Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Scottish Government's Principles for Programme and Project Management

Authored by the Programme and Project Management Centre of Expertise

For any further information on our principles or the Programme and Project Management Centre of Expertise, please feel free to contact us at **PPM-CoE@gov.scot**

Introduction

Our principles are the cornerstone of the support we deliver to the Scottish Government and wider public sector; they are embedded in assurance and are applicable to any project of any size.

Split into three chapters, **Strategy**, **People** & **Process**, the principles look to provide practitioners with a practical guide for delivering programmes and projects. The chapters move beyond traditional Process placing a greater emphasis on Strategy and People.

This guide will explore each principle by describing it, providing a maturity matrix for it which describes **Developing**, **Good**, **Better** and **Best** and allowing you to assess and target improvement – taking a proportionate approach and recognising that **not all projects require to be Best** in every discipline.
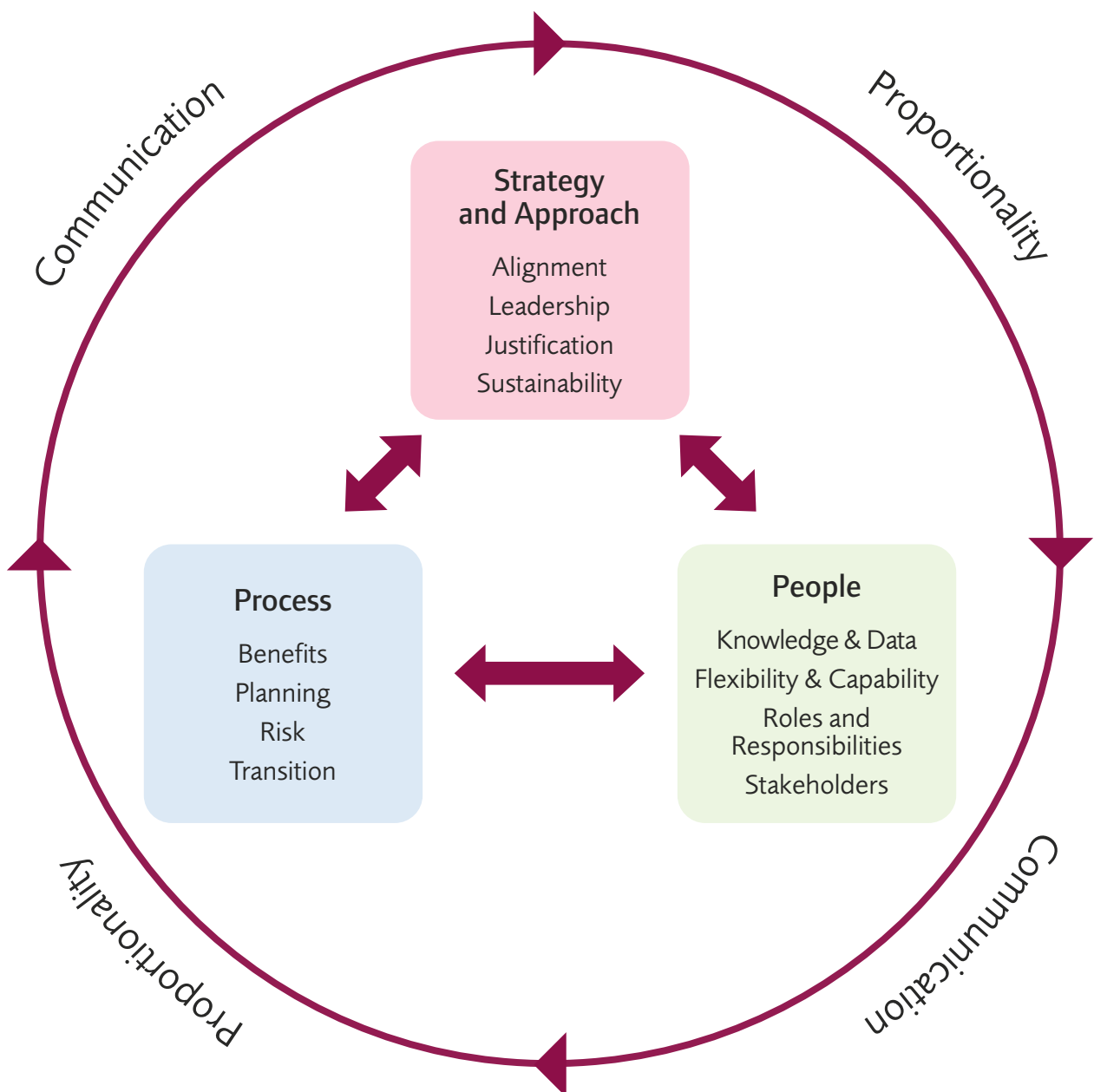
Strategy and Approach – **Alignment**

Description

We align our programmes and projects to corporate priorities to ensure we deliver for the people of Scotland.

