



Towns Conference

Project management and overcoming delivery challenges



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

**Towns
Fund** [©]
Delivery Partner





Agenda

- Introduction
- Summary of delivery challenges raised by Towns during PPM seminars
- Facing up to delivery challenges:
 - Schedule and cost
 - Risk and opportunity
 - Requirements and change
 - Governance, assurance and reporting
 - People, behaviour and leadership
- Interactive session / Q&A



Delivery challenges

Complexity,
number and
diversity of
projects

Developing **plans** at
project and
programme level

Understanding **risks**
and their associated
cost exposure.
Managing
mitigations
effectively

Resource
constraints – staff
turnover, budget,
reorganisation etc.

Performance
monitoring and
reporting

Opportunities
management and **value**
engineering – will be
especially important
given the uncertain
economic and political
climate

Behaviours – reluctance
from some to produce
required deliverables,
share resource; a
**culture of challenge /
suspicion**

Spectrum of
confidence in
delivery teams

Establishing the
ethos and
collaboration needed
to create a single
vision beyond
individual projects /
organisations

Maintaining focus
on **outcomes** – clear
plan on which
projects to focus on
first

Developing a robust
governance structure
to aid with clear and
effective decision
making and issues
escalation / support



Schedule and Cost

Schedule:

- Performance measurement enabling decision making and issues management
- Does not need to be perfect – identify what you don't know
- Drives behaviours
- Common reasons for delays:
- Insufficient time for key activities
- Internal and external dependencies
- Long lead items
- Risk and uncertainty

Cost:

- Establish a cost baseline and measure productivity against it
- Understand the project risk profile. Who owns the risks (project or contractor)?
- Cost increases due to uncontrolled scope creep, poor cost estimates, increasing material / labour costs etc.

Construction project critical paths tend to run through applying and obtaining statutory approvals, land agreements and long lead items



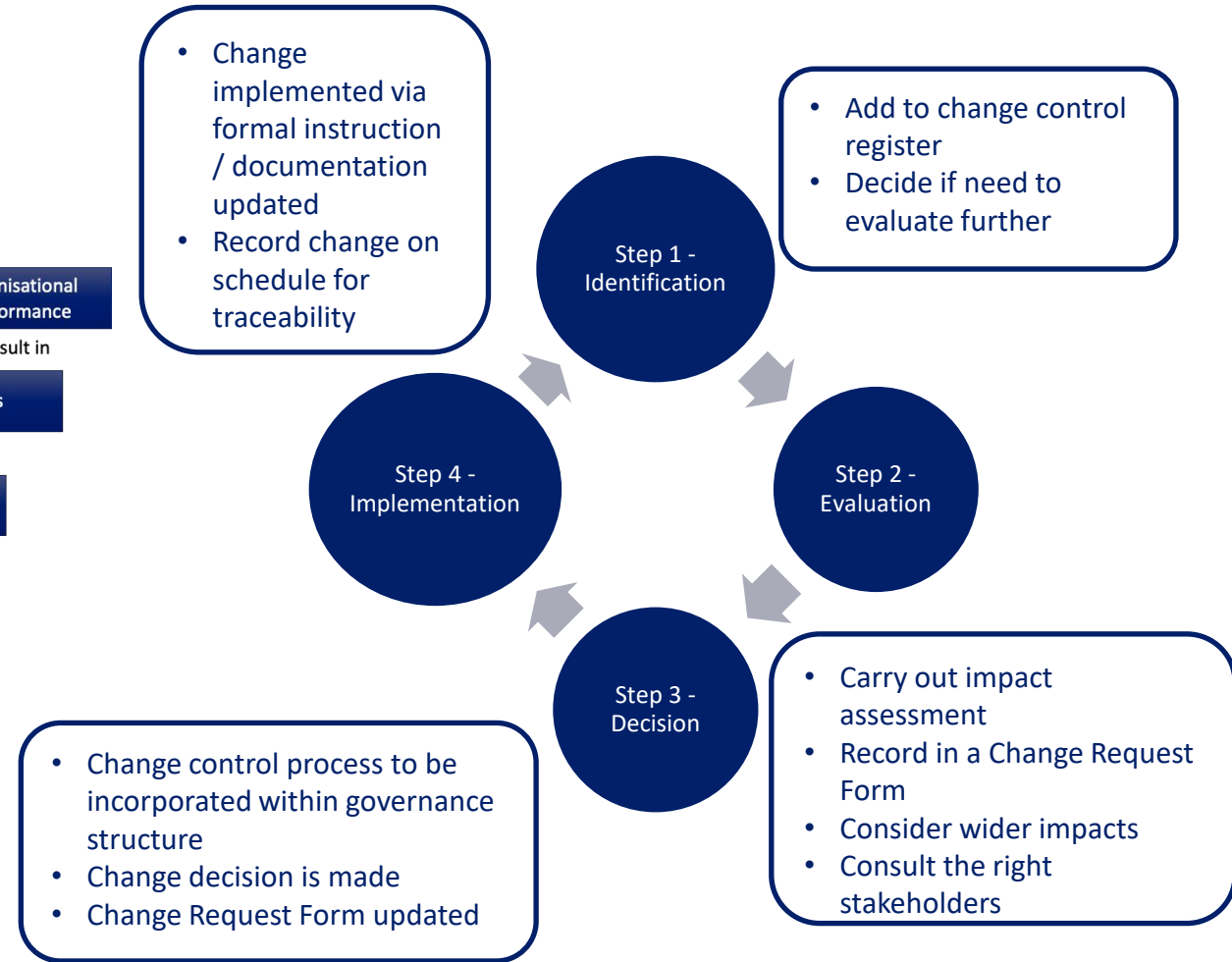
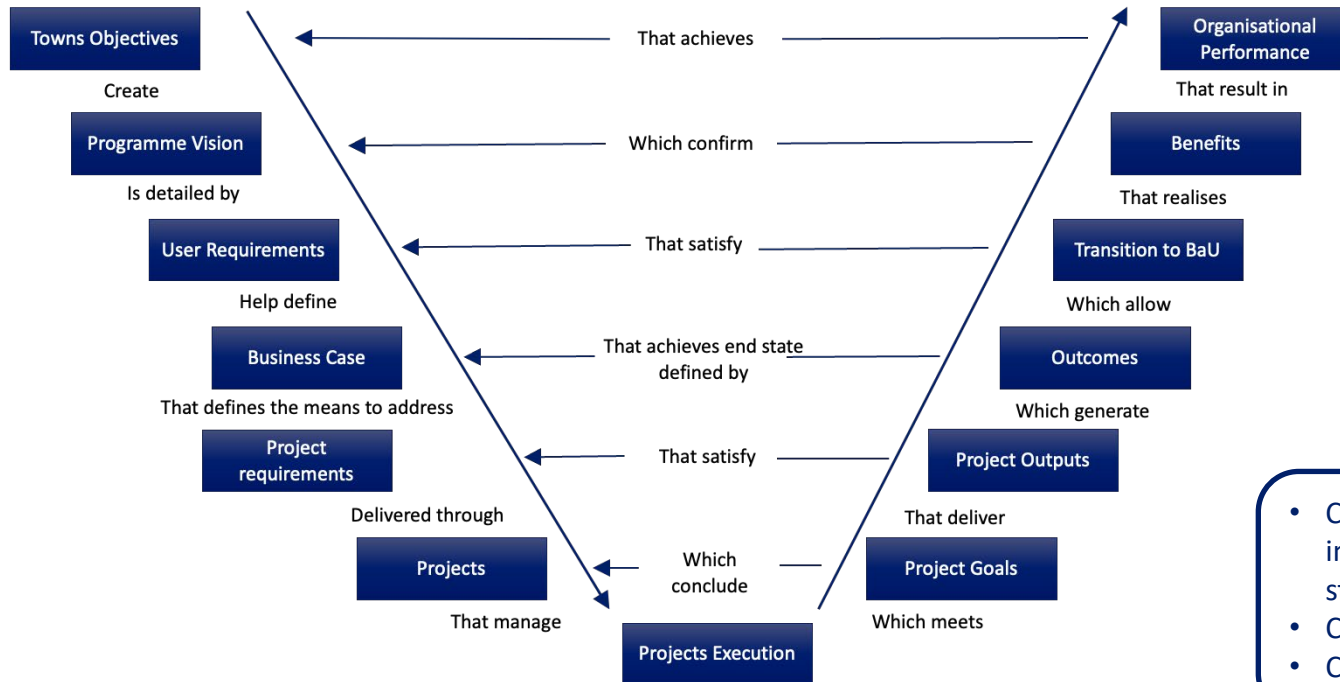
Risk

