Registers of Scotland

RoS Board

15th September 2021

**Vision for RoS beyond 2024 –
Core Services, Ideas Down-selection Approach and Ideas Workshop**

Purpose

1.   To update the Board on the latest thinking being developed on the post-2024 RoS vision and to provide the Board with an opportunity to comment on and contribute to this thinking.

Background

2.   As outlined to the Board at the previous meeting; beyond 2024 [1]it is assumed that RoS will continue to deliver the current statutory registers for which we are responsible, however beyond our statutory function consideration needs to be given to which (if any) other non-statutory products and services RoS should provide.

3.   The overall approach outlined at the previous meeting for identifying, down-selecting and potentially delivering new products and services, is shown in the diagram at Appendix 1.

Progress since June 2021

4.   Since the previous Board meeting, progress has been made on developing our thinking in relation to three elements within this diagram, outlined in three annexes as follows:

      a. Development of a description of the '2024 end state'. Annex A describes the core (statutory) registration and information services RoS anticipates providing from 2024 onwards, and how it expects to provide them.

      b. Development of a proposed approach to down-selecting a potentially large number of ideas for potential products and services. This is provided at Annex B.

      c. Development of a proposed format for an ideas generation workshop. Annex C provides the preparatory information required to enable Board colleagues to participate in a pilot version of this ideas generation workshop. This workshop is intended to both enable Board colleagues to have an initial opportunity to contribute ideas for consideration; and pilot the approach with the Board ahead of re-running it with other stakeholder groups.

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[1] Although this paper is primarily focussed on the approach to defining what products and services RoS will offer beyond 2024 (as in broad terms there is no operational capacity to establish significant new products and services before 2024); the method described will be appropriate in the interim to enable consideration of any new requests for statutory RoS activity that may arise from the Scottish Government before 2024.

Discussion

5.   Board colleagues are invited to:

      a. Review and comment on the 2024 end state description in Annex A.
      b. Review and comment on the proposed down-selection approach in Annex B.
      c. Prepare for, and participate in, the ideas generation workshop at Annex C, and provide feedback on the approach having experienced it first-hand.

Next steps

6.   Feedback from the discussion at the Board will be used to refine the down-selection approach and ideas generation workshop format.

7.   The ideas generation workshop will then be re-run throughout the remainder of this financial year with a variety of other stakeholder groups, including customers, SG stakeholders, partner organisations, colleagues, and trade union representatives. The intention will be to generate a large number of potential high-level ideas for input into the down-selection approach.

8.   The down-selection approach will be implemented and used to start filter the potential ideas, in order to rapidly identify the ideas which are worthy of more detailed consideration. This will enable us to identify the best candidates for new products and services that RoS may wish to consider introducing in 2024, and will support the development of the narrative for RoS beyond 2024 in the next edition of our corporate plan.

9.   It is important to note that the ideas generation and down-selection approach are expected to repeat on a rolling basis as we move towards 2024. This will ensure that the opportunity to identify and consider additional new ideas, which might be a better ideas than any currently under consideration, is not missed; and enable us to take into account any change in circumstances, which could mean that an idea which has previously been discarded should be re-considered. As previously described the down-selection process will also be used to review our existing non-statutory services to consider if we should stop or change any of them as we move towards 2024 and beyond.

10.   Once we have selected which non-statutory products and services we will aim to deliver beyond 2024 (and which, if any, additional statutory services we believe we will need to deliver) work will need to be undertaken, as part of each subsequent corporate planning round, to ensure that we are ready to start delivery of these when appropriate. Any work that will need to be undertaken to position RoS to deliver these potential new products and services will be discussed at the Corporate Planning workshop in January 2022, with a view to agreeing what, if any, of this work will be taken forward in the next financial year.

