Comptroller and Auditor General

eGovernment

19 May 2016

C&G

JERSEY AUDIT OFFICE

R.56/2016

eGovernment

Introduction

1.1   eGovernment (eGov) is about transforming government. It is not just about putting access to public services online. It uses new technology and changes in processes and systems to:

- effect a fundamental change in the design and delivery of public services to modernise the interface between government and citizens; and
- transform the way public services work and are organised to deliver modern services.

eGov has significant implications for citizens, businesses, service providers and leaders in government (see below).

Implications of eGov

For citizens and business, it means that:

- services feel modern, they are easier to access and more efficient to use; and
- they are empowered by being able to access not just the service but information and data about the service.

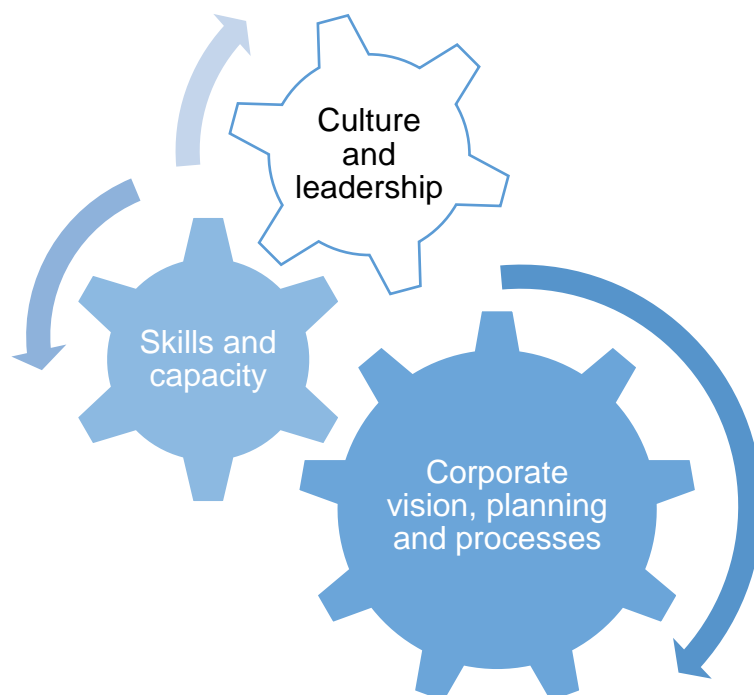For those delivering the service, it means that:

- there is an opportunity to re-design how the services are delivered;
- enterprise data (data structures, quality, availability and security) is a critical part of the new design, gaining as much management attention as people and organisational structures;
- as much of the activity is automated as possible and decisions are made based on data, thereby reducing costs of people and estate and the possibility of error;
- there are opportunities for different parts of government to use common processes and systems to help share data and to reduce risk and development and operational costs;
- services are easier and quicker to update to respond to how citizens want to use them, when legislation changes or services need to be improved;
- data is obtained once, retained, used for multiple purposes and, in the context of personal data, updated by the citizen; but
- greater emphasis and expertise is needed to secure services, to protect government assets and to protect the data and identity of citizens and businesses using the services.

For leadership in government, it means that:

- modern management and technology practices have to be deployed;
- there has to be a keen understanding of the changed data and system security implications and risks; and
- designing and operating a digital operation requires different skills.

1.2   The benefits of eGov are evident but implementation is a significant
       management challenge. For the full benefits of eGov to be secured there is a
       need for changes not only in technology but also in process and organisation,
       in governance and in the management of risk. Crucially, there are important
       changes in the very perception of the relationship between government and
       citizens and in the culture within government. There are vital drivers in
       securing those changes (see Exhibit 1).
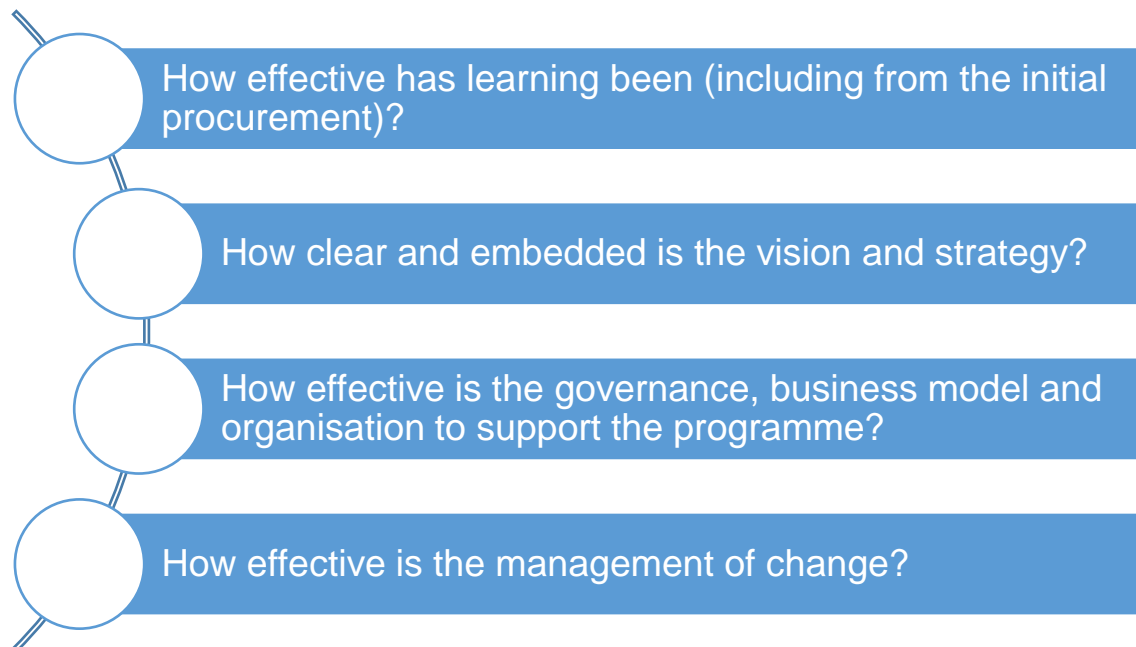
Exhibit 1: Drivers for change

1.3   The States embarked on an ambitious eGov programme as a cornerstone of
       its programme of Public Sector Reform. In 2014 it published a business case,
       prepared with the input of consultants, setting out key principles and
       recognising the need for cross-departmental, co-ordinated and collaborative
       work. Governance arrangements, including an eGov Board were put in place.
       The estimated cost of implementing the strategy was £11.5m over six years
       with recurrent costs of £2.9m per year. Despite the need to anticipate and
       respond to the new threats presented by data being managed in a digital
       environment, no specific budget was identified for cyber security.

