



Delivering best practice ICT Shared Services at Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS)

NICS needed to achieve Gershon's vision to release funds for front line services by 2008. The first step was to share ICT services between two major departments. Atkins helped NICS achieve this in compressed and critical timescales, covering key issues including:

- the business case for ICT shared services.
- cultural differences between ICT staff in departments.
- ITIL service management processes.
- service desk tool procurement.
- training for all ICT staff.

Introduction

NICS needed to deliver ICT shared services to support eleven major civil service departments over a staged period, starting with the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) and the Department of Regional Development (DRD) and their agencies. Other civil service departments would come on-stream over 2 years.

The initial shared service centre would support some 9,000 users rising to 18,000. NICS wanted to implement service management based on ITIL which provides a cohesive set of best practices, drawn from the public and private sectors internationally. It is supported by a comprehensive qualifications scheme, accredited training organisations, and implementation and assessment tools. The best practice processes promoted in ITIL are supported by ISO 20000 Standard.

In order to achieve this, Atkins work covered:

- the review of an outline business case and tightening down of costs to ensure optimum value for money.
- a culture assessment of staff from DFP and DRD who would become part of SSC.
- an ITIL maturity assessment and development and integration of five new ITIL processes.
- the provision of a New Service Management tool OJEU procured, and tested for use by new Service Desk.
- full training of staff on processes and tools.

Target dates

Atkins helped deliver the programme in demanding timescales, in around nine months in total to meet the target date for opening the Shared Service Centre (SSC) in May 2007. The compressed schedule included a business case review, a competitive OJEU procurement of the service management tool, the development of five new ITIL processes and full training.

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1. Outline business case review

DFP Supply (the Northern Ireland equivalent of HM Treasury) was concerned about the affordability of the wider Modernisation & Reform Agenda and the clarity of the costs in the outline business case (OBC) for rationalising ICT infrastructure and setting up an ICT shared service centre.

Atkins revisited the OBC, looking closely at:

- the principles for an ITIL-based implementation approach.
- an organisation/role model and resourcing plan for shared services.
- accommodation requirements to agree a strategy to optimise costs and benefits.
- the high level transition plan.

By critically re-examining the cost and benefit models, a revised draft of the OBC was produced and approved in the Summer of 2006.

Culture Assessment Study

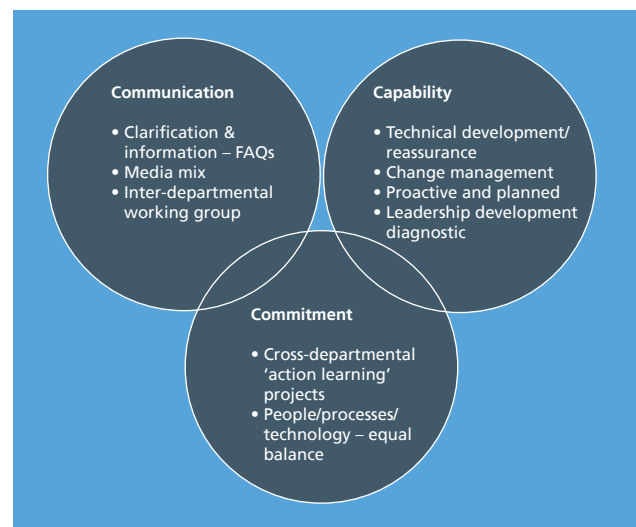
In order to address concerns about how the people aspects bear on the successful outcome of the ICT shared service centre, Atkins undertook an assessment of the respective cultures of the merging departments. This sought to identify both the strengths and risks inherent in bringing the departments together.

Atkins used internet-based questionnaires with follow-up, semi-structured interviews and focus groups to assess the respective cultures.

Culture Assessment Recommendations & Benefits

The study provided the opportunity for the leaders of the merger programme to:

- understand the profile of each Department's culture and their members' stance on the move to the Shared Services Facility (SSF).
- identify likely tensions arising due to the different cultural 'norms' existing within each Department.
- adopt a range of people-focused actions to plan into the programme to maximise success of the merger and lead to greater customer and service focus. These actions were grouped under the headings of Commitment, Communication and Capability.



2. ITIL Service Management Gap Analysis

Atkins assessed the maturity of the existing ITIL processes in DFP and DRD, using an ITIL gap analysis based on the OGC Process Maturity Framework (PMF).

Gap analysis results

- ITIL concepts understood by most ICT support staff
- Some elements of ITIL processes practiced already e.g. some parts of Incident Management
- Little formal documented ITIL processes

NICS was evaluated as PMF level 1 (Initial) as described in table 1 below.

