, yet are constantly changing portfolios of services and product offerings, and it is constantly experimental. For example, the merger of SN Brussels Airlines and Virgin Express early in 2007 led to consternation with some passengers when the new brand logo had an 'unlucky' 13 dots[314].

Furthermore, these brands are maintained by highly turbulent and disruptive strategies: "*Entrepreneurs such as Virgin's Sir Richard Branson and Body Shop's Anita Roddick bring an emancipatory, anti-corporatist tilt to their business*"[315]. Yet, when Government is just as experimental and disruptive, it is criticised as being "*like consumers of policy, abandoning them as though they have no value once they exist. This consuming passion breaks trust in government*"[316] (p.176), and "*A shortened framework of institutional time lies at the heart of this social degradation; the cutting edge has capitalised on superficial human relations*"[317] (p.181). Huge advertising budgets in business are ok, but advertising by government so often is interpreted as propaganda, or 'spin'. So, it seems possible for business to maintain a brand in an environment of instability, but the citizen perception of government is that 'certainty' and 'stability' are needed at the same time as government delivers better, and newer, services. Things are not so easily transposed from business to government, or even vice versa.

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[314] BBC. (2007h). *Unlucky' airline logo grounded.* (February 21) BBC, [cited February 22 2007]. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6383171.stm

[315] ECONOMIST. (2006b). *Post-modernism is the new black.* (December 19) Economist, [cited December 22 2006]. http://www.economist.com/world/displaystory.cfm?story_id=8401159

[316] SENNETT, R. (2006) *The Culture of the New Capitalism,* New Haven, Yale University Press.

[317] Ibid.