



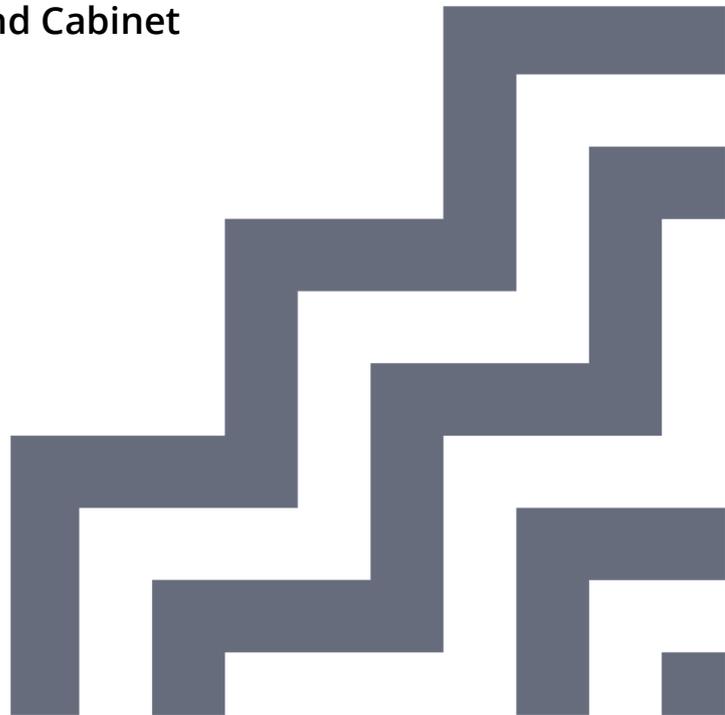
**DEPARTMENT OF THE
PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET**
TE TARI O TE PIRIMIA ME TE KOMITI MATUA

Guidance for planning and implementing complex programmes

Part 2: For programme directors,
managers, and central agencies

Prepared by the Implementation Unit,
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

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Background to this guidance

This guidance focuses on the key things programme directors or managers need to do to give effect to the decisions of senior leaders implementing complex programmes.

What is this guidance?

The Implementation Unit supports the public service to strengthen implementation of Government's key priorities. The Unit has written this guidance based on the lessons and best practices it has identified through its work with agencies responsible for delivering complex programmes, drawing on agencies' experience and expertise.

This guidance is in **two parts**. Both parts can be read together and support different levels of responsibility. The guidance is not exhaustive, nor is it prescriptive. There are many programme management methodologies that can be used to deliver programmes. This guidance does not replace any of those, nor does it replace guidance available from Te Tai Ōhanga – the Treasury and Te Kawa Mataaho – Public Service Commission.

Part one is a reminder for senior leaders about the most important decisions to be made at the beginning of a programme's implementation and as the programme progresses. It outlines the decisions senior leaders should make, identifies possible options, and provides some of the questions that should guide each decision.

Part two (this document) supports programme directors and managers to give effect to the decisions senior leaders make.

Who is this guidance for?

- *Senior leaders* who are responsible for programme implementation.
- *Programme directors* and *managers* who manage programme implementation.
- *Central agencies*, who may find this guidance a useful reference for working with agencies who are implementing complex programmes.

When should this guidance be used?

This guidance is best used as programme implementation is being established but can also be used as a checklist as implementation progresses.

What other resources are available?

A range of guidance and resources outside of this guide are available to support officials preparing to implement new programmes. These include the [System Design Toolkit](#), developed by Te Kawa Mataaho – Public Service Commission, and the [Better Business Cases™](#) guidance and [Gateway guidance](#) developed by Te Tai Ōhanga – the Treasury. Other resources are linked where relevant.

In addition, officials preparing to implement new, complex programmes may need to:

- refer to relevant Cabinet Office circulars, such as [CO \(19\) 6](#) (Investment Management and Asset Performance in the State Services) and [CO \(18\) 2](#) (Proposals with Financial Implications and Financial Authorities)
- consult with relevant system leaders, such as Te Waihanga (New Zealand Infrastructure Commission), New Zealand Government Procurement and Property, and the Government Chief Digital Office.

Using this guidance

This document is a companion guide to **Part one**. It provides further detail and advice to help programme directors and managers give effect to senior leaders' decisions.

A simplified approach to programme management

Implementing a complex programme is a dynamic process and there are many different versions of the number and type of phases implementation can take.

To illustrate decisions at different points in the life of a programme, this guidance uses a simplified view of a programme's phases:



In this view, each phase is connected to the others, and elements of each phase occur concurrently or in some cases in a cycle. For example, planning influences how delivery is managed, and ongoing delivery influences what further planning is needed.

