

Levelling Up Funding Board Governance Document May 2023

Levelling Up Board Terms of Reference

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Levelling Up Board Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

This Programme Definition Document sets how the Levelling Up Board (henceforth The Board) plans its work and how it monitors delivery against plans and projects funded by the UK Government's Levelling Up programme.

The document describes the structure which will support the Board, which includes member responsibilities and reporting mechanisms.

2. Executive summary

The Board must undertake delivery of the Clwyd West project (LUF20687 Protecting Ruthin's Unique Heritage, Wellbeing & Rural Communities); the Denbighshire elements of the Clwyd South project (LUF 0309 Maximise the potential of the post-COVID-19 visitor economy); and oversee delivery against the Denbighshire element of the regional Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan, by planning and monitoring the work of Lead Members and Officers.

2a. Board Principle Interdependencies

- All Denbighshire County Council Services and Strategies
- Equalities Legislation
- State aid / subsidy control
- Procurement
- Health and safety
- Fraud

2b. Outputs and Outcomes

The Clwyd West, Clwyd South and Shared Prosperity Fund plans all note particular projects and/or interventions that have associated Outputs and Outcomes. As well as monitoring progress against projects, the Board has a role in monitoring achievements against outputs and outcomes and overseeing reporting back to UK Government.

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3. Vision and Purpose for the Levelling Up Board

3a. Programme Vision

The Programme Board is required to drive change and delivery of the priorities under the Plans that have been approved by the UK Government

3b. Programme Purpose

The Board will utilise the corporate programme / project management methodology to ensure a strong focus on achievement of outcomes and associated benefits for all the plans approved by UK Government under Levelling Up Funding.

At the highest level, the Programme Board is responsible for:

- Clearly and consistently communicating the aims, particularly the desired outcomes.
- A focus on managing the outputs and outcomes, and the internal and external threats to their achievement.
- Co-ordination of a number of projects and their interdependencies.
- Leadership, influence, management, and directing the programmes
- Communication with key stakeholders including national and local politicians

4. Governance Principles and Management

4a. Delivery Approach

Delivery against the Fund's deadlines will demand good project management; the Board will set projects in motion by providing a mandate from the top down.

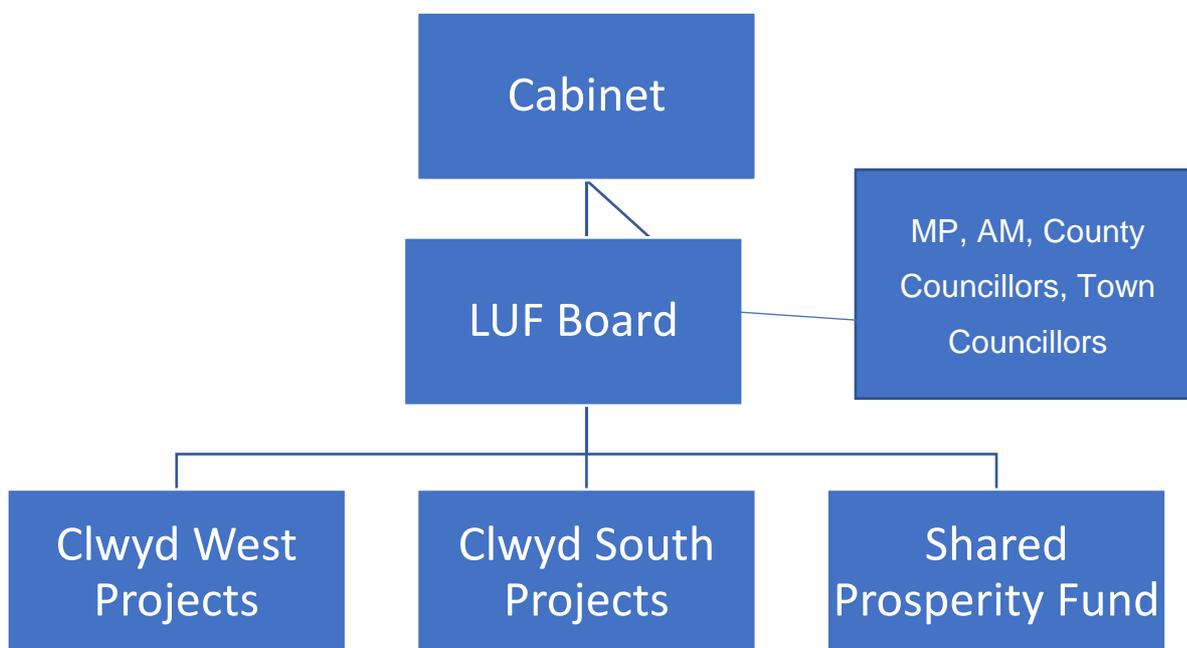
The approach is designed to ensure that Levelling Up commitments cascade into a coherent set of projects designed to enable delivery against the Funding's requirements and in line with Denbighshire's strategic priorities as far possible.