Level	PMF	Focus	Comments
1	Initial	Technology	Technology excellence/experts
2	Repeatable	Product/service	Operational processes e.g. ITIL service support
3	Defined	Customer focus	Full service level management in place
4	Managed	Business focus	Business and IT aligned
5	Optimised	Value chain	Seamless integration of IT into the business and input into strategy

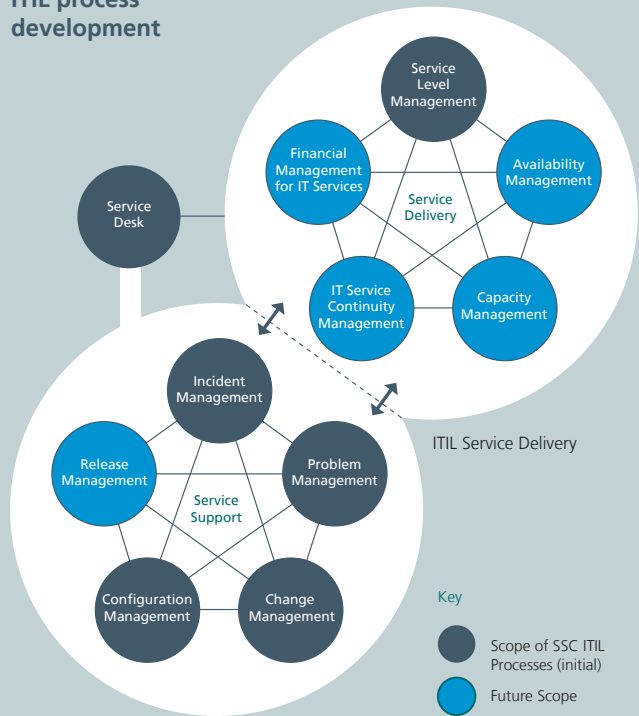
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Table 1: The ITIL PMF

Gap analysis way forward

It was agreed with NICS that the current level of maturity would not be good enough to support a new shared service centre. This and the ambition of NICS to develop best in class shared service pointed to a need to move to a PMF rating of 3 (Defined) in time for the opening of the Shared Service Centre (SSC).

Scope of ITIL process development



3. The ITIL/IT Service Management Implementation

ITIL Process Design

All Atkins consultants working on the project were ITIL red badge (Managers Certificate) qualified with strong experience of process development.

Client relationship

Excellent relationships with NICS project staff were imperative if the project was to be successful and the team worked closely together, with effective skills transfer to NICS project team members.

Process rigour

The ITIL processes were developed in rigorous fashion and contained both process and the underlying procedure required to execute the process. NICS built Configuration Management with Atkins input.

Atkins experience

The incident, problem and change management processes were developed in three months and completed by early March 2007. Atkins' experience of developing these processes for public and private sector organisations was critical in achieving rapid implementation. This experience also helped to understand the existing processes so that Atkins could complete new service level agreements in just six weeks.

OJEU Service Management Tool procurement

Atkins helped NICS procure a new service management tool using The Journal of European Union (OJEU) in record time over four months from December to March.



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Challenging project

Atkins, in close partnership with the NICS central procurement department, assisted with the development of the statement of requirements for an OJEU procurement of a service management tool. Atkins were also part of the NICS panel that evaluated the supplier responses using weighted evaluation criteria. Around ten responses were evaluated and NICS selected the preferred supplier based on the results of scoring against the criteria. The procurement completed on time with no supplier challenges.

Functional and system testing

Atkins managed the functional, system and user acceptance testing of the new service management tool implemented by the tool supplier and developed training on processes for the Service Desk, ICT support staff and ICT support managers.

4 The project result

The SSC opened smoothly with the five ITIL processes and the new service management tool live and was viewed by NICS as a major success. The project was completed on time and within the agreed consulting budget.

Barry Lowry, the Shared Service Centre Programme Director, commented "NICS put together a best of breed team for this project including Atkins, Microsoft and Gartner. I cannot emphasize enough how critical the establishment of robust processes and an underpinning service desk system was to the creation of a best practice delivery organisation. Atkins certainly demonstrated that they are a consultancy that can deliver complex critical projects on time and to budget".

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About Management Consultants in Atkins

Atkins is one of the leading management consultancy companies in the UK. Atkins MC is a part of the Atkins group and our vision is to help clients deliver value from their programmes of investment and change. Atkins plans, designs and enables the delivery of complex capital programmes for clients across the globe.

Atkins is the largest multidisciplinary consultancy in Europe; and the world's third largest design firm.

The combination of Atkins' position as a leading multi-disciplinary consultancy, its heritage of successfully delivering on some of the world's most complex projects and our capability in programme delivery, position us uniquely.

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Above: Belfast City Hall

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