SWINDON & WILTSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (SWLTB)

ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

FEBRUARY 2013

Document History

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Contents

Introduction and Background

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out the assurance framework for the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Transport Body (SWLTB). The assurance framework sets out the governance and working arrangements of the SWLTB in accordance with the Department for Transport's (DfTs) 'Local Frameworks for Funding Major Transport Schemes: Guidance for Local Transport Bodies' (available from https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/devolving-local-major-transport-schemes-consultation).

2 Background

2.1 In January 2012, the DfT published a consultation paper entitled 'Devolving local major transport schemes' to take forward discussion about a new system for prioritising and funding local major schemes after the end of the current spending review period in March 2015. The paper detailed the principles, proposed processes and issues in designing a system which meets the Government's three key objectives to:

- ensure the best outcomes are achieved for the economy, whilst balancing the need for developing sustainably and reducing carbon emissions;
- hand real power to local communities, making decisions more responsive to local economic conditions and more locally accountable; and
- be fit for purpose in practical delivery terms.

2.2 The DfT's new approach was confirmed in September 2012 with the publication of 'Devolving local major transport schemes: Next steps' (available from https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/devolving-local-major-transport-schemes-consultation). The key features of the new system include the following:

- The primary decision making bodies on the use of devolved major transport scheme funding will be LTBs.
- LTBs will be broadly based on the geography of Local Enterprise Partnerships.
- LTB membership must be open, as a minimum, to all the constituent LTAs and to the primary LEP(s). Representation of other bodies should be for local decision.
- There will be no funding retained at the centre as a top-slice for larger schemes.
- There will be no centrally imposed minimum cost threshold for schemes but the DfT encourages the setting of appropriate local thresholds.
- The available capital funding will be distributed on a simple per-capita basis.
- Indicative figures for planning assumptions were provided for each LTB in January 2013. Confirmation of the actual level of funding available for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19 will be made following the next spending review.
- LTBs will need to operate within assurance frameworks that meet minimum standards of governance, financial management, accountability, meeting value for money and environmental considerations. The frameworks will need to be approved by the DfT.
- LTBs must have a high degree of transparency, including routine and timely publication of all key documents, as well as arrangements for involving local stakeholders that are not represented on the LTB.

- The DfT's Transport Business Case guidance and WebTAG (the DfT's appraisal framework) must be used for all schemes considered by LTBs for funding.

Part One: Purpose, Structure and Operating Principles

3. Name and Geography

3.1 The LTB for the Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) area is to be formally known as the 'Swindon & Wiltshire Local Transport Body' (SWLTB).

3.2 As set out in a joint letter to the DfT on 23 September 2012, Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Council and the SWLEP agreed that the LTB boundary should be consistent with the SWLEP boundary (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: SWLEP/SWLTB Geography
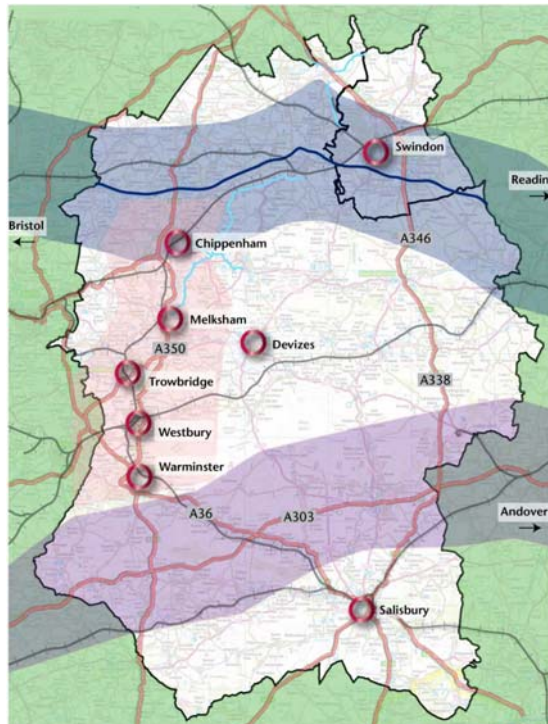
4. Membership

4.1 The SWLTB permanent member organisations and their respective membership status are shown in Table 1. Full members are responsible for making decisions; advisory members can participate in meeting discussions but cannot make decisions. A quorum will consist of three full members, one from each organisation.

