

Report of the Chief Executive

Project boards

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to outline the council's approach to the set up of Project Boards during the start up phase of the project lifecycle.

Background

2. As part of the delivery of the council's five priorities and other initiatives, such as efficiency work, the council has a large number of programmes and projects. These vary in scale from multi-million pound programmes that operate at a corporate level, e.g. Accommodation, Access York, Elderly Persons Homes review, to small scale projects within directorates.
3. As part of any project, a project board is set up to provide governance and leadership. The project board also ensures that links are maintained to overall council strategy and to Directorate Management Teams.

Project Boards and assignment of roles

4. A Project board is formed during the start up phase of the project and exists from the start up to project closure. This is mandated by the Prince2 Project Management methodology that is the accepted methodology for all public services including City of York Council. It is important to recognise that there is a difference between a working group, or task and finish group, that might inform and shape work in certain areas and a project board.
5. City of York Council takes an appropriately flexible approach to the governance of pieces of work and generally the directorate management teams provide a mechanism to manage business as usual and small projects. Where work is more cross cutting in nature or carries significant risk or cost a formal project will be established and a project board will be assigned at that point.

6. Technically there are four key roles on a project board according to Prince2 Project methodology. The project sponsor (or customer), the senior user (who is the main user of the output of the project), the senior supplier (the main supplier involved in the outputs of the project) and project assurance (ensures that there is quality assurance and robust control during the project lifecycle). These are the decision making roles and the project sponsor appoints a project manager who manages the day to day delivery of the project.
7. The project sponsor is the senior officer on the project board and they chair the project board and arbitrate on any areas that require agreement at the project board. On City of York Council projects this role is assigned to a senior officer (the level will depend on the size and nature of the project). As part of the project initiation, officers are identified to perform the project board as identified.

The role of elected members on project boards

8. When a project is initiated it is noted which elected member portfolio the subject matter of the project falls into (in some cases the project will fall into more than one portfolio). A view is then taken as to what the most practical method of briefing the portfolio holder is as the project progresses. In some cases it is determined that the most practical approach is for the portfolio holder to attend the board meeting. In other cases, members are briefed on a regular basis. In the case of major cross cutting projects the portfolio holder will be responsible for making the decision on procurement at Cabinet and there is therefore a conflict in them being involved in the procurement process as part of the project board.
9. The elected member attendance is not in a decision making capacity, unless board members specifically request the member's view at a meeting to inform the decision making process.

Recommendations

10. Members are recommended to:-

Note the points in this paper about the composition of project and programme boards and the roles played by elected members on these boards.

Reason: To ensure that the Members are informed on the composition of project boards, as requested by the Committee.

Contact Details

Author:

Dave Atkinson

Transformation lead –
Office of the Chief
Executive

Telephone: 01904 553481

**Chief Officer Responsible for the
report:**

Kersten England

Chief Executive

Telephone: 01904 551000

**Report
Approved**



Date 8/04/2014

Specialist Implications Officers - None

Wards Affected: Not applicable

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annex of abbreviations

MSP – Managing Successful Programmes

Prince2 – Project management methodology