RoS Keeper
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Appendix 1 – Overall approach
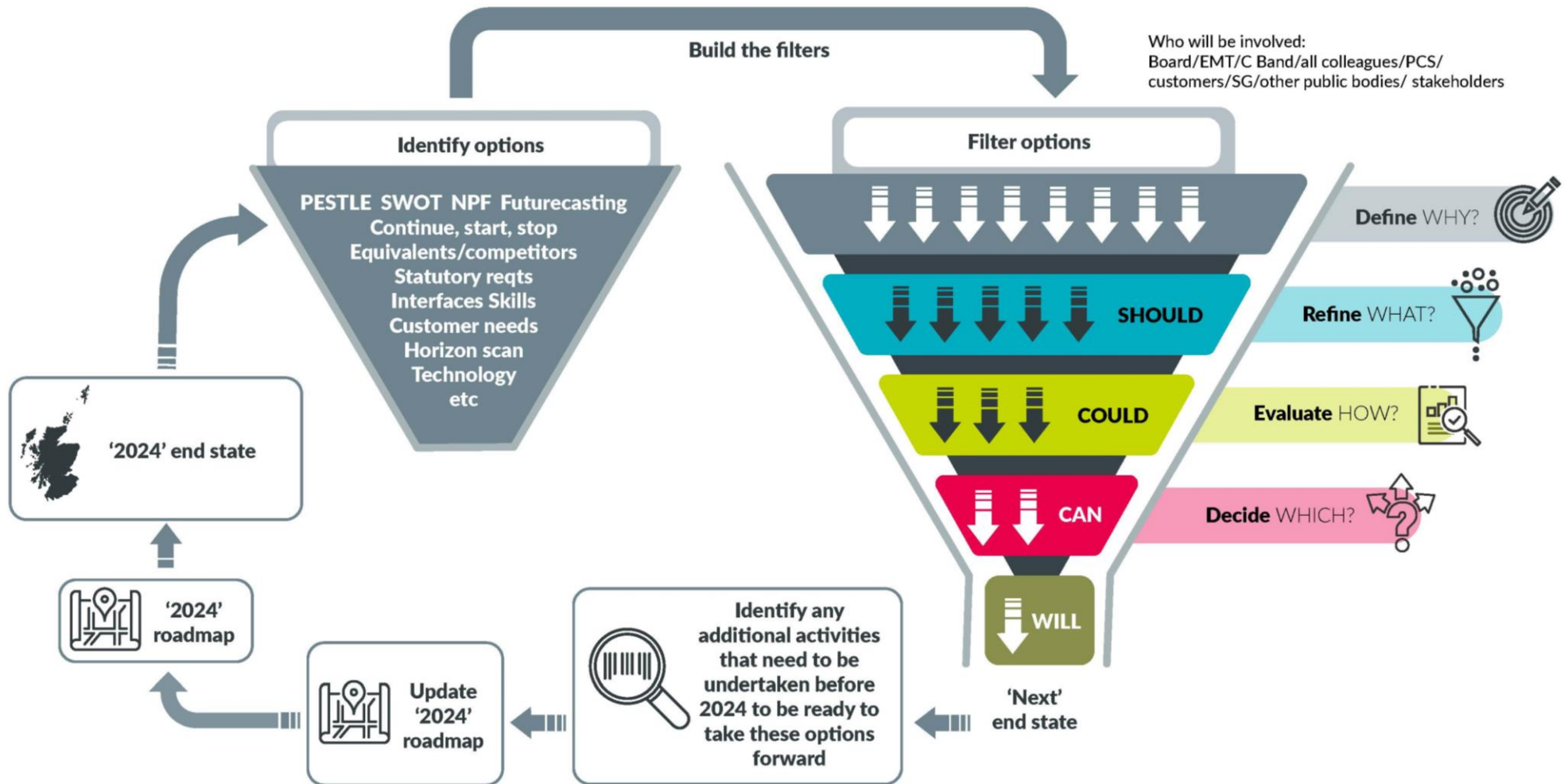
Annex A: Core services beyond 2024

Purpose

1.   To set out a high-level summary of the core registration and information services which RoS will offer beyond 2024.

2.   The Board are invited to take account of the core offering when considering and giving advice on additional activities which may be undertaken in the lead up to and beyond 2024.

