

ABSTRACT

This document provides guidance based on HM Treasury Green Book and WMCA requirements to assist in the writing of the Strategic Outline Case (SOC)

Programme Assurance & Appraisal

VERSION CONTROL SHEET

Version No.	Date	Author(s)	Changes
V1.0	June 2021	Programme Assurance & Appraisal	First Launch of Business Case Guidance
V2.0	March 2023	Programme Assurance & Appraisal	Planned update to reflect WMCA and HM Treasury Green Book Requirements
V3.0	October 2023	Programme Assurance & Appraisal	Planned yearly update including but not limited to; addition of Inclusive Growth and Equalities Section, more detailed guidance on Stakeholder Involvement, Critical Success Factors and Monitoring and Evaluation
V3.1	February 2024	Programme Assurance & Appraisal	Update to stakeholder information and improved guidance on Inclusive Growth and Equalities Section
V4.0	October 2024	Programme Assurance & Appraisal	Enhanced stakeholder information, improved formatting across documents and governance Board Report requirement added to appendices
V4.01	January 2025	Programme Assurance & Appraisal	Amended links to external resources and guidance (Inclusive Growth), following stakeholder feedback.
V5.0	February 2026	Programme Assurance & Appraisal	Significant updates to entire guidance, linked to associated changes to the corresponding SOC template, following annual revision cycle. Incorporating HM Treasury Green Book updates (5 February 2026)

Version No.	Date	Approver(s)	Approvals
v1.0	June 2021	Programme Assurance & Appraisal	Working Group Activity
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V4.0	October 2024	Programme Assurance & Appraisal	Programme Assurance and Appraisal Working Group
V4.01	January 2025	Programme Assurance & Appraisal	Programme Assurance and Appraisal Working Group
V5.0	December 2025	Programme Assurance & Appraisal	Programme Assurance, Appraisal, Centre of Excellence – Business Case Update Working Group

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Reference	Related Documents
WMCA-SAF-TP016	SOC - Strategic Outline Case

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I INTRODUCTION

A key principle that underpins the Single Assurance Framework (SAF) is delivering enhanced, evidenced based decision-making across everything that the WMCA does; this requires ensuring that decision-makers are as informed as they can be with the right information.

To support this approach the SAF requires the development of business cases using the 'Five Case Model' as outlined within the HM Treasury Green Book, in a scalable and proportionate way that incorporates WMCA requirements such as alignment to strategic objectives, policy and Inclusive Growth.

A well-prepared Project Business Case:

- Enables the organisation and its key stakeholders to understand, influence and shape the programme's scope and direction early in the planning process.
- Assists decision-makers to understand the key issues, the available evidence base and to avoid committing resources to schemes that should not proceed.
- Demonstrates to senior management, stakeholders, customers and decision-makers the continuing viability of the project, and provides the basis for management, monitoring and evaluation during and after implementation.

This guidance document sets out the requirements when submitting a Strategic Outline Case (SOC). It is designed to help with the completion of the SOC, by explaining what the WMCA and HM Treasury Green Book standards are, and which will be appraised, assessed, and considered through the decision-making process.

The Purpose of a Strategic Outline Case

The Strategic Outline Case (SOC) is the first stage in developing the project business case for a significant scheme using the Five Case Model.

The purpose of the SOC is to confirm the strategic context and establish the Case for Change. It should also provide an early indication of the Preferred Way Forward (PWF) to key stakeholders, alongside indicative costs and benefits. The PWF is subject to senior management approval, prior to more detailed planning and development stage(s), such as the submission of a subsequent Outline Business Case (OBC).

The SOC also articulates outline details for procurement fundamentals in the Commercial Case, likely affordability of the project in the Financial Case, and project management arrangements in the Management Case.

II PROJECT DETAIL

Ensure Tables 1, and either 2a (WMCA internal business case only) OR 2b (External business case i.e. constituent Local Authority, WMCA arm's length body), are completed in full. This should include the names of the key stakeholders who have input and been sighted on the business case for submission.

The WMCA Project Code can be obtained from the WMCA Project Sponsor.

Note, there are several mandatory stakeholders for both internal and external promoted business case submissions (Tables 2a OR 2b). Where the required input from those mandatory stakeholders is not clearly demonstrated, the business case submission will not be accepted until the necessary detail is provided.

Engagement with those mandatory stakeholders must happen prior to formal submission to Programme Assurance and Appraisal.

If the business case has been submitted by a non-WMCA entity i.e. a Local Authority, there are a number of both non-WMCA and WMCA employees which should be engaged as part of the business case development process.

In all cases, where a stakeholder is mandatory, this is indicated in the 'requirement' columns of Tables 2a and 2b of the business case template.

III MANDATORY APPENDICES

Provide each of the mandatory appendices listed below as separate documents (do not embed documents within the business case and ideally avoid the use of PDFs).

Any missing appendices risk delays in your business case being submitted into the SAF process

The mandatory appendices for the SOC are listed in Table 3 and include:

- A. Health and Equity Impact Assessment (HEIA)
- B. Risk Register and Issue Log
- C. Indicative NPSV/BCR/RPSC/VfM calculations (may be in the form of a workbook)
- D. Legal Appendix
- E. Written Confirmation(s) of Confirmed Funding
- F. Project Schedule
- G. Stakeholder and Communications Strategy
- H. If Investment Programme, Project Delivery Plan on a Page (POAP)
- I. Transport Additional Appendix*
- J. Whole Life Carbon Assessment (WLCA)*

Further information on the content of these mandatory appendices is provided in section 6 of this guidance.

IV EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Provide a one-page standalone summary of the proposed project (Max 500 words).

This summary should include the following at a minimum:

- **A brief project description** – A well-written description makes it possible for the intended audience (e.g., the decision-makers and reviewers) to understand the concept, context, and rationale of the proposed programme.
- **Project Objectives** – State the ‘big picture’ goals that are planned to be achieved (e.g., improving air quality)
- **Associated Outputs** – State the tangible and direct results of the project (e.g., 250 metres of new cycle lane).

V FINANCE SUMMARY

Complete Table 4 to provide a brief financial summary of the project.

Definitions for each line required are:

- **Total project cost** - The sum of the entire project (as known), including all revenue and capital costs, with their funding sources identified. This may include costs that will be met by others external to the WMCA.
- **WMCA funds subject to this business case** - The total amount of funding being requested from WMCA (i.e., the financial ask of this business case)
- **Development funding requested** - This should set out the amount for development funding. This sum will be included within the above row but may not reflect the entire financial ask of this business case (as the row above does).
- **WMCA funding source(s)** - State the funding source of the WMCA Funding being requested (e.g., Transport for City Regions (TCR), Integrated Settlement (IS) – Environment and Climate Change pillar)
- **Funds already secured** - The amount of funding that has already been officially secured; this should be demonstrated by confirmation of funding appended to the business case.
- **Identified but unsecured funding** - The amount of all funding that has not yet been officially secured, this should include the financial ask of this business case (i.e., the amount in the ‘WMCA funds subject to this business case’ row. This may also include additional funding requirements which are not the subject of this business case, but which are also not yet secured.
- **Funding deficit yet to be identified** - The remaining amount needed to meet the total project costs, when excluding the funds subject to the business case, any already secured funds and funds that have been identified for other sources but are also unsecured (i.e. the subject of an additional competitive funding application).

Example Table (4) for Financial Summary

Finance Summary	SOC
Total project cost:	£4,000,000
WMCA funds subject to this business case:	£1,000,000
Development funding requested	£250,000
WMCA funding source(s):	TCR
Funds already secured:	£0
Identified but unsecured funding:	£1,000,000 (TCR) + £1,000,000 ('XYZ' fund)
Funding deficit yet to be identified:	£2,000,000

1 - STRATEGIC CASE

The purpose of the strategic dimension of the business case is to make the Case for Change and to demonstrate how it provides strategic fit.

1.1 ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW

Provide a brief overview of the organisation(s) making the case for intervention and change.

This should include general purpose of the respective organisation(s), strategic goals and key stakeholders. The organisational structure and financial position should be briefly summarised, along with the range of all services those organisations currently provide, their service levels and demand.

Note, that the deficiencies with those existing services and the business needs required through the project intervention(s) are provided in a later section of the strategic case, only once objectives are set. This section should focus on the organisation(s) more generally.

