

Project Board Investigation (MPEB Panel Investigation)

Review Title: **Project Board Investigation**

Overview & Scrutiny Panel: **Major Projects and External Bodies**

Panel Chairman: **Cllr. Charles Gerrish**

Overview & Scrutiny Project Manager: **Bethan Grant**

Supporting Service Officers: **David Langman, Major Projects Team Manager**
Claire Wiley, Major Projects Reporting Systems Co-ordinator

Process for Tracking O&S Recommendations - Guidance note for Executive Members

The enclosed table lists all the recommendations arising from the above Overview & Scrutiny Review. Individual recommendations are referred to the relevant named Executive Members (or whole Executive in the case of a whole Executive referral) as listed in the '**Exec Member**' column of the table. In order to provide the O&S Panel with an Executive response on each recommendation, the named Executive member (or whole Executive) is asked to complete the last 3 columns of the table as follows:

Decision Response

The Executive has the following options:

- **Accept** the Panel's recommendation
- **Reject** the Panel's recommendation
- **Defer** a decision on the recommendation because a response cannot be given at this time. This could be because the recommendation needs to be considered in light of a future Executive decision, imminent legislation, relevant strategy development or budget considerations, etc.

Implementation Date

- For 'Accept' decision responses, give the date that the recommendation will be implemented.
- For 'Defer' decision responses, give the date that the recommendation will be reconsidered.
- For 'Reject' decisions this is not applicable so write n/a

Rationale

Use this space to explain the rationale for your decision response and implementation date. For accepted recommendations, please give details of how they will be implemented.

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Project Board Investigation: Recommendations

The Major Projects and External Bodies Overview and Scrutiny Panel has undertaken a review of the Council's Major Project Boards. **The Panel ask the Executive Member for Economic Development to consider the following recommendations** to help improve the Board's role and operation.

Recommendation	Exec Member	Decision Response	Implementation Date	Rationale
<p>Recommendation 5.1</p> <p>The chair should take the decision to cancel meetings if not needed or call more meetings if required. However, reporting to the project programme Board should keep the same format.</p> <p>Consideration could be given to increasing the knowledge of Board members by using meetings with lighter agendas for either brain storming or education in more technical aspects of project management i.e. contracts, risk management etc.</p>	Cllr Colin Darracott	AGREE	IMMEDIATE	<p>Meetings' frequencies should be flexible.</p> <p>Some Boards currently need to meet about fortnightly, others only every other month.</p>
		AGREE	IMMEDIATE	<p>Agree, so long as regular monitoring of key issues takes place, particularly for projects in early stages or in the gateways process.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5.2</p> <p>A more formal set up in the meeting room could be adopted with the Project Board sitting together, the Chair in the centre, facing the reporting officers</p>	Cllr Colin Darracott	NOT SURE	IMMEDIATE	<p>It's important for Board member to be able catch the Chairman's eye and be focussed on key issues, and to be satisfied they are being addressed. We'll try it.</p>

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<p>Recommendation 5.3</p> <p>5.3.1 All those tasked with attending should regard attendance as important. If they are unable to attend they should send a substitute if appropriate (i.e. technical, legal, or Section 151). Observations should be made to Chair before the meeting, arising from reading of documentation issued in advance. These should be reported to the Board accordingly.</p> <p>5.3.2 The PPB should review the current membership and appropriate levels of reporting officers for each Board and that this should continue be reviewed on an annual basis.</p> <p>5.3.3 The role of non executive councillors is considered valuable and must be retained, members need however to attend consistently to be effective in this role.</p> <p>5.3.4 It is suggested that the Schools Project Board should split their agenda between their capital program and the specific school projects thereby enabling reporting officers to attend only for their required item.</p>	Cllr Colin Darracott	AGREE	IMMEDIATE	It's a good discipline to present observations in advance, but I doubt it will happen owing to general pressures on officer time
		AGREE	ASAP	No further comment
		AGREE		
		N/A	N/A	I have not attended Schools Project Board. However, it seems eminently sensible.
<p>Recommendation 5.4</p> <p>5.4.1 The Project Boards each need to assess whether they are taking a high enough overview of the project, and review the agenda to ensure the attendance of senior officers and consultants are maximised.</p> <p>5.4.2 The Project Board's role should be to assess and direct the project, not to manage it and the</p>	Cllr Colin Darracott	PARTLY AGREE	IMMEDIATE	Sometimes a Board can become an important forum for helping to sort very detailed issues, especially in early stages.
	Cllr Colin	AGREE	IMMEDIATE	

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Members of the Project Boards should be aware of that role and arrive suitably prepared to undertake that role.	Darracott			
5.4.3 Monthly reports should be more concise, highlighting the strategic issues that the board needs to consider. Updates not in the report should be given at the meeting.	Cllr Colin Darracott	NOT AGREED	N/A	Reports of meetings I attend are now pared down sufficiently and I would not recommend further reduction.
5.4.4 As a matter of best practice each Project Board should utilise the CDSM template, used for defining the level of decision needed for each issue (see Appendix 5 for an example).	Cllr Colin Darracott	PARTLY AGREE	IMMEDIATE	Some might be more complex in terms of “templating” key issues, such as Bath Western Riverside project We should try it and see.
5.4.5 Minutes should record who made the decision to allow an audit of the process, and record follow up points.	Cllr Colin Darracott	AGREE	IMMEDIATE	I thought this already happened.
5.4.6 From a governance point of view Project Boards should review and challenge the decisions that the Directors and Executives have made in the interim between meetings.	Cllr Colin Darracott	AGREE	IMMEDIATE	