



Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee - 10 March 2022

Swansea Bay City Deal Portfolio Gateway Assurance Arrangements

Purpose:	To seek Joint Committee approval for the SBCD Assurance Framework detailing the assurance arrangements for the Portfolio and its constituent programmes and projects
Policy Framework:	Swansea Bay City Deal (SBCD) Joint Committee Agreement (JCA)
Consultation:	Senior Responsible Owners, Project Leads, Welsh and UK Government
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that the Joint Committee approves the SBCD Assurance Framework attached at Appendix A.
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Financial Officer:	Chris Moore (S.151 Officer)
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith (Monitoring Officer)

1. Introduction

The application of independent assurance arrangements are an essential and integral part of ensuring successful delivery of programmes and projects, and the realisation of their benefits. Due to the high value, risk rating, complexity and the number of discrete project elements within the SBCD portfolio, a number of issues arise in developing assurance arrangements that are effective and practical, particularly with respect to cost, resource and timing.

A series of meetings and workshops were held between the PoMO and officers from the Welsh Government Integrated Assurance Hub (WG IAH) to develop the approach to assurance of the SBCD portfolio.

Programme (Portfolio) Board on 30th November 2021 were informed of the requirements for independent assurance across the portfolio and rationale for the developing assurance arrangements. The approach and direction of travel was agreed by Programme (Portfolio)



Board which was to be formalised through the development of a SBCD Assurance Framework.

2. SBCD Assurance Framework

The SBCD Assurance Framework is attached at Appendix A.

This framework has been produced jointly by the SBCD PoMO and WG IAH and describes the arrangements for the SBCD Portfolio which are aligned to best practice, and are proportionate, practicable and fit for purpose.

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for the management, resourcing and governance of Gateway assurance arrangements for the SBCD Portfolio and its constituent programmes, projects and workstreams. The framework provides clarity for programme and project Senior Responsible Owners (SROs) and their teams, Welsh and UK governments and partner organisations on the assurance arrangements that will apply to the programmes and projects within the SBCD portfolio.

The framework supports the portfolio Integrated Assurance and Approval Plan (IAAP) which leads the assurance activity associated with the development, delivery and operational phases of the programmes and projects.

Consultation on the framework has been undertaken with SROs and programme / project leads and WG / UKG City and Growth Deal leads.

Proposed Arrangements

The proposed arrangements for independent assurance are shown below.

Level	Assurance Arrangements
Level 1: Portfolio (1)	Gateway 0 – annual review
Level 2: Headline Programmes and Projects (9)	Gateway 0 / Gateways 1-5 / PARs – periodic reviews with the option of undertaking Gateway 1-5 to incorporate key decision points of component projects and workstreams
Level 3: Projects and Workstreams (35)	Primarily internal (regional) independent reviews managed and resourced through a SBCD Assurance Sub-Hub. Provision for some high risk / value projects to be undertaken through the formal Gateway Review process

The following agreed approach will also apply in the establishment of the assurance arrangements for Level 3 of the portfolio:

- The SBCD Gateway assurance arrangements will replicate the OGC Gateway Review process e.g., format, documentation, process

- Level 3 reviews will be aligned to best practice for OGC Gateway Review process but adapted to undertake lighter touch reviews
- The management and delivery of reviews will be overseen by a joint SBCD/WG/UKG assurance panel
- A SBCD assurance sub-hub will be established to undertake the planning, organisation and resourcing of reviews under accreditation of WG IAH
- WG IAH will ensure that assurance standards are being applied throughout the process and will manage the process by way of quality assurance checks and regular updates/meetings
- Reviews will be led by an independent Review Team Leaders, trained by the WG IAH, to ensure integrity and transparency in the review process
- Projects and workstreams will have assurance reviews by exception based on the Risk Potential Assessment (RPA) rating for criteria such as value, risk, and complexity

SBCD Assurance Sub-hub

Essential to the establishment of these assurance arrangements is the creation and operation of a formal assurance capability within the SBCD. This will be in the form of an Assurance Sub-hub which would manage the organisation, resourcing, delivery and monitoring of the majority of Level 3 reviews. The Sub-Hub would also ensure that the independent external reviews at Levels 1 and 2 are assessed and scheduled appropriately through the WG IAH.

The SBCD Assurance Sub-hub will be established under the umbrella and accreditation of the WG Integrated Assurance Hub with the approach, process, format, standards and documentation replicated to ensure the consistency and robustness of reviews.

SBCD Joint Assurance Panel

Oversight of the development and implementation of the SBCD Assurance Framework will be undertaken by the Joint SBCD/WG/UKG Assurance Panel. The Panel will be chaired by Welsh Government Head of Integrated Assurance with representation from the SBCD PoMO, the Welsh Government and UK Government leads for City and Growth Deals.

3. Financial Implications

The adoption of the assurance framework will lead to cost saving due to lower-level assessments being undertaken internally by the PoMO. As the framework is in development cost savings cannot be quantified at present.

4. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5. Alignment to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The SBCD Portfolio and its constituent projects are closely aligned to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the seven well-being goals for Wales. These alignments are outlined in a Portfolio Business Case for the SBCD, as well as in individual project business cases. The proposal would contribute directly to the Act and the well-being by promoting the successful delivery of programmes and projects.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix A: SBCD Assurance Framework

Appendix B: Options Appraisal

Appendix C: Terms of Reference