

Appendix L

Project Assurance – Peer Review

How successful implementation will be ensured

Version dated 11 August 2011

Assurance Principles

Regular assurance is important to the successful delivery of projects, providing an independent challenge, bringing in external expertise to the project and helping identify major risks. Assurance can provide comfort that a project is on track to deliver or, conversely, identify remedial action required.

Weston Package Project Assurance

A full Gateway Review is not deemed necessary or cost effective for the Low Cost Option which has a total scheme cost of £14.994m and is seeking a DfT contribution of £10.395m. We are looking to other ways of providing external review by officers with expertise but not involved in the project both within and from outside the West of England sub region.

Alternative assurance will be achieved through a series of peer reviews during the life cycle of the project. Given the sub-regional context of this bid which sits within a wider suite of 5 major schemes, there is a growing base of major scheme experience. This strong peer base is a valuable resource to draw upon and gives a high level of confidence in the assurance process.

Peer Review Process

The project seeks the ongoing input from peers working in neighbouring authorities on similar projects and the list of participants identified below is likely to change as the project progresses. As the gateway review process will not be followed for this project, a formal process for peer review will be followed in addition to the ongoing peer support that takes place within the West of England. The outputs of this process will provide DfT with clear evidence that assurance is taking place.

Drawing upon some of the process set out by OGC, the reviewers will be asked to consider whether the appropriate framework, processes and resources are in place in order for the project to progress to the next stage. The reviewers will look at many of the criteria identified in DfT guidance such as value for money, deliverability and risk management but focussing on those most relevant to each stage.

The stages for formal internal review are set out as follows:

IR1. Before Programme Entry

Spring 2009

The draft bid was reviewed by officers from the West of England Partnership prior to programme entry. No show-stoppers were identified but feedback was focussed on: The scope of the objectives; the business case; affordability; robustness of cost estimates; communication plan

Completed

IR2. Before Best and Final Bid Submission	17 August 2011
Project ‘health-check’ focussing on: detailed designs; governance; communication strategy; procurement strategy; programme; risk identification and management; value engineering; cost estimates; evaluation plan.	
IR3. Prior to Full Approval	June 2012
Focussing on the investment decision: Final prices; project resources incl. funding commitments in place; risk management;	
IR4. Prior to construction	September 2012
Focussing on: programme, contractor monitoring and performance targets;	
IR5. Mid-term construction	November 2013
Project ‘health-check’ focussing on: programme; costs; review of objectives, quality and value for money on elements delivered.	
IR6. Following Delivery	January 2015
Focussing on the achievement of objectives, quality, value for money.	

The dates indicated for each stage are based on the current programme which is subject to achieving reactivated Programme Entry by December 2011.

List of Participants

Colin Medus	Senior Responsible Officer
Alex Fear	Project Manager
Steven Thorne	Transport Policy Officer
Stephen Walford	Transport Policy Manager, Somerset County Council
Richard Needs	Major Schemes Manager, Somerset County Council
Bethan Morris	Transport Policy Team, South Glos. Council
Pete Davies	West of England Partnership

Additional engineering staff during the construction phase will also be invited to ensure peer review is robust.

The outputs

To maximise the benefit of the assurance process all outcomes and recommendations of assurance activities will be communicated to the project team including the SRO, Programme Board and WEPO.

Formal review and consideration of the review recommendations will be undertaken and an assurance log maintained with the appropriate organisational owner identified.