The core focus of this guidance is decisions at the **planning** stage, where decisions have the widest repercussions through the life of the programme.

The complexity of the programme management methodology selected is not restricted by the approach taken in this guidance. A programme director would be expected to operate a more comprehensive and sophisticated set of programme disciplines than the simplified version shown in this guidance.

Navigating this document

Section 1: Giving effect to senior leaders' decisions

This section is organised by the key decisions and questions for senior leaders outlined in **Part one**. Additional considerations are provided for each key question to assist programme directors and managers to help senior leaders to make informed decisions. Links to further resources are provided.

Section 2: A checklist for each stage of a programme

This one-page checklist helps programme directors and managers to ensure key elements are in place at each phase of a programme.

Section 3: Illustrative scenarios

Two scenarios are provided to illustrate the decisions that can be taken at each phase and how they influence other the other decisions.

More detailed aspects of guidance are provided in the Appendix.

Section 1

Giving effect to senior leaders' decisions

Planning how the programme will be implemented

1 Decide the level of integration required for agencies to implement the programme

When a complex programme is set up, it may be clear which agencies are responsible for implementation, but it may not be clear how those agencies will work together.

The level of integration between agencies should be decided early during planning as it will inform many other decisions about how the programme is managed. The level of integration may need to evolve if the programme's context or objectives change.

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
What level of coordination will deliver the best results for programme implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are agencies delivering common outcomes? • Do agencies share common challenges? • Do agencies share common stakeholders or end users? • Do potential coordination benefits outweigh the costs?
Are the third-party delivery partners or end users sufficiently different across agencies to minimise the transaction costs for stakeholders to engage with several agencies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many agencies will stakeholders interact with? • Should agencies align processes or other administrative requirements for third-parties? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ eg, applications, contracting, reporting • Does the programme need a programme-wide 'front door' for third parties or end users?
What is the existing level of coordination across the agencies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have agencies within the programme worked together on any other similar initiatives? If so, does the current programme cover the same teams or directorates?
What are the barriers to integration and can agencies manage barriers effectively? Will each agency face the same barriers to delivery or compete for the same resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are agencies likely to compete or overlap in the purchase, hire, or use of any resources? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ eg, a workforce, project supplies, buildings • Are any specific structures needed to manage barriers, such as a cross-agency working group?

Further resources to support the work

- The [System Design Toolkit](#) outlines a spectrum of integration at each level of delivery from the system-level to the frontline
- [Managing for Shared Outcomes](#) guidance provides a decision-making framework to identify where to coordinate (pp. 8-9) (*please note: parts of this guidance are out of date*)

2 Decide how agencies will manage implementation of the programme, and the role each agency will play

The number of agencies, stakeholders, and objectives in complex programmes create a range of implementation risks. Programme management functions can help senior leaders manage implementation risks and support coordination between agencies.

Senior leaders can use existing agency or cross-agency arrangements to undertake programme management functions or may set up new, bespoke arrangements for the programme. Regardless of the arrangements, it is important that agencies agree on and record their respective roles and responsibilities in the planning phase.

Decisions on the level of integration between agencies inform decisions about programme arrangements – and vice versa. As an example, if closer integration is needed, the programme may need a more expansive set of centralised functions to support coordination. If less integration is needed, central programme arrangements may not be necessary.

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
<p>What programme management functions are needed to support senior leaders to lead implementation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What programme management functions are needed to support the level of integration and other programme needs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>See further guidance in the Appendix</i> • Do agencies have any common needs or activities that would benefit from centralisation as programme functions? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ eg, procurement, contracting, training • Which functions are must-haves vs. nice-to-haves? • What functions can be provided within programme resources? • What capabilities are needed to undertake functions?
<p>Are there any existing arrangements in place that could undertake these functions for the programme, or are new arrangements needed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the programme structure? What is each part of the programme structure responsible for? • Which part of the programme structure will undertake programme functions? How will it be staffed? • Can key people and programme bodies at each level of the programme structure dedicate enough time to fulfil their role?
<p>If there is a system leader, what degree of input should they have into other agencies' approach and design?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a system leader for any aspect(s) of the programme? What role do they play? • To what extent and on what aspects of implementation should other agencies take the system leader's views into account?

Products to consider creating

- A programme structure including terms of reference for each programme body that outline their respective scopes and functions

Further resources to support the work

- An illustrative list of programme functions is provided in the Appendix

3 Decide the programme's stages and objectives and how agencies will measure progress at each stage

Complex programmes often have longer timeframes, more challenging objectives, and higher levels of scrutiny from Ministers and the public. Clear objectives, programme plans, and measures of progress are essential to show how agencies plan to achieve the objectives of the programme; to identify and manage inter-dependencies and risks across agencies, and to help officials report on progress.