> The APM's Body of Knowledge (2020) – *alignment is crucial in Making Strategy Happen – recognising that projects and programmes are tightly aligned to strategic objectives in order to ensure the delivery of strategy from every level.* By ensuring your project outcomes are aligned to your organisational objectives you will gain better and lasting support from the business and provide better value back to it.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
It is recognised that outcomes from projects should support organisational objectives.	Projects are in alignment with corporate objectives and benefits are managed to maximise support.	Business cases are not signed off unless they explicitly show support of key organisational objectives. A key line of sight is articulated between all activity and wider organisational objectives.	Investments are prioritised across the organisation to ensure projects are initiated on a value-creation basis.

Strategy and Approach – Leadership

Description

We lead from the start by clearly communicating the vision, agreeing approaches, providing resource, collaborating across teams and setting a delivery culture.

> APM Body of Knowledge (2020) – *Leadership: Providing vision, direction, feedback and support so people can do their best work.*

Whilst we can all lead, this principle stands to set out the importance of being more than a manager, setting and meeting expectations, enabling or engendering their teams to succeed and dedicating an appropriate focus to the work. Project Leaders must negotiate a firm mandate for the work they lead and reflect that in the governance they develop and the levels of decision making they delegate.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
Leadership is recognised within the project but not formally dedicated or documented.	The SRO (and other key figures) have dedicated time for their project duties. The SRO has established appropriate governance and monitors its performance. The SRO ensures appropriate assurance regimes are in place.	Project Success objectives are part of the SRO's personal annual objectives for key divisional/ directorate projects. SRO has undertaken or is committed to relevant training for the role. SRO's time commitments are documented and met.	SRO Appointment letter documents SRO's responsibilities. SROs dedicate time to maintain their project delivery skills. SROs are appointed based on their relevant PPM skills and experience for the post.

Strategy and Approach – Justification/Business Case

Description

We secure a mandate for our work and ensure an ongoing justification for the cost is made by the benefits, and that we stop any unjustified work.

> APM Body of Knowledge (2020) – A *business case provides justification for undertaking a project, programme or portfolio. It evaluates the benefit, cost and risk of alternative options and provides a rationale for the preferred solution.* We recognise the benefit of the five case model and have agreed and can articulate our project's strategic value, priority of spend, financial virtue and our approach taken to delivery including any commercial approach.

Our business cases are live and provide the ongoing yardstick to measure viability and performance.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
Projects have a clear mandate and an initial business case may be established.	Business Cases are up-to-date, approved and continue to present clear justification for the projects. Costs and benefits are clearly defined and up-to-date.	SRO's ownership of the business case is explicit. The SRO supported by their project board set an appropriate business case review and approval timetable. The business case baselines are used as a yardstick for project assessment and considered in any change requests.	The Five Case Model is followed. External/ specialist scrutiny is employed by the SRO and project board in reviewing the business case.

Strategy and Approach – Sustainability

Description

We understand our impacts on people, place, and value, and ensure whole-life value and whole-life cost are central to decision making.

> APM Body of Knowledge (2020) – *Sustainability is an approach to business that balances the environmental, social, economic and administrative aspects of project-based working to meet the current needs of stakeholders without compromising or overburdening future generations.*

Recognising this, we implement proportionate impact assessments and management plans to maximise the benefits to people and place and mitigate as effectively as possible those dis-benefits.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
Projects recognise the role of project delivery in achieving outcomes sustainably.	The key objectives and business case for the project takes into account sustainability criteria along with cost and time. Key project staff have sustainability awareness training or development.	'Sustainability management plan' is a key document, focussing the project's delivery (and commercial/ procurement activity) on delivering outcomes sustainably. Appropriate and proportionate sustainability metrics are developed for the project and reported on.	Sustainability is a central theme of the project and progress/ achievement is considered against a triple bottom line. SMART sustainability objectives are laid down in the SRO appointment letter.