Table 1: SWLTB Membership

Organisation	Representatives	Level	Votes
Swindon & Wiltshire LEP	1	Full	1
Swindon Borough Council	2	Full	2
Wiltshire Council	2	Full	2
Highways Agency	1	Advisory	0
Network Rail	1	Advisory	0

4.2 The full members of the SWLTB confirmed their membership and approved the assurance framework on the following dates:

- Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership 27 February 2013.
- Swindon Borough Council Cabinet decision 6 February 2013
- Wiltshire Council Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport decision (effective from 5th March 2013.)

4.3 In recognition that the SWLTB is a nascent body, the assurance framework will be reviewed by March 2014. Thereafter, the assurance framework will be reviewed as and when required. Following consultation with the DfT, any material changes will be submitted to the DfT for formal approval.

4.4 The respective representatives on the SWLTB are as follows:

Organisation	Role in Organisation
Swindon & Wiltshire LEP	Business Sector Board Member
Swindon Borough Council	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic Transport Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability
Wiltshire Council	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Strategic Planning
Highways Agency	TBD
Network Rail	TBD

4.5 A chair will be elected by the SWLTB on an annual rotating basis. Each of the full member organisations shall be entitled to one chair position every three years. A vice chair will also be appointed who shall deputise for the chair in their absence. As far as possible the SWLTB will conduct its business on a consensual basis. All voting will be carried out by a simple majority vote of the full members including the chair.

4.6 The Highways Agency and Network Rail are included on the SWLTB as permanent advisory (non-voting) members. As the Highways Agency and Network Rail may be affected by the SWLTB's decisions on schemes, their views need to be considered by the SWLTB in its decision making process.

4.7 Other organisations, such as neighbouring local transport authorities (LTAs), neighbouring LEPs,(comprising West of England, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Thames Valley Berkshire, Enterprise M3, Heart of South West and Dorset), transport operators and environmental bodies, may be invited to participate in the work of the SWLTB (as a temporary advisory (non-voting) member) on a case-by-case basis.

4.8 Any relevant transport infrastructure organisation can request they are given temporary advisory (non-voting) membership if they can make the case that they have a relevant key responsibility and/or interest. It will be up to the SWLTB to approve requests for temporary advisory (non-voting) membership.

4.9 The permanent membership of the SWLTB will be reviewed annually with the proviso that publicly elected members cannot be outvoted by non-elected members. The voting membership of the core members will also remain permanent.

5. Conflicts of Interest

5.1 It is vital that SWLTB members act in the interest of the area as a whole and not according to the sectoral or geographic interests of their member organisations. The decisions of the SWLTB will therefore be based on an analysis of robust business cases produced by the scheme promoter(s). The SWLTB will be assisted in this respect by an Independent Technical Advisor (ITA).

5.2 Full members of the SWLTB will be required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest or pecuniary interests (e.g. direct financial interest in a scheme through employment or personal gain including any interest as a result of close personal relationships or friendships) which may prevent them from making an impartial decision. Depending on the nature of this interest, there may be the need to co-opt another suitable member of the same organisation on to the SWLTB for the purpose of making the decision in question.

5.3 Publicly elected members will continue to declare their interests using their respective local authority's register of interests. They must also declare any additional interests outside their own authority's area but within the SWLTB area boundary. Elected members must abide by their respective authority's code of conduct when conducting SWLTB business.

5.4 The member representing the SWLEP should declare any personal interests in accordance with the process and practice of Swindon Borough Council as the accountable body.

5.5 Access to available registers of full member interests will be available to the public via links on the SWLTB website.

6. Gifts and Hospitality

6.1 Members should record any gift or hospitality which is received in connection with their SWLTB duties in line with their respective local authority or in the case of the SWLEP representative, in accordance with the policy of Swindon Borough Council as the accountable body.

