

Appendix 2c: Audit Assurances and Themes

Assurance



South East Active Travel Programme Governance Arrangements

Objective

To assess whether there are robust accounting, monitoring and transparency arrangements in place to ensure the outcomes set out in the original bid¹ are met.

The audit was included in the annual audit plan at the request of the Director of Planning and Transport and the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) who wanted independent assurance over compliance with the grant's terms and conditions.

Summary

The audit was undertaken following a request from Senior Management for independent assurance over the performance of the programme and its ability to meet the outcomes outlined in the original bid, agreed with the Department for Transport.

There are appropriate arrangements in place at a programme management level to monitor the programme's spend and ensure it is delivering to budget.

The risk register in place contains appropriate detail but some risks from the original grant bid were not included, as they had not yet materialised. Including these risks will ensure they are monitored and can continue to be effectively mitigated.

Fortnightly reporting to the Programme Manager by Workstream Leaders, and monthly meetings between the team ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to monitor the programmes progress at programme level. Monitoring arrangements need extending to include the contributions made by third party organisations included in the original grant bid.

Strategic Leads from the three councils and key stakeholders (including travel providers), attend the Programme Board which is '*accountable for managing the delivery of the programme*' and receive high level summaries of the progress of work streams, budgets and risks, which is positive.

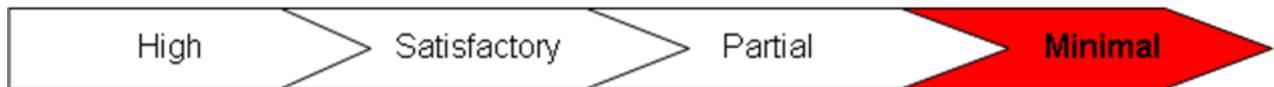
A high level 'Team Plan' has been developed for 2018/19 that outlines the key lines of work to be undertaken during the year to achieve the KPIs outlined in the original bid. Extending this to include action owners and timeframes for delivery would provide more accountability for deliverables across the programme. Reporting this to the Programme Board alongside progress against the KPIs would give more assurance over the programme's progress, and enable more effective challenge of performance.

The Project Board receive similar information to the Programme Board. Providing a highlight report to support this would allow them to focus their attention on the key issues and achievements of the programme that they need to be aware of. In

¹ The bid for the Access Fund Grant awarded by the Department for Transport

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In addition, more information is needed to allow the board to effectively fulfil their responsibility for *'overseeing the execution of the Legal and Financial responsibilities afforded to the Council by way of being lead body of the programme'*.

To ensure the terms and conditions of the grant are complied with going forward, members of the programme team should undertake some targeted training on:

- the Council's Contract Procedure Rules
- the rules in respect of State Aid.