Project Management - Approval, Governance and Reporting (DRAFT)

Project approval

1. **Completion of project proposal and determination of project size**

   The initial stages of any project starts with the completion of a **Project Proposal.** This template seeks to determine the scope and potential budget of a proposed project and encourages the writer to think about potential risks, timeframes, consultees etc. but just as importantly, should provide sufficient information to inform a decision regarding its outcomes and deliverability. The proposer determines the size of a project using a simple Q&A matrix. Examples of complete project proposals will be available to help those who have not completed one before. We would estimate it should take no longer than 1 hour to complete the form.

2. **Project Check by CDU**

   Project Proposals are submitted to the CDU to be checked as follows:
   - Completeness – have all questions been answered?
   - Content – are the responses reasonable, considered and give sufficient information? Is there anything obviously unclear or omitted?
   - Budgets – do the figures given look realistic? Have staff costs been taken into account etc. (Finance to check also)
   - The CDU will then run medium and large projects through 'a sieve' to determine their weighting towards delivery of the corporate plan. This system gives a score to measure a projects deliverability and impact including how it supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan

   2a Projects review by CLT

   Small projects (as defined at the Project Proposal stage) will be approved/rejected/parked by CLT or be requested to be elevated to Medium project status. Small projects are anticipated to be covered by revenue budgets. Other projects will receive a light touch review to ensure they are suitable for discussion at Business Planning Group.

3. **Business Planning Group (BPG)**

   All projects will progress to the Business Planning Group to consider but priority is likely to be given to those that score highly through the sieve.

   The BPG does not 'approve' any projects but will;

   a) recommend the proposal proceed to Cabinet with a Business Case or Cabinet Report (stage 4)
   b) request amendments or further detail
   c) park a project - suggesting the proposal is worthy but not a priority. Such projects may also be considered likely to attract funding and will be 'stored' for future reference and application., or
   d) reject.

4. **Cabinet**

   Cabinet approves or rejects the project. Projects should not receive funding offers or capital cost codes until Cabinet has formally approved the project. Currently the Finance team requests capital bid forms to be completed simultaneously and this may not necessarily work if we are expecting a year round flow of projects coming forward. Therefore, this element needs further discussion and resolution.

Approving projects should be a **standard** procedure.

Project Approval Process
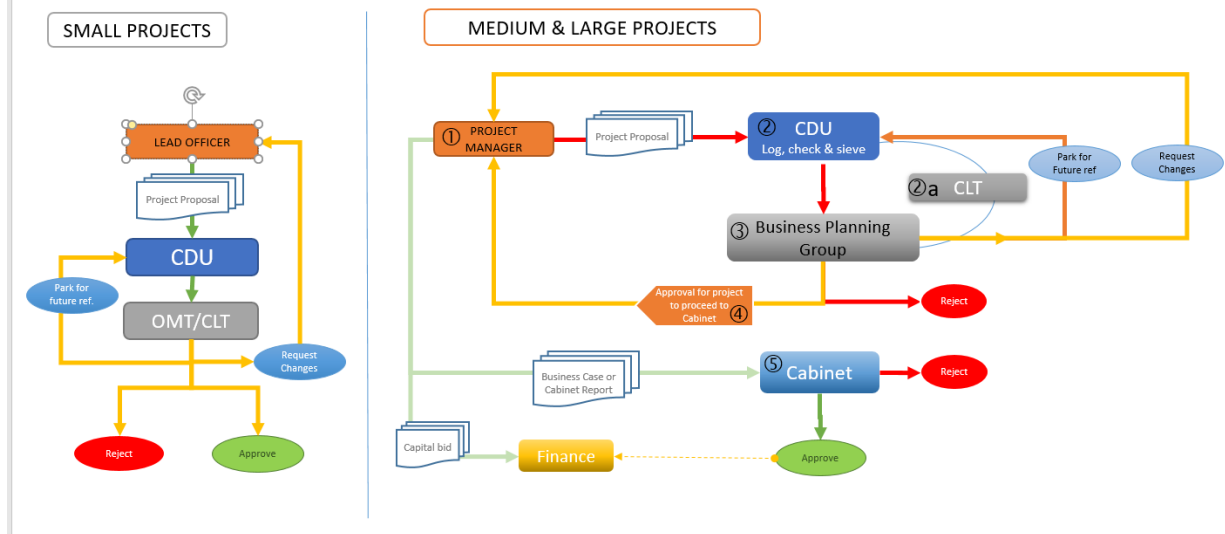
Project Governance

Different sized projects will require different levels of governance. Fuller descriptions and templates will be available to officers through a refreshed **Project Management Guide**.

