



Defra Group Management Consultancy Framework: Project Engagement Letter

Completed forms and any queries should be directed to Defra Group Commercial at

████████████████████

Engagement details		
Engagement ref #	DPEL_61541_038 Defra Internal Gated Assurance	
Extension?	N	DPEL Ref.
Business Area	Portfolio Directorate	
Programme / Project	Centre of Expertise	
Senior Responsible Officer	████████████████████	
Supplier	Methods Business & Technology Ltd (Methods)	
Title	Delivery Assurance Service design & delivery	
Short description	A commission to design a Defra Internal Gated Assurance model for the Defra Portfolio Assurance Team. Working in line with IPA requirements and wider industry best practice and to support scheduled lifecycle assurance to ensure that a project/programme is ready to move to the next stage.	
Engagement start / end date	Proposed start date 23/1/2023	Proposed end date 31/3/2023
Funding source (CDEL/RDEL)	RDEL	
Consultancy Spend approval reference	N/A	
Expected costs 21/22	£67,285	
Expected costs 22/23	£0	
Expected costs 23/24	£0	
Dept. PO reference	To follow	
Lot #	Lot 3	
Version #	V1.0	



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Approval of Project Engagement Letter

By signing and returning this cover note, **Defra Portfolio Directorate** accepts the contents of this Project Engagement Letter as being the services required and agrees for **Methods** to provide the services in accordance with the agreed Supplier Proposal under the overarching contract (**Lot 3 - Ref 28595**), with Defra Group and confirms the availability of funding to support recharge for the services.

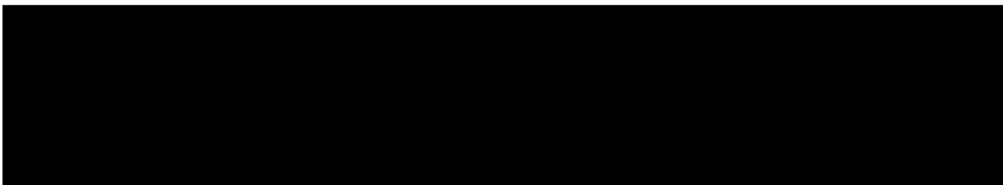


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Signatures



GMT



General Instructions



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The Engagement Letter describes the services required and provided. When completing the Engagement Letter establish the context, explain why external support is required and distinguish between the objectives, outcomes, scope and deliverables. The rationale behind the costs should be made evident in the Fees section.

The Business Area considerations are guidance notes for the customer to support their evaluation of the Engagement Letter.

1. Background

The core purpose of the Portfolio Directorate is to enable the successful delivery of Defra's programmes, through the increase of project delivery capability alongside effective management of the portfolio as a whole.

We have been investing in common standards and tools as well as supporting major programmes build the skills they need to succeed. Yet established assurance practices require further maturity and embedding across Programmes to identify poor practice and future potential issues that affect the ability to realise baselined benefits. The resulting lack of consistency yields patchy results and prevents effective portfolio management.

One of the most effective ways that has been identified where we can help is by supporting the Portfolio Assurance team within the Portfolio Directorate to align assurance practice with Government standards, providing expertise from Methods to design and provide collateral for a Gated Assurance process to implement Assurance into the delivery plan of Programme, in-flight and as they are set-up from the outset.

Utilising a bespoke design building on the IPA Assurance Toolkit <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/infrastructure-and-projects-authority-assurance-reviewtoolkit> and a tailored Gated Assurance approach.

Scope would be limited to cover Defra major Projects / Programmes and underlying projects

It is understood that for the 1st Phase, this would cover light touch information gathering with the Assurance Team.

The current civil servant Assurance team does not have the capacity to develop the service. Internal gated assurance was identified as a gap in the Continuous Assessment Improvement Framework (CIAF).

The risk of non-activity or significant delays would affect the ability to achieve our goal of having a successful delivery culture that puts us at the forefront of world class delivery across government.



2. Statement of services

Objectives and outcomes to be achieved

The objectives and outcomes for this work are separated into four key areas:

Stage 1

Objective: Build understanding of current as is, baseline and key risks / concerns.

Outcome: Clear understanding on level of activity required and support for the approach from within the Portfolio Directorate.

Deliverable: Discovery input into Design activity

Stage 2

Objective: Design Assurance Service

- Building on activity undertaken by the Assurance team
- Tailoring IPA Assurance Toolkit for Core Defra and
- Gated Assurance model and Tiering
- Timings of implementation within delivery and business lifecycles, inc.

