

King's Lynn Town Deal Local Assurance Framework

March 2023

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Local Assurance Framework for the King's Lynn Town Deal

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The King's Lynn Town Deal Board (TDB) was established in January 2020 to support the development of the Town Investment Plan (TIP) for King's Lynn and identify and agree the funding priorities for a Town Deal. The TIP provides the vision and strategy for the framework for planning and implementing the regeneration of King's Lynn over the period of 2020-2030.
- 1.2 In June 2021, King's Lynn was awarded a £25m Town Deal by Central Government Department for Levelling Up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) to deliver a range of programmes and projects that will provide 'interventions' which will result in economic productivity through urban regeneration, planning and land use, skills and enterprise infrastructure and connectivity.
- 1.3 During 2022 the TDB led the oversight and strategic direction for the completion and approval of the business cases for six Town Deal Projects ("Projects").
- 1.4 Now that the six approved Projects have entered the delivery phase, the purpose of this version of the Local Assurance Framework (LAF) is to set out the governance and decision-making structure of how the Town Deal will be delivered.

2. Summary of Roles

Town Deal Board – responsible for the oversight of the delivery phase of the Town Deal Projects and making identified strategic decisions and approvals as set out in this LAF

Accountable Body - the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN), responsible for the Town Deal funds and providing the governance frameworks and officer resource set out in this LAF.

Lead Council – depending on the Project will be either BCKLWN or Norfolk County Council – responsible for leading the delivery of the relevant Projects.

3. Town Deal Projects

Below are the Town Deal Projects approved by government which are now in the delivery phase.

	Towns Fund Programme	Intervention	Lead Authority
1	King's Lynn Youth & Retraining Pledge	Support youth skills, youth employment and adult workforce development.	Norfolk County Council
2	Rail to River Public Realm	Create quality and distinctive public realm	BCKLWN
3	St George's Guildhall & Creative Hub	St Georges Guildhall Refurbishment of theatre and adjoining spaces to create new cultural quarter.	BCKLWN
		Creative Hub workspaces/maker spaces for creative industries	BCKLWN
4	Active & Clean Connectivity	Local Cycling & Walking infrastructure plan priority route improvements	Norfolk County Council / BCKLWN
		Active Travel Hubs at Nar Ouse & Baker Lane	BCKLWN
		Travel Plan Fund for 6 employers in King's Lynn	Norfolk County Council
5	Riverfront Regeneration	South Quay & King Staithe Square Public Realm, repurposing of the Custom House and pontoon dryside infrastructure.	BCKLWN
6	Multi User Community Hub	Repurposing vacant town centre property for new library and one stop shop for multi-agency services & support	Norfolk County Council
7	Accelerated Projects	School of Nursing	College of West Anglia
		High Street Public Realm	BCKLWN
	Innovation & Collaboration Incubator*	Incubator workshop space for high growth potential businesses.	BCKLWN
	Town Centre Repurposing*	Repurposed units	BCKLWN

**Project Approved by DLUHC but not prioritised to be taken forward under the Town Deal.*

The Business Case for each Project set out the resources, programme and key milestones for each intervention, delivery of which will be monitored by the TDB and the Accountable Body.

4. King's Lynn Town Deal Board

The **King's Lynn Town Deal Board** is the strategic body overseeing the delivery of the Town Deal. It provides strategic direction to the development and implementation of the Town Deal programme for King's Lynn. Specifically, it will be the vehicle through which the vision and strategy for the town is defined to drive long-term transformative change including the amount of investment secured through the Towns Fund.

The Board has approved each Town Deal business case to ensure alignment with the priorities set out in the TIP and to ensure they are developed with broad engagement with local communities and businesses. The Government provided supplementary [guidance](#) (November 2022) on the role on the TDB during the delivery phase of the programme.

The Board will receive reports on the progress, key milestones, delivery against the vision set out in the TIP, expenditure and any issues/risks identified during the development and delivery of the Town Deal projects. DLUHC have confirmed that the TDB are required to have sight of and feed into the Monitoring & Evaluation returns prior to submission every 6 months. It is also expected by DLUHC that the TDB will continue to have a focus on local accountability and decision making.