3.   The Board are asked to note that this paper is focussed specifically on core and statutory services. Our current non-statutory (discretionary) services will be subject to separate analysis (stop/continue/change) using our 2024+ options evaluation approach in due course. Board advice will be sought on any significant changes proposed as a result of that analysis.

Recommendation

4.   To review and comment on the narrative provided, and to note the detail as context for the 2024 and beyond options workshop

Registration Services 2024

Land Register

5.   The Land Register in 2024 and beyond will remain the largest register by volume of application and staff required to support its operation. Though the numbers of staff will be greatly reduced, and the skills required will be significantly different from today's operation. The core products will be as follows.

6.   Advance notices. These offer protection to the purchaser in a conveyancing transaction in the period between settlement and registration. They are low cost, and our expectation is that their use will continue even if the gap between settlement and registration is narrowed (currently the typical gap is a few days, though it may be longer in some cases.) Advance notices over whole are currently fully automated. Our expectation is that advance notices over part will also be largely automated (at the very least for housing developments which will be circa 50% of transfer of part work). Sasines advance notices will remain subject to manual processing, but will be seen in diminishing numbers.

7.   Dealings with whole. These will represent the majority of transactions on the register and will cover, in the main, residential house sales, commercial property sales and remortgages (new securities and discharges) across both residential and commercial property. We anticipate that upwards of 80% of dealings with whole will be fully automated. The <20% subject to manual intervention will be complex cases which require amendment to the cadastral map and the long tail of less common deed types where automation is not cost effective.

8.   Transfers of part. This product will be split into two classes. The first will be housing developments (anything above 3 properties). These cases will require a small specialist team to work with the developer and solicitors to plan the development and the style of deeds to be used with the development. Thereafter, as the individual plots are sold off, our expectation is the processing of those applications will be 100% automated, or so close thereto as to make no practical difference. We anticipate this will account for around 50% of transfer of part work, though that may increase depending on building of new homes and government decisions around tenure.

9.   The second class of transfer of part work will account for the remaining 50%. This will cover one off splits of residential or commercial property and will be facilitated by manual intervention, though there will be some automation of data entry. Manual intervention will be to interpret the relationship between the new title and the title from which it has been removed which is not cost effective to automate, at least in the medium term.

10.   First and voluntary registrations. These applications will continue for a period as plots of land not previously brought onto the land register are swept up. The Unlocking Sasines work will make the preparation of these applications more straightforward than they are now. Registration of these plots will be largely manual, though data will be reused between the unlocking sasines layer/sasines advance notice and land register application.

11.   Post registration services. We expect automation only to have a tangential impact on post registration. Automation and the use of structured data in other registration products will reduce the number of enquiries and corrections for minor data discrepancies processed by the post registration team. They will accordingly be a smaller but more specialist team dealing with property disputes, litigation etc.

General Register of Sasines

12.   The Sasine register will remain open for certain specialist and low volume registrations. It will not be automated, though will continue to benefit from recent improvements in digital tooling. For legal reasons sasines entries are required to be made across three parts of the register: the presentment book, the minute book and the search sheet. With some minor differences the data input at each stage is the same. Currently this requires Sasines staff to make each entry separately. In future the entry will be made once and replicated across the relevant parts of the register. We may also consider closing certain counties and therefore moving those transactions to the land register but that will be subject to a public consultation and views of Ministers.

The Register of Deeds

13.   The RoD will be a hybrid register, allowing for registration for preservation and execution of both paper and electronic deeds. Registration of electronic deeds will be fully automated. There is no requirement in RoD to check the content or effect of deeds and so automation is straightforward. Given the range of deed types (in particular wills and other documents related to succession) registered in RoD we anticipate the split of paper deed to electronic deeds to be somewhere in the region of 75%/25%.

Moveable Transactions

14.   By 2024 the two registers dealing with moveable property will be established and commenced. These will be the Register of Statutory Pledges (similar to a register of mortgages but over moveable property rather than land) and the Register of Assignations. Based on the position in other jurisdictions we anticipate these registers to be 100% automated and registration to be instantaneous.