1.2 STRATEGY AND POLICY ALIGNMENT

Explain how the project supports the WMCA Strategic Planning Framework, and the way other programmes and projects within the strategic portfolio are linked to this project. In addition, comment on how Local, Regional, and National policy and other organisations' strategies (relevant to the project) are supported. Attach relevant documents, if applicable.

Explain how the project supports the existing policies and strategies of the WMCA and how it will assist in achieving the business goals, strategic aims and business plans of the organisation.

This section should set out:

- All International, National, Regional, Sector and Local policies, initiatives and targets, as required, first focussing on those which are most relevant to the project.
- Clear alignment with the Integrated Settlement (IS) Outcomes Framework (where applicable/if funded by IS) and the 10-year outcomes outlined in the forthcoming West Midlands Growth Plan. **These are primary strategic priorities.**
- How proposals have also considered second-order alignment with Mayoral priorities and local place-based strategies, ensuring a comprehensive fit with both regional and local objectives.
- The linkages between other programmes and projects within WMCA's strategic portfolio. This should include relevant milestones and timescales on the critical path for delivery.
- Any acknowledgement of aligned strategy/policy still being developed. Whilst valid to note any emerging policies and plans (particularly of local and regional importance), limited weighting should be applied due to their status.

The above information may be gleaned from existing documents, including WMCA strategies and business plans. These should be briefly summarised (with excerpts) or attached to the business case.

PAA specialists will validate the strategic alignment of each proposal as part of the Assurance & Appraisal activity.

1.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND ALIGNMENT TO WMCA AIMS

Outline the project objectives of the project and how they will be measured within the table below.

Note: All projects should clearly align to WMCA Outcomes and Strategic Planning Frameworks.

Note: There will be further opportunity to review and update project objectives, outputs/outcomes, measures and targets in the next stage business case, once more analysis has been undertaken

Complete Table 5 to set out the objectives for the project i.e. what we are seeking to achieve.

The project objectives should be:

- Aligned with the WMCA Strategic Objectives, to include the Strategic Planning Framework.
- SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-constrained – to facilitate evaluation. The setting of clear, concise and meaningful objectives is an iterative process and will depend upon the nature and focus of the project. **It is noted that at SOC stage the objectives may not be wholly SMART, it is envisaged that by OBC stage they will be fully defined.**
- Customer-focused and distinguishable from the means of provision, so focus is on what needs to be achieved rather than the potential solution
- Not be so narrowly defined as to preclude important options, nor so broadly defined as to cause unrealistic options to be considered at the options appraisal stage
- Focused on the vital outcomes, since a single or large number of objectives can undermine the clarity and focus of the project.

The project objectives will typically address one or more of the following five generic drivers for intervention and spend. These are:

- Improve the quality of public services by delivering better social outcomes (**effectiveness**); for example, by meeting new policy initiatives and operational targets.
- Improve the delivery of public services by the better use of inputs and outputs (**efficiency**); for example, by improving the throughput of services whilst reducing unit costs.
- Reduce the cost of public services (**economy**); for example, by spend on innovative technologies
- Meet statutory, regulatory or organisational requirements and accepted best practice (**compliance**); for example, new health and safety legislation or building standards
- Re-provide services in order to avert service failure (**replacement**); for example, re-procurement of an existing service or replacement of an asset

Note: Table 5 below shows various example objectives for different project areas. The numbers used are also completely illustrative.

Example Table (5) for Project Objectives and Alignment to WMCA Aims:

	Objective	Baseline Outputs / Outcomes (Quantitative)	Target Outputs (Quantitative)	Target Outcomes (including reference from the agreed WMCA outcomes framework)	Target Date	Alignment to WMCA Aims and Objectives
1	(EXAMPLE) Increase the number of residents who successfully complete Level 3 digital skills bootcamps delivered at the Wolverhampton Skills Hub.	Digital Skills Hub currently delivers 0 Level 3 bootcamps (2025 baseline).	240 learners enrolled; 180 learners successfully complete Level 3 bootcamps.	Increased proportion of residents qualified at Level 3, contributing to wider employability improvement (IS Outcome 7)	March 2026	Ensure everyone had the opportunity to benefit.
2	Upgrade three key junctions and ten bus stops along the Coventry corridor to improve bus journey times and punctuality.	Average delay per bus = 4.8 minutes per peak-time journey (2025 baseline).	3 junctions redesigned; 10 bus stops upgraded with real-time information and accessibility features.	Reduced corridor delays and increased punctuality of bus services, supporting improved bus satisfaction (IS Outcome 3)	April 2026	Connect our communities by delivering transport and unlocking housing and regeneration schemes.
3	Deliver site remediation, utilities connections and access works, to prepare the Castle Gate North plot in Dudley for residential construction.	Site currently has 0% infrastructure readiness (2025 baseline)	Complete site clearance, remediation, utilities connections, and internal access road.	Site becomes fully serviced and ready for development, unlocking capacity for up to 220 new homes (IS Outcome 5)	May 2026	Connect our communities by delivering transport and unlocking housing and regeneration schemes.

1.4 HEALTH AND EQUITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HEIA)

Provide details of the HEIA conducted for this project, including the likely impact on:

- Protected characteristics
- Health inequalities
- Place (socio-economic and environment)

Note: A HEIA framework and template has been developed by WMCA to help ensure the likely impact of policy changes (including the development of programmes and projects) is effectively considered. Where external delivery partners have their own templates for conducting this assessment, they do not need to use the WMCA version.

It is critical that you explain how the project will contribute to equality. At the WMCA, the Health and Equity Impact Assessment (HEIA) framework or tool is used for this purpose, and its aim is to capture the likely impact on groups of people in terms of:

- [Protected characteristics \(Equality and Humans Rights Commission\)](#), as guided by the [Equality Act 2010 \(Gov.uk\)](#)
- Health inequalities and outcomes faced, and
- Impacts on place through in terms of socio-economic and environment

When considering likely disability impact(s), please be reminded to follow the, ['social model' of disability \(Gov.uk – Disability Knowledge and Research\)](#).

As a public body, WMCA have a mandatory requirement to evidence, “due regard” to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and completing an equality or equity impact assessment is widely accepted as the best way to provide evidence compliance with the PSED.

The [WMCA Health and Equity Impact Assessment \(HEIA\) Tool \(WMCA Intranet\)](#) can be used by WMCA internal staff, or other equality impact tools available from Local Authorities. If you are external to WMCA and wish to use our HEIA Tool, please email equalitiesteam@wmca.org.uk

1.5 INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Explain how this project will contribute to West Midlands Combined Authority Inclusive Growth fundamentals using the Table 6.

Here you should use this section to explain how the project will contribute towards the Inclusive Growth (IG) fundamentals within the West Midlands, setting out the to what extent (i.e. the impact) and those actions supporting each fundamental. [More details of the WMCA’s Inclusive Growth Framework \(WMCA website\) can he found here.](#)

The IG fundamentals, each with their separate missions include:

- Climate and environment
- Inclusive economy
- Power and participation
- Affordable and safe places
- Connected communities
- Education and learning
- Health and wellbeing

Those developing the business case should either use the WMCA tools (link provided in this guidance below), or other similar tools available within Local Authorities to best articulate IG alignment. Please refer to [the Inclusive Growth Toolkit \(WMCA website\)](#) for further information and updates.

Once the tool(s) are completed, the output should be used to shape the business case i.e. what steps or actions have been taken in response to the results. The completed tool provides the project with a rating between 0-10. The overall ratings are categorised as follows:

- The project is non-compliant, scoring between 0-2
- Compliant, 2-4
- Aspirational, 4-8
- Transformational, 8-10

If you are external to WMCA and wish to contact the Inclusive Growth Team, please email inclusivegrowthunit@wmca.org.uk

1.6 EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS AND BUSINESS NEEDS

Provide a clear Case for Change for this project. This should include a complete summary of the current service model and 'Business as Usual' (BAU) offer, including any elements of services provided externally, where appropriate.

In addition, state the deficiencies associated with the current provision and the implications if the project does not proceed.

Provide a brief summary that details the current situation and range of services presently being provided by the organisation. This includes detail on key customers, service levels and current demand.

Evidence the future needs of the organisation and the implications if this pro is not implemented. This helps establish a compelling Case for Change based on business needs, rather than the contention it is 'a good thing to do'.

1.7 PROJECT SCOPE AND SERVICES

To effectively deliver potential service improvements, it is useful to classify needs/requirements. Outline the requirements of the project based upon on the following hierarchy.