Complex programmes should include 'offramps' along the critical path to show how the programme's objectives will be achieved on time if key milestones are not met, and contingency planning should be incorporated into programme management disciplines.

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
How coherent does the implementation plan need to be across agencies to support successful implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will the programme achieve its objectives, and what will each agency do? Do objectives overlap with other initiatives or programmes?• What dependencies exist between agencies?• What should programme-level plans capture? What can agencies plan for independently?
How will the success of the programme be defined? How aligned to the definition of success does each agency need to be?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the programme's overall objectives, main stages, timings, and milestones at each stage?• What are the measures of progress for each initiative, each agency, and the programme as a whole?• What deliverables will each agency contribute to the programme's measures of progress?• What is the expected trajectory of progress for key measures?
How will risks and issues be dealt with across the programme? If milestones are missed, are there escalation paths, offramps or back-up plans? Should these be agency-specific, or programme-wide?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the programme's critical path?• How will agencies ensure milestones are met?• If milestones aren't met, what is the escalation path?• What milestones are least likely to be met? What contingency plans do agencies need?

Products to consider creating

- A programme plan including stages, milestones, and a critical path
- A risk register across agencies

Further resources to support the work

- The [Better Business Cases™](#) guidance provides advice on planning key elements of a programme, including procurement and programme management

4 Decide what assurance mechanisms to put in place within each agency and across the programme

Assurance is an independent and objective assessment that provides credible information to support decision-making. External risk assurance and periodic reviews should be designed into a programme plan that clearly identifies each level of assurance.

The right mix of levels will depend on the complexity, scale, size of the investment, and longevity of the programme, but could include:

- a first level of assurance within the programme
- a second level drawing on the lead agencies' wider assurance mechanisms
- potentially a third independent level such as an Independent Quality Assurance (IQA) or Gateway process.

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
How will agencies know in a timely manner if the programme starts to falter? Are programme-wide and/or agency-specific mechanisms embedded in programme plans and governance to identify when action is needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What assurance mechanisms does each agency have in place already? At which frequency do they operate?• Are any existing arrangements suitable for providing assurance over an agency's work, or the programme as a whole, or are new arrangements needed?
What levels and mechanisms of internal and external programme assurance will be established? What will their schedule be throughout the life of the programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What mechanisms are needed within each agency, and across the programme?• What level of risk does the programme carry, and what level of external assurance does it justify?• At what stages or milestones are assurance mechanisms most needed?

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
How will changes in the programme's context or environment – at an agency level and a programme level – be identified as the programme is being implemented, and how frequently will this occur?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will be responsible for monitoring the programme's operating context and broader implementation environment? • To which programme bodies will changes be reported? At what points will report backs occur? • How will external stakeholders assist in identifying changes to the programme's context?

Further resources to support the work

- The [Gateway guidance](#) developed by Te Tai Ōhanga – the Treasury provides advice on establishing a Gateway review

5 Decide an approach to defining, collecting, and reporting progress data on key programme measures within the programme governance arrangements and to Ministers

Effective progress reporting can show Ministers and senior leaders what the programme is achieving and can help identify issues before they threaten programme objectives.

It is harder to collate and report progress data in multi-agency programmes: agencies must agree what to report at the programme-level, align data definitions and collection timings, and create a process for collating reporting across agencies.

Definitions and collection plans – for qualitative and quantitative data – should be agreed at the planning stage to inform activities at the establishment stage, such as contracting. Plans should identify who will report on what, including who will prepare programme-wide reports.

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
Are there key terms or definitions that all agencies will use to implement the programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do agencies share the same measures of progress or use common terms? If so, should they share definitions? If not, should agencies align definitions? • Who will define terms and measures?
What is the most effective form of programme-level reporting to Ministers? How will this operate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should Ministers receive, and how often? • Who will be responsible for preparing reports?

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
Should agencies report individually, collectively, or both? Who is responsible for collecting and reporting progress data across the programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do any agencies already collect data? Does their approach suit the whole programme? • Who will collect, combine, and report progress data across the programme? How frequently will progress data be collected and reported?
What should be reported inside and outside the programme, including to the public?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which stakeholders within and outside the programme should receive progress reports? What formats are most suitable for each stakeholder? • How frequently should each stakeholder receive progress reports? Will this change over the life of the programme? • What should be reported to the public?

Products to consider creating

- Reporting framework and templates for each audience
- Programme-wide definitions for key terminology, data, and progress measures
- A public-facing website for reporting on progress

Further resources to support the work

- [Module 5 of the Performance Measurement](#) guidance covers the development of measures and indicators (*please note: parts of this guidance are out of date*)

6 Decide which arrangements are needed to ensure the right stakeholders are engaged at each level, at the right times

Careful planning is needed to engage the right stakeholders, at the right levels, at the right times, in the right ways – particularly when delivery depends upon third parties.