1.4   As part of the agreed approach, the States commenced a procurement
       process to retain a 'Senior Supplier' for the eGov programme. However, the
       response to the tender did not provide decision makers with sufficient clarity
       to proceed and the procurement was terminated in January 2015.

1.5 The eGov Board decided a different approach was required, under the leadership of a new Senior Responsible Officer. As part of the relaunched approach to eGov:

- the eGov Board was renamed the Sponsoring Group; and
- the eGov Programme team became the eGov Programme Board.

Objectives and scope of the review

1.6 The review focuses on four key questions (see Exhibit 2) that are considered in the subsequent sections of this report.

Exhibit 2:   Objectives of the review

How effective has learning been (including from the initial procurement)?

How clear and embedded is the vision and strategy?

How effective is the governance, business model and organisation to support the programme?

How effective is the management of change?

1.7 The review extends to the scope of business transformation within the eGov programme, but does not include a detailed evaluation of the technical aspects.

1.8 In undertaking the review, I have had the benefit of technical support from the UK National Audit Office (NAO). The second, third and fourth questions above have been addressed using a model developed by the NAO.

Learning (including from initial procurement)

2.1   Change is hard to secure. And there are numerous cases of failed Information and Communication Technology (ICT) initiatives. There is therefore inevitable risk in using ICT to drive fundamental change rather than applying modern management techniques to reform the States and the way that public servants work. Given that, and the failure in the 2014 procurement exercise, effective learning by the States is a key means of reducing that risk.

2.2   In this section, I consider:

- the changes implemented to date;
- the evidence of learning from the initial procurement exercise; and
- the evidence of other learning.

Changes implemented to date

2.3   There is demonstrable evidence of change following the appointment of a new Senior Responsible Officer. A new eGov Procurement Strategy was published in 2015 that:

- combined the design and delivery stages of eGov capability through planned procurement of a Design Authority function. The Design Authority is intended to provide the expertise in digital transformation by establishing the vision for eGov in the States and the operating model required to achieve it;
- broke down the procurement of deliverables into smaller work packages, each of which would be separately procured; and
- distinguished between:
   - o 'foreground projects' - digitally focused departmental or cross-departmental projects of varying scale and complexity intended to build confidence through tangible delivery of service improvements and cost savings (see Exhibit 3); and
   - o 'core workstreams' - the States wide longer term workstreams which underpin the eGov programme, deliverable over three years. The four workstreams are at early, and different, stages of development and some provide the building blocks for the foreground projects to be delivered (see Exhibit 4).
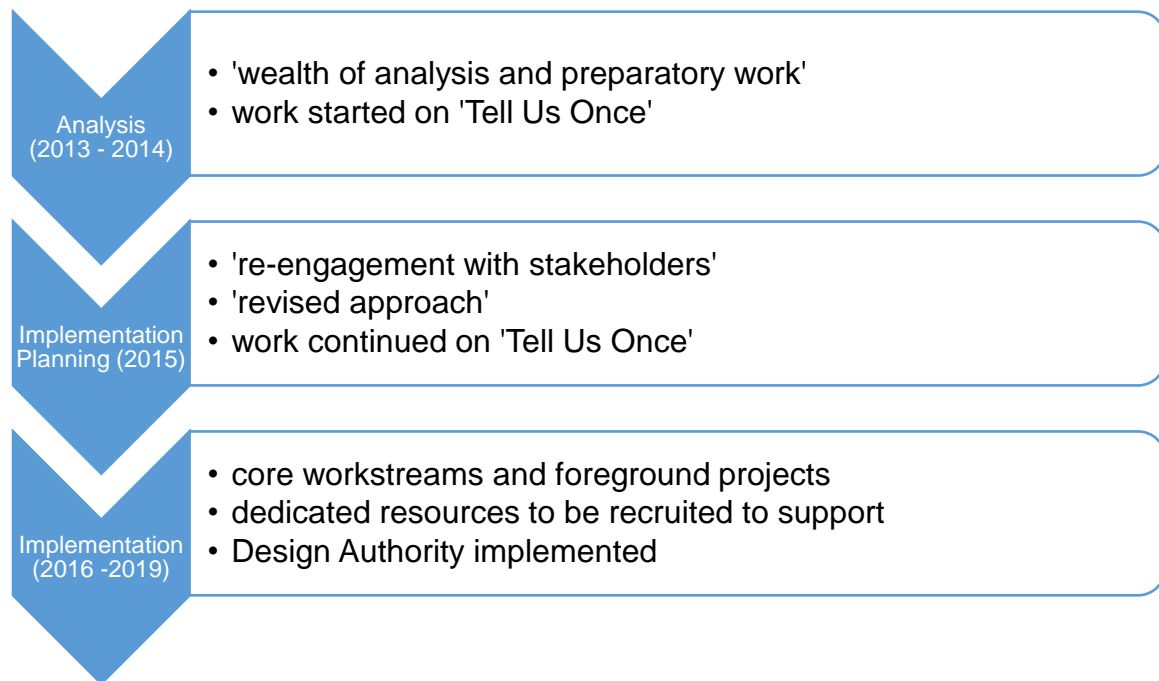
Exhibit 3: Examples of 'Foreground' projects

Title	Description
Tell Us Once (TUO)	A cross-departmental initiative to ensure that as islanders update personal information on one States' system, data in other States' systems is automatically updated.
The Gazette	An initiative to replace official public notices currently published in the Jersey Evening Post (JEP) with online versions.
Health screening	An online booking system for breast cancer screening appointments, enabling patients to choose convenient dates and times. It aims to improve screening take-up and reduce the number of missed appointments. This approach is being considered for other clinical services.
Car park occupancy levels	An initiative to provide live updates to alert drivers to which car parks have vacant parking spaces.
Bus timetable	An initiative to replace current texting system with Smart phone information on when buses will arrive at stops.

