
PROJECT PLANNING FORMS AND PROJECT FILES

Please note: This guidance relates principally to the creation of new Project Files. It may be useful to strengthen the Outputs and Outcomes sections of existing files, but there is no need to extensively revise them.

This guidance has been revised to bring **Processes**, **Outputs**, and **Outcomes** to the front of the project planning process, (and to the top of the agenda when considering a new project.) The key questions below define in more detail what should be included in these sections of the Project Planning form. (Appendix 2)

The purpose of this is to...

- define more clearly what projects are attempting to achieve
- establish robust and effective monitoring systems in projects
- improve consistency and comparability between projects
- facilitate the selection of potentially effective projects

ESSENTIAL REFERENCES

"How good is our Community Learning and Development 2"

www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/hgio2cld.pdf

which emphasises the prime importance of focussing on outcomes, in both planning and evaluation of CLD

"Delivering Change"

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Life-Long-Learning/LearningConnections/research/deliveringchange>

which defines CLD outcomes – regarding Personal Development, Building Community Capacity and Core Skills.

PART ONE

COMPLETING THE PROJECT PLANNING FORM

What will the project achieve?

Outcomes

Remember the Delivering Change definition of outcomes...

"The changes or results that come about through an organisation's activities. Outcomes are normally what an organisation is trying to achieve but some outcomes are not planned."

- What are the project's intended outcomes in terms of Personal Development? (*Delivering Change pp 14-15, and HGIOCLD2 2.1*)
- What are the project's intended outcomes in terms of Building Community Capacity? (*Delivering Change pp 17-18, and HGIOCLD2 4.1*)
- What are the project's intended outcomes in the development of Core Skills? (*Delivering Change p19*)

- What are the project's other intended outcomes, and what is their origin? (e.g. *Local Community Plan, or other planning source*)
- Ensure that the outcomes are relevant to the interests of participants and project partners.
- Describe the data collection formats and methods to be used.
- Specify the recording timescale
- Identify the staff responsible
- Include provision for reviewing and assessing unplanned outcomes

Outputs

What project outputs will you monitor and record?

"Delivering Change" defines outputs as follows...

"The specific products of a programme or project. These will be quantifiable (easily countable) things, such as the number of people taking part or number of programmes delivered"

Consider also grades or qualifications achieved, and any physical outputs of the project, e.g. newsletters, public events etc.

- Refer to HGIOCLD2 1.1 Improvements in Performance (p27) for other potential measures
- Ensure that outputs relevant to the interests of participants and project partners are included
- Specify what will be counted, in addition to the core outputs (see Appendix 1)
- Describe the data collection formats and analysis methods to be used.
- Specify the recording timescale (*Bear in mind the commonly used timescale of reporting for complete financial years, and quarterly at the end of June, September, December, and March, - and use it if possible.*)
- Identify the staff responsible

What will the project do?

Processes

What CLD activities will the participants undertake?

- brief description of core programme of project
- anticipated number and duration of sessions
- description of anticipated participants (age group & any specific characteristics of the targeted group)
- anticipated numbers of participants
- note the PIs from Key Area 5 - Processes and Delivery, that are most relevant

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

- What additional records and monitoring arrangements will you put in place? (*Check HGIOCLD2 1.1, and 3.1, as well as the references above, for other suggestions on Outcomes and Impact; and 5.10, Improving Services. Consider also any requirements from your team; Departmental plans and local community planning arrangements*)
- What will you do to identify and assess any unplanned outcomes?
- What reporting arrangements will you put in place?
- How will data be analysed?
- What reports will be produced?
- Who is responsible for reporting?
- To whom?
- What is the timescale?

Why is the project important?

Local and Policy Context

- What locally identified need will the project address?
- How will it relate to other existing or planned provision?
- How does it link to your team plan?
- How does it link to the local community plan?
- How does it address Department, DCC, partners', or national policy priorities?
- How will it address the inclusion, equality and fairness agenda?
- What risk assessments and other Health and Safety issues will need to be addressed?
- What Disclosure checks or other Care and Protection issues will need to be addressed?
(Check HGIOCLD2 5.6 Engaging with communities, and 5.9 Inclusion, equality and fairness)

Who has been, or will be, involved in the project?