6.2 Members should not accept any personal gifts or hospitality from any individual or organisation (including contractors and/or outside suppliers) which has or may have a specific interest in any major scheme.

7. Status of the SWLTB and Role of the Accountable Body

7.1 The SWLTB will be an informal partnership made up of the three full members – SWLEP, Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council. Advisory members will also be represented as outlined in section 4.

7.2 Swindon Borough Council will be the accountable body for the SWLTB. The primary role of the accountable body is to hold the devolved major scheme funding and make payments to scheme promoters. The accountable body will hold the SWLTB funds in separately identifiable accounts and provide the SWLTB with financial statements as required.

7.3 The accountable body also has the following responsibilities:

- ensuring that the decisions and activities of the SWLTB conform with legal requirements with regard to freedom of information, equalities, the environment and other matters
- ensuring (through the Section 151 officer) that funds are used appropriately
- ensuring that the assurance framework, as approved by the DfT, is being adhered to
- maintaining the official record of SWLTB proceedings and holding all SWLTB documents
- taking responsibility for the decisions of the SWLTB in approving schemes (e.g. if subjected to legal challenge).

7.4 In relevant circumstances, the role of accountable body and scheme promoter will need to be kept strictly independent of each other to provide assurance that there is no conflict of interest.

7.5 A legal agreement and/or terms of reference will define the workings of the SWLTB and the responsibilities of the partner organisations and members. The agreement will include commitments to fund the reasonable costs of employing the ITA and associated technical support.

8. Audit and Scrutiny

8.1 As the accountable body, Swindon Borough Council will appoint independent qualified auditors to establish that the SWLTB is operating effectively within the terms of the assurance framework. The SWLTB will consider any recommendations of the auditors and take necessary action to remedy any identified shortcomings.

8.2 An initial audit will be undertaken by December 2014 and annually thereafter. All audit reports will be submitted to the DfT.

9. Strategic Objectives and Purpose

9.1. The strategic objectives of the SWLTB should align with national transport goals, and recognise that a well functioning transport network is an important pre-requisite for economic growth

- To **support** national/sub-national **economic** competitiveness and **growth**, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks.
- To **reduce transport's emissions of** carbon dioxide and other **greenhouse gases**, with the desired outcome of tackling climate change.
- To **contribute to better safety, security and health** and longer life-expectancy by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport and by promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health.
- To **promote** greater **equality of opportunity** for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society.
- To **improve quality of life** for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a **healthy natural environment**.

9.2. The initial primary role of the SWLTB will be restricted to making decisions on devolved major transport scheme funding. Expanding the role of the SWLTB to take on additional responsibilities (e.g. to act as the decision making body for other local transport-related funding streams) can be considered by the SWLTB in discussion with the DfT and other relevant partners.

9.3. The specific roles of the SWLTB is to:

- identify a prioritised list of schemes within the available budget including under/over programming to enable prudent management
- make decisions based on the scrutiny of individual scheme business cases
- approve the release of funding to the relevant scheme promoter
- ensure value for money is achieved
- monitor progress of scheme delivery and spend
- ensure on-time delivery of schemes to the project programme
- actively manage the devolved budget and programme to respond to changed circumstances.

9.4. As stated in section 7, the SWLTB is an informal partnership between the respective member organisations. However, full members will be expected to have the necessary authority to agree on behalf of their organisation the decisions of the SWLTB. Each Council's cabinet members will have made the necessary arrangements for their authority to have agreed their list of schemes to enable the SWLTB to agree the prioritised list for the LEP area. It is suggested that all decisions will be agreed by consensus; where this is not possible, a majority vote will be taken by the chair.

9.5. Other relevant objectives are included in a variety of local documents including:-
a)Local Plans
b)Local Transport Plans for Swindon and Wiltshire
c)SWLEP Strategic Growth Plans, commencing 2015-19

10   Support and Administration Arrangements

10.1.   An experienced ITA will be engaged by the SWLTB to advise on the prioritisation process, individual scheme business cases and overall programme management (the exact scope of the ITA's work will be subject to the agreement of the SWLTB). The ITA' will be supported by a suitable independent specialist consultant (i.e. one that does not act as a term consultant for either LTA).