Exhibit 4: 'Core' workstreams

Enterprise data
- Addresses the way information is specified, defined and organised across departments so that it can be easily and securely integrated and effectively retrieved for both internal and external purposes. This all operates within the confines of data protection legislation.

eGov infrastructure
- Includes online authentication, online payments, online forms, websites and alternatives for those unable or unwilling to use digital systems.

Enterprise architecture
- Covers a road map for achieving the aims of the programme and the information and technical architecture required (including for cyber security).

Access Jersey
- Includes a customer service hub, by providing support, advice and guidance and facilities for customers to access public services through digital channels.

2.4   In addition, a programme definition document was signed off by the Programme Board in October 2015 detailing the phases of the programme (see Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5: Phases of the programme

Phase	Details
Analysis (2013 - 2014)	• 'wealth of analysis and preparatory work' • work started on 'Tell Us Once'
Implementation Planning (2015)	• 're-engagement with stakeholders' • 'revised approach' • work continued on 'Tell Us Once'
Implementation (2016 -2019)	• core workstreams and foreground projects • dedicated resources to be recruited to support • Design Authority implemented

Evidence of learning from the initial procurement exercise

2.5   Structured organisation wide learning, agreed at a senior level corporately, is a key mechanism by which organisations gain assurance that learning has taken place and is a key means of embedding a learning culture.

2.6   In response to an information request I made when undertaking this review in November 2015, senior individuals now involved in the eGov programme reviewed and documented their learning from the initial procurement exercise. This does indicate that some learning has taken place and there is an awareness of the action that is needed in light of the learning (see Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6: Examples of learning identified by management and action taken

Learning	Action to date	Action proposed by management
Documentation was often inaccessible as it was overly technical and academic for the audience	More accessible communication via presentations	Continuing aim for simple, concise summary documentation and presentations
Overly complex and large brief for aborted procurement	Separation of programme into more manageable work packages	
Failure to identify attributable benefits created a perception that the programme was 'all costs'		Consider allocation of future savings from the programme to appropriate departments as part of the Reform agenda in the Medium Term Financial Plan
eGov programme isolated from ICT function	Information Services Department (ISD) Director sits on the eGov Programme Board	

2.7   However, this exercise is not a substitute for structured, States wide learning:

- there was no formal capture of learning from parties not as closely involved in the programme. Although the Corporate Management Board (CMB) had little experience of eGov, the learning did not include identifying opportunities for digital enterprise management training at senior management level;
- the learning was not explicitly shared or endorsed outside the programme team. The CMB reviewed and re-committed to the core principles from the original Business Case, but other learning could have been used to support a common understanding of what the States is seeking to achieve through eGov and why the initial procurement exercise did not meet the need;
- the documents prepared did not identify key actions taken in response to the learning or, where relevant, those planned (with a timetable and responsibility for delivery); neither did it identify where learning should be targeted and action taken more widely, including within other departments; and
- the learning did not identify what appears to me to be a key learning point from the original process, namely the decision making processes surrounding the failed procurement.

Evidence of other learning

2.8   Learning organisations seek to apply learning from particular situations more widely. Only then do they truly become 'learning organisations'.

2.9   In 2012 the consulting firm Atos undertook a customer mapping project, which looked at external customer interactions with Government services. The work concluded that the States needed to:

- develop a strategy for 'channel shift' (moving to digital channels from non-digital ways of working);
- adopt a customer management model; and
- implement some exemplar projects.

2.10   The third of these recommendations was carried forward into the 2014 Business Case, which identified exemplar projects some of which are the current foreground projects. However, the first two, which underpin the third, were not implemented.

2.11   The CMB, which includes members of the current eGov Sponsoring Group, was aware of and discussed these recommendations. However, it was not until my review was underway in late 2015 that the eGov Programme Board was alerted to the Atos work and findings. Workstreams due to start in 2016 would directly benefit from knowing about the work: 'Assisted Digital' and 'Access Jersey' are both concerned with improving and supporting access to online services for citizens.

2.12   In January 2016 the eGov Programme Board considered how to use the Atos report within the specifications for future eGov workstreams and projects.

2.13   The newly established Design Authority is currently developing a document library as a common point of reference for all those working with the eGov programme to ensure that in future key documents are available and shared.
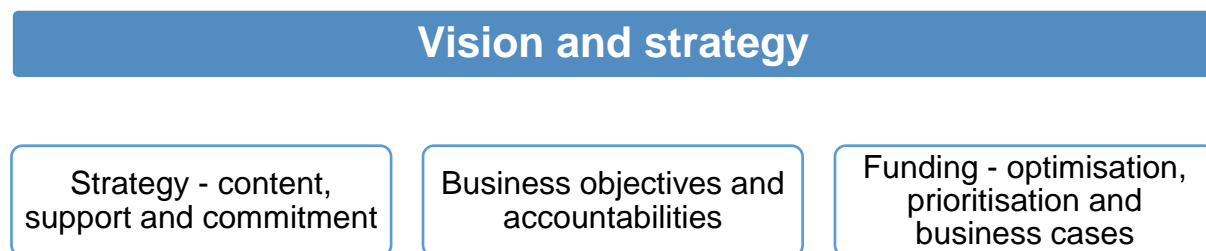
Recommendations

R1   Routinely undertake structured learning (including from other projects); identify actions to be taken; secure senior level understanding, commitment and endorsement; and monitor implementation.

R2   Review the reasons for weaknesses in decision making over the initial procurement, identify corrective action, secure senior level endorsement and monitor implementation.

Vision and strategy

3.1 Implementing and securing the benefits of eGov is challenging and complex. It requires:

- a clear, agreed vision of what is to be achieved, as part of an overarching corporate framework;
- a comprehensive and coherent strategy to get there;
- an approach which treats the whole organisation as a single enterprise, emphasising the principles, standards, skills and infrastructure that make it possible for component parts to work in consistent ways; and
- a digital leadership capability, including building digital enterprise skills into core requirements for senior appointments.

3.2 Simply digitising existing processes will not deliver all the benefits of eGov.

3.3 In this section I explore three different strands of vision and strategy (see Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7: Vision and strategy – strands explored

Vision and strategy

Strategy - content, support and commitment	Business objectives and accountabilities	Funding - optimisation, prioritisation and business cases

Strategy, content, support and commitment

3.4 An eGov programme cannot operate in a vacuum. It is a key part of securing reform. Its effectiveness is reduced by weaknesses in the corporate arrangements for, and leadership experience of, identifying, planning, communicating and monitoring:

- what an organisation intends to change; and
- the skills and resources required to secure that change.