It is reasonable for external stakeholders to expect to interact with a multi-agency programme in a consistent way regardless of which agency they are dealing with. Creating a programme-wide approach to stakeholder engagement requires upfront work to align processes across agencies but can save significant additional work later in the programme for agencies and stakeholders alike.

Agencies can establish a coordinated approach to stakeholders by establishing a central programme function or nominating a lead agency to serve as ‘front of house’. This can minimise the need for stakeholders to navigate different application, contracting, and reporting processes.

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
Have key stakeholder groups (including iwi-Māori and end users) been identified? What is the programme-level engagement plan? How will end users be engaged with, and by whom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will agencies rely on external delivery partners? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ eg, NGOs, suppliers, private sector providers • Who are the end users, and what input should provide? • How will the programme engage with iwi-Māori? • At what points will the programme need stakeholder input? • How will agencies reach and engage stakeholder groups? • What groundwork is required prior to engaging stakeholders?
To what extent should agencies coordinate when engaging iwi Māori, stakeholders, and/or end users?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do agencies share the same stakeholders? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ eg, end users, the workforce, funding recipients, delivery partners • Will any stakeholders need to interact with multiple agencies? Does the programme need a single portal? • Will agencies run parallel processes? If so, should any processes be centralised across the programme? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ eg, funding applications, contracting, consultation
Should any stakeholders provide formal input to senior leaders or agencies as part of the programme arrangements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it suitable to seek input from sectoral or industry groups? • At what levels should stakeholders provide input? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ eg, at the Ministerial level? Chief Executive level? Tier 2 level? Working levels?

Products to consider creating

- Stakeholder maps
- Stakeholder engagement plans

7 Decide whether the programme's scope or arrangements will be reconsidered at any points in the life of the programme

Aspects of complex programmes can change over time. Changes can arise because:

- complex programmes are delivered over multiple years, during which time the circumstances in which they were established can change
- the most suitable mix of programme functions may evolve as the programme moves through different phases of implementation.

Decision points and delegations for deciding whether to continue or adjust the scope of a programme may be defined when a programme is initiated. If not, senior leaders should consider whether plans should include decision points at key moments and at what level each decision should be made.

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
<p>What assumptions underpin the viability or value of the programme? Are assumptions likely to change during delivery, or are there other circumstances where parts of the programme would pause or change substantially?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the programme’s creation motivated by specific underlying conditions or assumptions? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ eg, a current or future economic indicator or level of demand for a service • If the conditions or assumptions underlying the programme’s creation changed, would this undermine the viability or value of the programme? • Should any aspects of implementation or spending not go ahead if key assumptions did not eventuate? • Should Ministers or senior leaders have check-ins or decision points before key milestones or activities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ eg, before major investments are committed
<p>Who will make decisions on the future of the programme?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What delegations do Ministers and senior leaders hold? Which decisions should be escalated to Ministers or Cabinet? • Should any report-backs to Cabinet be scheduled?
<p>What assumptions and/or milestones will trigger a reassessment of scope, timeframes, and/or funding and resource requirements? How will these assumptions and milestones be monitored?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What information or data can be collected on each assumption? • When will data be available, who will collect it, and how often? • Through which mechanisms will data on assumptions be reported to senior leaders and Ministers, and at what points?

8 Confirm that all key decisions have been made and that plans are sufficient to proceed with establishing the programme

Before proceeding to establish the programme and its implementation disciplines, senior leaders should ask a series of questions.

If the answers to any of these questions are unclear, programme directors and managers should revisit the considerations in the pages above to ensure the right things are in place for senior leaders to make a go-ahead decision on establishing the programme.

Key questions for senior leaders	Pages to revisit in this guidance
Have the assumptions or the operating context underpinning the programme changed? If so, should any programme settings be reassessed?	Page 11
Is the right capability and capacity in place to establish the programme? Can agencies recruit, procure or build what they need?	Page 6
Have agencies formed the necessary working relationships and engaged all stakeholders, including iwi-Māori and end users?	Page 5 Page 6 Page 10
Do plans provide senior leaders the right decision points, escalation tracks, and offramps?	Page 7 Page 11
Are oversight, assurance, and decision-making processes suitable for the size of the investment?	Page 6 Page 8
If needed, do plans factor in the design and implementation of change management processes?	Page 7

Establish the implementation disciplines

The **establishment** phase is a short one, where key implementation disciplines are stood up to manage delivery. This includes practices put in place to regularly assess the context in which the programme is implemented.

This includes the enablers that support delivery of the programme to function, such as reporting, communications, procurement, and other functions, as well as meeting cadences at each level of the programme structure.