10.2.   The SWLTB will also be supported by an officer technical group made up of officers from the SWLEP, Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council. Representatives from other relevant bodies (e.g. Network Rail, Highways Agency, Natural England, Environment Agency, English Heritage, etc) will be invited as and when required. The role of the officer technical group includes:

- making recommendations to the SWLTB on the priority of, and business case for, individual schemes
- monitoring the progress of individual schemes against projected profiles, reviewing proposed mitigation measures and making recommendations to the SWLTB for any changes
- reviewing outcomes from completed schemes and making recommendations to the SWLTB on any implications for future schemes and programmes.

10.3.   The ITA and the officer technical group will be expected to work closely together to identify and resolve any issues. Where necessary, however, the ITA will be able to submit separate reports to the SWLTB if significant issues remain unresolved.

10.4.   SWLTB secretariat support (to include day-to-day administrative functions and the updating of the SWLTB webpage) will be provided by Law and Democratic Services at Swindon Borough Council. This team will also co-ordinate the various council services (e.g. legal, finance, etc.) contributing to the accountable body role. Secretariat support will be part-time support within the scope of existing roles.

10.5.   A legal agreement defining the role of the SWLTB will set out the financial contributions to support the accountable body role, and the associated secretariat and technical support functions. Reasonable costs related to the review of individual scheme business cases by the ITA will be charged to the promoting organisation.

11.   Working Arrangements and Meeting Frequency

11.1   It is anticipated that the SWLTB will have four scheduled meetings a year, and in any event, a minimum of two meetings a year to:

- take the initial decision on the prioritisation of the scheme programme
- consider scheme business cases
- make scheme approval decisions
- discuss overall programme delivery
- amend the assurance framework.

11.2   A special meeting of the SWLTB can be held in exceptional circumstances or when an urgent decision is required.

11.3   The meeting dates of the SWLTB will be published on the SWLTB website with a minimum of four weeks advance public notice (except for special SWLTB meetings which will be publicised as soon as possible after the meeting date is confirmed). Agenda papers will be made available on the website a minimum of seven working days prior to the relevant meeting. Minutes will be published no later than fourteen working days after the relevant meeting. All meetings will be open to the public.

11.4   The officer technical group will usually meet bi-monthly but this frequency may increase if there are any urgent matters to consider. No agendas or minutes will be published for the officer technical group given its status as an informal, non-decision making body.

12.   Transparency and Local Engagement

12.1   The SWLTB will conduct its business in an open and transparent manner which will enable interested stakeholders and members of the public to scrutinise and participate in the SWLTB process.

12.2   The SWLTB's website will include information and documents relating to the SWLTB's activities, including:

- the assurance framework
- details on the devolved major transport scheme funding for the SWLEP/SWLTB area
- the scheme prioritisation process
- the scheme assessment and approval methodology
- the overall major transport scheme programme and individual scheme project programmes
- agendas, minutes and reports for each SWLTB meeting
- correspondence from partners, stakeholders and others (if deemed not to be commercially sensitive)
- evaluation reports
- funding decision letters

12.3   The website will also include links to relevant information on other websites (e.g. statutory processes that are required to implement schemes) and to the relevant decision making processes of Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council (e.g. planning and Cabinet reports).

12.4   Key stakeholders who are not SWLTB members will be able to apply to attend SWLTB meetings to make a representation on a scheme(s) or agenda item(s). Applications should be made via the SWLTB secretariat a minimum of five working days in advance of the meeting date.

12.5   While SWLTB meetings will be open to the public, no members of the public will be able to make direct verbal representations. Instead, written representations can be submitted to the secretariat by email or letter at least five working days in advance of the relevant SWLTB meeting.

12.6   As the accountable body, Swindon Borough Council will deal with requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 in line with its standard procedures. In some instances, however, it may be

more appropriate for the promoting authority of a scheme to deal with these matters rather than the accountable body.

12.7   The SWLTB will adhere to the Local Government Data Transparency Code (available from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-data-transparency-code).