3.5 But an effective vision for eGov for the States is not possible given the:
- absence of a vision for Public Sector Reform and what the end-state looks like; and
- lack of a corporate plan that brings together how different resources (financial, human, information and asset) will be used to secure the States' objectives.

More narrowly, there are only fragmented statements of the objectives of the eGov programme (such as those set out in the 2014 Business Case) and the strategy for the programme has yet to be finalised.

3.6   The need for 'digital leadership' training is recognised by the eGov programme. There is an intention to make available a differentiated series of role-based training from formal qualifications to general awareness:

- two eGov team members are undertaking the Academy of Digital Business Leaders' (ADBL) Digital Leadership qualification to test its appropriateness for a sub-set of States leaders;
- the programme is considering a variety of executive leadership training opportunities offered by ADBL, including workshops and awareness sessions;
- the eGov programme has initiated work with the central Human Resources function to:
  o extend the digital leadership content of the recently commissioned 'managers to leaders' training; and
  o ensure that any additional digital leadership training dovetails with the States' corporate learning and development programme.

3.7   The programme has set an initial budget of £100,000 and expects to have a plan agreed and initiated by June 2016. The basis for this 'holding figure' of £100,000 is not documented. I understand the Programme Board intends to revisit this and determine its level of commitment both to initial and on-going training. However, no timetable for this is yet in place.

3.8   The eGov programme risk register identifies as a risk disagreement about the underlying approach to eGov. But, given the lack of explicit agreement on its role in Public Sector Reform, it is likely that not only the approach but also the overall aims of eGov are not commonly understood across senior management. This in turn is likely to be linked to different levels of experience of digital enterprise management.

3.9   Recent communications from the eGov team have emphasised the need to look beyond technology – and that is an important message central to the success of eGov. However:

- that emphasis on wider organisational and cultural issues is not evident in all individual projects, increasing the risk that projects are delivered 'successfully' but fail to secure the underlying strategic objectives; and
- there is a conscious emphasis on 'foreground' projects at the expense of the 'core' workstreams that provide the essential underpinnings for organisational change. This focus means that there is an increased risk that the fundamental changes required to secure the benefits of eGov are not achieved.

Recommendations

R3   Put in place arrangements to foster a common understanding of the vision for and scope of Public Sector Reform within senior leadership teams.

R4   Finalise the strategy for eGov in light of the agreed scope for Public Sector Reform, making sure that:

- there is a common understanding of what it means for all parts of the States;
- training needs are assessed, budgeted for and training put in place so that senior managers can increasingly contribute to and operate within the digital enterprise management environment; and
- new appointments are routinely made with eGov competence as a core requirement, so that digital leadership capability and capacity is continually increased.

R5   Reflect the dimensions of the eGov finalised strategy in all communications of the eGov programme and individual eGov workstreams and projects.

Business objectives and accountabilities

3.10   Clear vision and strategy is only a start. To secure action the vision and strategy need to be understood comprehensively before translation into business objectives, with clear accountabilities for delivery.

3.11   My review has identified weaknesses in the arrangements for aligning the objectives of individual projects with those for the programme as a whole:

- there are no SMART (Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) objectives for the eGov programme nor a roadmap for achieving objectives. SMART objectives would provide a bridge from the overarching vision to individual projects, enhancing decision making and reducing the risk of non-alignment of individual projects with the objectives of the programme;
- the 2014 Business Case which sets out high level organisational and customer benefits has neither been withdrawn nor replaced, despite the failure in the initial procurement. Although the new Senior Responsible Officer assessed the continuing relevance of the document in light of changes to approach, the outcome of the review is not documented. The ambiguous status of the document increases the risk of non-alignment of individual projects to States wide objectives;
- documentation for individual eGov projects does not consistently use the language of the Business Case. It is therefore difficult to see how individual projects align to the original objectives of the programme; and
- criteria used to adopt projects into the eGov programme have not been clearly set out, increasing the risk that projects that only loosely relate to the programme's objectives are adopted.

3.12   To date, the programme has not developed a strategy for eGov or roles and responsibilities for eGov within a defined data security architecture. Management intends that the Design Authority function, which started work in early 2016 under an interim agreement, will progress this crucial piece of work.

3.13   In June 2015 I published a report on information security within the States. My findings are directly relevant to the eGov programme. In the context of the changes to the risk landscape and new threats to data and information when held in digital format, I identified that the States needed to be confident that:
- a new, inclusive and corporate approach to information security is adopted so that information security is embedded in ways of working throughout the States; and
- sufficient appropriate skills and resources are in place to manage the threats and vulnerabilities.

3.14   I have also identified some organisational issues that increase the risk of non-delivery:

- the team structure for the eGov programme is still developing with some gaps in key workstream and project management roles;
- the scope of responsibilities of the Programme Management Office (PMO), planned to be established as part of the wider Public Sector Reform programme, has yet to be clarified. Clear allocation of respective roles between this Office and eGov Programme Board would reduce the risk of confusion and consequent non-delivery;
- the relationship between the new ISD Business Support Groups (BSGs) and the eGov programme has not been clear but is improving. The BSGs will provide a range of services at departmental level, including relationship management, development of departmental IT strategies and plans, assisting in the review of business process design and serving as 'technical owner' of departmental systems. Plans include that the BSGs will be the single point of contact for eGov within departments, but this is not yet in place. Without clarity of the relationship between the BSGs and eGov programme, and strong collaboration, there is a risk of fragmentation.

Recommendations

R6   Adopt and embed SMART objectives and a roadmap for implementation of the new eGov strategy.

R7   Develop and implement a strategy for cyber security within the eGov programme in line with the work already underway in response to my review of information security.

R8   Clarify programme, workstream and project management responsibilities for eGov.

R9   Clarify the roles of ISD Business Support Groups in the eGov programme.

Funding – optimisation, prioritisation and business case

3.15 The capital programme includes a budget for eGov, an element of which has been re-profiled into 2016. However:

- there is no rationale for the budget in the context of the current reformulation of the programme;
- as some of the funding for foreground projects comes from departmental budgets, the total resources available for eGov are not clear;
- future revenue costs have not been agreed or reflected in planned reductions in other budgets; and
- although the Design Authority is responsible for agreeing cyber security arrangements as part of the Enterprise Architecture workstream, the budget for cyber security has not yet been determined.

