



Regeneration Programme Management Arrangements

Strategic Director: Jan Gamon, Director of Place and Recovery
Service Manager: Natalie Fortt, Regeneration Programme Manager
Lead Officer: Natalie Fortt, Regeneration Programme Manager
Contact Details: Natalie.fortt@southsomerset.gov.uk

Purpose of the Report

Audit committee is requested to review current arrangements for the management of SSDC's regeneration programme for the purpose of assurance that adequate governance arrangements are in place and/or to suggest areas for improvement.

Public Interest

SSDC has an ongoing programme of regeneration across a number of sites in South Somerset. Large sums of money are allocated to these projects and Audit Committee will wish to be assured that decisions regarding scope, timings and costs are made in accordance with agreed procedures.

Recommendations

Audit Committee is requested to:

1. endorse current governance arrangements, noting plans for further strengthening of these by October 2022
2. Consider and comment on the arrangements and propose any additional amendments

Background

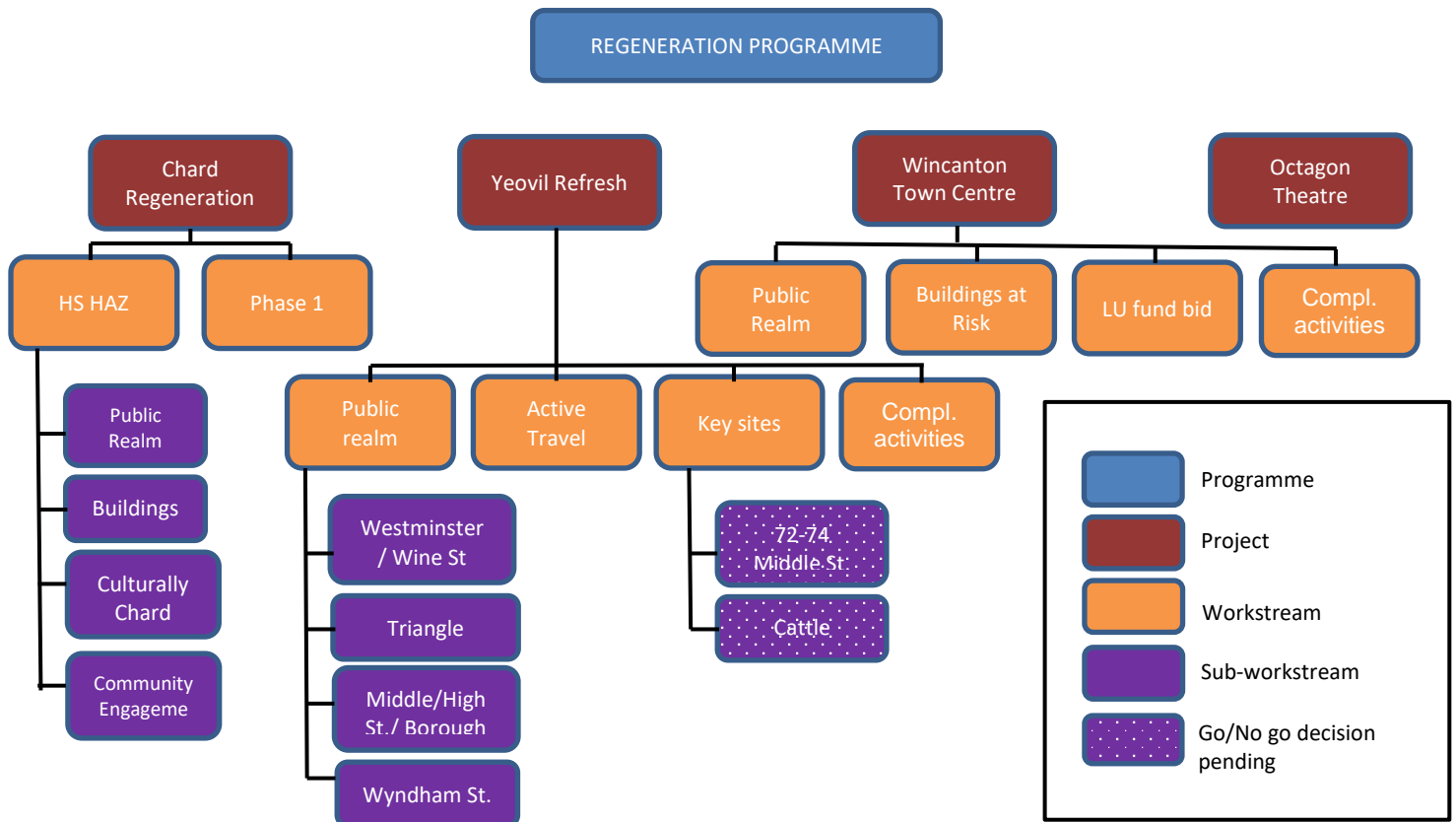
The regeneration project team manages a range of regeneration projects on behalf of the council. Over the last few months, there have been changes to the way in which we manage this programme and projects in order to improve governance and audit outcomes. We believe that our approach has been strengthened as a result; in addition, we have identified further opportunities for improvement and these are identified in para 5.

Report Detail

1. The scope of the current Regeneration Programme is shown below. We take a Programme, Project and Workstream approach to project management. Chart 1

shows the projects and workstreams which currently fall within the overarching programme.