Identify the potential scope of the project in terms of the operational capabilities and service changes required to satisfy the identified business needs. This will assist in avoiding ‘scope creep’ during the options appraisal stage of the project. An example table for capturing this information is provided below

Consider the range of business functions, areas and operations to be affected and the key services required to improve organisational capability on a continuum of need, where:

- The ‘**core**’ coverage and services required represent the ‘essential’ changes without which the project will not be judged a success.
- The ‘**desirable**’ coverage and services required represent the ‘additional’ changes which the project can potentially justify on a cost/benefit and thus Value for Money basis.
- The ‘**optional**’ coverage and services required represent the ‘possible’ changes which the project can potentially justify on a marginal low cost and affordability basis.

Example Table (7) for Project Scope and Services:

RANGE	CORE (essential - must have)	DESIRABLE (additional - could have)	OPTIONAL (possible - nice to have)
Potential Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of new financial reporting tools • Automation of manual data entry processes • Compliance with regulatory standards • Staff training for new systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced dashboard analytics for decision-making • Mobile access to operational systems • Streamlined approval workflows • Improved customer service interfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI-assisted forecasting tools • Chatbot for internal queries • Gamified staff engagement features • Integration with legacy systems for archival access
Key Service Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure data migration • Real-time system performance monitoring • User access controls and audit trails • Dedicated support during transition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • API connectivity with third-party platforms • Role-based user customization • Scalable cloud infrastructure • Periodic performance reviews and updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-demand training modules • Custom branding of user interfaces • Optional multi-language support • Quarterly innovation workshops

1.8 KEY RISKS

Use the Project Risk Register, and latest assessment of project risks, to complete the table below. Capture the project’s (top 5) highest rated risks associated with the achievement of its objectives and outcomes, along with the key activity aimed at either managing the cause or mitigating the effects of each risk.

Note: *The information provided should be an extract from the Risk Register and Issue Log attached with this SOC.*

Use Table 8 to highlight the most significant/highest rated risks associated with the achievement of the project’s outcomes, and the key activity for mitigation and management of said risks. These main risks focus should be around 20% of the total project risks, and which provide 80% of the total risk values.

These risks should be extracted from the more comprehensive Risk Register appended to the SOC. The Risk Register should follow the standards of the WMCA Risk Register template and should be developed and used in accordance with the WMCA Risk Management Framework.

Further details and guidance on Risk Management are provided in section 5.6 below at ‘Risk and Issue Management’.

Example Table (8) for Key Risks:

ID	Risk	Impact (1-5)	Probability (1-5)	RAG Rating	Risk Owner	Mitigation
001	Discovery of Japanese knot weed along the desired metro route	4	2	Medium	S Jones (SRO)	Land surveys to be completed in March 2027

1.9 MAIN BENEFITS

Include the main benefits associated with achievement of the project objectives/outcomes.

Note: *The approach to benefits identification should focus on the 20% of benefits likely to provide 80% of the project’s benefit value.*

Note: *Outcomes and outputs should not be included in this table. Ensure that the benefits listed here match those included in the Economic Case, including monetizable benefits within the BCR calculations*

Complete Table 9 provided to specify the main benefits of the project to be delivered by:

- **Benefit** - describe the benefit that will be realised because of the project
- **Benefit category (type)** - select the type of benefit from a dropdown of the following 3 categories:
 1. Direct public sector benefits (to originating organisation).
 2. Indirect public sector benefits (to other public sector organisations).
 3. Wider benefits to UK society (e.g., households, individuals, businesses).

¹Note: *that ‘Wider benefits to UK society’ are not typically linked to Cash Releasing Benefits (CRBs) from the 4 Benefit classes (listed below), as per HM Treasury Green Book Supplementary Guidance.*

- **Beneficiary(s)** - expanding on the selected Benefit category (type) selected, detail to whom the benefit will be of value.
- **Benefit class** - should be selected from a dropdown, indicating how the benefit is to be measured from the following 4 choices:
 1. **Cash releasing benefits¹(CRB)**: directly reduces expenditure or generates actual cash savings for the organisation or wider system (e.g. reductions in operating cost, increase in revenue,
 2. **Monetisable non-cash releasing benefits (non-CRB)**: can be expressed in monetary terms and add measurable social value, but do not result in actual cash savings or spend reductions (e.g. efficiency gains, productivity improvements, avoided costs, staff time savings, reduced travel time, energy efficiency gains).
 3. **Quantifiable but not readily monetisable benefits (QB)**: can be measured in numbers or units but cannot easily be converted into a monetary value because there is no clear market price for the improvement or the link to financial impact is indirect or uncertain (e.g. improved social outcomes, improved staff retention, customer satisfaction, reduced waiting times, improved throughput, higher compliance rates).
 4. **Qualitative but not readily quantifiable benefits (Qual)**: are descriptive and subjective rather than numerical and represent improvements in areas which are important but hard to measure or express in numbers (e.g. improved staff morale or job satisfaction, greater public confidence in the service, improved user experience).
- **Value or Size** - this should detail the value where the benefit is quantifiable, or the size of the benefit where it is qualitative. Where the benefit is qualitative, the size (order of magnitude) can also be indicated as either small, medium or large.

Note: Table 9 shows various example benefits for different project areas. The numbers used are also completely illustrative.

Example Table (9) for Main Benefits:

#	Benefit	Benefit category (type)	Beneficiary(s)	Benefit class	Value (if quantifiable) OR Size (is qualitative)
1	Reduction of Co2 emissions through installation of green infrastructure at Dudley Bus Interchange.	Wider benefits to UK society	General public (Bus passengers, local residents, businesses near interchange)	QB: Quantifiable but not readily monetisable	Estimated 18 tonnes Co2 equivalent reduction per year from tree planting and solar-powered lighting.
2	The retrofit of 50 social homes in Walsall to EPC C standard.	Wider benefits to UK society	Low-income households facing high energy costs	Non-CRB: Monetisable non-cash releasing	Estimated £210k lifetime bill savings and 300 tonnes Co2 reduction across upgraded homes (2025–2069).
3	Enhanced safety and comfort through new segregated cycle lane and LED lighting on Birmingham Road.	Wider benefits to UK society	Local residents, commuters, school pupils, active travel users	Qual: Qualitative but not readily quantifiable	Improvement in perceived safety and comfort along a 1.2km section, benefiting an estimated 600 daily users.

1.10 CONSTRAINTS

Specify any constraints that have been placed on the project.

Note: *Any risks arising from the constraints identified in this section should be included in the Risk Register, alongside any mitigating actions.*

Detail any constraints that have been placed on the project i.e., the limitations that may be faced.

Constraints are the external conditions and agreed parameters over which the *project* has little or no control. These can include parameters agreed for an overarching programme of which the *project* is a component of, policy decisions, ethical and legal considerations, rules and regulations, and timescales within which the project must be delivered. Affordability constraints may include agreed limits on capital and revenue spend.

Constraints on the project need to be managed from the outset, since they will constrain the options that can be considered for delivery.

1.11 DEPENDENCIES

Specify any dependencies outside the scope of the project upon which the success of the project is dependent.

Note: *Any risks arising from the dependencies identified in this section should be included in the Risk Register, alongside any mitigating actions.*

Detail any dependencies outside the scope of the project upon which the ultimate success of the project is dependent i.e., things that must be in place/managed elsewhere.

These should include:

- **Inter-dependencies between other programmes and projects.** These are the dependencies that are external to the project but are still within the perimeters of the organisation's project and project management environment, and most likely linked to the scope of another project or project within the strategic portfolio.
- **External dependencies outside the project environment.** These are the dependencies that extend beyond the boundaries of all the projects into other parts of the organisation or even other organisations. These dependencies are outside the control of the project management environment; potentially in business operations, partnering organisations and include external dynamics, such as legislation, strategic decisions and approvals.

2 - ECONOMIC CASE

The purpose of the economic dimension of the business case is to identify the proposal that delivers best public value to society, including wider social and environmental effects.

Note: *Where the proposal is a Transport based with total costs of £10m or more, the Whole Life Carbon Assessment (WLCA) is to be prepared in conjunction with this business case and submitted as a mandatory appendix.*

2.1 CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS (CSFs)

List the Critical Success Factors (CSFs) associated with this project i.e., what must this project achieve to be successful?