Consultation, Partnership and Planning

- Who has been consulted, and how?
- If the project is to be run as a partnership, who are the partners?
- Who has been involved in planning the project, and how has it been done?
- What paid and/or voluntary staff will be required to run the project?
(Check HGIOCLD2 5.6 Engaging with communities; 5.8 Assisting communities...to achieve outcomes; and 8.1 Partnership Working)

How much will it cost?

Inputs

What resources will be needed?

- Salaries/staff time, equipment, premises, transport, administration, publicity
- Funding required from core budgets
- Funding required from external budget (please specify source and whether funding has been secured.)

PART TWO

MAINTAINING THE PROJECT FILE

The main purpose of the Project file is to gather the information required to enable your self-evaluation of the project, and to report on its performance. The aim of both of these activities is to provide intelligence to inform future planning of the project and/or to assist the development of practice more widely.

A named worker should be clearly responsible for maintaining the file - and in most cases only one file should be maintained for each project. When staff from different teams work in partnership throughout a project, they should agree who will be responsible for maintaining the file and all contribute material, and have access to it.

It is acceptable to keep some - or in some cases all - of the material in the file electronically. For ease of reference, the structure of an electronic file should be the same as that recommended for a paper-based Project file, and the availability of any additional electronic data should be noted in the relevant area of the hard-copy file.

When a project has ended, the file should be retained for four years, (i.e. an Inspection cycle). After this, only exceptional files should be retained as a reference - as examples of good practice; for student placements; or to assist with the planning of similar projects.

Project File - Contents

The file should begin with the Project Planning form, and have four additional sections, relating to...

- Outcomes
- Outputs
- Process and Programme
- Project Management

Outcomes

"The changes or results that come about through an organisation's activities. Outcomes are normally what an organisation is trying to achieve but some outcomes are not planned."

This contains reports and evidence on the achievement of outcomes. Bear in mind that this evidence is most useful when it can be analysed for trends over time - and laying it out in a consistent format will make this much easier.

Evidence of outcomes will frequently need to be recorded after the event. Retain notes of staff's assessment of outcomes. They are entirely legitimate evidence.

Include evidence that you have reviewed the project for unintended outcomes - and your assessment of any that you have identified.

If there is other evidence, which is not retained in the Project file, keep a note of what and where it is.

Consider how this evidence relates to the identified project outcomes - if it is not already clearly indicated in the documents themselves. You should either identify these references on the documents - or create a separate record that helps you to access the evidence relevant to the project.

Outputs

"The specific products of a programme or project. These will be quantifiable (easily countable) things, such as the number of people taking part or number of programmes delivered"
Consider also grades or qualifications achieved, and any physical outputs of the project, e.g. newsletters, public events etc.

This section contains any output reports, and examples of the physical project outputs. Bear in mind that this evidence is most useful when it can be analysed for trends over time - and laying it out in a consistent format will make this much easier.

If there is other evidence, which is not retained in the Project file, keep a note of what and where it is.

Consider how this evidence relates to the identified project outputs - if it is not already clearly indicated in the documents themselves. You should either identify these references on the documents - or create a separate record that helps you to access the evidence relevant to the project.

Process and Programme

This contains material – generated through the running of the project – which provides evidence of the activities undertaken with or by participants.

If there is other evidence, which is not retained in the Project file, keep a note of what and where it is.

Consider how this evidence relates to the Process and Delivery indicators – especially those you have identified as the most relevant. You should either identify these references on the documents themselves – or create a separate record that enables you to quickly identify the references

Project Management

This contains planning and project management records, relevant to the Policy Context, and Consultation Planning and Partnership areas, along with any other material generated in the ongoing process of managing the project.

If there is other evidence, which is not retained in the Project file, keep a note of what and where it is.

APPENDIX 1

CORE OUTPUTS FOR PROJECT PLANNING AND MONITORING

Outputs are "the specific products of a programme or project. These will be quantifiable (easily countable) things, such as the number of people taking part or number of programmes delivered" (Delivering Change definition)

Context

As we continue to introduce and expand the coverage of the Communities Data Management System (CDMS), this database will increasingly be the way that we collect and analyse core output data.

Within our direct provision, through Youth Work, Adult Learning, and Centres and Projects, similar data sets should be established, relating to the CDMS definitions of "structured" and "unstructured" programmes...