13.   Complaints and Whistle Blowing

13.1   Any individual or organisation is entitled to make a complaint about the work of the SWLTB if they feel that it is not being conducted in accordance with the assurance framework. All complaints will be dealt with by the accountable body using Swindon Borough Council's complaints procedure. It should be noted that the DfT will take the place of the Local Government Ombudsman at the end of stage two of the process.

13.2   The SWLTB's approach to whistle blowing will follow that of Swindon Borough Council's existing procedure.

Part Two: Prioritisation of Schemes

14. Candidate Schemes

14.1 Initially, the majority of candidate schemes will be identified as part of the Local Development Framework and Local Transport Plan processes undertaken by Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council. In the medium to longer term, schemes may be identified within a wider context that includes the SWLEP Business Plan and City Deal negotiated between SWLEP partners and Government. Other candidate schemes will be identified through the relevant processes of the Highways Agency and Network Rail (e.g. route utilisation strategies). However, any individual or organisation may put forward a scheme for consideration as long as it demonstrably meets the following criteria and provides the required information:

Criteria:
- **Purpose** – the scheme should be a transport scheme (i.e. located on the highway, railway or waterway networks) and related to transport users (e.g. motorists, passengers, hauliers, etc).
- **Costs** – the scheme must have a minimum value of £1m and include capital spending of at least this minimum value which creates a physical asset.

Information:
- **Description** – a short description of the scheme and the geographical area covered.
- **Problems and objectives** – a short description of the identified problem(s) and what the scheme is seeking to achieve.
- **Consultation and public acceptability** – an outline of what consultation has taken place and what degree of consensus has been achieved.
- **Evidence** – a short description of the available supporting evidence.
- **Key risks** – an outline of the key risks associated with the scheme.
- **Financial** – an estimate of the scheme costs and income (if applicable), and the potential funding sources.

14.2 The ability to fund typically more significant cross-LTB boundary schemes will depend on pooled funding and securing additional third-party funding. Given the additional complexities associated with cross-boundary working, candidate schemes need to be identified at the earliest possible stage in association with neighbouring Local Authorities / LEPs / LTBs.

15. Initial Scheme Assessment and Sifting

15.1 All applicable schemes will be put through the DfT's Early Assessment and Sifting Tool (EAST) process. EAST forms the initial part of the DfT's Transport Business Case (see Section 18 and Figure 1) and is a decision support tool that has been developed to quickly summarise and present evidence on schemes in a clear and consistent manner . It provides decision makers with relevant, high level information to help inform an early view of how schemes perform and compare. It should be noted, however, that the confidence that can be applied to the outputs of the EAST process often depends on the robustness of the available evidence base.

Figure 1: DfT's Transport Business Case Decision Making Process
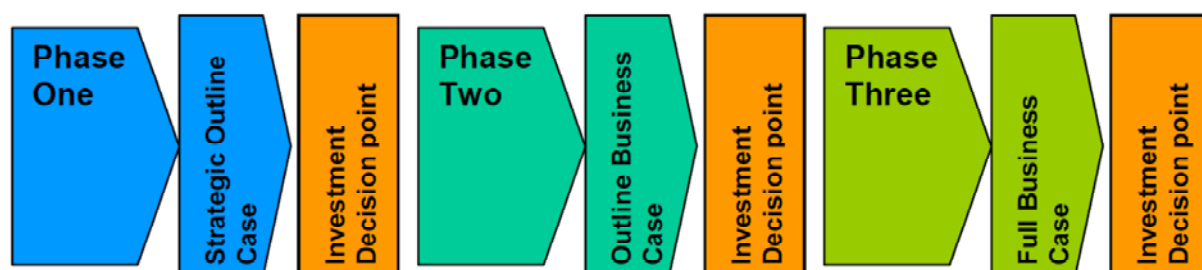
15.2   Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council (in conjunction with relevant partners such as the Highways Agency and Network Rail) will be responsible for undertaking the EAST assessments of the candidate schemes in their respective areas.