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Projects within the scope of the Board will be developed, managed and implemented by nominated project managers either in-house or with third parties with support from a Matrix team. This Team primarily sits within DCC's Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital & Assets service, and consists of a Programme Manager supported by a Project Officer for each constituency bid, External Funding Officer, and Administration and Compliance Officer. In other services the work of this team is supported by a Senior Finance Officer, Communications Officer, and others as required.

Regardless of the team and/or organisation that's delivering a project, normal delivery will be undertaken following methodology from Managing Successful Programmes and Prince-2 Project Management, consisting of a Project Brief (including Well-being Impact Assessment), Business Case and Highlight Reports for DCC projects. Delivery will be enhanced using the corporate programme / project management methodology (or a workaround for it, in the case of third party delivery) to ensure a strong focus on achievement of outcomes and associated benefits.

Strategic Overview of Delivery Approach



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4b. Programme Board Members

The Programme Board will comprise members as below:

Core Members

- Corporate Director: Economy, Environment, Communities (Chair)
- Leader and Lead Member for the Economy & Tackling Deprivation
- Lead Member for Finance & Assets
- Head of Corporate Support Services: Performance, Digital & Assets
- Head of Planning, Public Protection & Countryside Services
- Head of Finance & Audit
- Head of Housing & Communities

Advisory members

- Programme Manager
- External Funding Manager
- Senior Finance Officer
- Communications Officer
- Compliance, Monitoring & Administration Officer

4c. Roles and Responsibilities

Programme Board (collective)

The Programme Board must concentrate on effectively delivering against the Levelling Up funding the Council has received. It must achieve this through:

- Delivering the agreed programme through structures such as project boards, task and finish groups, that are proportionate to the task.
- Ensuring that scarce resources are prioritised to deliver maximum benefit.

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- Communicating progress with stakeholders through a corporately managed communication and engagement plan.
- Agreeing actions to overcome obstacles.
- Managing the programme through regular reporting on progress and referring to other structures within the Council for approval where required, as follows:
 - Project leads will be accountable to the Board via the Programme Manager
 - Capital projects will be shared with the DCC Capital Scrutiny Group
 - Progress updates will be captured via Quarterly Performance Reports, routinely shared with Cabinet and Performance Scrutiny.
- Managing programme level risk.
- Making recommendations to Corporate Executive Team / Senior Leadership Team / Cabinet where required.
- Programme leads will also develop supporting material, including a Forward Work Programme and a Risk Register, for delivery of the overall programme to enable a sound management approach to the successful delivery against Levelling Up. Risk Register and activities will take into account our Risk Appetite for the Council.
- Ensure that projects respond to emergent evidence and other changes in the political and operational context.
- Manage interdependencies as outlined above.

Programme Board Members (individuals)

Programme Board Members are tasked with:

- The delivery of the Levelling Up programme outcomes and benefits assigned to them.
- Heads of Service and Lead Member will collectively be responsible for making arrangements for the Levelling Up plans on which they're leading (e.g. Clwyd West, Clwyd South, SPF), and should be able to report back to the Board with progress updates as required.

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- Working collaboratively as part of the Board to solve issues and overcome obstacles.
- Reporting to Performance Scrutiny, Senior Leadership Team, Cabinet, County Councillors, AMs and MPs on their areas of responsibility, when required.
- Proactively managing relationships with key delivery partners such as town councillors, community councillors, etc.