9 Confirm that the right disciplines and relationships are in place to manage implementation

Before proceeding to implement the programme and manage its delivery, senior leaders should ask a series of questions.

If the answers to any of these questions are unclear, programme directors and managers should revisit the considerations in the pages above to ensure the right things are in place for senior leaders to make a go-ahead decision to continue with implementation.

Key questions for senior leaders	Pages to revisit
Are agencies clear on who will deliver what, where they will work together, and what their responsibilities are within the overall programme?	Page 6 Page 7
Are there clearly defined measures of success? Have agencies identified and agreed primary and contributory milestones?	Page 7 Page 9
Are internal and, where appropriate, external assurance mechanisms in place?	Page 8
Has the appropriate formal programme management methodology been adopted and are its disciplines in place?	Page 6
Are meeting cadences in place at each level, and is there enough dedicated time to adequately manage implementation?	Page 6
Has the right capability to effectively manage implementation been identified and put in place across agencies and within each agency?	Page 6
Are strong working relationships in place between agencies, with key stakeholder groups (including iwi-Māori and end users), and any third-party providers?	Page 5 Page 6 Page 10
Are data collection processes, reporting formats, and routines defined and in place across the programme?	Page 9
Are the governance arrangements identified and in place along with the relevant supporting programme management arrangements at lower levels?	Page 6

Manage implementation of the programme

At the **manage implementation** phase, the programme structure comes to life and implementation of the programme begins.

Programme directors and manager should have practices in place that will alert them to the possibility that implementation is not going well and the associated risks to the success of the programme. Programme officials will need to identify changes occurring in the context or environment in which the programme is being implemented, and to do so in a timely manner so that senior leaders can act and make changes where appropriate.

The planning and establishment phases do not necessarily finish when implementation begins: planning will continue as the programme is delivered, lessons from implementation are incorporated, and new elements of the programme may be established over time.

10 Confirm that decisions made at the planning and establishment phases remain fit for purpose

The needs of complex programmes evolve over time, particularly when they are delivered over multiple years. As programme needs evolve, planning and implementation disciplines may need to change.

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
Are the right people and agencies at the table at each level, and do they have what they need to manage implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do programme arrangements meet the needs of Ministers and senior leaders? Do decision-makers and senior leaders receive the right information to make decisions and provide effective oversight? Does each level of the programme meet at the right frequency? Are decision-making processes timely?
Are there distinct phases of delivery that will require different approaches, skills, and programme management requirements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should programme arrangements evolve through the programme, and if so, how? Is there a greater or lesser need for key programme functions as the programme develops?
Will any part of the programme arrangements need to change in scope or functions once milestones are met?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would any other programme functions support delivery? Are any programme functions obsolete? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>See further guidance in the Appendix</i> Have any new programmes or initiatives been created since the programme's inception that change the delivery landscape?

11 Decide how progress will be made visible during implementation and who will be responsible

In complex programmes, measurable changes to population-level outcomes may not occur until several years into – or after – the life of the programme. In due course, the impact of a programme can be assessed through formal evaluations – in the interim, programme directors and managers should consider how to routinely assess progress.

During implementation it is important to share regular progress updates across the programme and to stakeholders, including the wider public. This helps to show that delivery is occurring and can build confidence that programme objectives will be met.

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
Who owns the narrative of implementation and its progress and how is the narrative kept alive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is responsible for making progress visible? • How can progress be made visible? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ eg, public dashboards, proactively releasing reporting, annual reports, communications strategies, launch events • What is the overall communications strategy, and who is responsible for it?
What part will each agency play in ensuring coherent messaging about implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data and information will each agency be responsible for reporting? What will central programme functions be responsible for reporting? • What will be reported publicly, in what formats, and at what frequencies?
How and when will Ministers know whether the programme is on track to achieve its intended objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What progress reports are provided to Ministers and Cabinet? • Does reporting make clear whether progress is on track, and what the trend of progress is? Are interim milestones enough to provide assurance that longer-term objectives will be met? • If programme funding is added to an existing pool of funding, how will its incremental impact be measured and reported on? • Is it clear what progress is attributable to the programme, distinct from baselines and prior funding? Does reporting clearly distinguish the incremental impact of new initiatives? • Who will be responsible for evaluations of the programme, when will they occur?

12 Decide an approach to sustain programme benefits over time

Programmes may end or become incorporated into 'business as usual'. Programme directors and managers should carefully consider how the benefits of the programme will be maintained once funding ends or programme arrangements are wound down.