15.3   The candidate scheme list will represent a long list of potential major transport schemes which will be subject to a two-step sifting process to enable a more manageable short list to be formulated. The first step of this process will be based on a simple assessment of affordability and deliverability:

- Is the estimated capital cost or estimated capital funding gap of the scheme under £25m?
- Are any associated revenue costs likely to be fundable (e.g. through income receipts or developer contributions)?
- Can the scheme be delivered within funding timescales allowing for the necessary design, consultation, statutory processes and procurement prior to scheme construction?

15.4   Those schemes which make it through the first sifting step will then be assessed against the following criteria using a process similar to that outlined in WebTAG (TAG unit 2.1.2c – Step 6):

Criteria	Issues
Scale of scheme impact	To what extent does the scheme meet the objectives identified for intervention and help alleviate the identified problems?
Fit with strategic objectives	How does the scheme fit with goals set for transport investment? How does the scheme complement objectives in relevant local strategies? How does the scheme fit with other proposals in the area?
Contribution to economic and development growth	How does the scheme help to deliver economic and development growth in principal locations and along key corridors?
Environmental and community impacts	What are the scheme's potential environmental and community impacts?
Broad deliverability assessment	Does the scheme have stakeholder/public support? Is the scheme practically feasible? What is the quality of the supporting evidence? Are there other significant funding streams available? What are the key risks?

15.5   The output from the above process will provide a manageable recommended short list of potential major transport schemes.

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16. Scheme Prioritisation

16.1   The initial two stage sifting process will produce a short list of potential major transport schemes that could be subject to prioritisation by the SWLTB for delivery by March 2019.

16.2   In this context, the DfT's guidance states that:

"We recognise that the identification of a prioritised and affordable list of schemes by July 2013 will be likely to be conducted on the basis of a limited set of criteria. At that stage we do not expect most schemes to have a fully developed business case or a WebTAG appraisal completed".

"However, the Department believes that, as a minimum, value for money, deliverability, environmental and society/distributional impacts should always be among the factors taken into consideration".

16.3   To ensure that the above requirements are met and to also increase the robustness of the prioritisation process, a Strategic Outline Case (or equivalent) will be completed for each of the shortlisted schemes. This work will be based on a publicly available methodology – such as the '5 Cases Model' criteria described in WebTAG (TAG Unit 2.1.2c – Step 7).

16.4   The Strategic Outline Case will include a check that a full range of options have been assessed to deal with the identified problems and objectives – where necessary, additional options will be generated and assessed.

16.5   The prioritisation process may make use of multi criteria analysis which can, if appropriate, allow for the weighting of certain criteria (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-criteria-analysis-manual-for-making-government-policy).

16.6   The promoting LTA will be expected to contribute a minimum of 10% and a maximum of 90% to scheme costs. While a high level of contribution will not necessarily increase a scheme's level of priority in the programme, it may be considered a factor where there are marginal differences between schemes.

16.7   The outcome of the above prioritisation process will form the basis of a report and recommendation by the technical officer group to the SWLTB (the ITA will be able to submit a separate report if necessary). The SWLTB will be asked to approve a provisional programme with a value which is approximately 30% above and below the indicative funding allocation – the DfT has advised all LTBs to make contingency provision in their programmes for actual funding levels to be one third higher or lower than their indicative funding allocation.

