

Grant Thornton High Level Review of One Front Door Process

Risk/Issue	Recommendation	Proposed Response/Action
<p>Formal ratification from the LEP Board or Investment Board at the proposal development stage is not undertaken. Time may be wasted by the developer and LEP in reviewing the OBC for a scheme that does not meet basic requirements.</p>	<p>The LEP should consider if earlier formal ratification prior to the OBC process would be beneficial.</p>	<p>The OBC is intended to provide a high level overview of the project in terms of strategic fit with funding stream requirements and wider LEP objectives, cost and delivery aspects. It is considered that the resource requirement of producing an OBC is appropriate as the initial stage of proposal ratification. Notwithstanding this prospective promoters can seek early advice around eligibility, state aid etc in advance of submitting an OBC for a new scheme via the LEP Board, Investment Board or other routes.</p>
<p>Current arrangements could result in a conflict of interest not being identified and as a result not being effectively managed.</p>	<p>Procedures should be introduced to ensure potential conflicts of interest are identified and managed at every stage of the process, including the promoter, business representatives, the Unitary Authorities and at every Board and Committee meeting.</p>	<p>A conflicts of interest policy has been prepared to formalise arrangements for the LEP Board and Investment Board. In addition the interests of business members are formally declared and published as currently happens for the Local Transport Body Board members.</p>
<p>A lack of decision making principles and criteria, based on strong evidence and transparent measures makes it more difficult for the LEP to demonstrate it has applied a consistent and equitable approach for the selection of new schemes.</p>	<p>The LEP should consider if the adoption of decision making principles and criteria, based on strong evidence and transparent measures would be beneficial for new schemes at the OBC and at the FBC stage.</p>	<p>The way in which new schemes are prioritised in an evidence-based way needs to be strengthened and this made more transparent, including details of any criteria for specific funds. Through DfT funding, Local Partnerships and Grant Thornton are supporting this work.</p>

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<p>It has not been agreed at what stages and circumstances in the process feedback would be given to the promoter and if and when the promoter has a right to reply.</p>	<p>It should be agreed at what stages in the process feedback would be given to the promoter and if and when the promoter has a right to reply.</p>	<p>A more timely and formalised approach to feedback has been developed to enable promoters to understand the decisions or recommendations made about their schemes by the Investment Board, LEP Board and SLB. This includes issue of formal decision notices after the Investment Board and SLB meeting.</p>
<p>The Joint Scrutiny Committee should consider how they can add most value to the process and ensure arrangements are configured to enable this.</p>	<p>The role and function of the Joint Scrutiny Committee should be clarified to ensure they are effective and are able to add value to the process.</p>	<p>A report was taken to the Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting on 8 December seeking their views about how they can be best involved in adding value to the process. It was agreed that Joint Scrutiny Committee meetings would be aligned to fall soon before the SLB in order that they can scrutinise reports and make recommendations to the SLB.</p>
<p>The monitoring and reporting of progress on the release of funds has not been agreed.</p>	<p>The format and requirement for reporting progress on the release of funds should be agreed.</p>	<p>The accountable body has drawn up offer letters. This was aligned with work to clarify decision making roles, tolerances etc at the various Boards. Through DfT funding, Local Partnerships and Grant Thornton supported this work.</p>
<p>The Investment Board only has delegated authority from the Strategic Leaders Board for change in cost requests, if funds are available and the costs are below 20% of the total cost and below a maximum of £2m. It may be beneficial for delegated authority to be given for other types of change requests.</p>	<p>The Strategic Leaders Board should consider if the Investment Board should have additional delegated authority to review and agree other types of change requests.</p>	<p>Work has been undertaken to clarify decision making roles, tolerances and change management processes for the various Boards. Through DfT funding, Local Partnerships and Grant Thornton supported this work. Terms of Reference of each of the Boards have been drawn up and available on the LEP website. A robust change management process is now in place.</p>