- **Structured programme**
A programme, with attendance register, recording attendance by participants whose individual details have been recorded (and entered into CDMS.)
- **Unstructured programme**
A programme, which is recorded with numbers of participants only, without recording the individual details of those participating.

CORE DATA - ALL PROGRAMMES (STRUCTURED AND UNSTRUCTURED)

Attendance

Using the definition provided for the annual national CLD surveys

The Number of community-based learning opportunities which are accessed, and are provided directly by each local authority department's/service's staff or volunteers, during the reporting period.

("Accessed" means that a specific learning opportunity was taken up by an individual. Each accessing of a learning opportunity should be counted, even where the same individual is accessing a number of learning opportunities during the reporting period.)

Sessions provided

The number of sessions provided during the reporting period

Programme hours provided

The number of programme hours provided during the reporting period
(number of sessions x duration of sessions)

CORE DATA - STRUCTURED PROGRAMMES - IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE

Enrolments

The number of individuals who are registered to take part in the programme, during the reporting period

Learner hours

The number of learner hours undertaken during the reporting period
(number of participants per session x duration of session: total for the reporting period)

Learner group profile

Analysis of learner group by age group and gender at least, prepared as required for monitoring reports.

This data - as well as data on ethnicity, religion, disability, employment status, citizenship status, country of origin, first language, and initial qualification status are all recorded on the Adult Learner Details form in CDMS - and therefore is readily available for analysis, for adult learners, who are all already entered on the system, (although some of their details may still be incomplete.)

Age groups can be defined and analysed to whatever parameters you wish by CDMS. Prior to its full implementation age should be recorded using the following simple banding of age groups - which is directly comparable with census data.

0-9, 10-19, 20-49, 50-64, 65+

CORE DATA - OTHER POSSIBILITIES

Attainments

Recognised accreditation and qualifications achieved through the programme and Levels of attainment achieved within the programme during the reporting period
(both Adult Learning and Youth Work colleagues are currently considering how these should be defined and measured.)

Destinations

Numbers moving directly from CLD provision to other (specified) learning opportunities during the reporting period.

CORE DATA - COMMUNITY REGENERATION

The data collection issues for Community Regeneration are different, as so little of this work is about the direct provision of services to easily identifiable numbers of participants, in similar ways to most of the work of Centres, Adult Learning, or Youth Work. This is recognised in the approach taken in the annual national CLD surveys...

Groups

The number of community organisations or groups receiving community development, community work, or community capacity building support, directly from each local authority department's staff or volunteers during the reporting period

There is debate about how to move beyond this very basic data - but regular recording and reporting of this at least is still desirable.

REPORTING PERIODS AND LEVELS

To ensure a positive linkage with our reporting requirements for the Service Plan, CDMS reports will be set up to run for the standard quarterly periods...

April - June, July - September, October - December, January - March, and Annual (financial year) reports.

These CDMS reports will regularly be produced at Team and Section (city-wide) level.

At project level, they will be available on demand - for whatever timescale is required.

It is therefore desirable that similar timescales are established for programmes not yet covered by CDMS, to enable more comprehensive reporting of all projects for Teams and Sections.

APPENDIX 2

PROJECT PLANNING FORM Leisure & Communities Department

Project Name:

Location:

Outcomes

What are your intended outcomes? - You must select at least one of the Delivering Change Outcomes. Add any others related to: Personal Development; Building Community Capacity; Core Skills

Delivering Change Outcomes	
Participation assists people to become more confident	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participation assists to people to become effective contributors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participation assists to people to become responsible citizens	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participation assists to people to become successful learners	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/> Please note any other intended outcomes	

Outputs

What project outputs will you monitor and record? - content; data collection; analysis; timescale; staff

Processes

What CLD activities will the participants undertake? - programme; sessions; participants; relevant P.I.s

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Additional records and monitoring arrangements - content; data collection; analysis; timescale; staff

Local and Policy Context

Why is the project important? - identified needs; links to plans and priorities; inclusion; Health & Safety etc.

Consultation, Partnership and Planning

Who has been, or will be involved in the project? How has it been planned?

Inputs

Salaries/staff time, equipment, premises, transport, administration, publicity. Funding - core / external.