16.8   A prioritised list of major transport schemes will be submitted to the DfT by July 2013.

Part 3: Programme Management and Investment Decisions
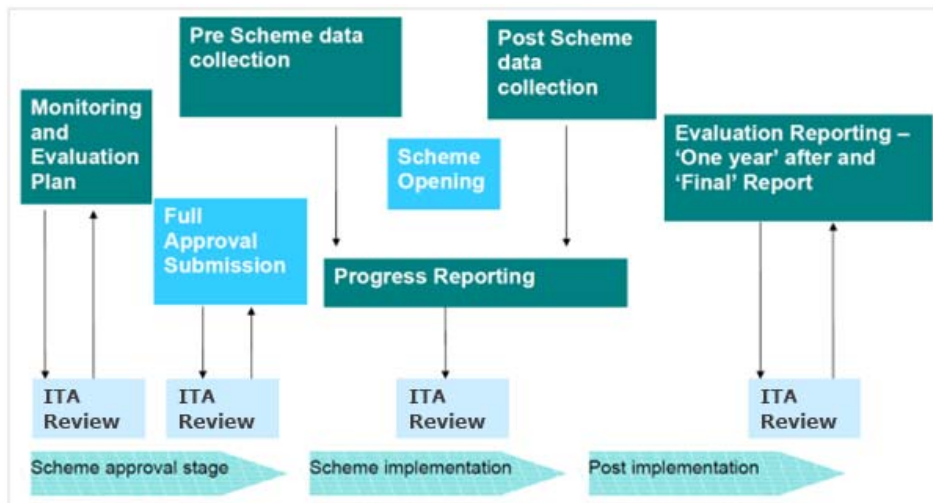
17. Scheme Assessment and Approval

17.1 Prioritised schemes will be subjected to a staged scrutiny and approval process based on the DfT's Transport Business Case:

- Stage 1 – Initial assessment of long list of candidate schemes using the DfT's EAST. Refine list through a two-step sifting process to produce a manageable short list. Completion of proportionate Strategic Outline Case for each shortlisted scheme. SWLTB approves prioritised scheme list.
- Stage 2 – Completion of proportionate Outline Business Case for prioritised schemes. SWLTB considers Outline Business Cases and approves schemes to proceed to Full Business Case.
- Stage 3 – Completion of proportionate Full Business Case(s) including necessary statutory and procurement requirements. SWLTB considers Full Business Case(s) and approves funding.

17.2 The promoting body will be responsible for developing the business cases at stages 2 and 3 (the funding and approval mechanism for schemes on the strategic road network and rail network may be different and will therefore be discussed with the DfT). The technical officer group and the ITA will consider each business case submission at each stage and make recommendations to the SWLTB. The SWLTB will need to approve each business case submission prior to progression to the next stage.

17.3 The promoting body is responsible for informing the SWLTB of any significant changes to a scheme's scope, costs and implementation timetable. The technical officer group and the ITA will advise the SWLTB of any necessary remedial actions.

17.4 As part of stage 3, a formal agreement will be issued between the SWLTB and the promoting body setting out the conditions under which the devolved funding is to be spent and the respective responsibilities.

18. The Transport Business Case

18.1 The SWLTB will ensure that its prioritisation and investment decision making process follows the key principles of the DfT's Transport Business Case guidance (http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/transport-business-case/). This ensures that the information and assessment of a scheme is set out according to five cases:

- the 'strategic case' – the scheme is supported by a robust **case for change** that fits with wider public policy objectives
- the 'economic case' – the scheme demonstrates **value for money**
- the 'commercial case' – the scheme is **commercially viable**
- the 'financial case' – the scheme is **financially affordable**
- the 'management case' – the scheme is **achievable**.

18.2 All completed business cases (excluding any commercially sensitive information) will be available to view on the SWLTB's website.

19. Value for Money

19.1   Proportionate Outline and Full Business Cases must be developed in accordance with the DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance (WebTAG) at the time the business case is submitted to the LTB for consideration (http://www.dft.gov.uk/webtag/).

19.2   Where applicable, associated transport modelling work should be based on forecasts which are consistent with the definitive version of the DfT's National Trip End Model (NTEM). Alternative planning assumptions may be used and/or required by the SWLTB as sensitivity tests.

19.3   Prior to the development of an Outline Business Case, the promoting body will be required to submit an Appraisal Specification Report to the ITA setting out the proposed appraisal and modelling approach to be adopted. In doing so, scheme promoters should make any case for applying WebTAG proportionately.

19.4   The officer technical group and ITA will advise on submitted Appraisal Specification Reports and make final recommendations to the SWLTB.

19.5   The promoting body will be required to produce a Value for Money (VfM) assessment and statement in line with the DfT's WebTAG (http://assets.dft.gov.uk/publications/value-for-money-assessments-guidance/vfmguidance.pdf).