The Board Chair Person

This role will be undertaken by the Director for the Economy, Environment & Communities.

The Board Chair Person has responsibility to:

- Chair and provide support to the Board. This will include offering a manageable agenda for each Board meeting.
- Ensure the Board stays focused on achieving the vision.
- Ensure communication of the Board's purpose and outcomes.
- Ensure that the benefits envisaged by the Board are realised (for example by ensuring that resources are contributed by service areas).
- Provide a link with portfolio holders and service areas to direct and manage projects, risks, issues, decisions.
- Share day-to-day executive management of the Board with the Chief Executive of the County Council.
- Provide support to the Programme Manager to manage risks and resolve issues.

The Board Programme Manager

The Board will be supported by Business Improvement and Modernisation by a Programme Manager of a matrix team. Responsibilities are to:

- Plan the programme, making recommendations to the Board.
- Provide management and monitoring of overall progress.

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- Be responsible for organising quality assurance and overall integrity of the programme.
- Manage the dependencies and interfaces between projects.
- Manage the risks to successful outcomes.
- Initiate extra actions where deficits in the programme are identified.
- Support outcome owners, middle managers and project managers where appropriate
- Ensure that projects adhere to the Corporate Project Management Methodology.
- Manage and monitor a Plan for the Board to track, control and deliver the programme outcomes and benefits. This will ensure all activities within the Levelling Up suite are reviewed at timely and regular intervals.

Programme Board Administrator

The Programme Board Administrator role will be undertaken by the Compliance, Monitoring and Administration officer. The officer will be responsible for:

- Booking all meetings and providing all necessary support papers.
- Coordinating the compilation of outcome reports and relevant papers.
- Supporting the Chair and the Programme Manager.

4d. Board Relationships

Relationship with Corporate Executive Team

The Board will have programme level authority to implement the actions required under Levelling Up. The Chair is empowered to make judgements as to which decisions can be made at the Programme Board and relayed directly to relevant Service Areas and/or public sector partners, and which decisions need to be referred back to CET and/or Cabinet. The latter are most likely to be decisions that will impact upon the wider organisation, those which may attract significant negative publicity or where the Board view differs significantly from that of a Service Area and/or third party or political interest.

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Relationship with Council, Cabinet and Capital Scrutiny Group.

The Board's work will be reported to Cabinet at quarterly intervals as part of current performance management arrangements for the Corporate Plan, where there is synergy with the Levelling Up projects. There will be clear and identified routes in relationship to working with the Council, Cabinet and Capital Scrutiny Group where resources are required, and political agreement is required for Board activities. Cover reports for project briefs, business cases and highlight reports will outline key recommendations and the power to make a decision.

Relationship with Scrutiny Committees

The Board's work will be reported to Performance Scrutiny at quarterly intervals as part of current performance management arrangements for the Corporate Plan, where there is synergy with the Levelling Up projects. At any other time, the Board may be asked to present its programme to Scrutiny Committees, which will play a key role in providing assurance to the Council that the Programme and its Board are delivering in line with the Levelling Up commitments. The Programme Manager will provide these reports.

Relationship with area-specific politicians and other stakeholders

For Levelling Up projects in Clwyd South and Clwyd West in particular, there will be much interest in progress from politicians at Town, County, National (Wales) and UK level.

The Head of Planning, Public Protection & Countryside and the Leader will arrange regular and timely updates on progress, with the support of the Programme Manager.

Occasionally the Corporate Director for Economy, Environment & Communities and the Leader will need to meet with one or more of this stakeholder group on an adhoc basis if an issue arises that needs to be dealt with at that particular political level (e.g. if there is a challenge that only UK Government can deal with the meeting might be with the MP).

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4e. Reporting Process

Agenda Setting

The Board will meet as required, but as a minimum, quarterly.