Small projects may consist of a team of 2 or 3 officers reporting to a Senior Responsible Officer (Section Manager or Assistant Director). A project manager needs to be identified but the creation of a Project Proposal is the minimum. They need to also issue a **project closure notification** once completed (or cancelled). Specific Issues and exceptions can be elevated to OMT/CLT for a decision. These are usually carried out using Revenue budget funds.

We anticipate approx. 60 small projects per year. Examples include; reviews, small refurbishments, cross team office moves, some software upgrades.

Medium Projects generally carry a larger (capital) budget and more risk but the team/service delivering the project is likely to have some experience in this type of work. Medium Projects do require a formal project team to be identified and it is suggested that the Project Manager should report collectively to a Project Board set up by each Assistant Director to cover all medium projects under their remit.

We anticipate approx. 40 medium projects per year. Examples include; Electrical vehicle charging, New build toilets, Mammoth Marathon, HR IT system.

Large Projects are likely to be those that aim to directly deliver the Corporate Plan, some may be high risk and/or high budget and more complex in delivery. They are also likely to include significant consultation/stakeholder engagement or working with external bodies. Each of these projects will need a Project Board which reports quarterly to a Project Working Party. The Projects Working Party will offer advice and assist with key decision / issues (e.g.: major stakeholder events, contract awards etc.). They will make recommendation on exceptions that need elevating to Cabinet.

We anticipate approx. 10 large projects per year. Examples include; Bacton Sandscaping, North Walsham HAZ, Splash replacement, Tree Planting Project.

There has been some discussion on the need for 'themed' working parties to make decisions – or whether just one meeting to cover all large projects would be preferable. Whilst our preference would be to split them up, on the grounds of capacity for both the attendees (it will take some time to work through potentially 10 projects) but also on the CDU and Democratic Services who will have to draw information from 10 different projects every month as opposed to 3 or 4 per month on a rolling basis. Having to manage 10 projects collectively will also significantly reduce the opportunity for Working Groups to 'call in' any Medium projects should they want to.
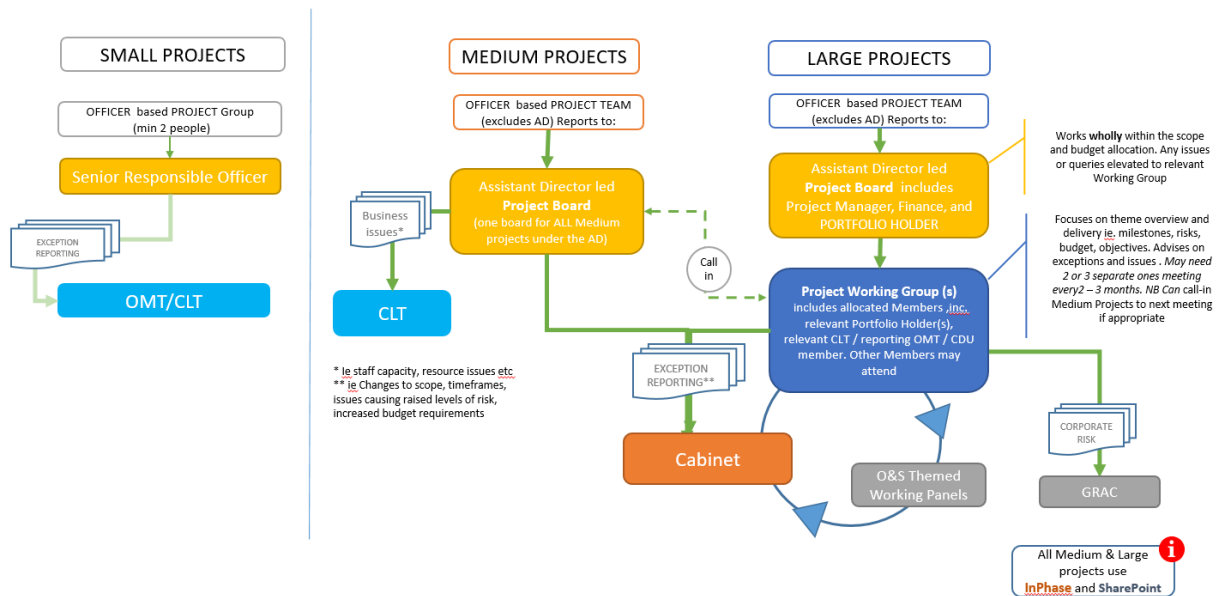
Any significant Project or Corporate risk will be acknowledged at these meetings and any change in status will be captured and reported to GRAC.

