

Quality Improvement Toolkit

**Improvement Project Charter and Project Stage Assessment Tool**

HELP SHEET 1

**Why would I use these tools?**

The development of an **Improvement Project Charter** is a cruical step in the execution of your improvement project. It establishes the purpose, scope, measures and targets necessary to achieve success. It identifies key members of the improvement team as well as the Executive Sponser of the project. Support from the organisation leadership will help team members maintain their focus and momentum and protect them from being overloaded with other work. The **Improvement Project Charter** is a “live” document to be used throughout the improvement project. It is used initially to answer and clarify the ‘thinking’ questions in the Model for Improvement: “What are we trying to accomplish”; “How will we know that a change is an improvement?”; “What changes can we make that will result in improvement?”

The Charter also includes an outline project plan which helps you to understand the phases of the improvement journey, the actions required within each phase and provides the opportunity to set out the timescale of your project.

The **Improvement Project Stage Assessment tool** should be used throughout the improvement journey to assess and communicate the current stage of your improvement project. It can help individuals, teams, strategic groups (such as the Community Planning Outcome Improvement Groups) and Executive Sponsers understand if the project is progressing at the necessary pace to achieve the improvement project aim.

The **Improvement Project Charter Assessment Form** can be used by Improvement Teams to review the charter and ensure it has sufficient detail before proceeding to test changes. It can also support peer assessment of Improvement Project Charters.

An Improvement team should use these tools to plan the project, communicate with leadership and keep track of the progress being made.

**What tips and tricks will be useful in facilitating the use of these tools?**

* Engage the Improvement team at the start, rather than presenting them with completed documentation for review
* Co-production of the **Improvement Project Plan** and **Improvement Project Charter** will help build momentum and generate consensus and a sense of purpose.
* Ensure that the **Improvement Project Plan, Project Stage Assessment Tool, Improvement Project Charter** is used at every meeting to provide a focus for discussion and ensure that the team regularly reflects upon its aim and progress made.

**Improvement Project Charter Guidance Note**

**Improvement Project Title:**

You may want to choose a title for your project to engage key stakeholders and provide an overall vision for what you are trying to achieve.

**Executive Sponsor:**

This is often the Chair of the Community Planning Aberdeen Outcome Improvement Group.

**Project Lead:**

All improvement projects should have an identified ‘Project Lead’ who will co-ordinate the team and keep track of progress against key milestone.

**Aim statement**

The aim statement is likely to be taken directly from the Local Outcome Improvement Plan or Locality Plan. It should state what are we trying to accomplish, with a specific timescale and specific target for improvement.

**Link to Local Outcome Improvement Plan**

Please state which Stretch Outcome the project will contribute to. Please also identify any other Stretch Outcomes, Drivers or Projects that the project may be linked with.

**Link to Locality Plans**

Please state which Locality Plans have Community Ideas for Improvement aligned to your project e.g. North, South, Central or None.

**Why this is important and issues with the current system?**

This section should be concise and provide a brief rationale/business case for the improvement project. The expected impact on organisation and/ or customer should be clear. It should provide clarity about the local context and may also refer to national priorities. This section should describe the current system including what is working well and where there are opportunities for improvement. Any statements made should be backed up by data (local data if available). Links should be made to any relevant research to underpin any theory of change.

Questions to consider:

* Does this support prevention and early intervention?
* What are the benefit to clients/ stakeholders/ citizens?
* Are there specific communities or citizens who would benefit most from the planned improvement?
* Are there specific parts of the system or specific processes that require improvement?
* Are costs reduced now or in the future by addressing this issue?
* What published research can you draw on as evidence?

**Measures:** How will we know if a change is an improvement?

Improvement teams should identify the ‘vital few’ measures that will help build understanding about how well systems are working and the impact of changes made to achieve the aim. Measures should be collected at intervals frequent enough to assess progress on the project

* **Outcome measures**

Outcome measures should link directly to your aim statement and should enable understanding of the extent to which progress is being made to achieving the aim.

* **Process measures**

Improvement teams should identify the key processes that contribute to the achievement of the aim. The process measures enable understanding of how well the system is working to achieve the aim/outcome measures.

* **Balancing measures**

Balancing measures are used to track any unintended positive or negative consequences of changes made to existing ways of working.

**Change ideas -** What changes can be made that will result in improvement?

This section should describe changes that will be tested which it is thought will contribute to the achievement of the overall aim. These changes would address any challenges identified in the ‘Why this is important’ section. These change ideas may be drawn from research, best practice documents or suggestions from key stakeholders. Please ensure changes which are community ideas for improvement from our Locality Plans are clearly reflected e.g. Build a network of volunteers trained by youth work team (North Locality Plan). This section should NOT be used to list tasks which have to be completed to manage the improvement project. Tasks or actions should be included in the ‘Outline Project Plan’.