The Terms of Reference of the TDB are regularly reviewed to reflect latest government guidance and to reflect the Board's long-term role to oversee the development and delivery of the Town Deal by 31st March 2026.

The TDB retains the overarching strategic oversight of the Town Deal and TIP as a whole and how the individual projects relate to one another.

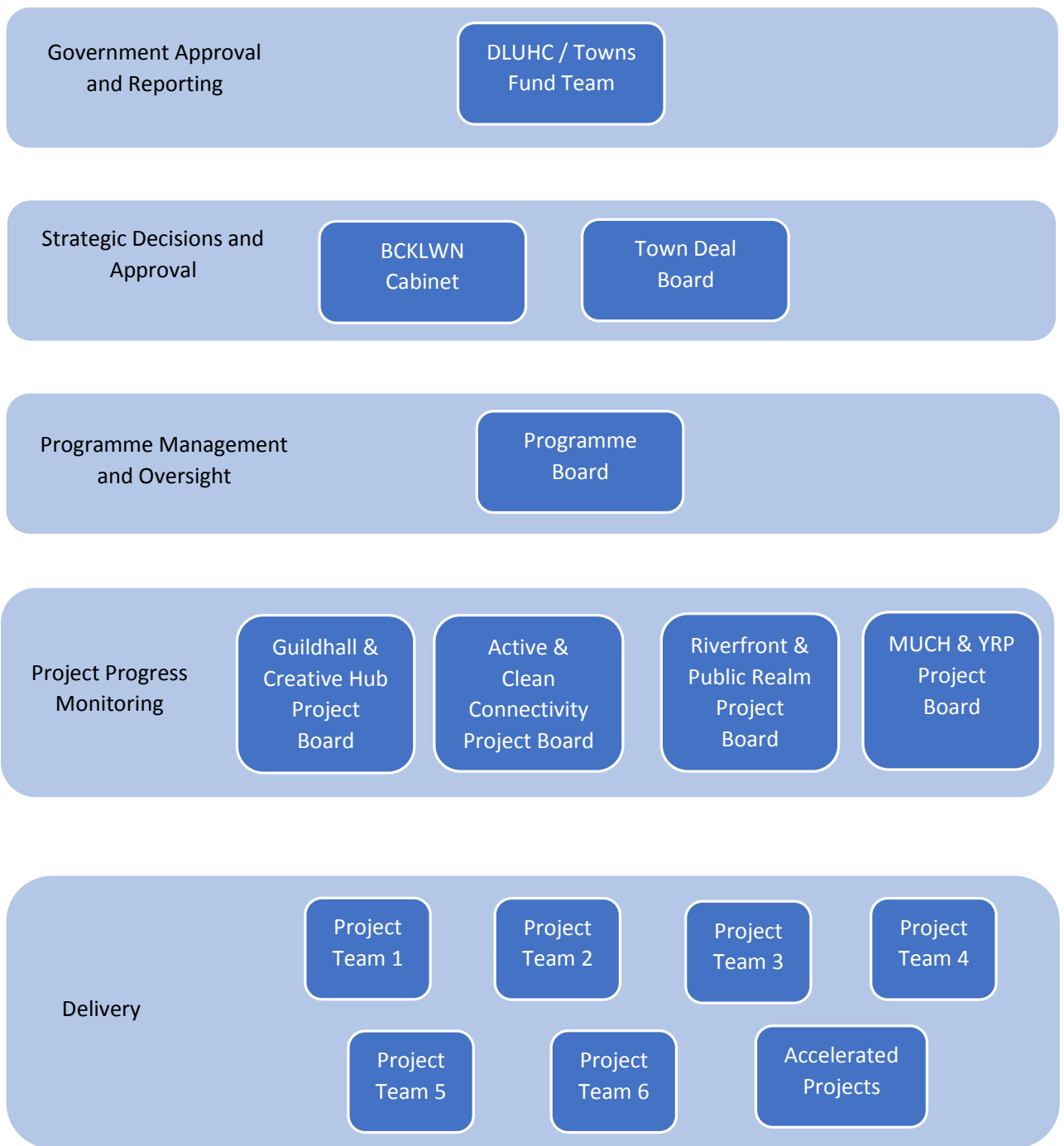
Specific thematic working groups have been established to develop and provide oversight on related towns fund approved projects, support the development of future projects and priorities, bring key partners together and ensure wider community and stakeholder engagement. These sub groups will be chaired by a member of the TDB who will report to the main Board on the sub-group activity and progress. The current sub groups established are:

- Skills Working Group
- Public Realm & Repurposing Working Group

DLUHC have reiterated the distinction between the Accountable Body, Lead/Delivery Council and the Town Deal Board, however they expect that the Town Deal continues to be a collaborative effort and that Town Deal Boards continue to be consulted on and involved at a strategic level.

5. Programme Management

- 5.1 The diagram below describes the board structure and relationship between the Town Deal Board and the Borough Council, at programme and project management level.



5.2 Programme Management

The **Town Deal Programme Board**, a BCKLWN led board consisting of senior managers from different Council disciplines, the County Council and New Anglia LEP, including the S151 Officer will be responsible for the delivery and oversight of the programme on behalf of the Accountable Body.

The **Towns Fund Senior Responsible Officer** (AD for Housing, Regeneration & Place) has the overarching responsibility for steering and overseeing the Town Deal and the TIP with the board and reporting to government. The Senior Responsible Officer will manage programme information and activity between the

TDB, Project Boards, TDB working-groups, scrutiny & policy panels and the Lead Council delivery teams, BCKLWN Portfolio Holders and the BCKLWN Cabinet.

The Lead Council will be responsible for the operational decisions for the delivery of the relevant project. The Accountable Body will enter-funding agreements with external partners who deliver Town Deal projects. The TDB will be responsible for strategic programme decisions and for overseeing delivery of the programme, monitoring and evaluation of the individual projects and compliance with the Business Cases and Heads of Terms Agreement with government.

Each Town Deal project will be led by an appointed **Project Sponsor** who will work with a **Project Manager** and **Project Team** made up of relevant internal and external stakeholders for this project. The **Regeneration Programmes Manager** will have day to day responsibility for the coordinating delivery of the Towns Fund projects on behalf of the TDB and provide update reports to the relevant Council panels, portfolio holders and Cabinet on behalf of the Accountable Body, supported by the Programme Management Office. Lead Councils will be responsible for reporting/updating of project delivery through their democratic systems.

Monthly Highlight reports and project documentation in accordance with the project stages set out in Appendix 2, of individual projects will be produced by the Project Managers for the following meetings in a monthly cycle.

The Programme Management Office (PMO)

A small team within BCKLWN which:

- Principally supports the major council capital projects/programmes and smaller projects within a governance structure to provide project oversight, alignment and control.
- Provides support for governance requirements for projects enabling standardisation in appropriate processes, procedures and tools to maintain an up-to-date view of progress (as set out in Appendix 2).

The PMO does not hold responsibility for managing and providing relevant information (e.g. risks, issues, progress) which lies with Project Managers and Project Sponsors.

5.3 Town Deal Programme Board

The work programme required to deliver the £25m investment involves the commitment and resources of other public agencies, extensive stakeholder, member and community engagement and consultation to assist in the development and delivery of projects to ensure they meet the expectations of government and secure local support and buy in.

In order to provide support and oversight of the Town Deal and to the individual project teams/lead for Town Deal projects, the **Town Deal Programme Board** will monitor and manage the delivery of the Town Deal. The Board is supported by

dedicated **Project Teams** from the Borough Council and Norfolk County Council, and specialist advisers as necessary.

Regular Project Highlight reports will be reported to the Project Board, Programme Board, TDB and published for the Accountable Body's Member Major Projects Board and other Members of the Accountable Body to access.