Key questions for senior leaders	Additional considerations for programme directors and managers
Who will be responsible for sustaining benefits after the end of the programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What roles will each agency have after the end of the programme? • What role will the lead agency or system leader have? • What roles will other stakeholders and delivery partners have?
What is needed to sustain benefits after the end of the programme, and what can be put in place during implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will benefits be maintained if the programme stopped entirely? • Is ongoing funded needed to maintain benefits? If so, what can be absorbed into baselines, and what would require additional maintenance funding? • What role will stakeholder groups have in maintaining benefits? • What role will agencies have in maintaining benefits? Do agencies have the necessary capacity and capability in place?
Does the programme need a transition plan, and if so, who should be responsible for its creation and at what stage in implementation should it occur?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will programme arrangements evolve through the transition? • When should the transition plan take effect? • How will the transition be communicated to stakeholders?

Section 2

A checklist for each phase of a programme

Phase	Does the programme have...?
Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A clear set of objectives that the programme aims to achieve <input type="checkbox"/> Specific results that each agency will contribute towards the objectives <input type="checkbox"/> A governance structure with terms of reference for key bodies outlining the accountabilities of each Minister (or Group), CE (or Board), and agency, as well as decision rights, delegation thresholds, and escalation paths <input type="checkbox"/> A programme structure with scope and functions defined for each programme body, including functions for coordination and reporting <input type="checkbox"/> A lead agency with a defined set of responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Strong working relationships between key agencies <input type="checkbox"/> A programme plan covering the life of the programme and including key milestones and phases for all agencies offramps and back-up plans in case milestones are not met check-ins, decision points, and report backs for senior leaders, Ministers and Cabinet <input type="checkbox"/> Shared definitions for measures of progress including leading indicators <input type="checkbox"/> A reporting framework including clear timelines and roles for each agency <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships with, and a stakeholder engagement plan that covers, delivery partners and funding recipients end users and the public government agencies outside the programme other stakeholders outside government <input type="checkbox"/> A risk register <input type="checkbox"/> Assurance arrangements (including any external reviews) <input type="checkbox"/> Plans for establishing programme-wide enablers, such as application processes, workforce. technology and IT, procurement, and contracting
Establish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Routines in place at each level of the programme to manage implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Processes that are ready from Day 1 (or before) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> reporting <input type="checkbox"/> stakeholder engagement <input type="checkbox"/> decision-making, including for spending decisions <input type="checkbox"/> procurement <input type="checkbox"/> A change management strategy (if needed)
Manage implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Clear measures of progress that are reported on regularly and visibly <input type="checkbox"/> Effective support from senior leaders for the agreed level of coordination <input type="checkbox"/> Timely reassessments of the suitability of the programme structure including governance and programme management arrangements <input type="checkbox"/> A consistent approach across the programme to the same stakeholders <input type="checkbox"/> Forums for agencies to identify shared issues and opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback loops where frontline experience informs planning and delivery <input type="checkbox"/> A transition plan for sustaining benefits beyond the programme

Section 3

Illustrative scenarios

Scenario 1: A multi-agency programme with some integration

- A new multi-agency programme is initiated that encompasses 15 different initiatives across four agencies, all contributing to a core set of initiatives. The programme is governed by a Joint Ministerial Group. One agency is system leader and acts as lead agency. All agencies will be represented in the programme's governance. No other agencies are within the scope of the programme.
- All agencies receive significant amounts of new spending to increase existing services and deliver new services. Some initiatives deliver increases to public services, while some initiatives contract services from third parties outside of government. While each of the agencies is accountable for their own initiatives, the initiatives are similar in nature and affect the same group of end users.

