

Appendix 1

NORTH WALES GROWTH DEAL – GATEWAY REVIEW ACTION PLAN

Context

The Portfolio Management Office accepts the recommendations from the PAR report and will put in place actions to address these, however our view is that it is not possible to address all 15 recommendations in the timescales set out within the report without diverting significant resources from project delivery. As this would be counter to the overall purpose of the review and the recommendations to increase the pace of delivery, the Portfolio Management Office have prioritised the recommendations and are proposing new target dates that can be delivered.

Ref. No.	Recommendation	Urgency	PAR Target date for completion	Proposed Action	Action Owner	Resources	Action Target date
1	<p>The SRO should ensure the following actions are implemented to improve effectiveness of the governance process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The entire decision-making process should be streamlined in terms of the number of board interactions required particularly regarding business case development. The Economic Ambition Board (EAB) should be prepared to approve relevant FBCs out of Committee to expedite the move into delivery. New business cases that don't require planning consent can be expedited faster The Project and Programme Boards for internal projects should be merged with the latter doing the business case reviews. 	Essential	By end November 2023	1a) PMO to commission external review of assurance and approval process including decision making process.	Head of Operations	Costs to be met from existing portfolio development budget.	Commission by Dec 2023. Implement by March 2024.
				1b) Having consulted with Monitoring Officer it is not possible under GA2 for EAB to make FBC decisions out of committee. EAB to hold additional extraordinary meetings if urgent decisions are required (5 days notice)	Monitoring Officer	n/a	Extraordinary meetings to be held as required.
				1c) PMO to review internal arrangements. Proposal to merge PMO led energy and digital project boards with the relevant programme board to oversee delivery. PMO to consider merging Agrifood and Tourism and Innovation in High Value Manufacturing Programme Boards or combining the meetings.	Head of Operations	Existing PMO staff	Review and consult with relevant Boards by Jan 2023. Implement in February 2024.

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2	<p>The SRO should ensure that, to mitigate the length of time to OBC approval, a more flexible approvals process should be implemented including:</p> <p>The level of assurance for smaller projects should be proportionate and new projects that don't require planning consent should be expedited.</p> <p>In addition to providing exemplars where they can, the PMO should sense check new projects thinking around the content they intend to provide for each of the five stages of the business cases</p>	Essential	By end November 2023	2a) Addressed by action 1a	n/a	n/a	n/a
				2b) Addressed by action 1a	n/a	n/a	n/a
				2c) PMO to develop template for high level project summary to focus on key questions in each case – building on initial application form for new projects.	Growth Deal Programme Manager	Existing PMO staff	End of March 2024.
3	The SRO should discuss with the Wales Regional Team the establishment of a Growth Deal Wales forum to provide mutual support and sharing best practice of business case design throughout Wales.	Recommended	n/a	3a) Request Welsh Government consider the establishment of a Wales Growth Deal forum.	Portfolio Director	n/a	Make request by Dec 2023
4	The SRO should seek to establish an appropriate cycle of strategic level communications between senior officials in the relevant policy areas of UKG, WG and the Portfolio at the strategic level. The outcomes should trickle down to operational level to ensure project alignment. In particular, a Plan B for projects where viability is uncertain due to policy development should be developed.	Essential	End of Q1 2024	4a) Request quarterly strategic meetings with UK/WG policy leads covering programme areas.	Portfolio Director	n/a	Make request by Dec 2023
				4b) Mitigation strategy already in place for some projects. PMO to develop similar strategies for Digital and Hydrogen.	Energy Programme Manager & Digital Programme Manager	Existing PMO staff	End of March 2024.

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5	The PMO should adopt a Portfolio approach to balancing/flexing resources within/across projects as needed, prioritising reallocation of resources to those projects close to delivery.	Critical	Do now	5) Priority projects pipeline identified and weekly PMO SCRUM set up to allocated tasks and resources.	Head of Operations	Internal PMO resources from Digital, Skills and Operations (2 x Project Manager, 1 x Project Officer) reallocated to support priority project pipeline.	Ongoing – review in December 2023
6	The PMO should remind EAB and Portfolio Board members of their obligations to ensure that communication of messages to frontline staff involved in the Growth Deal delivery is robust and timely.	Essential	At the next EAB meeting	6) Discussed at strategic session. New Strategic Communications Lead to review internal communications within partnership and implement required changes to support EAB and Portfolio Board to share key messages.	Strategic Communications and Engagement Lead	Existing PMO staff	Review completed by Feb 2024
7	The EAB should ensure robust challenge to sponsors for evidence that they have and will commit sufficient resource upfront to support project development and planning.	Essential	Ongoing	7) PMO to carry out risk review including how project risks are presented to EAB. Chair of EAB to write to projects where capacity/resources are identified as a risk.	Head of Operations and Digital Programme Manager (risk lead)	Existing PMO staff	Review by Jan 2023. Implement by March 2024
8	The PMO should ensure it robustly monitors known external risk factors, such as policy changes and related initiatives. Close working with WG/UKG in this area at a much earlier stage is essential to ensure strategic project choices are optimised.	Essential	Ongoing	8) Risk reviews in 7a to also consider strategic risk and relationship with WG/UKG. Strategic meetings set out in 4a will also support this recommendation.	n/a	n/a	n/a