The Terms of Reference for the Programme Board are:

1. To work in partnership on the shared vision and priorities set out in the TIP and final projects to be delivered under the Towns Fund.
2. Identify the resources required (and available for each project) and, where necessary, work together to secure additional resources to ensure delivery of the Town Deal.
3. Ensure compliance with the Local Assurance Process, to allocate resources and oversee the delivery of the Town Deal and the implementation of the component projects.
4. Ensure effective co-ordination between the activities and actions of the agencies and organisations involved.
5. Be responsible for managing and implementing projects, funding agreements, commissioning and procurement for projects as directed by the Board.
6. To monitor and review the progress of the Town Deal and effectiveness of the actions in line with DLUHC's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.
7. To monitor risks, issues and assumptions to ensure successful delivery of the Town Deal projects.
8. To monitor the financial profile, spend, cash flow and budgets of all projects.
9. To receive regular Highlight reports, comment on these, provide strategic direction, make decisions under approved delegations, resolve issues to be addressed on the implementation of Town Deal projects.
10. To monitor the effectiveness of the programme Communication & Engagement Plan to ensure members, stakeholders and the community are actively engaged throughout the delivery of the Town Deal.
11. To receive bi annual reports on the Monitoring and Evaluation being achieved as a result of the investment, against the planned outputs and outcomes submitted to DLUHC at Business Case submission stage.

5.4 Membership of the Programme Board will include;

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk	Executive Director	Debbie Gates
	Executive Director	Geoff Hall
	Executive Director	Oliver Judges
	Assistant Director / S151	Michelle Drewery
	Assistant Director	Duncan Hall
	Assistant Director	David Ousby
	Assistant Director	Matthew Henry (Chair)
	Regeneration Programmes Manager	Jemma Curtis
	Assistant Director & Monitoring Officer	Alexa Baker
	Project Management Office	Vanessa Dunmall
Norfolk County Council	Programme Manager	Hannah Edge
New Anglia LEP	Advisor	Mike Dowdell

Meeting frequency will be monthly.

5.5 To progress and deliver the Town Deal, the Programme Board will need to have wide ranging support and clear lines of accountability. These include;

- The Borough Council chairs the Programme Board as the accountable body for finance, funding, administration and performance monitoring of the Town Deal.
- The Programme Board has delegated authority within agreed tolerances to deliver the Town Deal within agreed budgets and funding attracted in accordance with the approved Business cases.
- The Programme Board will provide update reports to the Town Deal Board as the overarching partnership body for the Town Investment Plan. Individual partners will need to determine the need for reporting arrangements to their parent organisations.
- Representatives will have the ability to influence and/or deliver the Town Deal. The Board will have a key influencing role and be a senior officer interface between the Project Teams and the TDB to ensure the provision of technical expertise prior to making recommendations to the TDB.
- Programme Board Members are identified to act as programme and project sponsors on the basis that their powers and responsibilities make them the most appropriate lead for individual projects.

5.6 Project Boards

BCKLWN Council Policy Review and Development Panels, and **Project Boards** for Towns Fund projects will act as a two-way mechanism to inform and provide constructive feedback and recommendations to the TDB, Cabinet and Programme Board.

Project Boards are accountable to the Town Deal Board and report to the BCKLWN as Accountable Body and the Lead Council. Project Boards will

oversee and monitor the progress of each Project/Programme against the approved Business Case.

The **Project Board** for each project will exercise responsibility for the duties below, as appropriate:

- Comment and collectively agree on regular Highlight Reports prepared by the Project Manager as part of the reporting process set out in Appendix 1.
- oversee budget monitoring and management.
- monitor progress of the project programme and be consulted on change controls.
- ensure there is a clear, robust and transparent project and programme management process in place that is readily auditable to include risk, finance, stakeholder, legal and planning management issues.
- monitor and scrutinise the Project Risk Register.
- critically review Project strategies, studies and reports commissioned for the project.
- act as a sounding board for new project ideas within the scope of the approved Business Case
- act as ambassadors for the project
- monitor feedback from wider community and stakeholder engagement to ensure it informs the development and delivery of the project
- ensure appropriate reporting to funders, Town Deal Programme Board, Town Deal Board and Borough Council as the Accountable Body
- Ensure there is an appropriate interface with Norfolk County Council, BCKLWN Cabinet, Regeneration and Development Panel, Officer Major Projects Board, Member Major Projects Board, partners, group leaders and County & Borough Councillors.