3.16 In the absence of an agreed eGov strategy and objectives, agreement to fund individual foreground projects is undertaken on an ad hoc basis. There are no clear criteria for approval and the funding decisions the Senior Responsible Officer makes are not documented. This increases the risk that funding is allocated to projects which make a lower contribution to corporate objectives.

3.17 The Programme Manager is developing a new proforma against which to assess projects seeking funding or other resources as part of the eGov programme. However:

- although the proforma will improve the rigour and transparency of the process, in the absence of strategic objectives and the operating model to be developed by the Design Authority, it will not anchor funding decisions in organisational priorities and approaches; and
- the draft proforma reviewed as part of my work did not require applicants to specify how the stated approach, 'Simplify, Automate, Save', would be addressed for all foreground projects.

3.18 To date there has been an inconsistent level and quality of detail in business case submissions for the eGov programme. An A3 document was developed which set out headline information required, but the quality of how this has been completed varies.

3.19 In early 2016 the Programme Manager developed a 'benefits map' which assists in assessing how well potential eGov projects link via their outputs to the States' strategic objectives. This is not yet operational but should support improvements in decision making about the 'strategic fit' of projects. However, maximum benefit will only be secured when it is updated to reflect the finalised eGov strategy and the States' corporate plan.
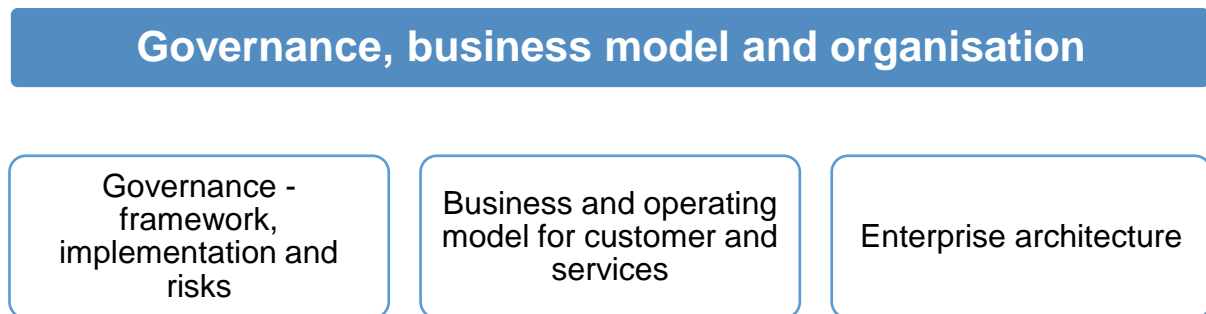
Recommendations

R10   Validate the capital and future revenue budget for eGov (including cybersecurity and training) in light of the revised eGov strategy, perhaps by commissioning an independent test of cost estimates and profile.

R11   Enhance arrangements for making rigorous and transparent decisions on project and workstream funding in the context of strategic priorities and the revised eGov strategy.

Governance, business model and organisation

4.1   Successful implementation of eGov requires a sound framework for oversight of the programme and for understanding and managing risks. But it also requires a clear understanding of how an organisation is going to deliver services and of the systems necessary to deliver those services. Exhibit 8 shows the areas that I have explored.
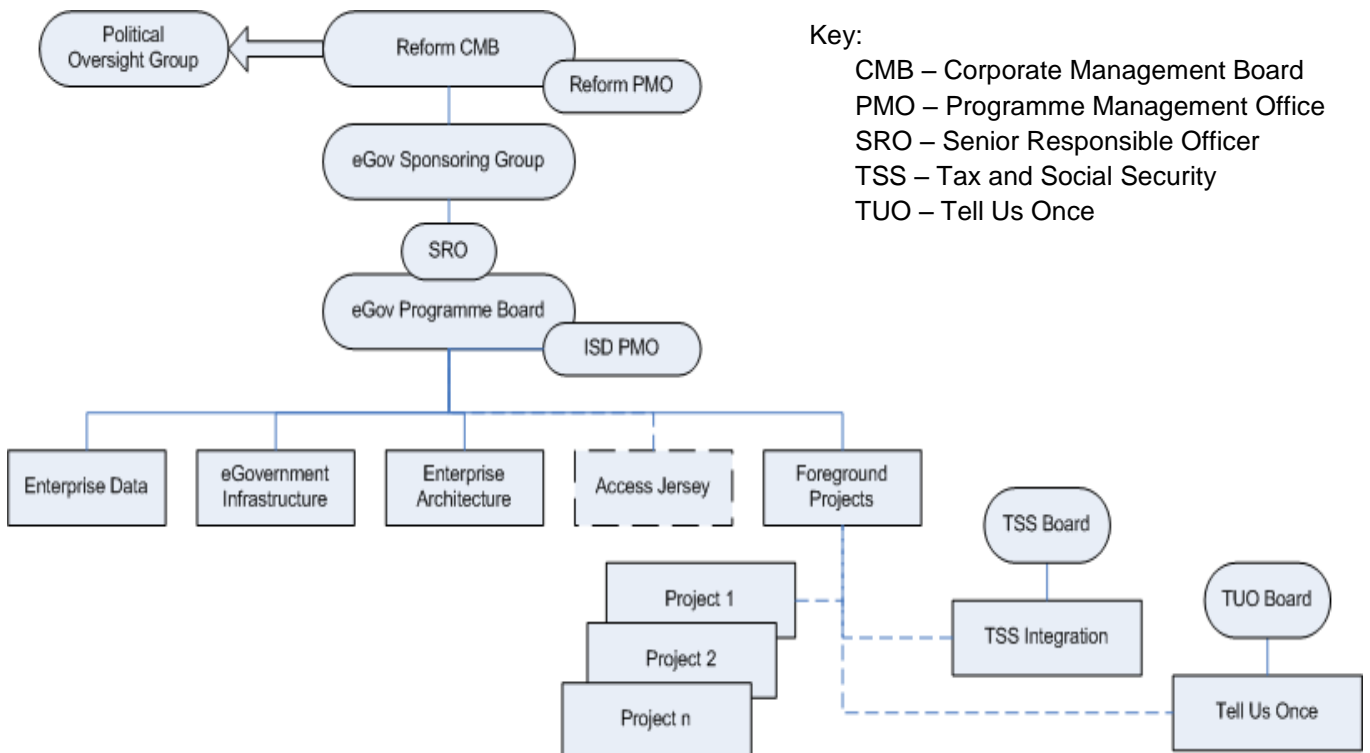
Exhibit 8: Governance, business model and organisation – strands explored

Governance – framework, implementation and risks

4.2   The eGov programme has established governance arrangements including a Programme Board and Sponsoring Group (see Exhibit 9).

