



Projects Policy

For Use by Cowes Town Councillors and Officers

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1. Definitions

A project has:

- A defined scope and agreed objectives.
- A sponsoring Councillor who provides strategic oversight.
- An approved budget and identified resource requirements.
- Clearly defined deliverables or outputs.
- An expected timescale with a planned completion date.
- Appropriate reporting and governance arrangements.

Business-as-usual (BAU) activities are:

- Routine maintenance and operational tasks.
- Day-to-day administration of tasks undertaken by Town Council staff.
- Delivery of existing Town Council services.
- Minor purchases and routine expenditure within approved budgets.
- Statutory and regulatory responsibilities undertaken as part of normal Town Council operations.
- Such activities shall remain the responsibility of the Town Clerk and Town Office staff, acting within the Town Council's approved policies, budgets and delegated authority.

Events are:

- One-off community activities.
- Annual or recurring civic and community activities.
- Seasonal celebrations and commemorative activities.
- The planning and delivery of Town Council events shall normally be regarded as a business-as-usual activity and shall be delivered under the governance of the Town Council's Events Working Group or other body as determined by the Town Council.
- Where the Town Council determines that an event is of exceptional scale, complexity, financial significance or strategic importance, it may resolve that the event be managed as a formal project under the governance of the Projects Committee.



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2. Governance

The Projects Committee is established to provide governance, oversight and monitoring of Town Council projects that require structured planning, defined resources and formal delivery arrangements and shall oversee the planning, delivery and completion of such projects and make recommendations to the Full Council where decisions fall outside its delegated authority.

Unless specifically referred by the Full Council, the Projects Committee shall not have responsibility for:

- Routine operational management.
- Staff management matters.
- Regular service delivery.
- Recurring events managed through the Town Council's established Event management arrangements.
- Matters delegated to other committees or working groups.

The Projects Committee may, however, recommend that any activity be designated as a formal project where it considers that the scale, risk, complexity or strategic importance justifies project governance.

3. Purpose

For the purposes of this policy, a project is a temporary undertaking established to deliver a specific outcome, asset, improvement or service change within an agreed timescale.

The policy is intentionally **principles and proportionality based**, allowing it to apply to projects of varying size without imposing unnecessary bureaucracy.

The policy follows a simple project lifecycle (**Initiate → Approve → Deliver → Monitor → Close**) and uses a combination of a standard set of project templates, including:

- Business case.
- Project Initiation Document (PID).
- Operational project tracker/plan.
- Risks and issues register.
- Change control tracker.
- Budget tracker.
- Project closure report.



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4. Proportionality

Project management arrangements should be proportionate to the scale, value, complexity and risk of each project.

Small projects may require only limited documentation and reporting, whilst larger or higher-risk projects shall require more detailed governance arrangements.

5. Project Approval

No project shall commence until:

- The need for the project has been identified.
- The proposed scope has been defined.
- A Project Sponsor has been identified.
- Estimated costs, cost contingency and funding have been considered.
- The appropriate committee or Full Council has approved the project in accordance with the Town Council's delegated powers.

6. Project Governance

Each approved project shall have:

- A Project Sponsor, normally a Councillor, responsible for providing strategic direction and reporting to the Town Council or relevant Committee.
- A Project Manager, who may be a Town Officer, Councillor or suitably appointed individual responsible for day-to-day management of the project.
- Defined reporting arrangements proportionate to the size and complexity of the project.

7. Project Management Requirements

Each approved project shall, proportionate to its scale and complexity, be defined in a Project Initiation Document (PID) or equivalent.

A PID will cover:

- **Project Overview:** Provides a concise summary of the project, including its name, identification number, key personnel, and the overall objectives and goals. It sets the stage for what the project aims to achieve and its significance.
- **Business Case:** Justifies the project's viability by analysing its costs, benefits, and if appropriate, potential returns on investment. This helps stakeholders understand the financial implications and supports informed decision making.



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- **Objectives and Success Criteria:** Defines the project's long-term outcomes and short-term objectives, including how success will be measured, which helps in evaluating the project's effectiveness upon completion.
- **Stakeholder Analysis:** Identifies key stakeholders involved in the project, outlining their roles, responsibilities, and expectations and emphasises the importance of effective communication and engagement strategies to manage stakeholder interests.
- **Project Scope and Boundaries:** Details the project's deliverables, outcomes, and the work that falls within its boundaries and should also highlight any limitations or exclusions to prevent scope creep and ensure all parties have realistic expectations.
- **Project Schedule and Timeline:** Provides a detailed timeline/plan that outlines key milestones, deadlines, and resource allocation. This helps in tracking progress and ensuring that the project stays on schedule.
- **Change Control Arrangements:** To monitor and control significant amendments to scope, cost or programme.
- **Risk Management:** Identifies potential risks and issues that may arise during the project and should include strategies for mitigating these risks, addressing issues and ensuring that the project team is prepared to handle unforeseen problems.
- **Communication Plan:** Outlines how information will be disseminated among stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle. This ensures that everyone remains informed and engaged.

Note here that a well-structured PID serves as a foundational document that guides the project from initiation through execution to completion. It ensures that all stakeholders are aligned with the project's goals and provides a reference point for decision making and progress tracking throughout the project lifecycle.

8. Monitoring and Reporting

Progress shall be reported regularly to the Projects Committee or other committee designated by the Town Council.

Reports should include, where appropriate:

- Progress against milestones.
- Expenditure against budget.
- Key risks and issues.
- Proposed changes to scope, cost or programme.
- Anticipated completion date.



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Projects experiencing significant delays, cost increases or changes to approved scope shall be referred to the appropriate committee or the Full Council for further consideration.

9. Project Closure

A project shall be regarded as complete when:

- The agreed deliverables have been achieved.
- Expenditure has been accounted for.
- Any remaining risks have been transferred to operational management where appropriate.
- The Projects Committee has accepted a final project completion report.

A post project review may be undertaken for significant projects to identify lessons learned and opportunities for improving future project delivery.

10. Relationship with Other Town Council Documents

This Policy shall be read in conjunction with:

- Standing Orders.
- Financial Regulations.
- Risk Management Policy.
- Procurement Policy.
- Terms of Reference of the Projects Committee.