Note: *These are not outcomes or objectives; they are the attributes essential for successful delivery of the project.*

Note: *A table of five basic CSFs that apply to all proposals, is given in Table 10 below. At most the number should not exceed seven.*

Complete Table 10 with the following:

- CSFs are those attributes or features the project must have that if not met, would mean the project would not be successful. They can be used to eliminate options from the long-list, even those options that perform well financially or economically but do not satisfy all CSFs. Refer to current [HM Treasury guidance \(The Green Book: UK Government guidance on appraisal - Gov.uk\)](#)
- An optional, 'nice to have' or non-critical output or outcome should not be listed as a CSF.
- CSFs are not the same as outputs, objectives or outcomes, which should still be defined separately.
- When considering programme CSFs, a starting point in order to ensure a broad range of attributes essential for delivery are identified, consider the following themes: Strategic Fit and Business Need, Value for Money, Supplier Capacity and Capability, Affordability (example #4 below), and Achievability.

Example Table (10) for CSFs:

#	Critical Success Factor (CSF)
4	Financial: Deliver within available TCR funding envelope and the deadline for permissible spend under terms and conditions (by X MONTH/YEAR).

2.2 LONG-LIST OF OPTIONS

Determine the long-list of options and undertake a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis to complete the table below. All supporting evidence informing the long-list should be made available if requested for reference and/or Assurance and Appraisal purposes.

Note: Some of the long-list of options detailed in Table 11 should also feature the short-listed options taken forward.

Use Table 11 to present the following:

- The long-list of options should consist of a wide range of options that are broad enough to capture all potential ways to meet the project objectives and CSFs, but without being unrealistic.
- The long-list should not consist solely of variations of the Preferred Way Forward (PWF) but should be compiled before the PWF is selected to give a range of possible solutions. This may result in options which are vastly different "on the ground" but which meet the project objectives and CSFs.
- One possible way of producing a long-list is to consider a range of criteria (e.g. scope, delivery method, finance route, timing etc) and consider a BAU, minimum, central and maximum solution for each criterion. This will give a 'matrix' of options from which a long-list can be chosen.
- **Note** that 'BAU' (unlike other options) must always carry forward² to the short-list, even if it doesn't meet CSFs and objectives in full. It is a Value for Money (VfM) benchmark for all other options. It is also the reason why a 'Do Minimum' option is included later in the economic appraisal, providing an option that does meet all essential requirements but goes no further in generating economic benefit.
- [The Guide to developing the project business case \(Gov.uk\)](#) provides more details of how to apply this method.

Note: Table 11 shows various example long-list options for a hypothetical active travel scheme.

Example Table (11) for long-list SWOT Analysis:

#	Option Description	Advantages (Benefits)	Disadvantages (Disbenefits)	Meets Objectives and CSFs?	Option short-listed?
1	BAU	No changes needed	Doesn't meet growth plans	Partially	Yes ²
2	Corridor-wide standard upgrade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves safety and user experience • reasonable costs and deliverable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited junction redesign may constrain mode-shift impact • Requires coordination with local highways teams 	Yes	Yes

#	Option Description	Advantages (Benefits)	Disadvantages (Disbenefits)	Meets Objectives and CSFs?	Option short-listed?
3	Full segregated cycle and pedestrian option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest safety improvements • Strongest potential for long-term modal shift • Highly aligned to Net Zero and health outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very high cost (likely unaffordable) • Requires land acquisition and long delivery times • Significant disruption during construction 	No – fails affordability and achievability CSFs.	No
4	Technology only enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low cost • Quick deployment • Provides useful data for future planning of active travel schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not address physical safety barriers • Minimal impact on walking/cycling rates • Fails core programme objectives 	No – fails strategic fit and business needs CSF.	No

2.3 SHORT-LISTED OPTIONS

Describe the short-list to be examined in further detail at the next business case stage. This should include a minimum of 4 options as listed below.

Note: *Short-listed options should align to key service requirements, the long-listed options above and meet CSFs and Project Objectives.*

Note: *Indicative figures should be provided for Present Value of Benefits (PVB), Present Value of Costs (PVC) Net Present Social Value (NPSV); Return on Public Sector Cost (RPSC); indicative Benefit/Cost Ratio.*

Where this is not possible for all options, please provide values for the Preferred Way Forward (PWF) at minimum and provide rationale as to why calculations could not be completed.

The short-listed options should include a Business as Usual (BAU), a Do Minimum option (acting as a benchmark for VfM), a PWF and one of more viable option(s), for example a more ambitious/less ambitious option. Further columns can be added to Table 12, present additional options considered in the short-list.

Any option in the long-list that did not meet the CSFs should not be considered in the short-list (excluding BAU).

The response to this section should clearly demonstrate the process used to select the short-listed options and explain how the PWF was ultimately selected for further economic appraisal.

A broad, indicative, appraisal is then carried out using the available information to provide further information on each option.

At this stage, it is not essential for the PWF to have the highest BCR, although it should be within the range of the other options. A more detailed appraisal will be carried out at the OBC stage to confirm the option which offers the best Value for Money (VfM).

2.3.1 COMPLETING THE SHORT-LISTED OPTION TABLE (12)

The following is a step-by-step guide to calculating NPSV, following the process set out in the HM Treasury Green Book. It is not possible to provide values or working calculations as each project is different.

Social cost-benefit analysis (CBA)

Firstly, ensure that Social Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) is the appropriate method of analysis to appraise your project. It is the most typical way and appropriate for most projects, but some projects may be more effectively appraised via Social Cost Effectiveness Analysis (CEA). CBA is the recommended approach for detailed comparison of the shortlist.

Refer to the [HM Treasury Green Book and supplementary guidance \(Gov.uk\) for more information](#).

Where the main social benefits of a project are unmonetisable, CEA *may* be appropriate, where different options involve various means of delivering the same output. It involves using only the social costs to be measured and estimated in monetary terms.

Chapter 6 of the HM Treasury Green Book (2026) can be referred to for more details of identifying a method of analysis and social benefit/cost classification.

1. Choose the method of analysis for appraisal (CBA or CEA)
2. **Assuming CBA**, Identify your social benefits (further examples provided in table 6 of the HM Treasury Green Book).

The starting point should be the benefits listed in your business case. However, note that HM Treasury Green Book supplementary guidance and Government departmental/sector-specific guidance (linked below) may list other benefits for consideration.

2. Calculate to what extent the benefits apply to your project.
3. Consider whether the social benefits can be monetised or not.

A decision tree for helping to classify the social benefits (and costs) can be found at figure 6 of the HM Treasury Green Book.

4. Identify appropriate social values for the monetisable benefits - see departmental/sector specific guidance for more information.
5. Approximate the benefits likely attributable to the project in the years they occur (including ongoing benefits where appropriate). Do so for a reasonable project life (e.g. 60 years for infrastructure, contract length for a service, or a life expectancy for community facilities).
6. Discount the benefit stream to your base year (the present year or other year specified by sector specific guidance) - this gives the Present Value of Social Benefits (PVB).
7. Calculate your estimated project costs for the life of the project (include capital, revenue and maintenance costs).
8. Remove any inflation in project costs to bring all costs to the same base year used for benefit calculations.
9. Discount the costs to your base year - this gives the Present Value of Social Costs (public sector).

10. Net Present Social Value (NPSV) is Present Value of Social Benefits - Present Value of Social Costs (public sector).

11. Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) is Present Value of Social Benefits / Present Value of Social Costs.

12. Return on Public Sector Costs (RPSC), is the Present Value of Social Benefits - Present Value Social Costs (not borne by the public sector) / Present Value Social Costs (public sector). Note that PVC (non-public) should also be converted into real and present value terms, as per point 9.

Gross Value Added (GVA) and Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

It is important to note that GVA and GDP should not be included in the BCR, as most programmes or projects do not produce interventions of the size and scale to significantly impact regional or national economies.

Departmental/Sector Specific Guidance (not exhaustive):

Environmental: Green Book supplementary guidance – [The rules for valuing energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions \(Gov.uk\)](#)

Transport: Green Book supplementary guidance – [Transport Analysis Guidance \(TAG\), the role of transport modelling and appraisal \(Gov.uk\)](#)

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) – [Default assumptions, theoretical frameworks and metrics \(Gov.uk\)](#)

2.4 PREFERRED WAY FORWARD (PWF)

Provide the rationale for the recommended Preferred Way Forward, based upon the analysis and appraisal above.

