

Speaking note – Minister Adam Ingram  
Continuous Learning Framework launch  
Roxburghe Hotel, Edinburgh – 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008

## Setting the Scene

I am **delighted** to speak at this event today, to formally launch the Continuous Learning Framework for Scotland's social services.

I would like to start by **thanking** our hosts, the Scottish Social Services Council and the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services for inviting me.

I am going to talk to you about continuous learning – which perhaps is for most of us the most **challenging** form of learning.

I am going to describe how this **key** product of Changing Lives will support the delivery of the Scottish Government's vision for the social services workforce.

## Why we are doing this - Our Vision

The Scottish Government's purpose is to create a more **successful** country, with opportunities for **all** of Scotland to flourish through increasing sustainable economic growth. The Concordat between the national and local governments heralds an exciting and challenging time for Scotland's policy development and implementation with a new focus on outcomes.

The approach heralded by the Continuous Learning Framework encourages organisations to take increased **responsibility** for the development of their staff in support of delivering improved services.

This is consistent with the Government's vision for embedding a culture of continuous **performance** improvement

Across **all** public services

which is what lies behind the proposals for improving external scrutiny arrangements announced recently by the Scottish Government

Against this backdrop we are **determined** to achieve a social services workforce which is

**competent,**  
**confident** and  
**valued**

A workforce who can deliver the crucial services the Scottish people demand. Transforming the **outcomes** for Scotland's children, families and users of social services is a key aim of this Government.

I believe that for **any** organisation

– whether **public, voluntary** or **private** –

it is **impossible** to deliver a high quality of service **unless** a **sustained** investment is made in the skills of the people at the sharp end of managing and delivering those services.

To achieve this the Scottish Government is taking action across a range of key policies that impact on specific sectors of this diverse workforce. For example, developing an *Early Years/Early Intervention Framework*.

More broadly we remain committed to supporting the implementation of the vision set out in *Changing Lives, the report of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Social Work Review*.

### What it will do

The Continuous Learning Framework is one of several **key** outputs from the workforce development change programme under *Changing Lives*.

It will make a **major** contribution to ensuring that our vision of a **confident, competent** and **valued** workforce

**committed** to continuous learning and development

and **contributing** fully to our ambitions for the people of Scotland,

becomes a reality **at all levels** in social services.

Building on existing registration based educational requirements the Framework sets out what **all** people in the social services workforce need in order to be able to do their job well

**now** and in the **future**.

It will improve approaches to three **key** areas –

**learning and development,**

**career pathways** and

**improved standards of practice.**

Against the backcloth of this Framework, practice tools and resources will be developed for social service workers and their employers.

Later this morning representatives from Angus Council will present to you their experience from the recent trial period of using the CLF in practice. This will be an excellent opportunity to begin thinking about how you might use the framework.

It is clear that the impact of this framework will be felt by **all** of the people of Scotland at **various** times in their lives. It is **they** who will experience the **real** change.

**However**, it would be wrong to attribute this change **only** to the Continuous Learning Framework.

Rather, **change** will be due to the **collective** impact of **all** of the products of the *Changing Lives* programme

**and** to the implementation of other related policy developments by both the Scottish Government and locally driven.

### Changing Lives

The implementation of Changing Lives is **already** a **reality** for the workforce through local change processes. But there is still much more to do.

A number of the Changing Lives Core Products will be launched over the next 6 months. For example, we have invested in the development of a Leadership Framework and plan to launch a prototype of this early in 2009.

Two leadership communities have already been established – in the South East and West of Scotland - and work to ensure they are energised, linked and well placed to take ownership is under way. Similarly further work has been initiated to establish new leadership communities in the North and Tayforth areas.

Under Changing Lives we are also investing in **the development of a** research and development strategy – which will support Scotland’s social service workforce develop the skills necessary for evidence-based practice. This month sees the launch of a process of engagement around that Strategy and I would encourage you to play a full part in that.

The public consultation on the role of the chief social work officer will come to an end on the **19<sup>th</sup> December**. The responses to this consultation will help inform the final paper, due for launch as part of a Practice Governance ‘pack’ by May 2009, along with a Practice Governance Framework, a paper on Social Work’s contribution to delivering **better outcomes** along with a paper on the Principles and

Standards of Citizen Leadership, published by the User and Carer Forum in April this year.

Following on from the Principles and Standards paper, early 2009 will see **amongst other things**

the launch of Citizen Leadership Training Material,

a paper on Commissioning for Personalisation – the sister paper to the paper on the Shared Understanding of Personalisation published earlier this year – and

the launch of SWIA's self-evaluation guide for social work services.

Vast resources of knowledge exist about “what works” and perhaps just as importantly – what doesn't.

A great deal of on line material has already been made available to social service practitioners. This will be significantly augmented through a knowledge transfer strategy that is being developed.

**So a busy end** to 2008

and a **busy start** to 2009

– as we see the dissemination of the majority of the products of Changing Lives.

### Tribute & Workforce Agenda

I want to take a moment to pay tribute to the work of both the Council and IRISS

and to say something about the workforce agenda.

The wholehearted **commitment, enthusiasm** and **purposeful engagement**

of both the Council and IRISS have been hugely important in driving forward the Scottish Government's workforce agenda

I must make a special mention at this point of Carole Wilkinson in her dual role as Chief Executive of the Council

and as Chair of the Workforce Group

for driving forward this activity.

**Registration** is part of the Scottish Government's commitment to **raise standards** in the workforce

by ensuring that staff **not only** have the skills and knowledge required to undertake their roles, **but also** to continue to update and develop themselves.

You will be aware of the policy intention and the current consultation on the introduction of **final** dates for registration. I would encourage **all** of you to **support** the workforce in submitting their applications for registration.

### Next Steps

Turning back to the Continuous Learning Framework

The Council and IRISS developed the framework in **partnership** with the social services sector. And I know that the response so far has been overwhelmingly **positive**.

I know you **understand** why we **now** need to see employers and workers building on this enthusiasm at a local level

to take full advantage of the opportunities presented by the Framework.

The Scottish Government is committed to supporting this activity.

We are providing resources to the Council and IRISS to take forward a strategy to promote **local ownership** of the Framework.

This will include supporting both employers and their workers to adopt the Framework. **Employers** may need support to decide how best to use the Framework in their organisation;

while **both** workers **and** employers may need support in using the Framework in practice.

The Scottish Government is also supporting the 4 Social Services Learning Networks as fora to enable local partners to agree learning and development priorities

And to work together to create **shared** and **sustainable** solutions

The networks are well placed to play a **key** role in enabling employers and others to implement the framework locally

**Whatever** role **you** have, whether as social service **workers**, **managers** or **employers** within the sector

the Scottish Government's vision for transformational change will require purposeful engagement from **you**.

## Summation and Closing Remarks

When the Council and IRISS set-out to develop a continuous learning framework they discovered that Scotland's social services sector was keen to help.

I know the sector gave a truly powerful demonstration of its **enthusiasm and commitment** to a new emphasis on personal learning and development.

To date the sector has engaged **constructively** in the developmental process of the Framework and the Scottish Government has proven its commitment to support this agenda. I am **confident** that **collectively** we shall succeed in delivering our ambition of transformational change to the quality of services for the people of Scotland.

As I said at the top of my speech, for most of us continuous learning is perhaps the most **challenging** form of learning. To succeed in such an ambitious endeavour we now must all **see the opportunity** which is being presented and be willing to **grasp** - with both hands - what is being offered. Thank you for listening – I am happy to take a couple of questions

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