- Risks must inform delivery
- Iterative process
- Reputational risks
- Interface with wider organisation
- Risks from unvalidated assumptions
- Structured approach to risk reduction strategy (avoid, transfer, reduce and accept)
- Responsibility - clear mitigations, owners due dates etc.
- Scale back, recast or even cancel to shore up delivery of higher priority projects
- Peer review risks - attend review meetings for an 'external perspective'

Opportunities, Efficiency and Innovation:

- Value engineering – look at alternative solutions (what is the 'low hanging fruit'?)
- Challenge requirements and standards
- Drive a culture of opportunity, innovation and efficiency internally and with contractors
- Allow teams time and space to be creative

Requirements and Change



Requirements:

- Regularly review ensure benefits are on track to be delivered i.e. do they inform the baseline?
- Current fiscal climate – how to decide what to do less of?
- Requirements can creep through cumulative change

Change:

- Changes controlled against established baseline
- Process embedded within BaU / established governance framework
- Change control can be a bottleneck if not established correctly



Governance, assurance and reporting

Governance:

- Necessary - but has to work for you (being structured but also flexible)
- Using formal / informal channels
- Ultimately about providing confidence

Assurance:

- Planning ahead (pre-emptive) – aligning to governance
- Reactive / deep-dives as and when required
- Internal vs independent assurance

Reporting:

- Clarify what is required by governance – ensure reports drive the conversation you need
- Identify issues early and implement corrective action
- Use stakeholders to support the project

People, behaviour and leadership

"Prioritise people and behaviour"

"Behaviour matters more than process"

Clarity

Vision, aims, roles, responsibilities, requirements, boundaries

Communication

Helpful, open, honest, regular, proportionate

Collaboration

Invest to enhance performance and mitigate risks

Culture

Shared ways of working with lived out values



Any questions?
Do any points particularly resonate with
your own experiences?

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