Healthchecks. Outcome: Design agreed in Portfolio Directorate

Stage 3

Objective: Assemble Assurance and Assurance standards content

Outcome: Consistent Assurance standards and supporting collateral (standard templates.

Guidance, processes) for deployment – link into Centre of Expertise activity across PDP.

Deliverable: Assurance toolkit

Scope

Workstream 1

Stage 1

The short information gathering phase will involve working closely with Portfolio Assurance team to ascertain the gaps in service, note activity already undertaken, identify where there is not adherence to wider Government standards and best practice.

Stage 2

The scope of the service design should cover activities prior to full deployment.

The scope of the service is expected to cover the following areas:

- The operational process (tiering, tailoring IPA standards, Gated onboarding, delivery, transition)]
- IPA standards, support suite of tools and guidance, expectations for assurance, tailored for Core Defra, controls and resources
- The balance of mandatory and best practice guidance activities
- Gated Assurance – artefacts review, Confidence assessment, complexity analysis of next stage/risk assessment
- The mechanism for managing the service (monitoring, reporting, adjusting, evaluation)
- Suitability of timings across the Delivery lifecycle, inc. Healthchecks and interim assurance assessments.
- Service tiering
- Knowledge transfer mechanism



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- Outline resourcing and activity required for BAU (inc. resourcing reviewers/SMEs, IPA accredited reviewers from Defra/OGDs)

Stage 3

The collateral assembled for the Gated Assurance service will be based on existing best practice, PDP standards and tools including IPA Assurance toolkit. The scope of this phase will be building the documents, templates, processes, routes for updating and maintenance, supporting guidance as agreed within the Design.

Knowledge transfer

Knowledge transfer would be undertaken throughout each stage, with the main recipient being the PDP Assurance team and to aid planning for internal resources to provide the service in the future.



Assumptions and dependencies

Assumptions

- Defra Internal Gated Assurance design aligns with the Project Initiation Service development.
- Defra Internal Gated Assurance aligns with the emerging CoEX TOM activity.
- That Methods staff will have access to key stakeholders who will engage meaningfully and promptly to provide information to support the outcomes.
- That Methods staff will have access to all key data sources as may be required to support the development of the deliverables and assess progress against the outcomes.
- That clear guidance on required formats for product delivery will be provided to Methods staff.
- Methods staff will be given appropriate access to IT systems as may be required for the purposes of extracting relevant information, storing, and managing working documents and for any other legitimate purpose as may be necessary for the length of the contract.
- That all relevant stakeholders will be available as necessary for the purposes of knowledge transfer and the transfer of responsibilities, and that key topics of interest will be identified and communicated to the Methods team for this purpose.

Risk management

Risks shall be recorded and mitigated by Methods staff and communicated to the named Point of Contact either through the regular governance structure or on an ad-hoc basis should a critical risk be raised. Key risks to the service delivery already identified include:

- Risk of lack of consensus over the need for, or ownership of, an increased Assurance service

A Methods Service Delivery level risk register will be produced as part of the SDD which will be shared with DEFRA so that all identified risks can be mitigated/managed appropriately.



Deliverables

Deliverable	Success Criteria	Milestone / Date	Owner (who in the delivery team?)
Stage 1			
Service Definition Document	Detailing product descriptions with quality criteria, plan and project governance, once initial engagement is complete. It also contains service description for client communication to wider stakeholders	3 February 2023	Principal consultant
Information Gathering	Documented Record of confirmed supporting detail as ascertained by Methods.	10 February 2023	Principal consultant
Stage 2			
Design outcomes	Explanation of each core component and how it would work in practice	28 February 2023	Principal consultant
Stage 3			
Assurance (Gated and IPA adherence) Collateral	All standards, templates, processes documents in an accessible set of activities, timelines, guidance, tools, templates, resourcing model and process flows to provide for a deployable model.	24 March 2023	Consultant

Limitations on scope and change control

Unless instructions to the Supplier are later amended in writing and approved by change control, the work undertaken will be restricted to that set out above. In providing the services detailed above, the Supplier will be reliant on information provided by the Business Area.

The Project Engagement Letter is the agreed contract of work between the Defra Group Business Area and the Supplier and can be varied under the change control process. Any changes to timescales, scope and costs will require approval by DgC.