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9	The SRO should ensure that distractions are minimised/mitigated for all members of the Portfolio for at least the next 6 months until the rate of projects entering delivery is improved in accordance with the Growth Deal Agreement if appropriate.	Essential	Now until delivery improves	9) PMO attendance and/or presentations at external events/conferences to be limited and prioritised for next six months.	Portfolio Director & Head of Operations	Existing PMO staff	Ongoing – review in March 2024
10	The Head of Operations should ensure that the requirements for entry to the Portfolio and for all stages of business case development include undertaking public sector focused procurement training and involvement of procurement throughout, evidence of active risk identification and action to mitigate and plans that demonstrate robust risk assessment and percentage confidence rating.	Essential	In place by end November 2023 and ongoing	10a) PMO reviewing procurement training packages available to sponsors	Procurement and Social Value Manager	Existing PMO staff	Review by Jan 2023. Implement by March 2024
				10b) Risk review in 7a to also consider how projects evidence active risk management. Consider use of through risk response action plans.	n/a	n/a	n/a
11	The SRO should explore with partners mechanisms for enabling PMO access to additional legal and financial expertise to avoid delays in business case development and the path to delivery.	Essential	Within next six weeks	11) Priority projects pipeline identified and weekly Legal/Finance SCRUM set up to allocated tasks and resources.	Head of Operations, Monitoring Officer & s151 Officer.	Gwynedd resources plus Pinsent Masons & Arlingclose when required.	Ongoing – review in December 2023
12	The PMO should review the role and membership of the BDG to determine when and how its expertise can be more effective in supporting progress into delivery.	Recommended	n/a	12) Chair of EAB and Chair of Business Delivery Board to review membership and diversity of Board	Chair of Economic Ambition Board Chair of Business Delivery Board	n/a	Review by Dec 2023. Implement by March 2024.

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13	<p>The SRO and EAB jointly should take the following action as a matter of priority:</p> <p>A “Rapid Delivery Team” should be brought in to support current project managers/PMO to get those projects close to the line into delivery.</p> <p>The Rapid Delivery Team leader should work with the current PMO leadership group to oversee the work including managing challenging relationships including private sector stakeholders.</p>	Critical	Do Now	<p>13) PMO to procure a framework of specialist expertise to support the PMO to get projects into delivery. Lots likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PPM and Risk Management; ➤ Commercial negotiations; ➤ Procurement; ➤ Financial Viability; ➤ Carbon and Biodiversity; <p>* Also see Action 5&11 in relation to priority pipeline SCRUM arrangements</p>	Head of Operations	Initial budget of £200k to be made available through pausing recruitment of new project officers for Energy and Property	<p>Launch procurement – Dec 2023</p> <p>Selection process – Jan 2024</p> <p>Operational – February 2024</p>
14	A Non-Executive Director (NED) should be appointed to the EAB to provide an increased level of challenge from an independent source.	Essential	From end December 2023	14) Economic Ambition Board to consider recommendation.	Chair of Economic Ambition Board	n/a	Decision by March 2024
15	The Head of Operations should ensure that greater emphasis is placed on highlighting the relationship between outputs, outcomes and benefits in business case development and how these will be quantified and measured. Other members of the PMO should continue to contribute to embedding the Benefits Realisation plan in specific business cases.	Essential	From end November 2023 With all existing business case in development and ongoing	15a) PMO to share Portfolio Benefits Plan and Programme Benefits Plans with all projects as the template for project benefit plans.	Programme Managers	Existing PMO staff	By December 2023
				15b) Programme Boards to include rolling review or project benefit plans.	Programme Managers	Existing PMO staff	Ongoing - Implement by January 2024