Provide more detail on the PWF. If the matrix method (Options Framework) was used to develop the long-list and short-list, the detail in this can be used to complete this section.

3 - COMMERCIAL CASE

The purpose of the commercial dimension of the business case is to demonstrate that the ultimate Preferred Option will result in a viable procurement and a well-structured Deal between the public sector and its service providers.

Although the Commercial Case is not expected to be matured at SOC stage, the nature of work should be identified to inform the next stage i.e., sound out the market and inform the procurement process in the next stage (OBC).

Note: *The Legal Appendix is to be prepared in conjunction with this business case and submitted as a mandatory appendix.*

3.1 OVERVIEW OF COMMERCIAL CASE IN SUPPORT OF PREFERRED WAY FORWARD

State the ability of the marketplace to provide the required goods or services and the attractiveness of this proposal to potential service providers.

The overview should include:

- An assessment of the ability of the current marketplace to provide the required goods and services needed to deliver to project.
- Evidence the level of attractiveness of any future Deal to potential service providers, including some analysis of risk apportionment and supporting charging mechanisms.
- Demonstrate input from procurement and legal team during the initial stages of project development, this includes any implications on HR and/or IT.

3.2 OVERVIEW OF THE COMMERCIAL STRATEGY

Provide a summary of the expected Commercial Strategy for this project and how public value will be achieved through economies of scale.

Discuss how the project will utilise the organisations current Commercial Strategy throughout development and how economies of scale will be achieved in a bid to provide public value. There should be consideration as to what the most likely procurement method(s) may be for this project and the estimated timescales for this activity.

3.3 SUBSIDY CONTROL

The mandatory Legal Appendix includes a Subsidy Control Assessment. A summary of the findings of this assessment should be included here.

A consideration as to whether a subsidy is being made and the implications of that subsidy, is included within a Subsidy Control Assessment for the project

The project will consider likely payment mechanisms for goods and/or services as part any contract(s) necessary to deliver the Preferred Option (determined at the next business case stage). In some, cases, the project may need to make a future payment(s) which could considered a subsidy under the Subsidy Control Act 2022. Public authorities must consider the 7 principles of Subsidy Control before making a binding commitment to provide a subsidy.

In some cases, the Subsidy Control Assessment may determine it is possible to make payments under the flexibilities of Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA). Where this is the case, this should be explicitly stated in the business case, with supporting statements from the respective Legal representatives of the organisation promoting the business case.

Further guidance on Subsidy Control rules can be found on [\(Subsidy Control rules: quick guide to key requirements for public authorities - GOV.UK\)](#)

4 - FINANCIAL CASE

The purpose of the financial dimension of the business case is to ensure the project is affordable and is fundable over time. This section should be completed by the Project Lead and reviewed by the Finance Business Partner/Lead and Accounting personnel.

All figures need to be **unrounded** and there should be full alignment with the Financial Summary provided in Table 4.

Some key points to consider when writing this section:

- Demonstrate that costs have been ratified.
- Nominal costs (including inflation) are not real costs.
- This section should provide a cost breakdown for expenditure for which funding is requested from this submission i.e., if you are asking for £100,000 for this SOC, what are the line items of expenditure.
- Inclusion of financial contingency and the percentage (%) of the total ask, which that contingency applies to should be made clear.
- Where possible, demonstrate how benchmarking has been used to ensure reasonable cost estimates have been used (cost/unit).
- Provide commentary to supplement tabular data and highlight assumptions used and sources of uncertainty.
- Work with finance colleagues to develop and maintain a full financial profile for the project.
- Please speak to your Finance Business Partner/Lead if you need further support.

4.1 TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE - FULL PROJECT LIFE (NON – HOUSING PROJECTS)

Provide a breakdown of project expenditure for the full life of the project, including expenditure incurred to date and future expenditure yet to be incurred.

Table 13 should be completed to provide a breakdown of project expenditure (**for the full life of the project**, including expenditure incurred to date and future expenditure yet to be incurred).

Expenditure should be included within the appropriate sub-section of Table 13 depending upon whether funding is requested for this expenditure from the WMCA.

These sub-sections include; eligible expenditure, eligible expenditure subject to further conditions, and any Ineligible project expenditure – which funding is not to be requested to meet these costs.

A further breakdown of the expenditure for which funding is requested at this stage should be provided at Table 15 Section 4.2

Note: This table typically only applies to Non-housing projects, however there are some exceptions specifically regarding WMCA costs, see further in section 4.1.1 below.

Housing projects should instead principally complete Table 14.

4.1.1 TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE (HOUSING PROJECTS ONLY)

Table 14 should **only be completed for housing schemes** delivered by developers and registered providers/non-local authority projects.

All expenditure incurred on housing development schemes should be treated as capital, where they are incurred in bringing forward the housing development schemes.

WMCA costs associated with delivering the full project, e.g., Legal, External Advice costs, etc., should still be noted within Table 13.

4.2 EXPENDITURE FOR WHICH FUNDING IS REQUESTED TO REACH THE NEXT DEVELOPMENT STAGE

For SOC stage the table below should be completed providing a breakdown of expenditure for which funding is requested to reach the next development stage only. This is expected to be a subset of the expenditure summarised previously at either Table 13 or 14 and represents the expenditure for which funding will be awarded, subject to approval of **this submission**.

Note that the expenditure included in Table 13 or 14 previously, reflects whole life project expenditure, whereas Table 15 considers only the funding to reach further business case stage(s).

4.3 CAPITAL AND REVENUE FUNDING STATEMENT

Provide a summary of the overall affordability of the project and the funding that has been secured to date in the sections below:

Note: All secured funding identified below should be verified by a written confirmation attached to this SOC with details of any conditions. This will be mandatory Appendix E.

Note: Any funding requested via this SOC is considered 'unsecured' until its approval.

Complete Table 16 to provide detail on the overall funding package. Note, funding can only be deemed secured if written confirmation is available and attached with the SOC.

Table 16 should show how the expenditure set out earlier at either Tables 13 or 14, and 15 will be funded (by individual funding source). The totals in each column should agree with the corresponding totals at Table 13 or 14. This table is designed to show how the funding will be applied and **does not** represent the cash in-flows.

4.4 PROJECT FUNDING (WHOLE PROJECT LIFE)

Table 17 should show how the expenditure set out at either Table 13 or Table 14 will be funded (by individual funding source). Expanding on the above Capital and Revenue Funding Statement (to include security and reference to written confirmation(s), this table should set out how funding will be profiled over the projects lifecycle to meet expenditure. This table is also designed to show how the funding will be applied and **does not** represent the cash in-flows.

Further guidance to help with the completion of the above sections 4.3 and 4.4, including definitions of Capital and Revenue is set out below.

Local Authority Projects

All expenditure incurred by a Local Authority is classified either as capital or revenue, based upon applicable accounting standards and the routes to qualification as capital.

The three routes by which expenditure may qualify as capital in England and Wales are:

1. Spending which meets the recognition criteria specified under 'proper accounting practices' (*creates a non-current asset*);
2. Spending which meets a definition specified in regulations made under the Local Government Act 2003 (*does not create a non-current asset*);
3. The Secretary of State makes a direction that the spending can be treated as capital expenditure (*does not create a non-current asset*)

The distinction between capital and revenue is important from an accounting perspective, because capital expenditure does not have to be financed by a direct charge to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year it was incurred.

The CIPFA Prudential Code and Local Government borrowing regulations stipulate that local authorities are allowed to borrow to fund capital expenditure, but not to fund revenue expenditure.

The CIPFA Guide to Capital Accounting states that ordinarily costs incurred in pursuance of the Preferred Option can typically be classified as capital.

Some further definitions to help with the completion of financial tables:

- **Gross costs** - The total costs, expenses, liabilities, Taxes and other expenditures.
- **Revenue costs** - Total cost incurred to obtain a sale and the cost of the goods or services sold.
- **Capital costs** - Fixed, one-time expenses incurred on the purchase of land, buildings, construction, and equipment used in the production of goods or in the rendering of services. In other words, it is the total cost needed to bring a project to a commercially operable status.
- **Development funding** - Costs that are needed to facilitate the work packages/tasks with Capital Costs in the BJC i.e., additional studies, finalised design works for later *project* phases.

You can use revenue funding to fund capital expenditure, but you can't use capital funding for revenue expenditure. Examples of revenue funding include; certain grants, and revenues generated.

4.5 BORROWING SUMMARY

State if any element of the project costs are to be financed by borrowing. (Yes/No).

