

Appendix 2a: Audit Assurances and Themes

Assurance



Better Queensway Workstreams Audit and Project Assurance Revisited

Objectives

- 1) To assess the robustness of agreed delivery plans and monitoring arrangements to deliver the Council's obligations under the Partnership Agreement for the Housing, Highways and Finance and Funding workstreams.
- 2) To assess whether the remaining actions as at July 2021, agreed in the management of the project original Project Assurance audit dated January 2021 have been implemented and are now effectively embedded into the day-to-day operation of the project.

Summary

The project's governance structures are well defined, documented and include progress reporting. Escalation processes are clear however, a lack of application of risk and issue management processes and detailed Council side plans, mean they cannot operate effectively.

Fully embedding risk and issue management processes, across the governance hierarchy is a particular area for focus going forward to ensure the Operational Group can properly deliver its obligations to the Partnership Board. This will also improve visibility and accountability for internal decision making and gives increased opportunity to demonstrate ongoing alignment to the Council's Values and Behaviour framework. As such management have agreed actions to:

- ensure everyone involved is clear on their roles and responsibilities in relation to risk management, by re-circulating the roles and responsibilities information to Workstream Leads and tabling at Operational Group and Partnership Board meetings
- work with Workstream Leads and Partnership Board members to ensure that the information contained within the project's risk register is complete, accurate and timely.

The introduction of regular internal project communications will also ensure that Workstream Leads are clear on the project's priorities and the actions required of them. The appointment of the new Council Programme Manager presents an opportunity to reset and develop relationships across the project more generally.

Council-side project plans and detailed workstream plans need to be fully developed for the current phase of the project, which capture all the required information, outline the critical path of activity and key dependencies, as well as the resources required to deliver Council tasks.

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As such, management have agreed actions to develop Council-side plans (that are driven by The Porters Place Southend Limited Liability Partnership) which will ensure the project is aware of the key tasks to be completed and the amount of resource required. This will provide the Operational Group and Partnership Board with the information required to fully challenge the completion of tasks and be fully confident the project remains on track to deliver as planned.

Management have agreed robust implementation dates with Internal Audit and we intend to follow up progress on the implementation of actions in Quarter 4 2022/23 or Quarter 1 2023/24, with a view to reporting progress to the April 2023 Audit Committee.

Number of actions agreed: 7