Overview & Scrutiny will review both Project Working Parties and Cabinet decisions at O&S working panel meetings. These meetings will review projects on a themed basis. These working panels are expected to meet quarterly on a rolling basis.

The following tables indicated project related tasks per group.

Project roles and suggested set up (further details on roles and responsibilities will be available in the Project Management Guide)

Medium projects

	Project Team Meetings	Project Boards	CLT/OMT(ADs) meetings	Business Planning Meeting	Project Working Party	Cabinet
Who	Project Manager Other relevant officers	Assistant Director, PMs, (Optional: **Portfolio Holder**, other experienced officers if required i.e. Finance, Comms, IT)	CLT & OMT (ADs)	Cabinet & CLT (& ADs?)	Portfolio Holder (as member of WP)	Cabinet members
What	Collectively deliver projects Create project documentation Undertake InPhase reporting	Provide support and advice. Ensures teams stay within project scope and budgets. Reviews risk. Manages exception reporting to CLT /Cabinet	Resolve/advise on business related exceptions.	Review Project proposals Discuss priorities and capacity. Horizon scanning. Informal discussion.	May 'call-in' a Medium project only if there are issues or questions that Members consider need to be raised.	Deals with Project Approvals and Exception reporting only
When	Every 3-6 weeks depending on project	Every 2 – 3 months depending on need	Submissions as required (will they meet Monthly?)	Meets fortnightly	On specific request only	Monthly
Why	Planning and delivery of project.	Reporting all medium projects together (grouped by AD) will keep focus but allow sharing of information (lessons learned etc.)	Exceptions relating to business matters should be raised with CLT for resolution. CLT will make recommendations for significant change to scope or budget to be elevated to Cabinet for approval.	Provides political check. Opportunity to discuss ideas or shape projects prior to approval		Significant changes to project scope and budgets* must be agreed by Cabinet
Minuted	Suggest action points as minimum	Yes	Yes	Action points only	Yes	Yes
Others	On request	CLT, CDU can attend if required	On request	On request		On request
Other points		Allows officers to share information and experience. Gives overview.	Maintains overview	Provides sounding board for ADs		

parameters based on % of total income originally approved.(TBC)

Large Projects (Key Corporate Plan Objectives)