People – Knowledge & Data

Description

We ensure our projects are learning organisations from day one. We seek and use information and data for the benefit of our work.

> APM recognise *Knowledge management as connecting people to create insight and use knowledge to improve outcomes*. We reflect this through the utilisation of knowledge from inception and planning through to transition and onwards into future endeavours through, workshops, case studies, 'lessons learned' logs and in our people.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
The project draws from lessons identified locally and from existing project staff.	Teams are encouraged to seek knowledge and experience from others. Lessons are recorded and available across the local enterprise.	Optimises knowledge using it as part of the integrated scoping and planning session. Engages with experts/ specialist resource at early stages. Data is collected and informs a range of management disciplines.	Involves external experts to validate assumptions and assist with planning. Improvement outcomes are planned and monitored. Data is used to identify improvement opportunities.

People – Flexibility & Capability

Description

Our multidiscipline teams contain flexible and skilled people who focus on required identified capabilities and outcomes, not positions.

> APM Body of Knowledge (2020) – *Flexibility can complement open collaboration approaches and offers enhanced abilities to innovate and move rapidly in order to shape opportunities, change strategic directions and build on adversity in uncertain settings.*

We focus on our ongoing development, individually and collectively. Ensuring we have, or have access to, the right skills mix and specialists to deliver our projects before we start.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
Staff understand the need to be flexible and work across disciplines.	Staff are skilled in a number of disciplines and can cover various roles. Leaders and project resource engage with the PPM-CoE to help develop their individual and collective capability.	The project monitors the environment and can pivot resources and workstreams as necessary to deliver most value. Staff within the project have recognised project delivery training or development planned that is relevant to their work.	The projects combines people, knowledge and capability to be able to meet current and future challenges. The project regularly horizon scans to ensure the current approach delivers the optimal outcome.

People – Roles & Responsibilities

Description

We assign and delegate roles and responsibilities within our projects flowing from the SRO's appointment letter/delegation/mandate.

> APM Body of Knowledge (2020) – *Good governance calls for the roles and responsibilities of the team and wider stakeholders to be clearly defined. This is typically achieved through the use of a responsibility assignment matrix that clarifies the roles that are accountable and responsible for activities and decisions.*

Each member of the project has a clear line of sight to the overall objectives and has agreed the elements they are responsible for delivering, and these should be backed by performance review goal setting. Teams are aware of the dependencies they have, internally and externally, and actively manage these.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
Specific key roles may be identified.	Appropriate resources are planned and agreed for projects. Roles are codified in a RACI or similar. Personal objectives recognise project outcomes for key individuals. Terms of Reference exist for key governance groups. The SRO recognises their responsibility for project success.	Appropriate business continuity measures and succession planning are in place for major projects. Project teams are fully committed to project success and are tied to it through the personal development system. Responsibilities of key governance groups are outlined in a document to ensure no overlap or gaps and performance is regularly reviewed.	A scheme of delegation flows from the SRO appointment letter to all project roles, authorising spend and decision making powers. The organisation has working practices to enable people to be assigned and managed on a temporary basis on multiple programmes and projects across the organisation.

People – Stakeholders

Description

We identify, assess and then manage our stakeholders to leverage maximum chance of success.

> APM Body of Knowledge (2020) – *There is a wide agreement that understanding stakeholders – those influential, interested individuals and groups who are affected by projects, programmes or portfolios – is critical work.*

We take an organised approach to stakeholder management to ensure we listen well, think hard and provide the balance of the best possible outcomes for all; and are seen to do so.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
There is an awareness of stakeholders involved in the project and activities are initiated to engage them.	Mapping of stakeholders is complete and informs a stakeholder engagement strategy. The purpose, audience and key message for each communication is defined.	Stakeholder tools are used to categorise, prioritise and manage key stakeholders. Engagement approaches are adapted based on stakeholder feedback.	Key stakeholders with significant influence are assigned a named individual liaison. Quantitative and trending data is used to assess stakeholder attitudes and the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement.

Process – Benefits

Description

We start with the end in mind, formally focussing on the intended outcomes of our investment.