19.6   The VfM assessment should provide a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of the scheme using monetised impacts in line with WebTAG. While it is expected that most schemes will need to have a BCR of 2:1 and over to gain approval, account will also be taken of a scheme's wider economic, environmental and social/distributional impacts. This means that a scheme with a low or medium BCR may still be considered for approval if wider objectives provide a compelling case taking into account broader appraisal evidence in relation to:

- Strategic economic benefits.
- Environmental impacts.
- Social / Distributional impacts.

19.7   Each VfM Assessment and Statement will be signed off as true and accurate by a named officer with responsibility for value for money assessments - the SWLTB will approve the business case based on the VfMS and other evidence as appropriate.

19.8   Scheme promoters must monitor and evaluate their scheme's progress in line with the 'standard monitoring' measures set out in the DfT's 'Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Local Authority Major Schemes' (http://assets.dft.gov.uk/publications/local-majors-monitoring-evaluation/la-major-schemes-monitoring-evaluation.pdf). Where applicable, the 'enhanced monitoring' measures should also be utilised.

19.9   The monitoring and evaluation process is set out below:

Pre Scheme data collection

Post Scheme data collection

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Reporting – 'One year' after and 'Final' Report

Scheme Opening

Full Approval Submission

Progress Reporting

ITA Review

ITA Review

ITA Review

ITA Review

Scheme approval stage

Scheme implementation

Post implementation

19.10 Agreed Monitoring and Evaluation Plans should be published on the scheme promoter's website. A link will also be included on the SWLTB's website.

20. External Views on Business Cases

20.1 Outline and Full Business Cases will be published on the SWLTB's website at least three months before a scheme approval decision is made by the SWLTB. Stakeholders and members of the public can make written representations to the SWLTB secretariat on these business cases up to two weeks before the relevant meeting date. Stakeholders and members of the public may be invited to attend the SWLTB meeting to discuss their representation at the discretion of the Chair.

20.2 The SWLTB's decision letters to promoters will include specific reference to how business case representations have been taken into account.

21. Release of Funding, Cost Control and Approval Conditions

21.1 The Accountable Body will not release any funding to the scheme promoter until the Full Business Case has been approved by the SWLTB and the scheme promoter (in the form of the Section 151 officer or equivalent) has accepted the funding and the conditions for its use.

21.2 The SWLTB scheme contribution will be capped at the level set out in the award letter; therefore, any cost increases will need to be borne by the scheme promoter.

21.3 The scheme promoter will be responsible for submitting financial claim forms (signed by the Section 151 officer or equivalent) to the Accountable Body on a quarterly basis. The SWLTB will agree payment based on a report from the Accountable Body. If the claim differs from the agreed funding profile then the scheme promoter will need to explain this in their submission.

21.4 The Accountable Body will undertake regular audits of the financial process by requesting evidence from the scheme promoter that funds are being spent on the

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specified capital scheme. The Accountable Body will advise the SWLTB of any concerns or irregularities. The SWLTB reserves the right to suspend funding, or request the return of previous funding payments, if it believes that there is a misuse of funds.

22.   Programme and Risk Management

22.1   Scheme promoters will be required to provide an initial project programme for each prioritised scheme. The project programme should include estimated timescales for the following:

- Production of business cases
- Completion of associated technical work
- Progress of outline and detailed design
- Statutory orders
- Public consultation
- Procurement
- Construction of scheme.

22.2   The ITA will meet the promoting LTA on an at least quarterly basis to discuss the progress of schemes and contents of the progress reports to be submitted to the Board. The frequency of these meetings will depend on the complexity and scale of the scheme as well as the stage of preparation / construction and any risk issues previously identified.

Scheme and programme risk levels will be closely monitored on a regular basis by the officer technical group including the ITA. The default position will be that the promoting LTA is expected to manage risk within the scheme and its funding envelope. Any significant issues that affect the programme as a whole will be referred to the next Board meeting, including proposed modifications to the programme in the light of scheme progress.

22.3   Potential risks to the delivery to the scheme programme, such as overspend and delays to timescales, must be highlighted. Promoters should also produce and maintain risk registers for their schemes and set out how they will manage potential risks.