

Briefing 4 - Transition

Processes for the Transition

Other briefings available:

1. Overview
2. Rationale and Vision for simplification
3. Accessing Business Support in the future
5. Getting involved/keeping up to date

More information:

The North East site:
<http://www.businesssupportnortheast.co.uk/page/index.cfm>

On the site key documents are stored including:

Transition Plan Summary

Role of One North East

The Business Support Simplification Programme (BSSP) is a major exercise taking place nationally and regionally. At a national level the process is being driven within central government by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR). At the regional level, Regional Development Agencies have been tasked with the job of simplifying business support.

One North East has been working within the region since 2003 to improve the efficiency of business support and reduce confusion for customers. Whilst supporting the overall transition within the region, ONE has also been reviewing and restructuring its own programmes to ensure they meet the principles of BSSP and that individual products and services meet product guidelines. ONE is also responsible for ensuring that any application for ERDF funding complies with BSSP.

Transition is not a task ONE can achieve alone and all key players need to be fully involved to make simplification successful.

Transition Management Board

ONE started the transition process by setting up a regional Transition Management Board (TMB) led by the businessman Ian Dormer. The TMB has representation from public, private and third sector organisations, including local authorities. Profiles of the members are available on the website <http://www.businesssupportnortheast.co.uk/page/netmb.cfm>

The TMB's first task was to formulate a Transition Management Plan that had to be approved by BERR. The plan contains a commentary on the state of the region, information about services being delivered and plans for the future. An exercise to gather information from all major funders of business support in the region was undertaken to inform the plan and work on that has been ongoing to keep the information up to date.

Working Groups

The TMB decided that a series of working groups were required to look at the transition issues for groups of products and for the future mechanisms governing the commissioning of business support. A series of Task and Finish Groups and an Alignment and Coordination Group have been set up. Again, membership of the groups is mixed to reflect the needs of each group and to provide a geographical spread across the sub-regions.

The purpose of the Task and Finish Groups is to make recommendations to the TMB about specific groups of services such as the 4 products focused on starting a business. Each group has made good progress in producing plans for transformation of existing business support services, closure or amalgamation of schemes and introduction of new products. Each group will ensure, through consultation, that the needs of users and regional priorities are met.

The Alignment and Coordination Group's objective is to identify more opportunities to align funding and delivery of business support. Examples may include further embedding of business support principles, co-funding, common procurement routes, data sharing and customer referrals and local augmentation of regional support. Details of membership of the group are available on the [website](#).

A range of regional, sub-regional and local partners, including local authorities, One North East, Business Link and the LSC will also work together to develop Business Support Agreements, which will define the business support approach that best meets the needs of businesses and entrepreneurs in each locality. The BSAs will be based on an evidence-based approach to identify customers' needs.

Introducing new Products

Introduction of the Solutions for Business product portfolio is a gradual process. The overall deadline for the transition phase of BSSP is 2010. In some cases, especially for nationally managed products, the new products are or will be available on release. For other products, the change over to the new approach, branding and access will be a negotiated process depending upon existing contracts for delivery. All new projects introduced from now should adhere to Solutions for Business guidelines on eligibility, scope and branding.

Detailed discussions with each funder will commence shortly to agree plans for transition.