If Yes, complete Table 18 and provide an explanation of the borrowing required.

If any proportion of project costs are dependent upon borrowing, this question is applicable, and the section must be completed in full.

If the project is dependent upon borrowing, using the guidance notes provided within the Table 18, to demonstrate the receipt of funding from other parties whereby there is an agreement that the funds will be repaid.

4.6 CASHFLOW

Summarise (where applicable) any material cashflow challenges the project is likely to face.

Where there are material challenges, provide a cashflow summary statement and incorporate any cashflow risks (with mitigating actions) within the project Risk Register.

Timing differences in cashflow may occur in certain situations such as utility diversions required to facilitate delivery activity, where payment needs to be made typically upfront in advance of other works.

Where there are differences between expenditure and cash outflows, or funding being applied and cash inflows, the summary statement should articulate how this is to be managed and the risks associated.

4.5 AFFORDABILITY & DUE DILIGENCE

Provide a summary of any financial due diligence that has been completed regarding the financial position of all major organisations involved in the delivery of the project.

Where risks exist regarding the financial security of the project arising from this due diligence activity, include these in the project Risk Register with appropriate mitigating actions.

The Project Lead should clearly explain the financial position of all major organisations involved in the delivery of the project, including financial due diligence undertaken, ensuring all key entities are sufficiently financially secure to deliver if funding is approved (i.e. validating affordability)

Further explanation of any revenue-based expenditure associated with the project, but which is not included at Tables 13 and 14 should be provided. For example, ongoing annual maintenance expenditure for the useful life of an asset. For whom and when these costs are liable should be clearly stated.

5 - MANAGEMENT CASE

The purpose of the management dimension of the business case is to demonstrate that robust arrangements are in place for the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the scheme, including feedback into the organisation's strategic planning cycle.

5.1 MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Provide an overview of the necessary management and governance arrangements both in the delivery phase and in operation i.e., include detail on: Governance and decision-making arrangements; Change management arrangements (including compliance with the WMCA Change Control process alongside any directorate, organisational or funder change control requirements); Outline benefits realisation arrangements and plans, including initial benefits register; Outline contract management arrangements; Post evaluation arrangements.

Please provide further information on the following elements of Management and Governance:

- **Governance and decision-making arrangements** - Who is involved in the decision-making process both inside and outside the organisation including the use of governance frameworks such as the Single Assurance Framework. Diagrams may be added.
- **Change management arrangements** - Detail the process for managing, tracking and approving changes to time, cost, quality and scope. This must include compliance with the WMCA Change Control process alongside any directorate, organisational or funder change control requirements. Note that any funder change control requirements do not replace/supersede the WMCA Change Control process defined in the SAF.
- **Outline benefits realisation arrangements** and plans, including an initial benefits register - explain the process in place for identifying and monitoring benefits through to realisation. This should include detail on the maintenance of a benefits register.
- **Outline Contract management arrangements** - Detail the arrangements in place to manage the agreed contracts over their duration. This should include detail on both the service provider's and procuring authority's respective roles and responsibilities in relation to the potential Deal.
- **Post evaluation arrangements** - Provide high level detail that includes the expected timescales for post project evaluation. These arrangements should be included in the project schedule with the individuals responsible for their delivery.

It is expected all the above arrangements are formed further by OBC stage. If the project is to progress to FBC as the next business case stage (or combined OBC/FBC), the above arrangements should be completely finalised and agreed.

5.2 PROJECT SCHEDULE FOR DELIVERY

The key Project milestones table below is a summary of those key milestones aligned to the Project Schedule (Appendix F), which must be appended to this SOC.

Use Table 19 to set out the key project milestones including (but not limited to) dates for future business case submissions and a longstop date by which all monies need to be drawn by.

Note, the detail provided should fully align to the Project Schedule appended to this SOC.

5.3 PROJECT ORGANOGRAM

Insert a Project Organogram which includes the staff who will work full-time, part-time and fixed term on this project. The Project Sponsor and Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) should be appointed and identified in the organogram.

Insert a Project Organogram that includes all key stakeholders and their reporting lines. This should identify the staff that will be working full-time, part-time and fixed term on this project. Where a project is managed by an organisation(s) external to the WMCA, there should also be a dedicated WMCA SRO allocated and named within the business case.

5.4 PROJECT DELIVERY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Classify the roles and tasks to determine who is Responsible (R), Accountable (A), Consulted (C) and Informed (I).

Use Table 20 to classify the key role and tasks leading up to the next business case stage. Additional key tasks and roles can be added to the table as necessary.

Where there is a more complex matrix available to the project, this can be appended to the business case submission, but a statement should be included under Table 20 drawing attention to this. The contents of any appendix must still be summarised within table provided.

The definitions for the RACI matrix are:

Responsible - The individual(s) with responsibility for the task or deliverable is typically responsible for developing the deliverable or completing the activity. The persons responsible are typically working-level project team members, such as the project manager, business analyst, developers, or those who create marketing material and technical documentation, for example. These are the doers.

Accountable - The accountable party is typically the person or group responsible for ensuring the work is complete and suitable. This is usually someone with signature authority or the decision-maker. The accountable parties are typically the business owner, business sponsor, steering committee, key stakeholders, information security or governance bodies, or the manager of the key responsible party.

Consulted - Consulted individuals are those from whom feedback, and input should be solicited. Consulted parties could be legal, information security, compliance, and subject matter experts (SMEs) from other departments in the organisation that could be impacted. If you are working on new product development, this could essentially be the entire organisation.

Informed - Informed persons are those you simply want to keep in the loop. These individuals do not have to be consulted or be a part of the decision making. Keep this group on your cc list for awareness of topics, decisions, and progress. Also, invite this group as optional attendees for kick-off meetings and project demos.

5.5 USE OF SPECIALIST ADVISERS

Specify any external support/input required or sought from outside the Project team/organisation.

The use of specialist advisers is encouraged where the necessary capabilities and competencies are in short supply for large, significant, complex and novel projects.

The requirement for special advisers usually falls into four key categories in the project plan: Financial, Legal, Technical, and Project Management.

The business case should indicate how and when this advice will be used along with expected costs.

Special advisers should be used where an independent and impartial role is required to achieve the best results. This includes facilitating workshops.

5.6 RISK AND ISSUE MANAGEMENT

Detail how risk management will be implemented for the project, including the relevant roles and responsibilities that are assigned for managing this activity.

This should include detail regarding how project risks are identified, reviewed and reported, including responsibility for undertaking this activity.

The mechanism for escalating project risks should also be included within this section, including when issues materialise from known risks.

Risk is the possibility of something occurring that could adversely impact the success of the project. While an *Issue* is evidence that such a risk event is occurring or has already occurred.

Risk Management is, therefore, a structured approach to identifying, assessing, and controlling risks that emerge during the project lifecycle. Effective Risk Management is not a tick box exercise, it supports better decision-making, is a key tool in providing protection to the WMCA, and provides assurance to the Board, Audit Committee and Government.

All the information necessary to understand how Risk Management works at the WMCA can be found in the [WMCA Risk Management Framework \(WMCA Intranet\)](#).

This includes the scope of the framework, the roles and responsibilities, and the process we expect to be followed in identifying, assessing, managing, and escalating risks.

Within each project it is important that the roles and responsibilities for Risk Management are understood. In particular the project should consider responses to the following:

- Who owns each risk and is thereby responsible for the risk?
- Who are the action owners; individuals tasked with implementing activity aimed at bringing a risk under control?
- Who will review the Risk Register and how often? and importantly,
- What happens with risks that are outside of control? Do these risks escalate outside the programme environment, the Executive Director / Operational Risk Register?
- What happens if there is evidence of far wider risks? How is awareness escalated higher, including Executive Director / Operational Risk Register?

For any questions on the application of Risk Management please contact Peter Astrella, the WMCA Risk Manager, peter.astrella@wmca.org.uk

5.7 INSURANCE IMPLICATIONS

Are there any insurance implications/exposures arising from this project?

Where this is answered 'Yes' those implications should be clearly set out.

In any instance where you are considering activity that falls outside of that which could currently be considered normal activity for the WMCA, or where you are procuring new property or other assets, you must contact the WMCA Insurance Team.