Exhibit 9: eGov programme governance

Key:
    CMB – Corporate Management Board
    PMO – Programme Management Office
    SRO – Senior Responsible Officer
    TSS – Tax and Social Security
    TUO – Tell Us Once

4.3 However, there are weaknesses in the arrangements put in place:

- there are no terms of reference for the Sponsoring Group and, in consequence, a lack of clarity of the respective roles of the Programme Board and Sponsoring Group;
- the paper trail for communication between the Board and the Sponsoring Group does not adequately demonstrate accountability or responsibility for decision making between these two bodies. The Senior Responsible Officer determines what outputs from one are shared with the other;
- the output from the Sponsoring Group meetings is in the form of actions agreed as recorded by the Senior Responsible Officer. This does not provide an adequate audit trail to show how options are explored and decisions reached, increasing the risk that required improvements in decision making are not made; and
- escalation arrangements are still evolving.

4.4 The eGov Programme Board intends that the Design Authority function will review the arrangements and establish what is required for strong programme governance. Given the States' lack of experience in implementing cross-departmental transformational change there are significant risks to delivery of the States' ambitions.

4.5 There have been improvements in governance arrangements. Until the Programme Manager joined in September 2015, Programme Board meetings were not documented in a way that set out the remit covered and actions agreed. In consequence it was not possible to demonstrate that the Board was discharging its responsibilities or to monitor implementation of agreed actions in a systematic way. Management recognised the weakness and, since October 2015, the Programme Board has set standing items for the agenda, although not all of these are well supported by information flows.

4.6 Quality assurance (QA) is a key means of minimising risk of non-delivery or inadequate delivery of elements of the programme. Plans for QA of the eGov programme have been developed, including independent QA of the Design Authority. However, these plans have yet to be agreed.

4.7 The Design Authority includes responsibility for establishing policies and standards and for overseeing compliance with them. Development and consistent application of policies and standards is essential to the implementation of eGov across the States. However, how this will be managed alongside the existing eGov and evolving Public Sector Reform governance frameworks has yet to be agreed. The Programme Board has identified risks both that individual departments ignore the Design Authority and that the States' existing programme and financial management arrangements might unnecessarily constrain the work of the Design Authority.

4.8   Given the significant risks faced, effective arrangements to identify, assess, scale and manage threats to delivery are crucial. The eGov programme has established a risks and issues log, including categorisation of risk and identification of risks that will be treated, tolerated or transferred. However, at the time of my review the risk log did not record:

- a 'next review' date to provide a focus for review of risks, allowing more frequent review of some risks and a trigger for review of tolerated risks; or
- the change (if any) in the assessment of a risk.

4.9   In addition, there is evidence of weaknesses in the operation of the risk log which together with the points above, indicate a lack of active management of eGov risks and issues (see Exhibit 10).

Exhibit 10: Review of risk log

Weakness	Example
Evidence for closing risks not always evident	The risk 'Processes are poorly designed, inefficient and/or not customer focused' was closed with the recorded reason 'no longer relevant'. There is no record of why it was no longer considered relevant.
Threshold for tolerating risks not clear	The risk 'The procurement value is estimated and does not include contingency. There is a risk that tenders are received which exceed available budgets'. This risk was subject to mitigating action recorded as 'Estimations have been based on benchmark data. However, the true cost of delivery will not be fully understood until further assessment is undertaken.' There is no timetable for conducting this further assessment nor, if the assessment was undertaken, is there a record of what it revealed.
Inadequate description of mitigating action	For the risk 'Unable to recruit cost-effective project managers and analysts; Increased costs, project delays' the mitigating action is described as 'Can be covered by an extended Professional Services contract (more costly)'. The mitigation does not address the cost element of the recorded risk.

Recommendations

R12   Clarify the governance arrangements for the eGov programme, including:
- the respective roles of and relationship between the Programme Board and Sponsoring Group;
- the arrangements for quality assurance; and
- the scope of control and influence of the Design Authority.

R13 Review the design and operation of the risk management process for the eGov programme and make any improvements identified.

Business and operating model for customers and services

4.10 Pivotal to the successful delivery of eGov is the clear framework of how services are to be delivered to users, enabled by technology. This is a key role of the Design Authority. However, despite some projects being 'in flight', there is no agreed operating model for users and services. This means that projects are being undertaken which might not accord with the business and operating model subsequently developed. It is also not always clear if projects have been taken through the 'Simplify, Automate, Save' approach. The extent to which this is an issue has not yet been assessed by the Design Authority.

4.11 There is also an overarching cultural issue of securing departmental buy-in to proposals that are for collective benefit. How departments will be incentivised to act corporately is not identified. The Programme Board has recorded risks that:

- savings will be made by departments rather than the programme. This risk is recorded as 'tolerate'. But not monitoring and managing it could lead to difficulties in evaluating the impact of the programme; and
- there are potential winners and losers in cross-departmental projects, meaning that the losers have less incentive to participate. The mitigating action includes introducing Digital Champions across the States. But this mitigation does not address the fundamental role of leadership in securing corporate working.

4.12 An integral part of a new business and operating model is a phased discontinuance of delivery through non-digital models. A consultancy report prepared in 2012 recommended work to support 'channel shift'. However, the States has not yet defined how non-digital service models will be closed, while facilitating access to services for those who cannot or will not use digital methods. 'Core' workstreams are designed to address these issues but are yet to be delivered.

4.13 Early foreground projects will not deliver if they do not secure:
- a fundamental change in the way people work;
- an enhanced focus on data quality; and
- a requirement to 'turn off' old channels of delivery.

If they fail, the benefits (including the financial benefits) of the eGov programme will not be achieved. One project which has not proceeded as quickly as originally intended is the 'Gazette' project (see Case study).