Register of Persons holding a Controlled Interest in Land (RCI)

15.   The RCI will also be in operation by 2024. We expect most first registrations to be capable of high degrees of automation, with manual intervention required for complex scenarios and challenges to the accuracy of the information contained in the register.

Small Registers

16.   The current suite of smaller registers (Crofting, Register of Inhibitions, Register of Judgements, and the Register of the Great Seal) we anticipate operating in a similar way to how they operate currently. We expect to retain hosting of the Housing management registers on behalf of local authorities/Scottish Ministers. These are high volume, and the operational aspects are dealt with by local teams in each LA; and in the case of the Letting Agents Register, by SG staff.

Registration staffing model

17.   We anticipate having circa 450 FTE to facilitate the manual intervention required across the various registration processes. Colleagues will be split into a number of smaller teams or squads and, with one exception, will be expected to be able to work across all of the operational tasks in registration (which are all closely thematically linked) depending upon market activity and demand at a given time. The exception will be the more specialist team who will deal with those areas where corrections or challenges to registration decisions are required.

Information services 2024

18.   Information services in 2024 are expected to continue to fall into two broad areas, as now: data services to support individual land and property transactions, and analytical services that add value to the underlying data.

Data services

19.   These include services to prepare a transaction: searches, copy deeds and plans reports. By 2024, we would expect to have our data in a state where 90% of these interactions will be self-service from a combination of ScotLIS, Register Land and Property and APIs, and the customer will be guided through reusing the same data for registration purposes.

Analytical services

20.   These include services derived from registration data: official statistics on house prices and related statistical reports and bulk products with datasets for all or regions of Scotland. By 2024, the pipelines for producing these datasets will have

been largely automated, with improved self-serve customer options. We will also be providing regular information relating to who owns Scotland derived from a mix of land register and sasines register data.

Data principles

21.   Our sharing of data will be governed by clear data principles, such as always lawful and robustly managed, open to sharing our data, and sometimes for free. We would expect to continue to have a mix of free information services, particularly where we are providing summary analytical reports of public interest, and paid for information services, where there is a market demand and commercial use.

Information Services Staffing Model

22.   By 2024 we would expect to be not too dissimilar from now in numbers but more skilled in data engineering and analysis. There will be efficiencies through automated pipelines and self-service by customers, that we would expect to be balanced by a growth in demand from customers and the need to make ongoing improvements to the quality of the underlying data and develop new analysis.

Supporting functions

23.   In principle, as registration and information services are streamlined and delivered with fewer people then the supporting functions required to underpin these areas will also reduce in size. We anticipate that customer services will change significantly. Most simple customer service enquires (where is my case? How do I fill in form x?) will be resolved by interactive guidance and technology solutions (automated reporting/customer dashboards and bots). The other traditional functions of a customer service area will be delivered in two main ways. Firstly, service improvement, surveying of user satisfaction etc. will be delivered at a product level by product/customer specialists. Secondly, complex customer enquiries about a particular transaction/legal issue etc will be handled by the operational squad dealing with the transaction.

24.   In our IT and digital function we expect staffing levels overall to reduce slightly but with significant internal movement in the types of roles. Additional people and deeper specialism will be required in certain areas, but that will be offset by a reduction in the requirement for traditional IT support and delivery to colleagues due to the overall headcount reduction.   In other enabling functions (comms. HR, estates, risk, procurement etc) we expect slightly fewer people as the smaller core function will generate less demand from these areas.

Summary

25.   The table below summarises the position on core services, omitting the new registers where we have no current baseline.

Product	Demand	Staff Level	Automation / Self Service
ANs	→	↓	↑
DWs	↑	↓	↑
TPd	↑	↓	↑
TP	↑	↑	→
FRs	↓	↓	→
Post Reg	↑	→	→
Sasines	↓	↓	↑
RoD	→	↓	↑
Data Services	↑	↓	↑
Analytical Services	↑	↓	↑

Annex B: Proposed approach for down-selecting ideas

Background

1.   At the previous Board meeting it was outlined that the ideas generated will be put through a series of filters intended to:

> a. **define** which ideas **meet our core principles** and therefore we **should** consider pursuing,
> b. **refine** to determine which ideas are **attractive** and therefore we **could** pursue,
> c. **evaluate** to quantify which ideas are **feasible** and therefore we **can** pursue,
> d. **decide** which ideas we should **prioritise** and therefore we **will** pursue.