If you have any doubts as to whether the activity you are proposing is covered by existing insurance or for additional insurance guidance and support, please contact the WMCA Insurance team: insuranceteam@wmca.org.uk

For external project leads external to the WMCA

Clarify whether insurance implications are fully covered under existing arrangements or whether WMCA has any insurable interest

5.8 PROJECT ASSURANCE

Set out the arrangements for project assurance, including the use of Cabinet Office Gateway Reviews. Other sources of assurance should be considered including technical, quality, security etc.

Specify the probable timescales for undertaking project implementation and post evaluation reviews.

Note: There is no requirement to add detail of the Single Assurance Framework (SAF) process specifically.

Detail the project assurance arrangements in place (including, but not limited to):

- Ongoing quality assurance, monitoring and reporting - meetings in place and frequency of progress reporting.
- Planned out of directorate health checks undertaken by the WMCA programme Assurance and Appraisal Team or other 2nd line of defence assurance teams - the plan to seek independent support and guidance outside of the programme team.
- External and internal audit/Government reviews - planned audits that may be a requirement of the funder/s.
- Post evaluation and implementation reviews.

5.9 CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

Detail the project contingency plans in the event of any delays or disruptions to anticipated services.

Provide details of the contingency plan(s) in the event of the non-delivery of the contracted services to the required level of performance and availability at some unspecified future point in time, this includes:

- Details of any tolerances built into the project, which if breached would trigger a change request (i.e. impact on cost, time, scope, benefits or quality of deliverables).
- Plans in place in the event of project or service failure.

5.10 LESSONS LEARNT

Detail how Lessons Learnt have been considered during the development of this proposal and plans for capturing and implementing improvements following Lessons Learnt activity during the project lifecycle.

Note: This activity should include the use of a Lessons Learnt Log and planned Lessons Learnt Workshops.

For Example:

- Project name: *West Midlands Station*.
- Directorate: *TfWM*.
- Title of the lesson learnt: *Lack of stakeholder engagement at concept stage*.
- The repository name and ID number (if available).

Also provide information on how lessons learnt will be captured throughout the project lifecycle to improve future project delivery. This will include the use of a Lessons Learnt Log also known as a PM or Daily Log and planned Lessons Learnt Workshops.

Best practice states that lessons learnt workshops should be conducted throughout the project and not just at closure. For example, at the end of a project Phase, Stage Gate, or Key Milestone, as well as at project closure.

For additional M&E guidance, support and templates please contact the M&E team: CorporateMonitoringEvaluation@wmca.org.uk. For **CRSTS/TCR** funded schemes, please contact Transport.Evaluation@tfwm.org.uk

5.11 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Set out a summary of the initial Monitoring Evaluation arrangements for the project and milestones to progress towards completion of the next business case stage i.e., OBC.

Include details for the following:

- An initial idea how performance will be measured including indicators and metrics.
- Consider how the project outcomes/impacts will be achieved. This information should be used to draft the logic model for the intervention.
- Previous Lessons Learnt and M&E learning that can inform this project/programme, as mentioned in Section 5.10 above.
- An initial estimate of budget & resources required for both monitoring and evaluation. (Note, this should align to the Financial Case. Further guidance is also available in The Magenta Book).

Schemes funded by the WMCA are required to have a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan as part of business case development. The aim is to embed evaluation at scheme design stage to ensure clarity from the outset about how we expect interventions to work to achieve their objectives, and how we intended to measure outcomes and impacts that stem from delivered schemes.

Monitoring & Evaluation Analysts within the Performance Team will assist in the development and completion of the M&E template and logic model required for all SAF projects and programmes.

Logic Models

A logic model is a visual representation that outlines the relationships between a project's resources, activities, and intended effects. It is a key tool for ensuring transparency, strategic alignment, and enabling effective performance monitoring and evaluation.

Whilst a completed logic model is not required upon submission of a SOC, it will be required on submission of a Full Business Case, Business Justification Case, Programme Business Case or Project Case.

Further steer is set out on the [Performance Team Intranet Page \(WMCA Intranet\)](#).

For additional M&E guidance, support and templates please contact the M&E team: CorporateMonitoringEvaluation@wmca.org.uk. For **CRSTS/TCR** funded schemes, please contact Transport.Evaluation@tfwm.org.uk

6 - MANDATORY APPENDICES

This section will provide guidance on each of the mandatory appendices required at SOC stage. There is a checklist for these appendices in Table 3 of the business case template.

6.1 HEALTH AND EQUITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HEIA)

This appendix may include the full outturn/report which considers the programme's HEIA. This is what underpins the summary provided in section 1.4 of the business case.

6.2 RISK REGISTER AND ISSUE LOG

Identifying, mitigating, and managing risks and issues is crucial to the successful delivery of your project, since risks coming to fruition are most likely to result in the project not delivering its intended outcomes and benefits within the anticipated timescales and spend.

A standard [WMCA Risk Register template \(WMCA Intranet\)](#) is available for use.

It includes concise but comprehensive guidance on how to complete the register.

Note that where a previous or existing Risk Register template is being used, you must ensure the headings within the WMCA Risk Register are included as a minimum standard.

The key requirements of a WMCA Risk Register are as follows:

Column	Description
Risk ID	Enter Reference Number e.g., Proj. X 001, etc
Date Risk Raised	Date risk was first raised to the Risk Register
Raised by	This is the project owner that raised the risk. This can be any member of the team but would usually be Senior or Assistant Delivery Managers, project co-ordinators, performance managers
Risk Owner	The risk owner is usually the Head of Service, Sponsor or Directors
Category	Select a Risk category from the dropdown list; this should be linked to the cause and should, in most instances, reflect where or how the risk arose.
Risk Title	Enter a brief, easily understood, risk title
Cause	Describe the root cause of the threat to the achievement of WMCA / project objectives, deliverables, etc.
Effect	Describe the possible consequences of the risk materialising. List the main impacts this risk could have, thinking about the effects not just on the department but also on WMCA and any other stakeholders (e.g., Internal and external partners).

Controls and Measures already in place	Enter all the controls or measures the project already has in place, or which have been put in place specifically for this risk. This should include any ongoing activity.
Likelihood	Likelihood reflects the probability of the risk happening, taking into consideration the controls and measures already in place and without any further control activity taking place.
Impact	Reflects the effect the risk might have once existing controls have been considered and assuming no further control activity is undertaken.
Score	The total risk score based on the Impact x Likelihood assessment.
Further Actions required to Mitigate Risk	Where the risk score is higher than desired, enter all further actions required to bring the risk down to achieve its target
Action Owner	Who is responsible for the further action. This could be a project team member.
Action Due Date	When the action is due
Risk Escalation	This cell should only be used to show that a risk has been passed from Project to programme, to Directorate, or from Directorate to SRR. If there is a need for the risk to be raised with a different body, committee, etc, as a control activity, then that should be captured under "Further actions required...".
Date Risk escalated	Date the escalation took place.

6.3 INDICATIVE NPSV/BCR/RPSC/VFM CALCULATIONS

To allow the ratification of calculations within the Economic dimension of the business case, authors should include details of all economic calculations (in full form) through the appendix. This is typically in the form of a workbook, which provides details of Net Present Social Value (NPSV) calculations, the assumptions and rationale for benefit quantification (with sources/relevant case study detail), discounting techniques and appraisal periods; all which are used to inform Benefits Cost Ratio (BCR) calculations when factored alongside cost detail. RPSC calculations are valuable as a summary metric because it is helpful to compare different options on the basis of how effectively they optimise social value *relative* to their costs to the public sector. RPSC requires an understanding of costs not borne by the public sector to deliver a particular option. These are then used alongside Present Value Costs (to the public sector) to calculate RPSC.

6.4 LEGAL APPENDIX

The Legal Appendix is a mandatory document that must be prepared alongside every business case submission.

It contains the full grant funding agreement details, including schedules for funded activities, agreed outputs, payment arrangements, performance measures, monitoring and reporting requirements, and data protection obligations.

The appendix also sets out the operational plan and contact details for key project leads to ensure accountability and compliance. A critical component is the Subsidy Control Assessment, which includes an initial and detailed review under the Subsidy Control Act 2022, Minimal Financial Assistance declarations, and confirmation that the award meets legal requirements.

6.5 WRITTEN CONFIRMATION(S) OF CONFIRMED FUNDING

Attach any official confirmation/s received to confirm funding award, this may include funding award letters.

6.6 PROJECT SCHEDULE

A project schedule is a timetable that organises tasks, milestones, and due dates in an ideal sequence so that a project can be completed on time.