A typical agenda might include:

- Levelling Up Plan/ Forward Work Plan.
- Programme level Highlight Report
- Project Briefs, Wellbeing Impact Assessments, Business Cases, or Highlight Reports on projects (for DCC projects. Third party projects will have similar documentation, but without access to DCC system they won't be identical).
- Finance Report
- Risk Register
- Exception reports from programmes/projects.
- Key decisions required from the Board.
- Communications plan, including key messages for communication and engagement and with which stakeholders

Highlight reports at each meeting will present the Board with a high-level snapshot of progress to date, and highlight any risks, issues or areas of further work that require Board input. The Highlight report is an export from Verto and, as such, relies on the quality of information therein. Exception reports will be triggered if the programme develops a 'ROYG' (Red, Orange, Yellow Green) RED or ORANGE status in its delivery confidence or if any projects develop a RED or ORANGE status that can't be addressed at project level and might impact successful delivery of the programme.

Board Papers

The Board Administrator will endeavour that papers are emailed to the Board at least 5 working days before scheduled meetings.

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Where there are queries relating to agenda items Board members are encouraged to seek clarification from the Programme Manager in advance of attendance at meetings.

When board members are responsible for providing information to the Programme Manager they should ensure that the timescales adhere to the above requirement. Board members should promote this message to project managers and teams to ensure a consistent approach.

Project Related Documentation

Programme managers and project leads are responsible for ensuring that programme information is kept up to date by work stream leads and business change managers using Verto, including a Well-being Impact Assessment (WIA), details of identified stakeholders, project benefits / disbenefits, project context, impact, risks, milestones, progress on achieving benefits outputs and outcomes, etc.

Outcome Monitoring

All projects within the Programme will follow the Corporate Project Management methodology which requires clear identification of project baselines, outputs and outcomes, expected benefits, measurement indicators and timescales for reporting on these. Projects will monitor their individual progress indicators and, where applicable, will also be linked to Programme outcomes via shared indicators so that progress towards achieving an outcome – through monitoring progress on a number of projects - can be tracked.

Risk, Risk Appetite and Issue Management

See 4f. below for Risk Management Strategy.

Risks and issues will be actively managed throughout the programme, and the overall risk and issues profiles continually monitored by the Programme Manager. This will incorporate the County Council's Risk Appetite requirements; Risk Appetite is the level of risk we are prepared to tolerate or accept as a Council in pursuit of our long term, strategic objectives. Determining and articulating our risk appetite allows us to consider all options

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to respond to risk and make informed decisions that are most likely to result in successful delivery whilst also providing an acceptable level of value for money.

The identified risks need to be regularly reviewed and challenged. New risks may be identified and responses planned or actioned. The Programme Manager is responsible for escalating issues arising from individual projects to the Board Chair Person, liaising with Board Members or working with the project leads to manage risks and resolve issues that could affect delivery of project outputs and programme outcomes, and therefore benefits realisation.

Projects must be clear about when risks need to be managed at a project level and when these should be escalated to the Programme Manager (and should then be defined in the risk management strategy).

Circumstances that should require a project to escalate risks or issues to the Programme Manager may include situations where:

- Dependent projects or programmes are impacted.
- The project does not have sufficient authority for the action required.
- The action required will exceed project tolerances for quality, time and cost.
- The project does not have the necessary skills or experience and does not have the authority to acquire them.
- The project cannot deliver its outputs.

4f. Management Strategies

Information Management Strategy

Up-to-date information is critical to enabling the Board to make informed decisions at appropriate times. The Programme Manager is responsible for ensuring accurate information is available to the Board in the correct format at specific reporting periods.

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Project managers are responsible for preparing required reports in line with the Corporate Programme Office and Prince 2 methodology for DCC projects.

Verto is the Programme Management System adopted to support project and programme officers in DCC. Verto enables users to record and monitor key programme and project information and produce relevant reports and plans. The quality of the information recorded in Verto is a key factor in the success of the programme. Verto provides standard change control and configuration management functions that support the provision of relevant, accurate information.

Resource Management Strategy

The Board is responsible for steering and monitoring activities associated with all Priorities within the Levelling Up programme, and for making recommendations to take work further. This includes ensuring the provision of resources - physical, financial and manpower - with the support and guidance of Capital Scrutiny Group, Cabinet, and members of the Board, particularly when approval is required from those decision making forums relating to significant resources.