Case study: The Gazette project

This 'foreground' project is intended to replace official SoJ notices currently published in the Jersey Evening Post (JEP), such as parish, public and enactments notices, with an online version. Benefits to islanders include being able to choose which notices to receive via email through personalising online requirements.

This project was initiated in 2015 in direct response to a request from the Council of Ministers to reduce advertising costs. The project initiation document included estimated cumulative net financial benefits of approximately £141,000 by the end of 2017 and £429,000 by the end of 2019.

However, by late 2015, because of failure to secure agreement on how required changes in business practices would be managed:

- delivery of the project had slipped by six months; and
- based on the original estimates, the forecast saving to the end of 2017 would be reduced by more than 40% to approximately £83,000.

In particular, two situations arose which had not been properly planned for:

- the Council of Ministers required time to consider the proposed approach to the online solution. System testing and the launch of the system to departments and parishes was as a result delayed by six months; and
- discussions with the JEP about how and when the printed notices would be withdrawn were more extensive than expected. In January 2016, a 12 month period of full parallel running was confirmed whereas the initial financial benefits were calculated on the assumption of beginning the phased switch to purely digital delivery from the start of 2016.

Publishing the Gazette notices solely online requires a change in the law. The project team anticipated the risks this might present in terms of complexity and time, and in August 2015 secured the Greffe's assurance that the change would be 'simple' to achieve. However, the necessary proposition has not yet been scheduled for debate by the Council of Ministers, introducing another risk to the timetable for delivery.

The project team does not plan to calculate the impact of the delay in securing the 'turn off' of an old channel of delivery until after the debate has taken place. The lack of urgency in assessing and escalating the threats to planned project outcomes points to insufficient 'ownership' of, or accountability for, achieving the savings target.

Even when the project is delivered, no agreement is in place to ensure that departments discontinue 'run-of-paper' advertising, in addition to or instead of using the online Gazette.

Recommendations

R14   Clearly set out the States' target business and operating model and ensure this is comprehensively understood by the Council of Ministers, CMB and senior leadership teams.

R15   Develop effective mechanisms to promote joint working towards corporate objectives, including clarification of accountabilities and escalation arrangements where necessary.

R16   Ensure the closedown of non-digital delivery channels and the legacy processes associated with them, in line with the eGov programme and benefits to be delivered in a timely manner.

Enterprise architecture

4.14   Early informed decisions on the technical infrastructure to support eGov minimise the risks in delivery. The 2014 Business Case helpfully set out assumptions for common platforms and its continuing relevance was reviewed in 2016.

4.15   Enterprise architecture is one of the four 'core' workstreams. Budget and headcount allowance have been secured to resource this workstream but to date efforts to make key appointments have failed. This increases the risk to delivery.

4.16   In January 2016 the Programme Board identified a risk that project delivery was compromised due to poor quality departmental data. The response has been to emphasise the data management workstream and the important role of the recently appointed Data Manager in agreeing and implementing a robust policy for data sharing and data quality. However, the specific actions to address poor quality departmental data and ensure compliance with the policy are not yet clearly set out.

4.17   I identified information management and data quality issues in my report on Freedom of Information and also in use of management information in the Health and Social Services Department. Improving both is a cultural and technical challenge that will take effort and time. I have not repeated the recommendations that relate to this issue in this report.

Recommendations

R17   Ensure sufficient management resources are in place for core workstreams.

R18   Expedite the planned development and implementation of policies and procedures for data sharing (and related data quality) and of arrangements to secure compliance.

Change management

5.1   eGov is about securing change but change is hard to achieve. It requires substantial investment in people, tools, policies, and processes. Technology is but one tool; on its own it does not secure change. It is not a silver bullet which will deliver the eGov vision. I have therefore reviewed different strands of the arrangements in place to secure change (see Exhibit 11).

Exhibit 11: Change management – strands explored

<div style="text-align:center; border:1px solid #4a7ebb; background:#5b8cc4; color:white; padding:10px; font-weight:bold; font-size:1.3em;">Change management</div>

Approach and stakeholders	Programme and contract management	Technical implementation

Approach and stakeholders

5.2   Securing 'buy-in' is essential to the success of any major change programme. The new approach to the eGov programme has identified that establishing strong links with stakeholders is a priority. The Senior Responsible Officer in particular has focused on internal and external presentations and meetings. However, the Programme Board acknowledges there is more to do. A communications plan has been drafted setting out internal and external stakeholder groups, how they will be involved and how their communication needs will be satisfied. It identifies departments and the Political Oversight Group for Public Sector Reform (including as part of governance arrangements, see Exhibit 9) as key stakeholders.

5.3   The 2015 eGov procurement strategy focussed on procuring the capability to undertake digital transformation. It recognised that the Design Authority function needs to be focused on helping the States to develop its in-house capability for change management. The recent appointment of the successful tenderer to serve as the Design Authority is an important step but, on its own, does not secure organisational 'buy-in'. Implementation requires strong leadership and corporate working.

Recommendation

R19 Focus leadership efforts on securing buy-in to the Design Authority function and the corporate working necessary to secure the full benefits from it.

Programme and contract management

5.4   Effective delivery of eGov requires effective management of the programme as a whole, individual workstreams, projects and individual contracts.

5.5   A Programme Manager for the eGov programme is now in place and starting to develop the structured, documented arrangements that had not previously characterised the programme.

5.6   In addition, the ISD Programme Management Office (PMO) has established a process for monitoring project delivery including of the eGov foreground projects, using an A3 return completed monthly by each project lead. Review of these sheets for a sample of projects identified inconsistent completion and, in instances, significant concerns about completion.

5.7   As discussed in the Case study above, there is significant slippage in and on-going risk to securing the benefits from the Gazette project. However the A3 monitoring sheet for December 2015 did not include:

- sufficient detail of the current position or the specific action being taken to resolve issues;
- the consequences of not securing the planned financial savings target; or
- the clear implications for the wider eGov programme and the need for action by the eGov Programme Board.

5.8   The eGov Programme Manager, ISD PMO and project leads meet monthly to review project progress. However, there is no established information flow in terms of agreed actions and reporting to the eGov Programme Board.