A project schedule is created during the planning phase and includes the following:

- Deliverables
- Tasks
- Task start and end dates
- Task dependencies

Then, during the delivery phase, the schedule baseline is compared against the actual project progress.

6.7 STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

A stakeholder and communications strategy documents involvement and influence of a project's stakeholders. It also outlines how the project plans to communicate with stakeholders.

Stakeholders can either be individuals from within your team or external parties that are impacted by your work.

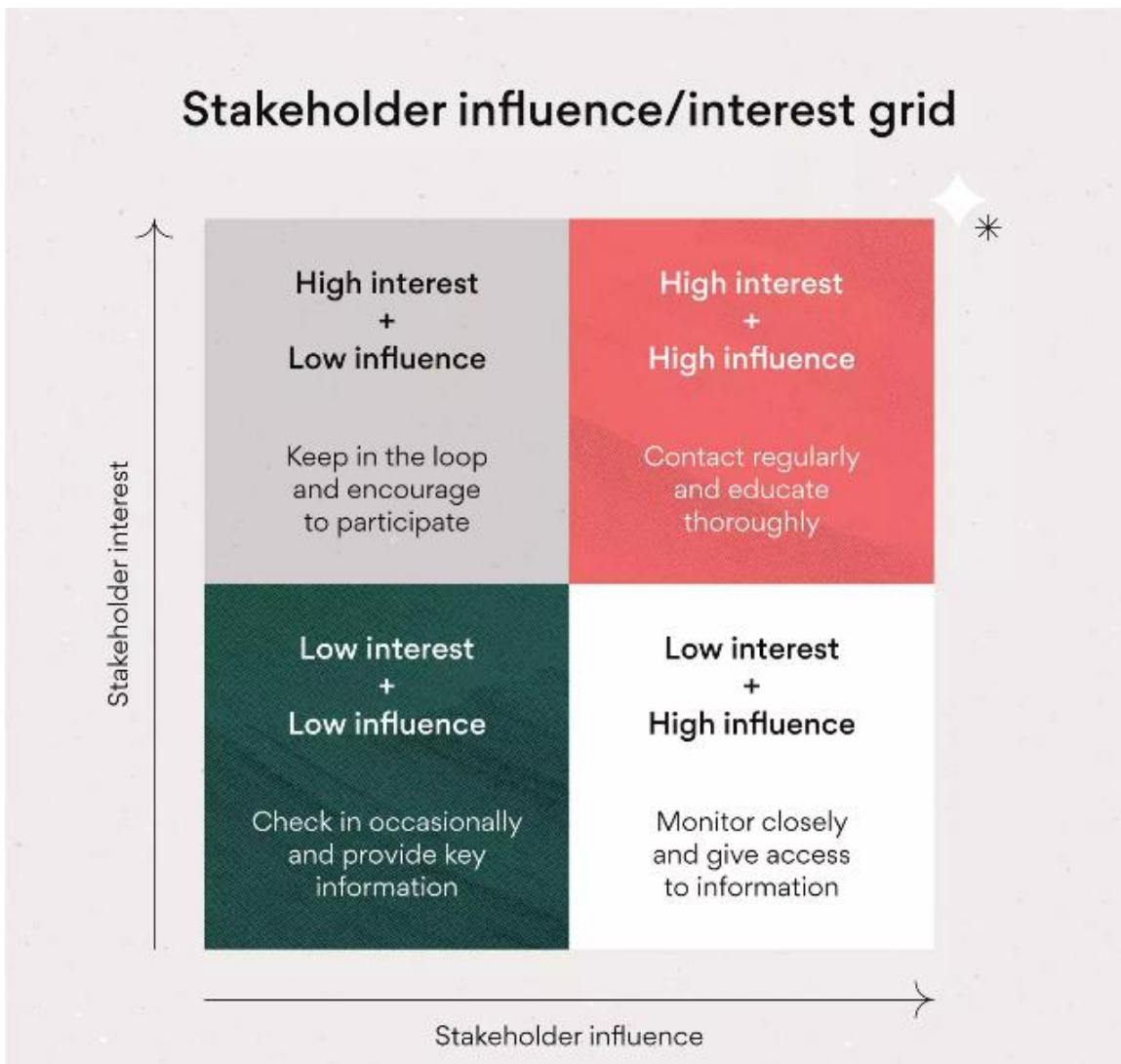
- Internal stakeholders may include project/programme managers, operations teams, department heads, and board members.
- External stakeholders may include clients, customers, investors, suppliers, company partners, or shareholders.
-

At a minimum, the strategy should include:

- **Stakeholder name:** Identify who your stakeholder is.

- **Interest level:** Rank the stakeholder’s interest level (High, Medium or Low), a stakeholder matrix may be useful to show this
- **Influence level:** Rank the stakeholder’s level of influence (High, Medium or Low), a stakeholder matrix may be useful to show this
- **Communication frequency:** Identify how often you’ll communicate with this stakeholder.
- **Communication channel approach:** Identify what communication tool you’ll use to communicate with this stakeholder.
- **Information type:** Identify the type of information you’ll deliver to this stakeholder when communicating.

Example of Stakeholder Influence-Interest Matrix:



6.8 PROJECT DELIVERY PLAN ON A PAGE (POAP)

Where the project is a component of the WMCA Investment programme, a shortform summary of the essential project information is provided on a single page. This enables clear and succinct communication of goals, financial, scheduling, management and progress information.

6.9 TRANSPORT ADDITIONAL APPENDIX

This appendix provides further technical details for transport specific programmes and projects. Its purpose is to provide additional context and evidence, through the completion of a 'checklist' matrix. It is aligned to the Transport Analysis Group (TAG) guidance for developing business cases across the five-case model.

[A copy of the WMCA Transport Additional Appendix \(WMCA Website\) can be found here.](#)

6.10 WHOLE LIFE CARBON ASSESSMENT (WLCA)

The Whole Life Carbon Assessment is a mandatory appendix required for business case submissions for **Transport Schemes with total costs of £10m or over**.

Its purpose is to demonstrate how the proposed project contributes to the WMCA's statutory commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2041 and to ensure that carbon impacts are considered, quantified, and mitigated from the earliest stage of project development.

The WLCA must assess the full lifecycle carbon implications of the project, covering:

- **Embodied carbon** - Materials, transport, construction activities.
- **Operational carbon** - In-use energy consumption and transport impacts.
- **End-of-life carbon** - Disposal, deconstruction, waste.
- **Carbon benefits** - Sequestration, modal shift, avoided emissions.

The assessment should also include:

- A **Carbon Compatibility Review**, evaluating how the project supports decarbonisation across transport, buildings, energy use, and the natural environment.
- Where quantified data is unavailable at early stages, a **qualitative assessment** should be provided, alongside a clear plan for when full quantification will be completed.
- A **Carbon Management and Mitigation Plan**, setting out proposed low-carbon design, procurement, construction, and operational measures, with defined responsibilities and implementation stages.
- A **Whole Life Carbon Quantification table**, using estimates where necessary, and detailing methodology and key assumptions.

A copy of the WMCA Whole Life Carbon Assessment Mandatory Appendix (WMCA Website) can be found here.

7 - FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

7.1 PUBLIC

[Business Case Guidance for projects and programmes \(Gov.uk\)](#) - HM Treasury guidance on how to develop business cases for projects and programmes.

[The Green Book \(Gov.uk\)](#) - HM Treasury guidance on appraisal.

[The Teal Book \(Gov.uk – Government Project Delivery\)](#) – Guidance to enable the direction and management of portfolios, programmes and projects.

[Magenta Book \(Gov.uk\)](#) - HM Treasury guidance on what to consider when designing an evaluation.

[The Orange Book \(Gov.uk\)](#) – UK Government guidance on principles and concepts, for the management of risk.

[Managing Public Money \(Gov.uk\)](#) - This publication offers guidance on how to handle public funds.

[The AQuA Book \(Gov.uk\)](#) - Guidance for producing quality analysis for Government.

7.2 WMCA ONLY

The links below are accessed via WMCA intranet only.

[Governance Services](#) - Information on meetings and boards, Modern.Gov and cover/board reports.

[Health and Equity Impact Assessment](#) - Practical tools to promote inclusion and reduce health and wider inequalities.

[Performance Management](#) - Monitoring & Evaluation and Lessons Learnt guidance, facilitation and templates.

[Risk Management](#) - Risk register template and WMCA Strategic Risk Framework.