The programme methodology will ensure that resources are identified during the initiation phase. This will allow the Board to identify dependencies, prioritise activities and agree resources.

Once resource is committed, it is the responsibility of project managers to ensure that individual projects stay on track and within tolerance. The exception process is used to manage projects when resource requirements fall outside of the tolerances set.

The Programme Manager is responsible for reporting to the Board when exception situations arise and ensuring corrective action is taken with the minimum disruption.

Risk Management Strategy

Proactive programme risk management and issue resolution will be considered in the main by the Board, and within the context of the corporate risk management methodology. See

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Risk, Risk Appetite and Issue Management above. Risks will be entered into the Board Risk Register (as featured in Verto) and Issues into the Issue Log (as featured in Verto) by the Programme Manager. Risks will be reviewed at each Board meeting in line with this Corporate Risk Strategy. This will include Risk Appetite, as mentioned above; this is useful for sense checking our appetite to take risks with our corporate priorities, projects, corporate or service risks and so on

Any member of the Board can highlight potential risks to or issues that might impact upon achievement of programme benefits to the Programme Manager. Each risk will be considered in terms of impact and probability, together with mitigating action responses. The risk/issue will be assigned an owner by the Board, a 'ROYG' (Red, Orange, Yellow or Green) status in accordance with the corporate risk management methodology and reported on through highlight reports. Any that are ranked as red or orange and escalating will be brought to the attention of the Board.

Project risks/issues will be handled at a project level and only those risks or issues that are ranked as orange and escalating will be brought to the attention of the Programme Manager. Where it is felt that there is potential for impact on the wider programme the risk/issue will be escalated for the attention of the Board. If necessary, the matter may need to be brought to the attention of Senior Leadership Team through the Project Register.

Verto will be used to record project risks and issues so that they are visible at the programme level to the Programme Manager, who will then be able to identify programme related interdependencies around risk at an early stage.

The Programme Manager will table the Risk Register at each Board meeting.

4g. Closing down the Programme

The purpose of closing the Programme is to formally recognise that objectives have been completed.

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The Board Chair Person will propose closure to the Board. If satisfied with the overall outcome, they will endorse the recommendation to confirm the programme closure. If they are not satisfied, they must give clear direction about further work to be carried out.

There may be a necessity to close the Programme prematurely.

As part of closure a formal review should be conducted to assess delivery of the Programme and the following should be assured:

- Business case has been satisfied (thus far).
- All projects have been completed satisfactorily.
- Business performance is stable.
- Outcomes and outputs have been achieved.
- Benefits are self-sustaining.
- Last tranche review has been completed as per the programme plan.
- No risks or issues are outstanding that are unacceptable to operations, and risk appetite has been considered.
- Any remaining handover or transition activities required have been defined and assigned to the relevant business operations.

Once the above criteria have been satisfied, the Board must then:

- Confirm ongoing support is in place.
- Confirm programme closure.
- Notify programme is about to close.
- Review programme.
- Update and finalise programme information.
- Provide feedback to Council.
- Disband programme organisation and supporting functions.

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5. Costs

In developing the Levelling Up programme, estimated costs have been used to inform the process to allow a broad funding strategy to be produced. As delivery develops, the projects and actions identified will have to be properly costed and more detailed business cases developed. It is important to involve the Head of Finance and Audit at an early stage of this process.

The formal approval of expenditure decisions will remain within existing delegations and processes, including the requirement for all capital expenditure proposals to be considered by the Capital Scrutiny Group.

Council funding to support the Levelling Up programme is limited and therefore will have to be prioritised should pressures arise such as inflation, escalating costs, scarcity of resources, etc. The Council's overall funding outlook is set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan and the Levelling Up assumptions may have to be revised to reflect changes to the overall financial position.

6. Contact Information

For more information on anything within this document please feel free to contact the Levelling Up Programme Manager via the Corporate Programme Office. We would be happy to provide any additional guidance and materials to help you.

Email levellingup@denbighshire.gov.uk