5.7 Project Teams

Project Teams for each project will be led by **Project Sponsors** and supported by a **Project Manager** and wider officers and consultants (where appropriate) to provide the specialist expertise required to develop and deliver the project(s) in line with the approved Business Case.

Project Sponsors play a key role in promoting, advocating and shaping the projects. They oversee the assigned project in terms of the project and programme management functions and remains accountable for ensuring the realisation of the specified outputs and outcomes set out in the Business Case. Ensures that all necessary monitoring, contract and funding documentation is completed and in place.

The **Project Manager** will be responsible for presenting regular Highlight Reports, approved by the Project Sponsor, to the Project Boards.

6 Decision Making and Reporting

- 6.1 The Lead Council will be responsible for delivery of the relevant project in line with the agreed business case and updating the Accountable Body and TDB on progress in accordance with the approved project management process and stages

(as set out in appendix 2). This delivery and oversight process is shown below in Diagram 1 in Appendix 1.

6.2 The government has set out a process for Accountable Bodies and Town Deal Boards to adhere to should there be any changes to project scope, budget, outputs and outcomes. Project Adjustment Requests (PAR) include but are not limited to:

- A change in project scope or activity
- Splitting one project into multiple separate projects
- Merging projects
- Cancelling a project and reallocating funding to other projects in the deal

Project Adjustment Requests need to be submitted to DLUHC for decision.

6.3 There will be triggers in the delivery of the projects when the Lead Council must obtain the approval of the Town Deal Board and Accountable Body. Those triggers will occur in the event of an **Unforeseen Strategic Decisions**, which are defined as:

- a. Changes in project scope (for example following a change in the risk assessment) that impacts on outputs, outcomes and/or project budget
- b. Consultation and approval of Project Adjustment Requests to DLUHC

For Unforeseen Strategic Decisions, the Lead Council, the TDB and the Accountable Body must all be in agreement to proceed. The decision-making process for Unforeseen Strategic Decisions is shown in Diagram 2 in Appendix 1. There is a Dispute Resolution process set out below in the event that agreement is not unanimous.

Unforeseen Strategic decisions (as defined in 6.3) will require final approval by the relevant Portfolio holder, the Town Deal Programme Board and the TDB where appropriate.

6.4 **Dispute Resolution**

At any time an objection or project issue is raised through the Highlight reporting process by the TDB and/or the Accountable Body, the following process shall be followed to resolve the dispute:

- a) Referral to the Project Board for further discussion and recommendations to the Programme Board.
- b) Consideration by the Programme Board with proposed resolution to the TDB. If not accepted by the TDB, the following dispute resolution process would be triggered; The Chair of the TDB, an Executive Director of the Accountable Body and the Lead Council and the Monitoring Officer of the Accountable Body will meet to narrow the issues and achieve resolution of the outstanding areas of dispute. Where further information/expert input is required, this shall be sought and the meeting shall reconvene within one week of receipt;

- c) If the dispute cannot be resolved at stage a), the same meeting group will meet again along with the Chief Executive of the Accountable Body and where different, the Chief Executive of the Lead Council to achieve resolution of the outstanding areas of dispute.
- d) If there is no resolution agreed, determine if Project Adjustment Request to DLUHC is required.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Town Deal provides a unique opportunity to better understand what policy interventions are most effective in driving economic growth and living standards at the town level. This improved understanding will rely on the frequent collection of high-quality data to enable the ongoing monitoring of progress and the evaluation of the Towns Fund's impact. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Town Deal will ensure that Government has better evidence of what policy levers work best to improve connectivity, spatial organisation, skills, and local authority capability in towns.