Chart 1: Regeneration Programme Structure



- Jan Gamon is the Senior Responsible Officer for the Octagon Theatre and Yeovil key sites projects and is supported by Peter Paddon in his role as Acting Director as SRO for the Chard, Wincanton and Yeovil (excluding Key sites) projects. Natalie Fortt is the Programme Manager and has overall responsibility for the allocation of resource across the projects, for monitoring our financial position and for supporting the Project Managers. The Project Manager for Chard Phase 1 and the Octagon Theatre is Dan Bennett; for the Yeovil Refresh it is Ian Timms and, for Wincanton Pam Williams. The role of Project Manager for the Chard HS HAZ project is currently vacant following the departure of Anna Matthews but is being actively recruited to.

Each of the Project Managers brings technical expertise to their role; however, none of them is able to commit 100% of their working time to these projects and, for that reason, each project is supported by external project management capacity.

3. Governance Arrangements:

- a. Each of the Regeneration Projects is supported by an advisory Project Board, the membership of which include members, senior officers and external stakeholders, as appropriate. The Terms of Reference for the Yeovil Board is appended at Appendix A; the remaining Boards operate under equivalent ToR. The Project Board reaches decisions by consensus and, where no consensus is achieved, the decision is referred to the Chief Executive and Leader for a decision. Approval for spend within approved budget is delegated to the Director of Place and Recovery.
- b. The Project Boards report into a Strategic Development Board. The Strategic Development Board (SDB) has been granted executive powers by full council and ensures consistency across all of the regeneration projects. The role of the SDB is to provide strategic oversight of the financial capital and revenue implications from these projects. It also routinely assesses strategic risks to SSDC from these activities and ensures appropriate responses are in place. The SDB also tracks progress against project timetables and seeks to understand any deviations from timetable. The full Terms of Reference are appended at Appendix B. It should be noted that the SDB is only authorised to make decisions within agreed scope or budget. If the scope changes, or additional budget is sought, this must be referred to District Executive and Full Council for a decision
- c. Although decision-making is determined to some extent within the current Terms of Reference, this is an area we plan to review over the next six months, to make explicit the limitations for decision-making at each level of the programme and where decisions must be escalated for consideration.

4. Meeting arrangements:

- a. Board meetings take place approximately quarterly, but additional meetings can be requested at key stages of a project. Meetings of the project team happen more frequently; for example, the Octagon project team, comprising the internal client, SRO, programme manager, project manager (internal), project management (external), architects and design team currently take place on a weekly basis. There will, of course, be numerous additional on site visits during construction.
- b. Regeneration projects are progressed using a staged approach, to represent the key stages: initiation stage, Stages 1, 2, 3 etc. and closing stage. These stages will usually coincide with the timetable of key decisions being made. At the end of each stage, we review whether the project is within agreed tolerances for time, cost and scope. Although this process is largely followed already, there is scope to increase the rigour of our approach, with standard documentation being available to support the end of each stage and the project plan being updated to ensure that the business case is still evidenced.

5. Further improvements underway:

- a. To date, regeneration projects have worked with approved budgets and agreed scope. Where external funding has been available, this is often accompanied by quality criteria which must be met in order for the funding to be forthcoming. We now propose to work with a more rigorous approach to agreeing tolerances for each regeneration project and workstream in respect of cost, time, scope and quality. The benefit of this approach is that any deviation from agreed tolerances will trigger the need for a member decision at SDB level. Decisions within agreed tolerances may be made at Project Board level.
- b. This, in turn, will inform a much more detailed matrix outlining where decisions may be made by an officer or SRO, where these must be made by the Project Board chair, the Board itself, or escalated to the Leader and CEO. In addition to recording where officers must refer decisions to members, it will also identify where the responsibility for some activities rests with officers and not members
- c. We plan to introduce a staged approach to project management which will recognise the learning from the Chard lessons learned report in ensuring that the end of each stage is accompanied by a consideration of whether the business case is still justified and records key decisions about changes to tolerances

These proposed improvements will be discussed at the Project Boards during May/June 2022 before being taken to SDB on 1st July 2022.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

Council Plan Implications

The regeneration programme is a cornerstone of the council's approach to driving improvements to our places, encompassing key infrastructure, keeping our towns vibrant and supporting the development of strong communities: [Council Plan | South Somerset District Council](#)

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

Regeneration is not specifically aimed at addressing our ambitions to be carbon neutral by 2030, but we ensure that the buildings are environmentally sustainable and incorporate energy efficient design.



Equality and Diversity Implications

<i>An Equality Impact Relevance Check Form has been completed in respect of the Proposal?</i>	<i>Yes / No</i>
<i>The Impact Relevance Check indicated that a full EIA was required?</i>	<i>Yes / No</i>
<i>If an EIA was not required please attach the Impact Relevance Check Form as an Appendix to this report and provide a brief summary of its findings in the comments box below. Attached as Appendix C.</i>	
<i>If an EIA was required please attach the completed EIA form as an Appendix to this report and provide a brief summary of the result of your Equality Impact Assessment in the comment box below.</i>	
Additional Comments	

Background Papers

Please bear in mind that, for executive decisions, all background papers listed here must be available for public inspection and posted on the SSDC website. Do not list working files.

- Appendix A: Project Board Terms of Reference
 - Appendix B: Strategic Development Board Terms of Reference
-