**Location/Test Group**

Have any of our Locality Plans identified potential ideas for you to test? In this section, tell us which location (e.g. Northfield) and test group (e.g. 16-18 year olds) you are going to test your change ideas with. In the why it is important section you will have provided rationale for location/test group.

**Resources**

This section should detail how the change ideas in the charter are going to be resourced. When completing this section, the Project Team should contact the External Funding Team, [stbews@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:stbews@aberdeencity.gov.uk) to discuss any external funding opportunities available that could support delivery of the project. This section should confirm that discussion with the Funding Team has been held and the outcome of that.

**Potential risks and/or barriers to success & actions to address these**

The project may include Change Ideas which address these

**Project Team:**

The project team should include key stakeholders who will contribute to the improvement project, or who may benefit from or be affected by the proposed changes. Teams should consider how citizens and communities are being represented. Where a Community Connector has been identified in the Locality Plans, or by the Locality Empowerment Groups/Priority Neighbourhood Partnerships, they should be reflected in the Project Team. Project teams should include those who will undertake key functions within the project e.g. Project Lead; Data Collection and Analysis; Designing and Testing Changes; Subject Matter Experts.

**Community/User Representation/Engagement**

This section should detail any engagement you have done, or plan to do with communities and/or user groups such children and young people, people with lived experience to ensure your changes planned are informed by these key groups and that there is clear opportunities for people to get involved in your project.

It is important that your engagement is inclusive and recognising the unique circumstances of marginalised groups and considering the most appropriate methods of engagement to encourage all members of the community to voice their opinions, ideas and concerns.  See our Directory of community group by locality and protected characteristics to help you identify groups.

**Community Ideas for Improvement from Locality Plans Aligned to this Project**

In developing the North, South and Central Locality Plans, communities have identified ideas that they believe will improve outcomes in their local area. To support joined up working between Outcome Improvement Groups and locality staff and communities, the community ideas have been mapped against the LOIP projects and included in the [draft CPA Improvement Programme 2024-26.](https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Draft-Improvement-Programme-2024-26.pdf)

This section should detail the community ideas for improvement from the three Locality Plans that are aligned to your project. You will find this information in the [draft CPA Improvement Programme 2024-26.](https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Draft-Improvement-Programme-2024-26.pdf) You will report progress against these ideas via your project updates.

A member of our [Integrated Locality Planning Team](https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/meet-the-locality-team/) will connect with LOIP project managers to discuss working together with communities to take these ideas forward.

**Outline Project Plan:**

This should be used to set out your initial plan about the tasks or actions required to reach key milestones for the project. (This should be reviewed regularly)

**Getting Started** (Project Score 1-3)

What initial activities are required to get started?E.g. Forming the improvement team; developing the project charter; gathering and analysing baseline data; understanding the current system; and connecting with community ideas for improvement through the agreed process.

**Designing and Testing Changes** (Project Score 4-7)

What activities are required to start testing changes?

E.g. Further definition and prioritisation of changes; engagement with customers & colleagues; Identifying the people, place to start testing)

**Implementing and sustaining changes that demonstrate improvement** (Project Score 7-10)

What actions would be required to implement and sustain the changes that have resulted in improvement? E.g. Training?; Changes to procedures?; changes to resources?; Measures to ensure Quality Assurance and Quality Control?

**Spreading Changes** (Project Score 9-10)

What actions are required to reach the full scale of the project?

E.g. Engagement of other teams/colleagues; other locations?

**A BLANK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT CHARTER/OUTLINE PROJECT PLAN AND COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT STATUS TEMPLATE IS PROVIDED BELOW FOR YOUR USE.**

**Improvement Project Charter**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Improvement Project Title** | | |
| **Executive Sponsor** | | |
| **Project Lead**  **Name**:  **Job Role & Organisation**:  **Email Address**: | | |
| **Aim statement** | | |
| **Link to Local Outcome Improvement Plan** | | |
| **Link to Locality Plans** | | |
| **Why this is important and issues with the current system?** | | |
| **What have our communities/children and young people/lived experience said?** | | |
| **Measures**   * **Outcome measures**      * **Process measures** * **Balancing measures** | | |
| **Change ideas** | | |
| **Location/Test Group** | | |
| **Resources** | | |
| **Potential risks and/or barriers to success & actions to address these** | | |
| **Project Team** | | |
| **Community/User Representation/Engagement** | | |
| **Community Ideas for Improvement from Locality Plans Aligned to this Project** | | |
| **Outline Project Plan** | | |
| **Project Stage** | **Actions** | **Timescale** |
| **Getting Started**  (Project Score 1-3) |  |  |
| **Designing and Testing Changes**  (Project Score 4-7) |  |  |
| **Implementing and sustaining changes that demonstrate improvement**  (Project Score 7-10) |  |  |
| **Spreading Changes**  (Project Score 9-10) |  |  |