3. Delivery team

	£67,285.00

Total resource <div style="text-align: center;"><u>Total days*</u> Engagement Length**</div>	90/50 = 1.8
*Total days worked across all resources **Total working days in engagement	

Business Area's team

Methods will be working with the PDP Assurance team

4. Fees

Defra Group will reimburse the Supplier for approved work done according to the table below. The total fees for the scope of work detailed in this Engagement Letter will be £67,285, inclusive of expenses and excluding VAT.

Stage	Cost	Due (link to milestone dates)
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Grand total	£67,285.00	End March 2023

Expenses statement

Defra Group overarching contract rates include expenses for any travel to/from any UK location defined by the Business Area as the base office for the work. Only expenses for travel at the Business Area's request from this base can be charged. If appropriate, define permissible expenses to be charged.

Payment

The Supplier should invoice fees monthly in arrears. Defra Group will reimburse fees monthly on confirmation of approval of work delivered by the Business Area. The Supplier will keep an accurate record of time spent by staff in providing the services and provide this information and supporting narrative, if requested.

5. Governance and reporting

As part of the Call-Off Contract, the Supplier and Business Area agree to following:

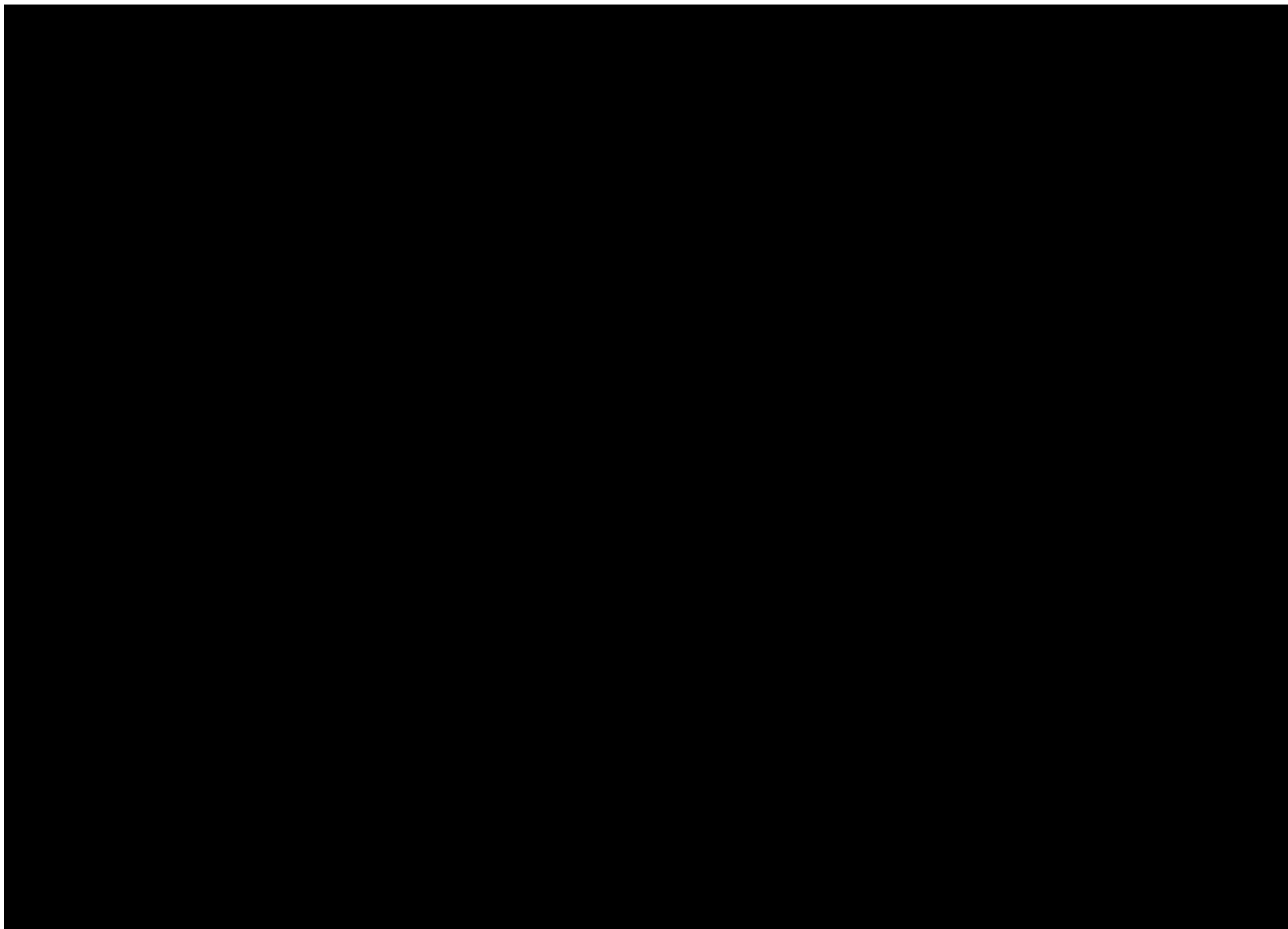
- A Service Definition document will be developed by Methods and agreed with the Business Area once initial data and stakeholder mapping is complete, detailing product descriptions with quality criteria, plan and project governance. It will also contain service description for client communication to wider stakeholders. This is subject to regular review through checkpoint meetings as part of ensuring delivery progress is in line with agreed DPEL requirements and outcomes.
- The business area, through the principal contact, will work closely and will require a minimum weekly progress report with the delivery manager who will provide a regular checkpoint report.
 - All new risks to delivery should be reported immediately or as soon practicable