2.   The Board had the opportunity at the previous meeting to review and provide feedback on the proposed core principles. The latest version of the principles, incorporating this feedback, is included for completeness in the description below.

3.   Since the last Board meeting work has been conducted to identify and review potential techniques that can be used to down-select what are essentially new business ideas. Having considered the different options available, a small number of techniques, which would appear to be the best fit for delivering what we need, have been selected. This annex sets out the overall proposed approach to implementing the additional filter layers by describing the technique that would be used at each stage, how it would be implemented and who would be involved in that part of the process.

Prior to starting the down-selection process

4.   Following an ideas generation session a small amount of information about each idea will need to be captured in order to enable the filtering process to begin. There is a trade off at this stage between the time and effort expended to define an idea clearly, and the fact that a large number of ideas will not progress beyond the principles stage – and therefore we would wish to keep the amount of 'wasted' effort to a minimum.

5.   For this reason it is proposed that a very simple set of information is completed for each idea that is just sufficient information to enable the first level of filter to be considered. The proposed information provided for each idea, ideally generated by the person who came up with the idea, is a single sentence to describe:

> a. What: is this the product/service?
> b. Why: is this product/service needed?
> c. Who: would be the customer for this service?

6.   Once this information is available the idea can enter the initial filter in the down-selection process.

Filter 1: Defining whether the idea meets the core principles

7.   A paper-based, asynchronous, review conducted on a rolling basis, with appropriate experts asked to score each idea (Yes/No/Maybe) against the **core principles**:

1. Is there a clear long-term market for the product and service? (Assessment provided by Head of Product)
2. Does the product or service deliver value for Scotland (with a clear link to the national outcomes)? (Assessment provided by NXD)
3. Is the proposed product or service appropriate to be delivered by a government organisation? (Assessment provided by EMT member)
4. (If the product/service involves the use of the data we hold), is this an ethical use of the data? (Assessment provide by CDO)
5. Does this product or service align with existing RoS skills and capabilities? (Assessment provided by Hd of OD)
6. Is there a sufficient return on investment (within the overall financial risk we are prepared to take across RoS)? (Assessment provided by CFO)
7. Are we confident that we can deliver this new product/service without a delivery risk to our existing core activities? (Assessment provided by senior registration or data manager).

8.   As discussed at the previous Board meeting, an idea does not have to pass all the principles in order to be taken forward, but any idea which scores a majority of No assessments against the principles will be discarded at this point.

Filter 2: Refining whether the idea is attractive - Ideas marketplace

9.   On a monthly basis a panel of experts will independently review the ideas still under consideration, and their associated assessment against the principles, and use an ideas marketplace technique to decide which ideas they would wish to see taken forward for further evaluation.

10.   The ideas marketplace is a technique that is proven to be effective at down-selecting a large number of ideas very quickly and is used by a variety of large well-established organisations to support their processes for considering new business ideas.

11.   The approach is simple, members of the panel each have a nominal £100 at each panel session to invest in any ideas currently on the table. Panel members will decide individually how intuitively attractive the idea is to them, based on the description of the idea and its principles assessment; and therefore how much, if any, of their £100 they would wish to invest. Any idea attracting £100 (or more) of investment will be taken forward.

12.   The ideas marketplace panel will compromise the Business Development director, a non-executive director and the Head of Service design.

13.   If no ideas in a given marketplace session qualify to be taken forward, then those ideas will be discarded.

14.   Any idea which receives the required support will be taken forward for further evaluation.

Filter 3: Evaluating whether the idea is feasible – 'Dragon's Den'

15.   If an idea has received sufficient backing in the Ideas Marketplace, an idea owner will be assigned (the C2 from the most appropriate business area) and they will be asked to undertake some additional work to capture more information about the proposed idea to enable its success potential and feasibility to be assessed.