5.9   In January 2016 a composite report from the A3 submissions was prepared, showing progress to December 2015. This highlights:

- the gaps in project management and technical lead resources and the delays this is causing;
- that not all projects have an identified or at least a disclosed budget;
- that some projects are 'awaiting the reprioritisation and re-scope of the eGov programme' without specifying when this is planned; and
- some pipeline projects have submitted business cases and are awaiting approval, without specifying the timeline for decisions.

5.10   The composite report, however, did not identify corrective actions agreed.

5.11   The eGov programme 'people' resource plan is an operational plan showing the allocation of project managers, business managers and technical leads to projects. But it does not fulfil the more strategic objective of identifying the people and skills required over the lifetime of the programme, whether those people and skills are within the States or outside. Nor does it reflect flexible mechanisms for securing those resources.

5.12   Although the eGov programme has identified a need to use contractors to augment internal capacity to upskill and develop internal resources, including by securing skills transfer from the Design Authority, it has yet to develop a plan to address the identified need.

Recommendations

R20   Improve the capacity and approach to how the programme is managed to ensure that:
- timely, comprehensive and accurate information is available; and
- the programme directly supports the specific needs of business transformation through eGov processes.

R21   Develop and implement a people and skills plan for eGov, including flexible mechanisms for securing skills both within and outside the States and covering the transfer of skills from the Design Authority.

Technical implementation

5.13   Technology does not drive a successful eGov programme. But it facilitates it, including through enabling services to be re-designed so they do not have to be centred around government offices. Clear identification of technical solutions within a consistent framework is a key component of success of an eGov programme.

5.14   However:

- in advance of identification of corporate technical solutions, a number of foreground projects have had to make case by case decisions on technical solutions using 'off the shelf' solutions. Such an approach allows progress on the projects but creates potential impediments to cross-departmental working and inefficiencies in the programme as a whole; and
- the eGov Business Case set out some assumptions on technical solutions but the status of these is currently unclear.

5.15   The Design Authority function will, once established, have a clear role in identifying and communicating corporate technical solutions and standards.

Conclusions

6.1 eGov is not easy. It is about so much more than technology and touches fundamentally on how government interacts externally with citizens and internally between functions and activities. Successful implementation goes beyond systems and processes to vision, culture and skills.

6.2 And even the technological challenges are substantial. The States is effectively trying to rebuild much of the existing technology while delivering a reform agenda, making savings and maintaining operations.

6.3 Many of the problems that the States has faced – and continues to face – in delivery of eGov stem from corporate issues that I have referred to in previous reports:

- a lack of documentation and common understanding of clear principles for Public Sector Reform;
- the absence of effective corporate planning at a States-wide level, setting out how all resources (including ICT and people) will be used to deliver strategic objectives;
- the operation of a substantial volume of legacy systems;
- an absence of a strong culture of programme and project management;
- weaknesses in the understanding and application of risk management;
- a strong sense of departmentalism as opposed to corporate working; and
- an absence of the culture of a 'learning organisation'.

6.4 The programme got off to a bad start. But that does not mean that substantial benefits cannot be secured. Under the new Senior Responsible Officer there have been significant improvements to project and risk management and continuing improvements are planned. The chances of success are maximised if there is concerted action in response to my recommendations. Many of my recommendations relate to corporate vision, commitment and arrangements and cannot be implemented by the eGov team alone.

Appendix 1: Summary of recommendations

Learning (including from initial procurement)

R1   Routinely undertake structured learning (including from other projects); identify actions to be taken; secure senior level understanding, commitment and endorsement; and monitor implementation.

R2   Review the reasons for weaknesses in decision making over the initial procurement, identify corrective action, secure senior level endorsement and monitor implementation.

Vision and strategy

R3   Put in place arrangements to foster a common understanding of the vision for and scope of Public Sector Reform within senior leadership teams.

R4   Finalise the strategy for eGov in light of the agreed scope for Public Sector Reform, making sure that:
  * there is a common understanding of what it means for all parts of the States;
  * training needs are assessed, budgeted for and training put in place so that senior managers can increasingly contribute to and operate within the digital enterprise management environment; and
  * new appointments are routinely made with eGov competence as a core requirement, so that digital leadership capability and capacity is continually increased.

R5   Reflect the dimensions of the eGov finalised strategy in all communications of the eGov programme and individual eGov workstreams and projects.

R6   Adopt and embed SMART objectives and a roadmap for implementation of the new eGov strategy.

R7   Develop and implement a strategy for cyber security within the eGov programme in line with the work already underway in response to my review of information security.

R8   Clarify programme, workstream and project management responsibilities for eGov.

R9   Clarify the roles of ISD Business Support Groups in the eGov programme.

R10   Validate the capital and future revenue budget for eGov (including cybersecurity and training) in light of the revised eGov strategy, perhaps by commissioning an independent test of cost estimates and profile.

R11   Enhance arrangements for making rigorous and transparent decisions on project and workstream funding in the context of strategic priorities and the revised eGov strategy.

Governance, business model and organisation

R12   Clarify the governance arrangements for the eGov programme, including:
- the respective roles of and relationship between the Programme Board and Sponsoring Group;
- the arrangements for quality assurance; and
- the scope of control and influence of the Design Authority.

R13   Review the design and operation of the risk management process for the eGov programme and make any improvements identified.

R14   Clearly set out the States' target business and operating model and ensure this is comprehensively understood by the Council of Ministers, CMB and senior leadership teams.

R15   Develop effective mechanisms to promote joint working towards corporate objectives, including clarification of accountabilities and escalation arrangements where necessary.

R16   Ensure the closedown of non-digital delivery channels and the legacy processes associated with them, in line with the eGov programme and benefits to be delivered in a timely manner.

R17   Ensure sufficient management resources are in place for core workstreams.

R18   Expedite the planned development and implementation of policies and procedures for data sharing (and related data quality) and of arrangements to secure compliance.

Change management

R19   Focus leadership efforts on securing buy-in to the Design Authority function and the corporate working necessary to secure the full benefits from it.

R20   Improve the capacity and approach to how the programme is managed to ensure that:
- timely, comprehensive and accurate information is available; and
- the programme directly supports the specific needs of business transformation through eGov processes.

R21   Develop and implement a people and skills plan for eGov, including flexible mechanisms for securing skills both within and outside the States and covering the transfer of skills from the Design Authority.