MINUTES

R&R Programme Board Sub Board

Meeting date	19 November 2024
Meeting location	Ministerial Conference Room, Palace of Westminster
Meeting time	12:00-14:00

Attendees

Programme Board Sub Board	Officials
Lord Vaux of Harrowden	Vicky Rock (Commons)
Mark Tami MP	Fehintola Akinlose (Lords)
Paul Duffree	Katya Cassidy (R&R Client Team)
Michele Dix	Tanya Coff (Delivery Authority)
Steve Hails	Catherine Murphy (Delivery Authority)
Sir Jonathan Stephens	James Young (R&R Client Team)
	Meg Conway Wait (R&R Client Team)

1. Welcome and Standing Items

Lord Vaux chaired the meeting.

No apologies were received.

The Sub Board agreed to the publication of the minutes on 21 May 2024.

2. Approach to assuring the costed proposals

The Sub Board was briefed on the approach to assuring the costed proposals. During the discussion:

- A question was raised about how the same level of assurance for the SE and DA developed options is being ensured.
- Board members asked about the assurance processes and whether there is sufficient time for those conducting assurance to get into the detail. R&R Client Team officials noted that while this might be an issue for the gateway review and the IAAP, Grant Thornton were working with the Programme until costed proposals, the Client Team assurance reps were based within the CT and the Fire, health and safety review would

be over a six month period, longer than a typical
gateway review. Any insights from the other reviews would be provided to the IAAP.

- Board members raised concerns about whether the independent technical assurer had relevant expertise in the technical assurance required. They also asked about whether there was an assurance group—Client Team officials briefed the Sub Board on the integrated assurance group. Client Team officials would provide information about the independent technical assurer's bid and relevant expertise.
- Sub Board members expressed a preference for seeing original reports (eg. reports from the assurers) rather than edited highlights from Client Team.
- Sub Board members asked for design review sessions taking place between SE and the DA to be included in the assurance plan as they provided opportunities for peer challenge and review.
- Board members asked about the appointment of members to the IAAP and suggested that the Programme Board external members should be included in the process of finding panel members.
- The Sub Board discussed the involvement of the Treasury in discussions about assurance of the options.
- Sub Board members asked about the Programme Board's upcoming programme of work. Members raised concerns about the Client Board considering the structure of the report on the costed proposals before Programme Board had considered the options and how it wanted to approach the report. Members agreed to raise the matter at the Programme Board meeting next week.

The R&R Sub Board **noted** the approach to assuring the costed proposals.

3. Delivery Authority Quarter 2 Forecast 2024/25

DA officials briefed the Sub Board on their Quarter 2 Forecast 2024/25 and the ongoing consultation exercise.

- Board members asked whether the timing of a decision on a preferred option would affect the DA's ability to have the right resource. DA officials responded that the consultation exercise was designed to ensure retained capability and skills (although there is a heightened risk of staff attrition) and that the DA was not expecting to award contracts for strategic partners until April 2027, with a 3-6 month mobilisation period when activity will ramp up in a meaningful manner.
- Board members asked about the procurement process—it was confirmed that the SE was using input from the DA procurement team to inform strategy and a single procurement process would happen once a decision had been made.
- Board members reiterated that they didn't consider that Parliament had the internal resources, both in SE and from a commercial procurement perspective to deliver a project of this scale.
- A question was raised about underspend on surveys. DA officials briefed the Sub Board that the shift in the date for strategic partner procurement has made the DA look again at the survey programme, and noted that strategic partners will need to undertake certain surveys themselves so it would be nugatory to do them ahead of their appointment. The surveys programme would stop at the end of the conference recess next year and start again when an option is decided with a strategic partner on board.

- Board members asked why certain costs weren't absorbed in current budgets. DA officials explained that with design and contract management contracted out, there was more flexibility to ramp up or switch off.
- Questions were raised about the level of corporate overhead. This is part of the consultation process currently underway, but the DA noted that as the total budget decreases, the proportion of corporate overhead will increase.
- Board members raised questions about the budget for data and digital. It was noted that digital cost is reducing but there is a base level of cost which will always be there without a fundamental operating model review. Members expressed the opinion that that review should happen.
- There was discussion around the initiation of conversations on shared services between the DA and Parliament.
- Board members were keen to see the cost of delay to date and noted that costs were not identified or flagged when critical decisions were taken or not taken. There should be an assessment of consequences of decisions not being made.
- Board members expressed a view to see an overall picture of what R&R is costing: DA budget, plus SE costs such as development of the EMI option, plus Client Team costs. It was noted that SE and Client Team budgets went through a different scrutiny process (through the Finance Committees of both Houses). Client Team officials would follow up to see if it was possible to bring that information to Sub Board.

The R&R Sub Board **noted** the Delivery Authority's Quarter 2 Forecast 2024/25

4. Any other business and date of next meeting

Sub Board members asked about the outcome of the R&R Programme Review of Governance Effectiveness. Client Team officials briefed the Sub Board that the report was being discussed by the Clerks of both Houses and would come to the R&R Programme Board and R&R Client Board in some form.

The Sub Board noted that it needed the R&R Programme Board to decide where the Sub Board should concentrate its efforts over the next six months.

The next meeting date would be confirmed.