Key Performance Indicators

Business Area and Supplier to agree any specific key performance indicators related to this specific project engagement.

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Feedback and satisfaction

Business Area and Supplier to agree regular reporting intervals for the duration of the engagement.

Defra Group reserves the right to hold review meetings during the assignment, discussing what went well, opportunities for improvement on future assignments and similar. This will incorporate any 'Show and Tell' documentation or transferable products that have been produced.

A post-engagement quality review of the engagement will be arranged where the Business Area rates the services provided.

Non-disclosure agreements

The overarching MCF2 framework include NDAs.

It is expected that this work will be undertaken under the NDA as part of the Defra Consulting Framework. Any additional NDA agreements will need to be assessed and agreed separately.



6. Exit management

The agreed actions and deliverables by the Supplier for when the contract ends are as follows:

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Knowledge Transfer:

Specific transfer outcomes will be tracked through regular reporting and evaluated through a review of completed knowledge transfer logs and reports, including sign off from individual knowledge recipients

The skills and expertise transferred back to the internal Defra team will help improve efficiency and effectiveness, and provide a framework to deliver future strategic projects

The supplier will provide: All documents, reports, excel files, presentations

The supplier will delete: any commercially information that is not required to be kept The supplier will prepare a handover note of any outstanding issues

Notice period

The nature of these engagements require that Defra Group have the ability to terminate an engagement with notice. Defra Group's termination rights for this engagement are marked below.

The minimum notice period for termination is 5 working days regardless of engagement duration.

1. Business Area identifies a potential need for delivery support, initiates a conversation with DgC, confirms which approvals are required for an engagement to occur, e.g. Consultancy Governance Board if over £100k or DgC Corporate Services Delivery Board if under £100k.
2. Request Form completed by Business Area and submitted to DgC at:

 - The form is reviewed by the DgC team around which resource route is most appropriate (e.g. Lots 1/2/3) and may request additional information/edits from the Business Area if required.
4. Lot / Supplier is selected and briefed on the request by DgC, then introduced to the requesting Business Area for further discussion and confirmation of work to be delivered
5. A Project Engagement Letter is completed by the Business Area with input from the Supplier (with supporting proposals as appropriate) and then finally agreed between the two parties, including evidence of all required approvals either being in place or being progressed (e.g. PO) and forwarded to the DgC for review by the Consultancy Governance Board (CGB). Approval states are:

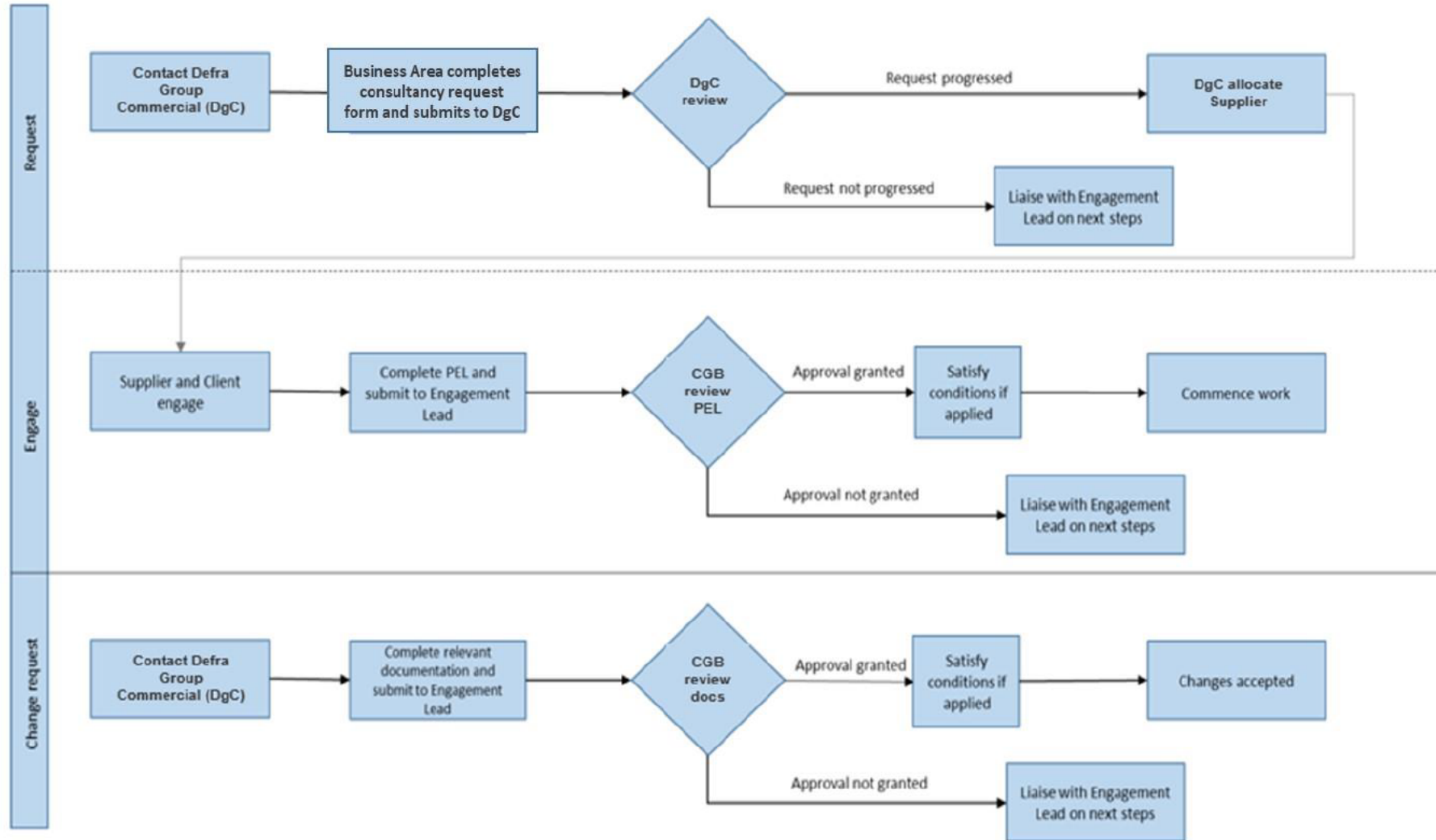
Approval state	Definition	Permissions
Full approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DPEL agreed ▪ DPEL signed: Supplier, Dept and CO ▪ Purchase Order number 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work can start ▪ Supplier can invoice for work

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Appendix A

[Project Title]
Service Delivery Document

[Date]

Version:

Status:

Author:

Service Delivery Document

Version History

Version	Date Issued	Summary of Issue	Author

Approvals

Name	Title	Approval Date	Version

Distribution

Name	Title	Issue Date	Version

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Document Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a definition of the Methods managed service for the [insert project name]. The content is aligned with the contracted statement of work [insert DPEL ref] but provides more detail on the deliverables as well as describing the agreed governance for managing

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the service. It will serve as the key reference point for delivery of the service to ensure that expectations are aligned as to scope and composition of outputs in support of agreed outcomes. It is not the intention for this document to supersede the DPEL, but rather act as a live document that will be iterated as further details emerge with regards to the service Methods is to provide to the client.

Introduction

This section summarises the key content as defined in the associated DPEL for this piece of work, providing the background and context for this project, in addition to detailing the intended outcomes and scope of this service.

Project Background

Content for this section will be taken from the associated DPEL and adapted to accommodate different audience requirements.

