

APPENDIX 2 – Assurance Process

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Leeds City Region Assurance Framework has been subject to an extensive review due to the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal for a Mayoral Combined Authority to be established.
- 1.2 As part of this process, the assurance process has been reviewed and amended based on feedback received as part of the consultation with stakeholders.
- 1.3 The proposed amendments to the process are as follows:

West Yorkshire Investment Strategy (WYIS)

- Programmes/projects will flow from the WYIS and enter the Assurance Framework.
- The detail of the WYIS is still to be agreed but this will set out the context, objectives and targets of the MCA and the transformational investments that the MCA will commit resources to over an agreed time period (possibly 5 years).

Stage 1: Assessment and Sequencing- led by Policy

- The main change in Stage 1 is that within the Combined Authority this will be led by Policy, in close consultation with Delivery and Corporate Services.
- **Activity 1** will now provide an early stage light touch review to identify approaches / schemes that align with the transformational investments set out in the WYIS. This will be done through the use of Strategic Assessments or a similar tool as part of a sequencing / prioritisation process and will include political engagement. It is proposed that a Strategic Assessment Prioritisation Group (SAP) replaces SARG to provide this check and Challenge Review.
- The main output of Stage 1 is now **Activity 2: Strategic Outline Case (SOC)**. This will be undertaken at programme level wherever possible, to allow full appraisal and consideration of impact of the programme. Where a programme SOC is submitted it will set out the projects to be included based on the programme criteria. Projects may still be submitted however and these will have their own SOC.

Stage 2: Scheme Development- led by Delivery

- The main change in Stage 2 is that the need for a Full Business Case with Finalised Costs has been removed.

- **Activity 3:** Outline Business Case (OBC) remains largely the same. Guidance will be provided around the level of detail expected at OBC compared to the Full Business Case (FBC) and work is ongoing with regards to proportionality of business cases. A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Benefits Realisation Plan are required as part of the Assurance Framework.
- **Activity 4:** Full Business Case. It is proposed that approval to progress is granted with conditions set regarding funding. When these conditions have been met, and the scheme costs have remained within the allocated budget post procurement, this is then approved to proceed into delivery by the Director of Delivery following a recommendation from the Portfolio Appraisal Team (PAT). If the conditions are not met, then the scheme would return to FBC for additional costs and impact to be considered.

Stage 3: Delivery and Evaluation- Activity 5 and Activity 6 led by Delivery and Activity 7 led by Policy (R&I)

- **Activity 5:** Delivery Closure Report and **Activity 6:** Financial Closure Report will still be undertaken as existing, but in a slightly different format.
- **Activity 7:** Evaluation will be led by Research and Intelligence. This is a reporting point as opposed to the previous decision points in the process, and will be undertaken when the Programme (or project in some circumstances), is completed for an evaluation of the benefits, outcomes and economic impact compared to the overall programme objectives set out in the SOC. Interim evaluations may also be undertaken as required as set out in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.

Figure 1: Assurance process