Monitoring and evaluation of the King's Lynn Town Deal programme for the 6 projects will be submitted to DLUHC twice a year or as requested. Project Delivery Teams will be responsible for supplying the data in accordance with the Final Monitoring and Evaluation Plans submitted to DLUHC with the business cases.

There is a formal requirement that the Town Deal Assurance Framework complies with the Levelling Up Funds Local Assurance Framework (LUFLAF) which will ensure the funds in scope are held accountable. The LUFLAF sets out standards in line with the principles in managing public money i.e. Regularity - compliant with relevant legislation, and Propriety – high standards of public conduct including robust governance. It also outlines the need for Efficiency, Economy, Effectiveness and Prudence in the administration of public resources to secure value for public money.

All projects will be subject to a post-project completion report; this will ensure the programme follows best practice using recognised project and programme management techniques to ensure sound decisions have been made and lessons are identified for future schemes.

8. Scrutiny

The Programme Board is made up of senior managers, responsible for ensuring that the programme aligns to the wider business of the Borough Council and its policies and procedures. There is representation from specialist areas like legal, finance and property, they act on behalf of the accountable body and will scrutinise the performance of the Town Deal programme to ensure appropriate compliance to Council, DLUHC and Towns Fund policies and processes.

BCKLWN policy and scrutiny panels will be updated during the project delivery at key stages of projects and when reports are brought to Cabinet.

9 Financial Regulations

BCKLWN is the Accountable Body for the Town Deal. BCKLWN must conduct its business efficiently and ensure it has sound financial management policies in place, including arrangements to monitor compliance. BCKLWN's statutory Section 151 Officer is also charged with ensuring that proper financial management processes are in place.

The financial management of the Town Deal will be in accordance with Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk's Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk will account for financial resources granted or to be applied for in the name of the Town Deal Board.

BCKLWN's Financial Regulations provide clarity about the financial accountability of individuals. The regulations identify responsibilities of individuals across all levels. Written records are a requirement where decision making has been delegated to members of staff, in order to give assurance that tasks or decisions have been performed in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

Delegations approved by Cabinet set out in the approved Business Cases will be put in place by the Accountable Body with specific reference to the delegation of authority for the Town Deal programme. This proposal will ensure the most efficient and timely management of the programme, in the context of the delivery timeframes.

10. Risk Management

10.1 BCKLWN proactively manages its risks, enabling it to effectively manage current priorities and promptly identify future challenges. Risk management is noted as one of the key pillars of good decision making and therefore a crucial element of good governance. BCKLWN continually develops its risk management processes. A programme delivery risk assessment will be completed and reviewed quarterly at the Town Deal Programme Board as part of the monitoring process ensuring that identified risks are minimised where possible and do not impact negatively on us achieving our priorities, outputs and outcomes.

10.2 Risk Register

A Risk Register will record the Town Deal programme and will be updated on a regular basis recording a list of any significant risks which may prevent the programme from achieving its priorities, outputs and outcomes. It will hold both strategic and operational risks. The Register identifies the lead individual to manage the risk, identify the controls or mitigation that needs to be in place to continually monitor the risk and record the outcome of any audit review. The register is used for reporting and monitoring of risks at a variety of levels and is configured in risk groups aligned to the directorate structure of BCKLWN.

It is overseen by the Corporate Team, who will also maintain evaluations of BCKLWN wide and confidential risks. Key risks are also recorded in BCKLWN 's Corporate Risk Register and are escalated to Management Team as chaired by the Chief Executive and to the Audit Committee if the risk reaches a defined level.

11 Procurement

As public sector bodies, BCKLWN and NCC employ rigorous procurement processes which fully comply with the Public Procurement regulations on tendering and procurement, and both authorities are a 'contracting authority' under the Public Contracts Regulations. Any procurement carried out as part of the Town Deal programme will follow the relevant Lead Council's [procurement procedures](#).

12 Communications

All project communications should be in accordance with the Towns Fund [Guidance](#) and the agreed communications protocol approved by the Town Deal Board. Project Managers will be responsible for ensuring a communications plan is established and agreed for each project with the Borough Council's Communications Team.