Phase	Key decisions for senior leaders	Illustrative scenario
Plan	1 Decide the level of integration required for agencies to deliver the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some agencies integrate delivery on subset of initiatives, to coordinate hiring and workforce development initiatives, and to ensure that agencies' combined progress towards programme-level objectives can be reported on. This is because agencies share some of the same end users and are likely to hire the same workforce. • Other initiatives do need to be integrated because there is minimal overlap between agencies' implementation activities (even though the initiatives contribute towards the same overarching programme objectives).
	2 Decide how agencies will manage delivery of the programme, and the role each agency will play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To manage coordination between the agencies, a cross-agency Tier 2 group is set up including all four agencies. To support the Tier 2 group, a programme office is created within the lead agency. Staff from across the four agencies are seconded into the programme office to keep it connected to the perspectives of all agencies. • The initial functions of the programme office include developing an implementation roadmap for the programme that identifies the key phases and milestones, coordinating cross-agency action on workforce initiatives, and leading programme-wide reporting. Functions are outlined in a terms of reference. Memoranda of understanding are set up to support cross-agency coordination on specific initiatives. Coordination will occur at the working level and report to the Tier 2 group.
	3 Decide the programme's stages and objectives and how agencies will measure progress at each stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each agency contributes initiative-level delivery plans to the programme office, who create an overarching programme plan. Check-in points are established for the Tier 2 group to take stock of progress ahead of key milestones. No milestones have major interdependencies for delivery across the programme. • Agencies identify five overarching measures of progress towards the programme's overall objectives in a series of cross-agency workshops.
	4 Decide what assurance mechanisms to put in place within each agency and across the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lead agency establishes an internal assurance mechanism for its parts of the programme. Other agencies with smaller initiatives repurpose existing assurance mechanisms. • A programme-wide Assurance Group is created comprising a mixture of government and external members. The Group schedules meets ahead of key milestones.
	5 Decide an approach to defining, collecting, and reporting progress data on key programme measures within the programme governance arrangements and to Ministers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lead agency's data definitions are used for reporting on measures of progress. Otherwise, agencies report progress at the initiative level independently and use their own definitions. Agencies do not share data with the programme office but are expected to show how contributions to programme-wide measures of progress will ramp up over time. • The programme office designs and consults on reporting frameworks for Ministers and for agencies. Senior leaders agree to proactively release all reporting during the programme's first year and intend to create a public-facing reporting system at a later stage of the programme.
	6 Decide which arrangements are needed to ensure the right stakeholders are engaged at each level, at the right times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Reference Group comprised of sectoral representatives is created because a significant proportion of funding will be spent through contracts with third parties. The Group will provide advice and assurance to the Tier 2 group by developing an investment framework to help inform agencies' spending decisions. • Sectoral groups representing end users are consulted during the planning stage, and the programme office builds relationships that it can draw on as implementation continues.

Phase	Key decisions for senior leaders	Illustrative scenario
Plan	7 Decide whether the programme's scope or arrangements will be reconsidered at any points in the life of the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme aims to meet high demand for services, and it is unlikely that demand will change over the life of the programme. It is also unlikely that an element of the programme would not go ahead. Therefore, no 'go-ahead' decision points are incorporated into the programme plans. However, programme arrangements will need to be assessed as the programme moves from a 'ramp-up' and contracting phase to managing delivery at scale. A check-in point with a report back to the Tier 2 group is set up for the end of the first phase of the programme.
	8 Confirm that all key decisions have been made and that plans are sufficient to proceed with establishing the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior leaders are confident that most of the right elements are in place – however, they ask for more information on how cross-agency coordination will operate in practice. Programme arrangements are revisited and re-planning with more capacity to support coordination. Senior leaders take a decision to proceed.
Establish	9 Confirm that the right disciplines and relationships are in place to manage delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A series of kick-off workshops are held to ensure all agencies are aligned on roles and responsibilities. Regular meetings begin, including monthly Tier 2 group meetings and weekly operational meetings run by the programme office. The programme office begins making data requests to agencies and reporting the results to the Tier 2 group.
Manage implementation	10 Confirm that decisions made at the planning and establishment phases remain fit for purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twelve months into the programme, the programme management office reassesses and provides advice to Ministers on the suitability of the programme structures. Ministers decide that a Ministerial Group is no longer needed and responsibility reverts to the Minister for the lead agency. The programme office is retained and the Reference Group ends once third-party contracting is complete.
	11 Decide how progress will be made visible during implementation and who will be responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once all contracts are in place with third-parties, the programme office launches a public-facing dashboard to coincide with quarterly reports and undertakes an exercise with agencies to identify suitable proxy measures to track programme outcomes. A fieldwork programme is established to capture qualitative information about delivery. The lead agency includes information on the programme as a whole in its Annual Report.
	12 Decide an approach to sustain programme benefits over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A transition plan is commissioned to look at sustaining benefits and work on future funding proposals to lock in gains on initiatives where funding runs out at the end of the programme. A new transition planning working group is created with representatives from agencies and the sector.

Scenario 2: A public sector-wide programme with minimal integration

- A new programme is initiated to coordinate action across the public sector towards a specific objective, which has a clearly defined long-term target associated with it. Two agencies manage the programme, which is governed by an existing Ministerial Group. A further 20 delivery agencies are in scope of the programme's goals and will be expected to act under the programme.
- There is a small amount of programme funding allocated to programme management, but no new money for specific initiatives: agencies are expected to fund their activities through existing initiatives or baselines.