> APM Body of Knowledge (2020) – *Benefits management involves identifying and agreeing the benefits and how they will be measured, monitored and managed throughout the project until they are realised.*

Benefits are agreed and tracked and we understand the golden thread between need or objective, deliverable or output, and the final outcome desired. We communicate benefits realistically throughout, and report on expected and actual performance against them.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
Projects understand the benefits they are responsible for delivering and have them mapped on a benefits register.	The benefits register is consulted to aid the decision making process and create the foundation for any change management requests. The benefits register is used to complement the measurement of project progress and success.	Benefits are managed in a way to maximise value from the investment. Benefits are explicitly linked through a mapping exercise to show support for project objectives. The project's benefits are effectively communicated to both internal and external stakeholders.	The project operates with the end in mind. Prioritising benefits management from the beginning to the end of the project lifecycle. Measurable and achievable benefits are established at project justification stage. The benefits inform all aspects of project decision making and planning.

Process – Planning

Description

We consider all aspects of our projects and continuously plan managing dependencies, agreeing and refining evidence-based assumptions, and reporting on progress against milestones throughout

> **APM Body of Knowledge (2020) –** *Planning is the application of management processes that bring together the planning of benefits, success criteria, scope, quality, time, resources, cost, risk, communications etc to create the project management plan.*

Planning goes beyond the initial scoping of timings and resource requirements: it is a process which should be embedded throughout delivery, refining estimates as the project lifecycle progresses.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
Projects understand the value of planning, a project plan exists and milestones are agreed.	Projects document all assumptions and decisions which underpin the plan. Projects consult the plan regularly in order to understand progress and prepare for upcoming steps and milestones.	As the project progresses and the project gathers information, the plan is refined to sharpen estimates and continuously improve its utility. Projects communicate the plan effectively to relevant internal and external stakeholders.	The project uses actual and comparative data to plan and refine planning. The project plans dynamically, understanding the importance in contingency planning, and factoring in optimism bias when making estimates around time, benefits or resource.

Process – Risk

Description

We identify, communicate and act upon the threats or opportunities to and for our outcomes.

> APM Body of Knowledge (2020) – *Being ready to respond to minimise threats and maximise opportunities.*

Our projects develop, or align to proportionate risk management strategies which identify, record and assess risks to our objectives. We plan, carry out and monitor the efficacy of viable actions, and communicate our threats (and opportunities) to relevant stakeholders. Risks are considered throughout all project disciplines in a pro-active manner.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
Projects value the process of risk management and a risk register exists.	Projects interact with the risk register regularly, maintaining updates on how risks are progressing, any new risks, and if mitigations are still appropriate. A specific individual is tasked with managing the project's risk process. Scottish Government risk policy is embedded in project risk strategy.	Early communication and engagement highlighting risks, planning mitigations and maintaining a dialogue with affected or affecting parties. A proactive risk management approach is in place within the project. Team members feel empowered to speak candidly.	Risks, both threats and opportunities are actively monitored and discussed within the team. When required, the risks are also effectively communicated with stakeholders through established reporting routes. Risk mitigation is prioritised and communicated effectively to relevant stakeholders and considered and budgeted for within the planning process.

Process – Transition

Description

We provide focus and resource to understand the end needs from the supplier side and a commitment and capability to learn, manage and own the benefits/outcomes from the customer side.

> APM Body of Knowledge (2020) – *Transition is the phase in the project lifecycle where results are handed-over, commissioned and accepted by the sponsor, culminating in formal closure.*

Transition is an activity shared with the business or user, though it is a named activity specifically for the SRO to ensure value is realised from the investment they lead. It is planned for throughout the life of the project and then carried on after the project has disbanded.

Maturity

Developing	Good	Better	Best
Projects recognise the importance of transition, ensuring the project output will positively impact the end user; however, there is no formal governance to support the process.	Projects maintain a plan for transition, stating potential project actions to improve the process and updating if the project changes.	As well as the formal transition planning document, projects engage early with end users to complement their understanding of how the project ultimately needs to deliver. The whole-life realisation of benefits is prioritised and planned for, beyond project closure.	Projects engage early and maintain engagement with end users throughout the project lifecycle to ensure effective and seamless transition. This allows benefits to be realised to their greatest potential and thus the most value for time and resource. Formal change manager positions are appointed within the business and ensures the successful change implementation driven by the project.

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