

Better public services: indicative work programme

Ministers have sought advice on how to work through the material provided in the ‘Smaller and Better’ report of December 2010. This note sets out a potential plan.

	Phase I												
										Phase II			
	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	2012 +		
Ministerial Group (MG)	Signal direction 8 Feb: PM Speech 23 Feb: Finance Minister Speech	1 st meeting	2 nd meeting	3 rd meeting	4 th meeting	5 th meeting	6 th meeting	7 th meeting	8 th meeting	Consider ongoing role for Ministerial Group Decide ongoing governance arrangements			
		ToR to Cabinet	Cabinet decisions on implementing 1 st tranche	Cabinet decisions on approach for 2 nd tranche									
		Agree ToR with AG	AG progress report; design principles										
		March/April: - Progress report on implementing 1 st tranche		Report on contestability approach	Report on continuous improvement approach								
		- Advisory report on 2 nd tranche											
Advisory Group (AG)		Members agreed	Monthly meeting	Monthly meeting	Monthly meeting	Monthly meeting	Monthly meeting	Monthly meeting	Monthly meeting				
		Meet with MG; agree ToR	Progress report for MG	Meet with MG		Meet with MG	Meet with MG						
Secretariat Policy	Establish formally Appoint lead	Overall design principles Progress vote cluster work Project plan	Resources for workstreams Budget communication										
Logistics	Set up AG; draft ToR; budget												
Workstreams	Establish Structure Work-stream	Advise	Scope 2 nd tranche	Fit with work on votes & clusters				Detailed report; including legislative considerations		Establish implementation process			
			Implement	Progress report on 1 st tranche Crown Entities & departments (due diligence)	Implementation decisions by Cabinet				Detailed report; including leg. process etc.				
				Establish Contestability Workstream									
					Est. Continuous improvement Workstream								
Links to current initiatives	Policy Advice Review 4-year budget plans	ECC report on performance tools	BASS business case findings Servicelink business case	Welfare Working Group report Budget									

What matters most?

Seven priority changes (from December report)

1 Make it clear that we are serious about doing this

- Announce a target and deadline

2 Cluster votes

- With a particular focus on justice, economic development, social and natural resources

3 Deal with the clutter

- Address the inefficiency of 78 portfolios, 70 votes, 38 departments

4 Better leadership and support from the centre to drive performance and efficiency

- Strengthen monitoring role, feedback loops and drive on contestability

5 Rationalise agencies where it is worth it

- Withheld under s9(2)(f)(iv) and s9(2)(g)(i)

6 Reduce the number of Crown entities and board members

- Withheld under s9(2)(f)(iv) and s9(2)(g)(i)

7 Rolling value-for-money reviews

- Withheld under s9(2)(f)(iv) and s9(2)(g)(i)

Summary of Immediate Actions

- Signal intent – done
- Establish a central secretariat to drive and oversee change – underway (operational from late February)
- Establish Advisory Group – underway (Cabinet could sign off Terms of Reference and membership in late February)
- Establish a workstream team to drive first tranche of Crown Entities and Departmental Structure work (implementation work from 23 February), and report to Ministers on potential second tranche (March/April)
- Secretariat to lead and manage ongoing policy work programme. Potential starting points:
 - Work on an organisational ‘toolkit’. To cover framework issues such as when policy and operations should be combined or separate; degree of management autonomy, particularly in larger departments; ways to strike the right balance between central leadership and chief executives’ freedom to manage – e.g. around contestability; consistency with other processes such as BASS and procurement. This could also draw on work prompted by the Senior Executives Group (SEG) on budget flexibility.
 - An approach to continuous improvement. This could build from the report on current performance management tools to ECC in March.
 - An approach to value-for-money reviews. This could build from work underway at Treasury.
 - Work with Cabinet Office, as appropriate, to progress ideas around Vote clusters. Will need to link closely to work on structural changes.