

Benefits realisation tracking scheme

Identifying, tracking and analysing the measurable benefits of projects from the commissioning stage through to business as usual (BAU).

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Key details

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| Stage of practice | Untested |
| Purpose | Organisational |
| Topic | Leadership, development and learning Productivity |
| Organisation | Merseyside Police |
| HMICFRS report | PEEL 2023–25 Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy: An inspection of Merseyside Police |
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| Region | North West |
| Partners | Police |
| Stage of implementation | The practice is implemented. |

Key details

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| Start date | April 2022 |
| Scale of initiative | Local |
| Target group | Workforce |

Aim

The aim of the benefit realisation tracking scheme is to ensure projects are regularly reviewed, on track and delivering what they set out to achieve.

Intended outcome

The intended outcome of the benefit realisation tracking scheme is to:

- increase the number of successful projects
- improve overall understanding of ongoing projects within force
- improve decision making and accountability
- improve efficiency of public services
- improve public confidence in the police

Description

Merseyside Police aims to prioritise the needs of the community through the delivery of projects and services. The force's change programmes and projects play an important role in supporting Merseyside Police's vision. The public expect the force to justify what measurable benefits have been used to support the community.

Under the leadership of the deputy chief constable, all business change activity and decisions are overseen and tracked through Merseyside Police's Community First Transformation Board. The purpose of the board is to track the benefits and performance improvements of any investment or structural change reviews. This is to demonstrate how the force are using public money and delivering continuous efficiencies.

The force has introduced a tracker which includes:

- the intended benefits of each project
- an assessment of the true benefits post implementation

Benefits categories

The force's evaluation team are responsible for managing the business process, with business analysts overseeing the governance systems in place to track benefits and identify areas of improvement. Identified benefits are categorised into:

- cash-releasing and non-cash-releasing
- service improvement
- new capabilities
- compliance/risk avoidance
- officer/staff wellbeing
- collaboration/partnership working

There are five stages to the benefits process:

1. Identify and quantify
2. Value and appraise
3. Plan to realise
4. Realise and track
5. Review

Ongoing projects

Each ongoing project is scrutinised to identify risk and to assess whether an improvement to performance can be achieved. The force has developed a project scoring matrix which assesses against:

- weighted preferences and strategy
- force management statements
- funding stream

- legal necessity

The matrix allows chief officers to prioritise the projects to commission and subsequently proceed to a project. The analytical function is key to highlighting the 'as-is' process and the 'to-be' process and the force has recently seen an increase in business analysis capacity to meet demand.

This further enables the force to identify financial and non-financial benefits allowing reinvestment into areas where it is required. This ensures that funding and resources expended are aligned to the force's priorities on an objective and consistent basis. This is reviewed annually, and every business change project or business decision is scored using this. The benefits realisation tracking scheme has now become embedded into the force's business processes.

Merseyside Police have also used this principle for investment decisions and funding bids to ensure the force operate a benefits-led process. Benefit realisation remains a key tenet to the force's change activity and is at the heart of delivering projects successfully.

Evaluation

The scheme is due to be reviewed in 2025 by the Shared Internal Audit Service.

Overall impact

As of November 2024, the force has tracked the benefits against:

- 38 programmes and projects including the economic crime team and safer road unit reviews.
- 33 operation uplift investments including the online child abuse investigation team and local policing community officers.
- 36 business decisions including case builders, the major crime unit, and professional standards.

Several forces have contacted Merseyside Police regarding the benefits realisation scheme, and many have adopted the process.

Learning

The key learning points are:

- It is essential that prior to reviewing each project, the force have a full understanding of the baseline and target benefit metrics. This ensures that the scale and value gained against the

project's efforts can be assessed.

- The benefit tracking and evaluation process is planned in when the project is commencing, to provide the project lead with an understanding of when benefits will be assessed and realised.
- While data collection is vital, some data is not always readily available. It is incumbent on the project lead to ensure there is enough information available to provide an assessment of the intended benefits.
- Through feedback from officers and staff regarding the importance of understanding each project, the force has improved their initial scoping of quantifiable benefits.

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