Phase	Key decisions for senior leaders	Illustrative scenario
Plan	1 Decide the level of integration required for agencies to deliver the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While agencies' collective efforts are required to achieve the programme's goal, agencies work towards this independently and do not need to integrate their delivery. • There are opportunities for agencies to learn from others experiences and best practices, but these do not require a high level of integration .
	2 Decide how agencies will manage delivery of the programme, and the role each agency will play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two lead agencies already work closely on other initiatives and a decision is taken to manage the programme through existing arrangements. Programme functions are divided up amongst the two lead agencies: one agency services the governance group and collates reporting, and the other agency develops guidance for the delivery agencies within scope of the programme and coordinates delivery agencies to share lessons and best practices. • The two lead agencies have regular meetings to support coordination between their teams but do not create any specific programme bodies. • Each of the 20 delivery agencies is asked to nominate a lead person and a delegate to act as the main points of contact for the programme.
	3 Decide the programme's stages and objectives and how agencies will measure progress at each stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme plan outlines an initial six-month stage where key processes and routines are set up, after which point the programme will be implementing at scale. • The programme's overarching objective is represented by a long-term target, towards which the 20 delivery agencies set their own annual goals for the initiatives they are managing within scope of the programme.
	4 Decide what assurance mechanisms to put in place within each agency and across the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No programme-wide assurance mechanisms are needed. Instead, the 20 delivery agencies are asked to report on the assurance mechanisms they have in place for their own responsibilities under the programme as part of regular reporting to the programme management agencies.
	5 Decide an approach to defining, collecting, and reporting progress data on key programme measures within the programme governance arrangements and to Ministers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two lead agencies identify a key proxy measure of progress towards the targets and provide the 20 delivery agencies with guidance on how to measure and report against the proxy measure. • The 20 delivery agencies report to one of the lead agencies ever six months. A dashboard is created to show agencies' progress and is published online every six months.
	6 Decide which arrangements are needed to ensure the right stakeholders are engaged at each level, at the right times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The key stakeholders are the 20 delivery agencies. The two lead agencies set up monthly forums to convene agencies to share experiences and best practices.
	7 Decide whether the programme's scope or arrangements will be reconsidered at any points in the life of the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If progress towards the overall objective is not tracking well after the first few years, senior leaders want to reconsider programme settings. • All programme arrangements are time-limited to two years initially, with a review of the programme planned at the 20-month mark with a report back to Cabinet.
	8 Confirm that all key decisions have been made and that plans are sufficient to proceed with establishing the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme arrangements are adjusted to ensure there is enough dedicated capacity after senior leaders identify that business-as-usual commitments in each of the two lead agencies managing the programme mean that there may not be enough capacity to undertake key programme functions.

Phase	Key decisions for senior leaders	Illustrative scenario
Establish	9 Confirm that the right disciplines and relationships are in place to manage delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two lead agencies set up monthly forums with the 20 delivery agencies to share lessons and best practices. Reporting dashboards are finalised and data collection processes are initiated with agencies. Senior leaders feel that six monthly progress reporting will not be frequent enough to allow them to speak on delivery progress and take the decision to move to quarterly reporting.
Manage implementation	10 Confirm that decisions made at the planning and establishment phases remain fit for purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two lead agencies identify that some delivery agencies progress has slowed down. After discussions with delivery agencies, they identify that an additional programme function focussed on validating delivery progress could help to identify delivery challenges earlier. A programme body is created to validate and report on delivery progress on a more frequent basis, but otherwise the two lead agencies retain the same functions. A review of programme arrangements is completed after 20 months and options are presented to Cabinet for the programme's continuation.
	11 Decide how progress will be made visible during implementation and who will be responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programme's public-facing dashboard moves to a monthly update schedule as more regular data becomes available. One of the lead agencies produce and publish short exemplar videos highlighting delivery stories and showing progress towards the long-term goal.
	12 Decide an approach to sustain programme benefits over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific transition plan is needed because all initiatives are funding through baselines.

Appendix

An illustrative list of programme functions

	Programme functions may include...	in order to...
<i>Basic functions for simpler programmes with fewer needs</i>	Providing advice to Ministers	<i>...support decision-making</i>
	Servicing governance groups	<i>...support scheduling and logistics for key programme groups</i>
	Communicating on behalf of the programme	<i>...provide public and internal programme updates and respond to enquiries</i>
	Reporting on progress	<i>...inform leaders of progress against goals across the programme as a whole</i>
	Developing policy	<i>...plan for and set the direction of the programme</i>
	Engaging with stakeholder groups	<i>...actively reaching out to the sector and specific stakeholder groups</i>
	Monitoring performance	<i>...understand whether the programme on track to achieve its intended benefits</i>
	Developing guidance for agencies	<i>...issue programme-level guidance to agencies and help them understand how to apply it</i>
	Supporting agencies to implement	<i>...provide hands-on support to assist agencies to navigate challenges they face</i>
<i>More advanced functions for more complex programmes with greater needs</i>	Managing shared issues and risks	<i>...proactively identify barriers to implementation and coordinate agencies to address them</i>
	Coordinating across the programme	<i>...directly initiate or facilitate coordination and collaboration on shared issues</i>
	Validating implementation is occurring	<i>...proactively ensure agencies are making progress eg, through targeted assessments</i>
	Sharing best practices	<i>...connect and convene agencies to jointly improve implementation</i>