Outcomes

Content for this section will be taken from the associated DPEL and adapted to accommodate different audience requirements.

Scope

Content for this section will be taken from the associated DPEL and adapted to accommodate different audience requirements.

Service Delivery Approach & Plan

This section provides a detailed overview of how Methods intends to manage the service to the client. Methods are committed to using best practice P3M principles in delivering our services to DEFRA, which are outlined in this section below in addition to defining the key roles and responsibilities assigned to the project team and providing an overview of its guiding principles of work.

Principles of Work

- **Ethical:** Methods practice ethical consultancy, by which we mean, we must add value and avoid creating client dependency. We take decisions to prioritise the best interests of the clients over our revenue opportunities.
- **Transparent:** We are transparent in the how we work, share information, decisions and outcomes.
- **Inclusive:** We work in an inclusive way and are aware and mindful of our ways of working, communication and how it may impact others.
- **Respect:** We treat everyone who works and communicates with us, with respect, empathy and are open and honest.
- **Collaborative:** We are collaborative in our approach and use a knowledge transfer mechanism to ensure we empower client teams, to take forward our work in a sustainable way.

Project Plan

Provide a high-level overview of work packages, associated project activities, and deadlines.

Service Delivery Document

Governance

Meetings/Collaboration

State meeting cadence between Methods and the client, in addition to the meeting agenda(s).

Documentation

State what documentation will be produced to support the delivery of this service, and how frequently will this be communicated (e.g. Highlight Reports).

Methods Deliverables

Deliverable	Delivery Milestone	Owner
Service		
Service Delivery Document	[Date]	[Name]
Project Closure Report	[Date]	[Name]
Work package 1		
[Title]	[Date]	[Name]

Risk Management

Methods will record and manage all risks within their control, keeping Defra up to date on any developments which may lead to issues.

Reporting will be as follows:

- Medium risks will be logged and discussed in the Project Working Group meetings.
- High risks will be escalated immediately to [name], and discussed at the next Governance Group.
- Emergency risks will be immediately flagged with [name, Methods] and [name, Client] for further discussion and action.
- Defra can request to see the full RAID log at any point.

Service Delivery Control

Change Control

Any changes to the service provided by Methods in regards to timescales, scope and costs will require approval by both DEFRA Commercial and Methods.

Escalations

All issues linked to the service delivery by Methods to the client should be raised in the first instance to the Methods Principal P3M Consultant for investigation and resolution. For any

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issues that requires escalation above the Service Lead, you can contact [name, Methods] or [name, Client].

Quality Assurance

Methods will review and assure main outputs from deliverables via the Methods Assurance Lead until they are acceptable and fit for purpose before handing them to the client.

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Programme/Project Team

Insert org chart for Methods project team.

Roles & Responsibilities

The Methods team will hold the following roles and responsibilities:

Role	Name	Responsibilities

The Defra client team will hold the following roles and responsibilities:

Role	Name	Responsibilities

How We Help and Support

Methods will help DEFRA internal staff in increasing its internal capacity and capability to reduce the need for external resources in the future. As a recognised delivery partner, Methods is committed to supporting DEFRA to build project, programme and portfolio delivery capability and builds knowledge and skills transfer into each delivery assignment.

Our Knowledge Transfer Framework is underpinned by a set of core principles:

- **Continuous** – Start early and iterate.
- **Contextual** – Appropriately tailored using a suite of knowledge transfer tools and techniques
- **Equitable** – aimed at everyone, not just those with time or who appear more engaged
- **Varied** – multiple strategies to engage different styles and maintain interest

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- **Regularly reviewed** –structured reviews on a monthly basis
- **Two-way** – always collaborative, taking account of feedback and adjusting approaches □
Recorded – KT logs should be transparent and accessible.

From development of initial knowledge transfer requirements through to assignment and knowledge transfer completion, and beyond, the knowledge transfer process is aligned with the delivery lifecycle. The lifecycle is expressed in the stages set out below:



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Appendices

Product Descriptions (Work Packages)

Product Name		Product Ref.	
Purpose			
Description			
Composition <i>(if multiple elements)</i>	Element	Acceptance Criteria	
Risk to delivery <i>(if any)</i>			
Outcomes			
Milestone Date			
Product Producer		Product Reviewer	Product Approver

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Approval

The Project Senior Responsible Officer is required to sign off the Project Initiation Document.

Senior Responsible Officer	
Signature	
Date	

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