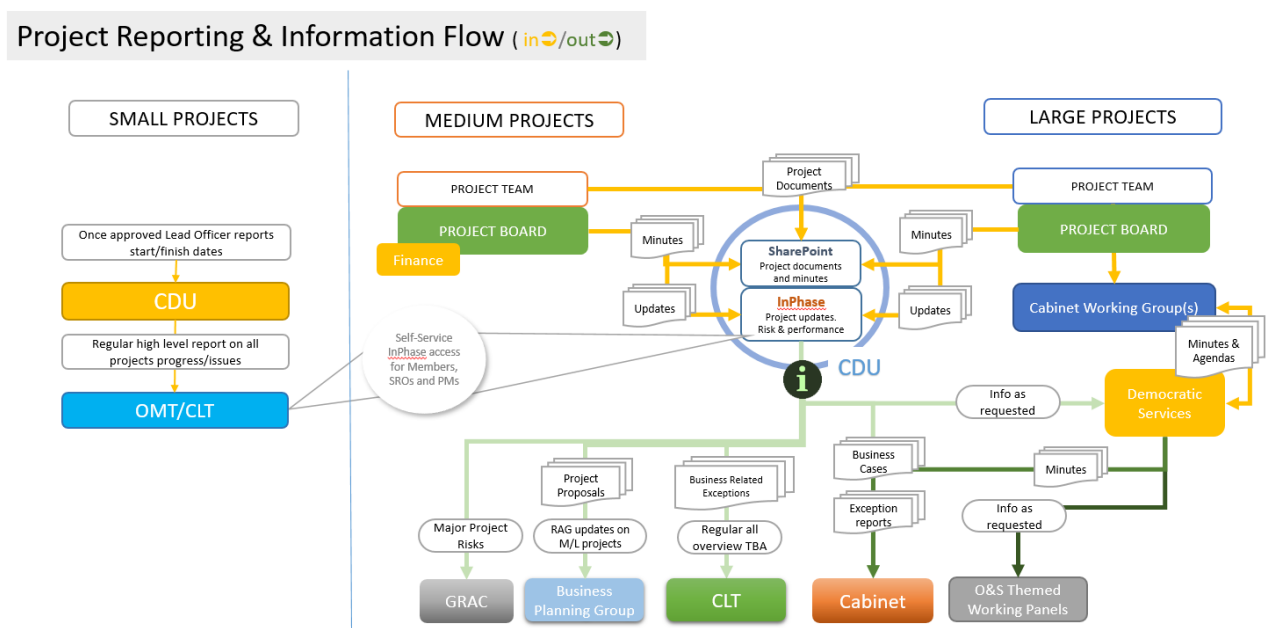|	Project Team Meetings	Project Boards	CLT/OMT meetings	Business Planning Meeting	Project Working Party (ies)	Cabinet	Overview & Scrutiny WP
Who	Project Manager Relevant other officers or appropriate stakeholders	Assistant Director, PMs, Portfolio Holder, Finance	CLT & ADs (OMT)	Cabinet & CLT (and ADs?)	Assigned Members (Portfolio Holders) CLT, ADs	Cabinet Members	Members of O&S (cross party)
What	Deliver the ongoing elements of the project. Create project documentation	Provide support and advice. Ensure teams work within project scope and budgets. Manages exception reporting to PWP and CLT	Resolve/advise on Business related exceptions.	Review Project proposals Receive high level RAG updates on M/L projects Horizon scanning. Informal discussion.	Review projects against milestones and budgets. Review risk. Deal with exception reports.	Deals with Project Approvals and exception reporting only	To scrutinise Project Working Party and Cabinet decisions.
When	Every 3-4 weeks depending on project	Quarterly prior to relevant PWP if applicable	Monthly	Fortnightly	Quarterly (themed rolling?)	Monthly	Quarterly (themed rolling)
Why	Ensures timely delivery of project.	Allow sharing of information		Provides political check. Opportunity to discuss ideas or shape projects prior to approval	To obtain an overview of specific Corporate Objectives.	To maintain a corporate overview. To maintain control on budget and scope creep.	To ensure a balanced and transparent approach to decision making.
Minuted	Yes – action points as minimum	Yes by Corporate PAs	Yes By Corporate PAs	No but actions recorded	Yes by Democratic Services	Yes by Democratic Services	Yes by Democratic Services
Others attending?	On request	On request, CDU/CLT can attend	No	On request	Other Members/ officers can attend	Open meeting	Open meeting

Project information flow

There are two key tools that the CDU will use and manage that will help provide information for the various groups.

InPhase will be updated by Project Managers on a regular basis against set milestones. This software will also provide a wider picture on progress, essentially against the delivery of the Corporate Plan Objectives.

SharePoint is where we will be asking all details of the project to be held. As a minimum this must include the project proposal, business case, PID, risk register, project plan and minutes of the Project Board. The CDU will be able to access these folders to obtain updates for some reports or draw information on exceptions and risk. The folder will act as a central depository for documents that will fulfil a future best practice library function.

The CDU will work closely with Democratic Services and Finance to ensure fluidity of information flow to ensure notice of items for agendas, potential budget changes etc. are highlighted and are readily accessible. This area needs further development, but Democratic Services have been involved in developing this proposal thus far.

The following diagram gives an overview of information flow but it is important to ensure reporting is proportionate and specific to each group concerned so they are able to make informed decisions.

On-going Project Information sources

Who	What	Supplied by CDU via:
CLT (& OMT?)	1. High level RAG overview of all medium/large projects. (monthly?) 2. List of small/medium/large projects completed 3. Other project documents as requested	1. Inphase 2. Report 3. Sharepoint
Cabinet	1. Summaries of progress against delivery of the Corporate Plan (Quarterly)	1. Inphase 2. Liaison with PM / Board minutes

	2. Exception reports/requests through standard template as required	
O&S	Information supplied on request through Democratic Services	Inphase, Sharepoint and 1:1 liaison.
Business Planning Group	On request	
Individuals	CLT, OMT and most senior managers, Members should be able to access InPhase to view progress in due course	Updates requested
GRAC	Updates on any high risks identified by large projects.	CDU

There is an important distinction between having information to provide an overall picture and needing specific information in order to act on it through decision making processes, for example.   It is recognised that levels of information required by each group may change or develop as the process is embedded.

In an effort to obtain some standardisation, it is important to ensure all groups understand the role they take in the process and where their remit ends and another begins. This can be clarified early on through terms of reference for Boards and working groups and this will be clarified more fully in the refreshed project guide and any associated training.

At this stage, from the CDU perspective, the focus is on identifying and developing the tools and templates that will supply different types of information at various stages in as simple and efficient way possible for both information supplier and recipient group.