16.   The idea owner will investigate and form a qualitative view on the following aspects for the idea:

   a. Added value – how much value does this idea add to customers/potential customers? marginal/middling/major.
   b. Target market – how big is the target market for this idea? small/medium/large
   c. Technical feasibility – how easy will it be to build/create the idea? easy/middling/complex
   d. Market entry – how easy will it be to reach the target market? Current major customer/current minor customer/not currently a customer
   e. Potential financial return – minor/middling/major

17.   Once the idea owner has considered these issues, they will form a view on the success potential and feasibility of the idea. If they judge the idea is still worthy of further consideration, they will attend a monthly 'Dragon's Den' to pitch the idea and seek approval to move to the next stage of development.

18.   The pitch will be made to the EMT. An idea will only progress past this stage if one or more EMT colleagues wants to get actively involved in supporting the idea. An EMT colleague who supports an idea will become the idea sponsor for the next stage of assessment.

19.   Any ideas which do not receive support at the 'Dragon's Den' will be discarded at this stage.

Filter 4: Deciding whether to pursue the idea – EMT investment board

20.   By this stage the majority of ideas will have been discarded. It is important to remember throughout this filtering process that RoS does not have to identify **any** new products and services to offer beyond 2024. We are in the fortunate position of having a solid business beyond 2024 via the delivery of our ongoing core statutory products and services, and we therefore should set a high bar for adding any new products or services to our enterprise. An idea which has successfully survived the principles test, the ideas marketplace, and the Dragon's Den clearly has potential and is worthy of further development and more detailed consideration.

21.   At this stage in the process the idea owner would be invited to work with the idea sponsor and suitable experts within RoS to quantify and develop an outline business case for this opportunity. This business case would use the standard format

used by colleagues seeking EMT approval for investment in any project or activity: quantifying the development costs, cost to serve, revenue forecast, resources and timescales involved, risks etc.

22.   Once prepared the outline business case would be considered at the formal monthly EMT investment board and, if approved, the development of this new product and service would be added to the 2024 roadmap and taken forward within the formal project management and governance structure already used to provide oversight of existing products and services.

23.   For more novel and high-risk ideas it may be appropriate to approach the business case approval in more than one distinct phase. Initial business case approval could allocate funding to support idea incubation, providing some limited investment to develop a proof of concept before seeking approval to progress to a full-scale development.

Summary

24.   The table overleaf summarises the filters within the overall downselection approach and the key characteristics of each stage of the approach.

Next steps

25.   The proposed down-selection approach will be refined following Board feedback.

26.   The ideas generated from the ideation workshop (that is part of this Board session) will then be used to test and further refine the down-selection process. This process will then be used more extensively to filter the much larger number of ideas that it is anticipated will be generated from repeating the ideas generation workshop with a wider number of stakeholder groups.

27.   Any ideas which have successfully passed all stages of the down-selection process will be discussed as part of the Corporate Planning workshop in January 2022, and reflected in the 2022-2027 Corporate Plan 2022-2027 as appropriate.

	Input info	**Testing**	**Assessment method**	**How?**	**Who?**	**When?**	**Output**
Filter 1	What? Why? Who?	Meets core principles?	Principles evaualtion	Paper based, asychronous,	Expert panel	Rolling	Y/N assessment against each principle for all ideas forwarded to next stage of process.
Filter 2	As above + Principles assessment	Attractive?	Ideas marketplace	Paper based, asychronous, colleagues decide whether to invest any of £100 in ideas	Business panel	Monthly	Ideas attracting more than £100 of investment assigned to ideas owner
Filter 3	As above + Attractiveness of investment value + Qualitative assessment of various feasibility aspects	Feasible?	Dragons' Den	In person verbal pitch at meeting	EMT	Monthly	Ideas attracting at least one EMT members support progress to next stage with EMT sponsor assigned
Filter 4	Detailed business case with quantative assessment	Do?	EMT investment panel	Business case paper and discussion, in person at meeting	EMT Investment Board	Monthyl	Ideas with business case approval move forward into development/proof of concept and are subject to normal governance in relation to their spend, benefits evaluation etc.

Annex C: Business Opportunity Ideation Workshop

Purpose

1.   This paper outlines the purpose and plan for a future business-opportunity ideation workshop to be piloted at the September Board meeting.

Recommendation

2. That the Board:

   a. notes the plan for the pilot workshop, in which they will be participating at this Board session.
   b. considers some individual preparation prior to the session to help get into a creative space for the workshop.
   c. at the end of the workshop, reflects on the process and provides feedback for further workshops planned to be held with stakeholders this autumn.

Background

3.   In June, the Board was updated on work now underway to plan for 2024+, once the Corporate Plan has been delivered and RoS starts to move into a new phase. Foundation-building for future activities needs to be factored in as part of business development activity over the next couple of years.

4.   Annex B outlines the proposed down-selection process to assess and select future ideas based on their success potential and feasibility. Linked to this work is the requirement for a set of possibilities to feed into this 'hopper'. The workshop proposed for the September Board aims to generate a volume of ideas that can then be refined to contribute to a set for further consideration and assessment.

5.   Subject to the successful delivery of the workshop at the September Board meeting, plans are in hand to repeat this workshop with Audit and Risk Committee colleagues, customers, Scottish Government stakeholders, and wider stakeholder groups as well as RoS colleagues. A degree of overlap in the ideas that all these sessions will generate is expected, but the aim is to get the greatest number of ideas possible. A robust filtering process would then be used to identify those ideas which will be worthy of further investigation and development, in order to make a final decision about which, if any, new products and services we may wish to offer beyond 2024.

Future Business Opportunities – Ideas Workshop

6.   This workshop asks Board members to think creatively (as wide and open as possible) about possible future business opportunities. The focus is to be very much on the 'ends' (products and services) for our customers, current or future, rather than the 'means' in terms of how we will look and work as an organisation. The ask at this stage is for volume: quantity rather than quality. Nothing is off the table: think about what 'we could' do, not 'we could do but'.

7.   The workshop will start with a short warm-up to get everyone into a creativity space and away from conventional thinking around business problems and the here-and-now.

8.   This will then be followed by a series of rapid-fire exercises using MS Teams, designed to stimulate ideas, drawing on stimulus materials (words and images). Each round will have a short period for reflection together.

9.   Following the ideas-generation exercises, Board members will be asked to each take an idea and quickly develop a micro-pitch to articulate at a very high level the opportunity statement, in terms of the who / what / why / when / where. A template will be provided for this.

10.   As preparation for the workshop, to force our brains out of autopilot, Board members might like to consider breaking habits or doing things in unfamiliar ways the day before the session. These nudges will make small differences to the way you think. For example:
- read a newspaper you don't normally, or listen to a different radio station or music to what you'd typically choose.
- disrupt your normal daily routine by doing things in a different order or way (have something different for breakfast!).
- avoid using your dominant hand for manual tasks (wear a mitt to make it more difficult).
- sit in a different seat or room for the day.
- use a different part of your brain: use alternative communication (for non-important things, at home) – draw instead of write for notes or to-do lists; mime rather than speak.
- pick a few day-to-day items around your home and spend a few minutes on each generating ideas for all the possible uses of each one.

Intended Outputs and Next Steps

11.   The workshop is intended to generate a set of ideas as candidates to then work up further. (Depending on the detail gathered in the workshop, this might involve some follow-up work to clarify the shape of the idea sufficiently to put it through the 'hopper' in due course.)

12.   In light of the experience of this pilot workshop, the approach will be refined ahead of running additional workshops with other stakeholders this autumn.

13.   The down-selection approach covered in Annex B will be developed further in light of feedback to then use on the workshop-generated opportunity-cards that emerge from this and future ideation workshops.

Conclusion

14.   Board members are invited to:
- participate in the workshop
- provide feedback on their experience of the workshop and suggestions for evolving the approach to use in future ideation workshops with other stakeholder groups.