**Improvement Project Stage Assessment Tool**

The Project Stage Assessment Tool can be used to monitor the progress made with an improvement project.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Stage of Project** | **Description** |
| **1** | Project area identified and agreed (complete for all LOIP projects) | Project has been identified as a priority from the Local Outcome Improvement Plan or Locality Plan |
| **2** | Draft Outline Project Charter and team in place | Draft Improvement Project Charter has been developed (rationale, initial aims, scope, resources, timescales, measures, expected outcomes) and project team formed. |
| **3** | Understanding baseline of current system (Data and practice) | Current system is being analysed- applying tools such as process mapping; cause & effect diagrams etc to understand processes and people, including readiness for change and analysis of baseline data |
| **4** | Project Charter endorsed by CPA Board | Knowledge of the system and other evidence of what could work have been brought together into a theory of change. This has been articulated in a final Improvement Project Charter which has been shared with the CPA Board. (A driver diagram may also be developed to support this stage.) |
| **5** | Change ideas and project measures further refined and prioritised | Range of specific change ideas developed further, measurement plans established and initial PDSAs are being planned |
| **6** | Testing underway | Testing strategy developed and is being deployed. Data being gathered and analysed (e.g. through use of run charts) |
| **7** | Initial indications of improvement | Anecdotal evidence or feedback that changes are resulting in improvement can be reported. |
| **8** | Improvements achieved | Evidence of improvements shows in project measures and has been reported to Community Planning Aberdeen Management Group. Implementation and Spread plans are being developed and deployed. |
| **9** | Sustainable improvement | Implementation plans have been deployed for key changes. Spread plans are developed if appropriate. Data indicates sustainability of impact of changes implemented in system. |
| **10** | Project complete | The aim has been met or exceeded and improvement sustained and spread where appropriate. Changes are now part of business as usual. |

**Improvement Project Charter Assessment Form**

The Improvement Team may find it helpful to use the assessment form below to review the charter and ensure it has sufficient detail before proceeding to test changes. It can also support peer assessment of Improvement Project Charters.

**Assessment**

**1: Not at all 2: To a small extent 3: Somewhat 4: To a large extent 5: To a very great extent or n/a**

**WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Score** | **Comment** |
| Aim relates to the LOIP/ Locality Plans. |  |  |
| Charter description clearly states need for improvement. |  |  |
| Expected impact on organisation and/ or customer is clear |  |  |
| Improvement clearly points to process, product or service or sub-system improvement |  |  |
| Expected outcomes are clear and the team will know when it has completed the project |  |  |
| Specific, numerical goals to be attained |  |  |
| Project can be completed within time frame as identified in the Aim Statement |  |  |

*Total: \_ out of possible 35*

**HOW WILL WE KNOW A CHANGE IS AN IMPROVEMENT?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Score** | **Comment** |
| An appropriate family of measures is identified |  |  |
| Measures identified are directly related to the project description, objectives, and goals |  |  |
| Historical data exist on performance of the process or product to be improved |  |  |
| Outcome, process, and balancing measures are specified |  |  |
| Measures can be collected at intervals frequent enough to assess progress on the project |  |  |
| Improvement in the project measures can reasonably be expected within project time frame |  |  |

*Total: \_ out of possible 30*

**WHAT CHANGES CAN WE MAKE WHICH WILL RESULT IN IMPROVEMENT?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Score** | **Comment** |
| Specific issues to investigate and/or alternatives to consider are given |  |  |
| A concept design or change package is identified |  |  |
| Project constraints are defined including what is NOT to be addressed |  |  |
| Project is tied to specific processes or sub-systems |  |  |
| Initial activities or PDSA cycles are suggested |  |  |

*Total: \_ out of possible 25*

**TEAM MEMBERSHIP**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Score** | **Comment** |
| All appropriate subject matter knowledge is represented on the improvement team |  |  |
| Process owner (authority to make changes) is represented or Sponsor of team |  |  |
| People with detailed knowledge of the targeted system are on the team |  |  |
| Patients, customers, clients or suppliers are on the team, or a way of involving/engaging with these stakeholders has been identified |  |  |
| Community connector has been identified and represented on the team |  |  |
| **TOTAL RATING** |  |  |

*Total: \_ out of possible 20*

**Total Evaluation Rating**

> 85 Good Project charter definition

66-85 Consider improving or clarifying the project charter (see low ratings)

< 65 Rework or Re-evaluate the need for this improvement charter

For more information, email: [CommunityPlanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:CommunityPlanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk)