

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Executive Summary

The Committee is invited to scrutinise the processes and arrangements that are in place for project management and provide recommendations as it sees fit.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the report be noted.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.

Background Papers: None

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The undertaking of projects is an integral part of Woking Borough Council (WBC) business delivery, and a significant amount of Council resources are allocated to their successful completion. Project management processes are embedded within the Council to bring consistency to how projects are managed and to aid the project manager in delivering projects on time, to budget, and to the desired standard.
- 1.2 Every WBC project, regardless of size or type, should follow the Council's project methodology which is loosely based on PRINCE2; this is regarded as the best practice approach when implementing projects.
- 1.3 The Project Support Office (PSO) facilitates project management within the Council. The PSO is responsible for ensuring that all projects within the Council are initiated, executed, and closed in a consistent and structured manner. This includes guiding staff on how to develop a robust business case for each project as well as defining and managing the route through which all projects are authorised. Additional tasks include advising in the development of project risks and issues, assisting with budget forecasts, and advising on benefit realisation.

2.0 Project Management Process

- 2.1 The project management process has been structured to be flexible and user friendly so it can meet the specific needs of the Council. It has been designed to make the lives of people who work on projects a little easier and its primary objective is to complement the WBC can do culture, not compromise it.
- 2.2 The process outlined at appendix 1 provides a complete overview to how a project should be initiated, planned, and authorised within the WBC environment. It details a step-by-step approach, describing the individual stages of a project and the various steps which must be completed within each stage.

3.0 Key Documentation

- 3.1 There are two key documents that need to be completed to plan and initiate a project. These are the Project Mandate (appendix 2) and the Project Workbook (appendix 3).
- 3.2 **Project Mandate:** This is required for the start-up of all projects with the view of presenting an outline idea to the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). The purpose of the mandate is to get an initial steer as to whether the project has merit to be explored further or not.
- 3.3 **Project Workbook:** If the Project Mandate is agreed, the next key stage is for the Project Manager to complete a Project Workbook (also known as a Business Case or Project Initiation Document in other organisations). The Workbook will contain all the primary information of the project from the justification of the project, to how and when it will be delivered, through to what actions must be completed following closure.

4.0 Project Assurance / Monitoring

- 4.1 Project monitoring is undertaken every quarter to ensure that projects are being delivered effectively. As part of the monitoring process, the PSO will meet with all Project Managers to assess each project against set criteria, and RAG Flags (Red, Amber, Green) will be applied to each project on a bespoke monitoring system in SharePoint. RAG flags are focused around the following areas:
 - Schedule - is the project on schedule?
 - Cost - is the project within budget?

- Risks - are any risks impacting on the project?
- Issues - are there any issues impacting the project?

Project overview - a statement as to the overall performance of the project

- 4.2 The output of the meetings between Project Managers and the PSO is a detailed monitoring report for formal review by CLT via the Corporate Programme Board (CPB). The CPB provides a forum where project risks, issues, and other areas of concern are discussed; this approach facilitates clear and accountable decision-making.
- 4.3 The Project Monitoring Report is also submitted to the Executive for review on a quarterly basis. The Project Monitoring Report outlines the progress of all live Council projects in the interest of financial prudence and to ensure open and transparent corporate governance. The most recent Project Monitoring Report is attached at Appendix 4.

5.0 Corporate Strategy

- 5.1 The application of robust project management underpins the effective delivery of the functions that the Council provides, which in turn supports the objectives listed in the Corporate Strategy.

6.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

- 6.1 No implications arising from this report.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 6.2 No implications arising from this report.

Legal

- 6.3 No implications arising from this report.

7.0 Engagement and Consultation

- 7.1 No engagement or consultation arising from this report.

REPORT ENDS

Appendix 1: WBC Project Management Process

